

## Summary

# STUDIES ON LATE ANTIQUE AND EARLY MEDIEVAL SCULPTURE FROM THE ISLAND OF RAB

This book on Late Antique and early medieval sculpture from the Kvarner Gulf island of Rab contains the results of research into one very prominent segment of the archaeological and art historical heritage of this island, which is particularly notable for its preserved early Romanesque and high Romanesque architecture. The sculpture covered in the book was also originally associated with this architecture. In Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, sculpture was largely made to furnish and decorate the interiors of churches and the actual architectural features, such as church fixtures and sculpted architectural elements. Although originally associated with architecture, Late Antique and early medieval sculpture has most often been preserved outside of this original context, in fragments and without reliable accompanying data. In the case of sculpture from the island of Rab, this primarily applies to monuments with Early Christian and pre-Romanesque features. Early Romanesque sculpture, however, has today been partially preserved inside the churches for which it was originally crafted. These are early Romanesque sculpted architectural elements, numerous capitals which are even today in their original places inside Rab's churches. The other segment of early Romanesque sculpture, church fixtures, shared the same fate as the church fixtures of earlier stylistic phases: they are quite fragmentarily preserved and without data on the original context.

Within the periods of Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, the features of three basic stylistic phases are thoroughly analysed in the book: Early Christian, pre-Romanesque and early Romanesque. The three main chapters are therefore dedicated to Early Christian, pre-Romanesque and early Romanesque sculpture. They are preceded by short introductory chapters which contain a discussion of the broader context and pre-conditions for the appearance of sculpture on the island of Rab. The introductory chapters are entitled "Introduction"; "The status of Rab within ecclesiastical organization on the eastern Adriatic coast and its implications to the development of architecture and the arts"; and "Early Christian and early medieval architecture on the island of Rab".

In the Introduction, the author sets forth the reasons which prompted her efforts to gather and interpret all available materials: stone sculpture from the island of Rab. The primary motive is the conviction that through detailed research, these numerous fragmentary monuments may be considered in their overall context, linked to similar pieces and workshop sites and accurately dated. In this manner, besides individual, isolated monuments, which are frequently interpreted in the scholarly literature, the remaining monuments will also become more accessible and assume a specified place within the body of Rab sculpture. Additionally, only comprehensive knowledge of sculpture can serve as the basis for drawing conclusions on workshop origins and the influence of thus far known workshops on the production of both Late Antique and early medieval sculpture.

In the chapter on the status of Rab within the overall ecclesiastical organization, Rab's vital and exceptional status compared to the remaining eastern Adriatic islands is underscored. Out of all possible island dioceses, the Rab diocese was the earliest to be recorded in preserved sources. Specifically, these are the acts of the ecclesiastical councils held in Salona in 530 and 533, in which the Rab Bishop Ticyanus was recorded, ranked second in the order of the council's participants right after the bishop of Zadar. According to later sources, it may be concluded that the Rab Diocese existed continually even into the very beginnings of the Middle Ages. Rab Bishop Urso, together with the

bishops from Split, Osor and Kotor, was recorded in the acts of the Second Council of Nicaea in 787. Other, somewhat later sources also indicated that developed ecclesiastical organizations in the early Middle Ages only existed on the northern, Kvarner islands, while diocese did not exist at all on the more southerly islands until the end of the early Middle Ages. This difference was reflected in the body of monuments as well: on the Kvarner islands, pre-Romanesque and early Romanesque sculpture is rich and numerous, while on the large central Dalmatian islands it is quite rare. The unbroken continuity of ecclesiastical organization from Antiquity and throughout the entire early Middle Ages probably contributed to the rather extensive furnishing of churches in Rab, especially at the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> centuries, to which period most of the preserved pre-Romanesque stone monuments have been dated. The appearance of Benedictine monasteries and convents on Rab during the 11<sup>th</sup> century testifies to new forms of organized Christianity, as well as significant prosperity. The importance of the new monasteries is reflected in the preserved stone monuments, particularly the numerous early Romanesque capitals, in the monastic churches.

The chapter on Early Christian and early medieval architecture on the island of Rab contains an overview of the fundamental features of church buildings thus far published and interpreted in the literature. Emphasis is placed on the fact that Early Christian and pre-Romanesque architecture has not been preserved in the form of whole buildings with clear stylistic features. Early Christian architecture is nonetheless known thanks to the defined Early Christian phases of certain major churches (the Cathedral of St. Mary the Great, the Church of St. John the Evangelist) and the archaeological remains of several buildings at various locations on the island. The new pre-Romanesque churches still constitute something of an unknown, because thus far only the demolished Church of St. Martin in the town of Rab has been distinguished as pre-Romanesque in the relevant literature. A blossoming in architectural development came in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, during the early Romanesque period. At the time, early Romanesque churches were constructed, either on the foundations of older Early Christian churches or as entirely new structures. It would appear that construction on the foundations of earlier churches predominated, since two certainly very important early Romanesque basilicas, that of St. Andrew in the town of Rab and of St. Peter in Supetarska Draga, probably grew on the physical template of Early Christian buildings.

The book's first main chapter is entitled "Early Christian sculpture". Like the other main chapters, it is broken down into a series of sub-chapters for the sake of systemization and simplified reference. The sub-chapters generally deal with monuments that originated at or are held at specific locations. Due to the many unknowns associated with the stone monuments of Rab, some of them could not be linked to any specific site. The examination of Early Christian sculpture therefore begins with a review of a single work, a fragment bearing the image of the Good Shepherd, which is built into a wall in the old town core of Rab. Only the image of man holding a lamb has been preserved on the small fragment. The animal is nicely carved, featuring the details of its wool, but it is positioned awkwardly, below the man's shoulder, which was probably due to a lack of skill on the mason's part. The iconographic features of the sculpture indicate the Early Christian portrayal of the Good Shepherd, so this Rab relief – which has thus far not been considered in the scholarly literature – has been interpreted as such. Since depictions of the Good Shepherd in the Eastern Adriatic seaboard are otherwise limited to the wider Salona environs, the appearance of a monument on the more northerly island of Rab is quite intriguing. The Rab relief, in terms of the selection of motifs and iconographic features, may be linked to the Salona workshops of the mid-4<sup>th</sup> century. This was probably part of a sarcophagus. Thus dated to the 4<sup>th</sup> century, this may constitute the earliest work on the island of Rab, i.e., the earliest precisely dated monument, since certain monuments (particularly fragments of unadorned sarcophaguses) are difficult to date accurately.

Among the Early Christian monuments, those from the Cathedral of St. Mary the Great in Rab stand out in terms of their number and significance. The preserved elements of church fixtures and architectural sculpture greatly contribute to general knowledge about the cathedral in Late Antiquity. They also testify to the furnishing of the church over a longer period, from the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. The architectural sculpture includes two monumental capitals on columns inside the cathedral, and a small mullion of a bifora, found during preservation works by Miljenko Domijan. When considering the capitals preserved *in situ*, certain specificities in the selection of decorative motifs have been pointed out which may indicate an earlier, Early Roman Imperial origin for these capitals. If the capitals date to the first Roman centuries, their dating cannot be applied to the church architecture which surrounds them. The architecture has been roughly dated by means of the entirely preserved mullion on the bifora. The mullion fits into a typologically defined group of rectangular mullions with a typically decorated frontal side. Such mullions are numerous and they have largely been dated to the 6<sup>th</sup> century, with a possibility for somewhat earlier dating. Based on the quality of the craftsmanship and its dimensions, the Rab window mullion corresponds to a larger, monumental structure, which the Rab cathedral certainly was. The general dating of the mullion to the latter half of the 5<sup>th</sup> or the 6<sup>th</sup> century may be accepted as the proper dating for the Early Christian cathedral in Rab.

Marble and limestone elements of church furniture are associated with the cathedral. The marble items, due not just to the type of stone but also the quality of their craftsmanship, are imports from the finer Byzantine workshops of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. The columns and capitals of the existing reconstructed ciborium and two marble capitals, probably from another ciborium in the original cathedral, belong to this group. These latter capitals are today held in the cathedral and the town's lapidarium, and their typological features and data contained in the older literature indicate that they belong to the same set of church fixtures. The capitals are made of white marble, adorned by acanthus leaves in one section. They have small volutes at their corners with pearl necklace motifs between them. These decorations are slightly different from the decorations on the six marble capitals of the preserved ciborium, which bear the traits of Corinthian capitals. These six capitals together with the columns and bases are the work of certain high-quality Byzantine workshops, probably from the early 6<sup>th</sup> century. The type of marble used may be discerned once all parts of the ciborium are cleaned, as it has darkened considerably over time.

The few pieces of limestone church fixtures are insufficient to discern the appearance of the altar screen in the Early Christian cathedral. The only conclusion that may be drawn is that the fixtures in the cathedral consisted of imported marble elements and components made of limestone that were probably made in nearby workshops.

Among the other sites with Early Christian monuments, the complexes of St. Andrew and St. John the Evangelist in the town of Rab, Supetarska Draga, Kapor and Barbat are also analysed in the book. Individual monuments from the town's lapidarium and several secondarily installed monuments come under separate consideration.

An Early Christian monument in the Convent of St. Andrew is notable. The original use of this fragment, due to its unusual shape, is difficult to determine. The limestone slab, with a preserved height of 84 cm, has a complete lateral side and lower edge. A rounded semi-column with a nicely preserved base and damaged capital is carved onto the preserved lateral side. Precisely at the height of the capital, the slab narrows diagonally on the upper side, where there is visible damage. This damaged upper section was probably the upper end of the monument, and its original appearance has not been preserved due to the damage. The lower edge of the slab has a narrower and wider articulated part, a type of ending that can be seen on Late Antique plutei and, for example, ambo slabs. A row of quadrangles with Greek crosses in their centres are carved onto the slab. The Greek cross shape also appears between the sculpturally highlighted quadrangles as a background motif. The arms of the crosses inside the quadrangles, or coffers, extend outside of the

coffers and are thus connected to each other. Generally, the exceptional geometrization of motifs on the Rab slab may be linked to the Zadar Early Christian circle, which was characterized by geometrically adorned plutei. Plutei with octagonal coffers and crosses thus were already prominent in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. A fragment of precisely this type of pluteus of Zadar origin was preserved in Supetarska Draga. Besides a series of plutei with octagonal coffers, other variants of geometrically designed plutei also appeared in the wider Zadar environs (examples from Zadar itself, Podvršje and other sites). The pluteus fragment from Biograd, on which the geometric ornamentation is also centred around a cross motif with arms of equal length, can also be cited as a close analogy to the slab from the Convent of St. Andrew. The Zadar plutei with geometric ornamentation have been dated to the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, the Rab monument with crosses can also be dated to roughly the same period, meaning the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century. As to the original function of this monument, in the analysis a reconstruction of its possible position as an altar element has been proposed. The slab with semi-columns on its lateral sides may have been the decorated frontpiece of an altar.

A valuable monument originated in the complex of St. John the Evangelist. This is a considerably damaged stone reliquary shaped like a small coffin or sarcophagus. The reliquary is notable for its richly-decorated ornamentation, on which basis dating to the 5<sup>th</sup> century has been proposed.

The aforementioned pluteus fragment of Zadar origin is from Supetarska Draga. Besides several smaller monuments, the text also contains an analysis of large capitals with closely pressed acanthus leaves on the first pair of columns inside the basilica. The capitals may have originated in the Early Christian period, but they also may have been carved in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, like the other capitals in the basilica in Supetarska Draga, so their dating has been left open.

Particular attention and extensive analysis have been accorded to a fragmentary monument that is today built into the wall of the monastic cloister in Kampo. The middle section part of the monument with a central cross carved in relief adorned by rectangular and circular ornaments (jewels) has been preserved. The cross is thus the *crux gemmata* type, which was not a common form in Late Antique Dalmatia and Kvarner. An important analogy is known in Zadar, where other essential iconographic traits of the Rab relief can also be seen. This refers to the stair-like, multiply segmented pedestal on which the cross stands. The pedestal is truly quite specific, and an identical form can be found in Zadar on the same monument onto which a cross adorned with jewels was carved. The Zadar monument is also fragmentary, and in contrast to the Rab monument, which is made of limestone, the Zadar fragments are made of marble. Much has been written about these fragments in the scholarly literature, with particularly important contributions by Ivo Petricioli, who proposed a reconstruction for the appearance of the Zadar monument, according to whom these formed a marble pluteus or two plutei originally situated in the Zadar cathedral. Besides this important analogy, the Kampo pluteus is also analogous to several plutei from Zadar and the Zadar environs. All similar pieces are analysed in the text, and the general conclusion is that they originated in the Zadar workshop. The pluteus from Kampo on Rab has thus also been linked to the Early Christian workshop in Zadar and interpreted as one of its products, probably originally intended for the Rab cathedral. Like the pluteus from the Zadar cathedral, the Kampo pluteus has been dated to the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> or the early 7<sup>th</sup> century. Iconographic models were found on the Byzantine plutei with central crosses on graduated pedestals, and an extensive history of similar iconography on Byzantine coins is also presented. It may be concluded that when making plutei during the 6<sup>th</sup> century, the Zadar masonry workshop used Byzantine iconographic models that were particularly notable on stone sculpture and coins, wherein the typical iconography on coins was only established somewhat later than on stone monuments.

The finds of Early Christian sarcophaguses with a central cross motif are from Barbat. One sarcophagus is today still located in Barbat, in front of the Church of St. Stephen, while the other has been placed in the lapidarium in the town of Rab. The sarcophaguses are adorned with a motif typical of Late Antique sarcophagus production in Dalmatia: a cross on the frontal side. Both crosses were carved in relief and they reflect two typical variants: a cross inside a circle and a stand-alone cross. Based on all details of rendering of the ornamental motif, close analogies to both sarcophaguses have been found. Their dating inside the 6<sup>th</sup> century is also discussed. Both sarcophaguses, based on typological features of the box and the preserve lid on one and based on the decorative motifs on their frontal sides, undoubtedly reflect Salona sarcophagus production, and they may be deemed imports from the Salona (Brač) workshop circle.

The above-described sarcophaguses from Barbat are not the only Early Christian sarcophaguses on the island of Rab. Among the other finds, some of those accessible for analysis have been included in this book, while a certain number of finds that are located at sites where archaeological research is still ongoing, so they could not be covered.

Similar limitations also emerged in connection to several other monuments. Noteworthy here is the monumental marble altar table from Barbat, held in the courtyard of the parish rectory. Thus far it has not been possible to study it in any detail, and so this monument was only mentioned.

A comprehensive review of the Early Christian stone monuments from the island of Rab has underscored that a considerable number of them are quite interesting and exhibit a high quality. Certain marble monuments are undoubtedly imports from distant workshop centres. Most of the monuments, primarily made of limestone, either originated in or assumed the models of the two leading workshop centres on the Dalmatian coastal belt: Zadar and Salona. The Zadar masonry workshop had a greater and continuous influence on the furnishing of churches on the island of Rab, but Salona's influence was also noticed, particularly when speaking of the sarcophaguses, where the assumption of models from the Salona workshop should also be taken into consideration.

The second main chapter in the book is entitled "Pre-Romanesque sculpture". It is divided into sub-chapters dedicated to individual sites. These sites are generally the same as those covered in the analysis of Early Christian sculpture, although some have nonetheless been left out (Barbat), while some new ones are included (St. Martin's in Rab). Out of the individual sites, and based on the number and quality of pre-Romanesque monuments, the Rab cathedral stands out in particular. Suitable attention has been accorded to these monuments, and the chapter on pre-Romanesque sculpture begins with an analysis of the examples from the cathedral.

The best-known pre-Romanesque monument from the island of Rab is certainly the ciborium from the Cathedral of St. Mary the Great. The ciborium is generally perceived as pre-Romanesque, although it is composed of both Late Antique and Renaissance components. Its three arcades, canopy and acroterion are pre-Romanesque. The arcades are adorned with a combination of triple-band interlace compositions and individual symbolic motifs of markedly Early Christian origin. This fact, as well as the lack of complete coverage of the surface with the interlace indicates the earlier pre-Romanesque period as the time of production of the three preserved pre-Romanesque arcades. A careful examination of the interlace compositions on the arcades reveals deft craftsmanship in linking the interlaced lattices and their proper distribution. Since the motifs on all three arcades are differently composed yet in mutual harmony, the arcades as a whole give the impression of being embellished with a certain archaic flourish that ensues from the use of Early Christian motifs.

In the relevant literature, the ciborium is acknowledged as a very peculiar piece without entirely matching analogies among the early pre-Romanesque ciboria. Even so, it

is possible to point out certain similar pieces that reinforce the dating of the Rab ciborium to the pre-Romanesque era. In the book, comparisons are made to certain Istrian, Dalmatian and Italian ciboria.

Besides the ciborium, other interesting pre-Romanesque monuments from the cathedral include two pilasters discovered during recent preservation works. The pilasters are adorned with very nice ornamental decorations on the facing side. One features a plant tendril consisting of a triple-strand circular medallion with unravelled ends and leaves on the inside of the medallion. The second pilaster is adorned with a geometric ornament consisting of triple-strand circlets intersected by diagonal lines that form rhombuses. The circlets are not connected to each other. Above them, in the upper section of the pilaster, there is a cross with articulated ends, encircled by two round rosettes and two trefoil lilies. Based on the carving style and analogies in the wider area, the pilasters from the cathedral may be dated to the early pre-Romanesque period. Unfortunately, in the cathedral itself no other parts of the altar screen to which the pilasters once belonged have been found, so without any certainty it may be assumed that the large pluteus preserved in nearby Kampor may have belonged to the altar screen.

The cathedral pilaster with plant tendril is very similar to a pilaster in the Rab lapidarium from the demolished Church of St. Martin. The plant tendril on the pilaster from St. Martin's has tiny leaves and a central ending shaped like a rosette or multi-petal flower. Due to the exceptional similarity to the pilaster from the cathedral, it should be assumed that they were made at roughly the same time, and this means the early pre-Romanesque period, i.e., the first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

Based on data from the older literature, it has been assumed that a very interesting fragmentary pluteus may have come from the small Church of St. Martin. This is a pluteus with rectangular triple-strand coffers with individual motifs inside them: a pre-Romanesque interweave and peacock. The division of the pluteus surface into a series of separate coffers and the method of carving the triple-strand bands, the interweave and the peacock indicate the early pre-Romanesque period as the time of production of this piece; this design is rarer on the Eastern Adriatic seaboard and is similar to numerous plutei in Italy.

The sub-chapter on Kampor is dedicated to a particularly interesting monument from the island of Rab: a large pluteus with vegetable decorations. This monument is also the most completely preserved pluteus from the island of Rab. The pluteus is characterized by repetition of the same motif of large leaves in circular medallions. A sculpturally emphasized eye is prominent in the links between the circles. Lilies, or perhaps atypical trefoils, are between the medallions. Emerging from the triple-strand links between the circular medallions, four lilies each connect to create stylized coffers or rectangles. These connections of lilies have prominent sculpted protrusions in their centres. It is precisely these lily connections which give the Kampor pluteus a specific appearance, and the manner in which they are formed classify the composition of the Kampor pluteus in a very specific, rare pre-Romanesque variant for which only few parallels can be cited. In the search for identically decorated monuments, pieces were identified at two sites: Osor and Privlaka in northern Dalmatia. Since these are the only two analogies to the composition on the pluteus from Kampor, it is clear that this is a very rare, specific composition, which indicates a skilled mason and a high-quality masonry workshop which formed this ornamental variant. The Osor fragments are particularly important to further analysis, since they originated from the secure and precisely-dated context of the early pre-Romanesque phase of the Osor Cathedral of St. Mary at the Cemetery. This phase has been dated to the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> or early 9<sup>th</sup> century and is tied to the early medieval monuments from Novigrad in Istria. The link to Istria's Novigrad is particularly important, because the genesis of specific coffer motifs of lilies can be followed on the Novigrad monuments. The rare ornamental composition on the Kampor pluteus has thus been placed in the proper chronological and spatial context, and the workshop connections and influences visible

in the pre-Romanesque sculpture of Rab were also enriched by the probable link to the important early medieval workshop in Novigrad.

The intriguing monuments from the town lapidarium are covered in a separate sub-chapter. Based on the morphological and decorative features and discovered analogies, the early pre-Romanesque dating for the separate monuments is virtually certain. The supplemental sub-chapters on monuments from Supetarska Draga and the St. Andrew's complex demonstrate the presence of an even more widespread ornamental scheme, such as ornamental lattices with circlets and rhombuses, very common on pre-Romanesque monuments on the eastern Adriatic coast.

In general, vegetable motifs were favoured in Rab's pre-Romanesque era. A more thorough-going analysis of some of the motifs has shown their link to sites on other islands and on the eastern Adriatic coast. It also points to a prevailing early dating to the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> and early 9<sup>th</sup> century. Besides vegetable motifs, strictly geometrically formed ornaments can also be seen, such as those on the fragments from Supetarska Draga and on a pilaster from the cathedral. The basic pre-Romanesque concepts are thus present, wherein one may observe a certain deviation from strict geometrization, which, together with the presence of manifestly Early Christian symbolic motifs, created the features of Rab's pre-Romanesque sculpture.

The third main chapter is entitled "Early Romanesque sculpture". Consideration is generally accorded to two categories: architectural sculpture and church furniture. The numerous early Romanesque capitals have a prominent place among the architectural sculpture, while other finds are rare. The early Romanesque finds of church furniture are not particularly numerous, but they are notable for their high quality.

The early Romanesque capitals, due to their high number and the exceptional high quality of their rendering, and also because of the existence of many variants, have a special place in the overall body of early Romanesque capitals on the Eastern Adriatic. Early Romanesque capitals gave a special quality to the early Romanesque stylistic phase on the island of Rab, and they have inevitably been covered in the previous scholarship on early Romanesque capitals.

The capitals preserved in individual churches and complexes on Rab may serve an attempt at chronological classification of certain formational variants. The basic forms which can be seen on the island of Rab are the capitals adorned with acanthus leaves and those adorned with palmettes. For one and the other, the motifs may be more or less sculpturally prominent, but a regularity and simplicity in form predominates. The distribution and number of the two basic groups of capitals in Rab's churches exhibit certain differences. Together with the craftsmanship, these differences are taken into consideration in the attempt to establish chronological relations between individual groups of capitals.

Nikola Jakšić wrote about the Rab capitals in general, their characteristics, the quality of their crafting and their presence in Rab's churches as part of a systematic overview of early Romanesque capitals in Dalmatia. Jakšić did not analyse the capitals from the Church of St. Andrew, because they were discovered in a more recent period during conservation works by Domijan, and they were presented in Domijan's book. Domijan's observations about the distribution of the capitals on four pairs of columns in the Church of St. Andrew indicate that in this church the capitals were installed with forethought: on the first pair of columns there are palmette capitals, while on the remaining three pairs there are capitals with acanthus leaves. The predominance of capitals with acanthus leaves makes the capitals from St. Andrew's similar to those from the cathedral, where early Romanesque acanthus capitals also prevail. In fact, of the preserved early Romanesque capitals from the cathedral, all of them are adorned with the acanthus motif. The analysis points to the similarities between the capitals from the Rab cathedral and those from the

Aquileian cathedral. Based on these similarities and the special place that the cathedral has among the other churches on the island of Rab, it has been concluded that the capitals from the cathedral are quite likely the oldest early Romanesque capitals on the island. Chronologically they are followed by the capitals from St. Andrew's, which are stylistically rather similar to certain capitals from northern Italy. The shape of the acanthus leaves on the latter is particularly oblong, carved into a single row, which speaks of a gradual transition toward the palmette motif already been seen on another pair of capitals in St. Andrew's. Palmette capitals actually predominate in other churches on Rab. The stylistic features of these capitals compared to those from the cathedral and St. Andrew's underscore certain difference which can be explained by their different times of production. In two churches with a prevailing number of palmette capitals – St. John the Evangelist and St. Peter in Supetarska Draga – the capitals with acanthus leaves exhibit differences in comparison to the acanthus capitals from St. Andrew's and the cathedral. The capitals from the cathedral and St. Andrew's have more stylized, pressed-together acanthus leaves, while several capitals from St. John the Evangelist and from Supetarska Draga are characterized by considerably more pliant and better sculpted acanthus leaves. Possibly noteworthy here is that the pair of palmette capitals from St. Andrew's, to the extent that it may be ascertained due to the damage they have sustained, have a much more stylized rendering than other palmette capitals from the island of Rab. In the relevant literature, it has been noted that the capitals from St. John the Evangelist are of a particularly high quality and similar to those from the Benedictine Church of St. Mary in Zadar. This should date them to the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> or early 12<sup>th</sup> century. Potential confirmation of this dating cannot be found in the literary sources, for besides sources on the establishment of the Monastery of St. Peter in Supetarska Draga in 1059, there are no sources on the Convent of St. Andrew and the Monastery of St. Ivan in the town of Rab from the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

A special place in the analysis of other early Romanesque monuments from the island of Rab has been accorded to masterpieces such as the small capital with birds from St. Andrew's, the capital with four-legged animals and birds today held in Zadar's Archaeological Museum and the slab bearing an image of Christ from the Rab cathedral. It is apparent that during the production of early Romanesque pieces, the services of the finest sculpture workshops were engaged, which may not have been sufficiently defined due to the small number of preserved monuments. These Rab monuments have thus been interpreted as separate top-quality works for which numerous analogies are difficult to find. The marble relief with Christ has, however, been distinguished as a Byzantine import which made its way to Rab in an as-yet unknown manner.

Viewing early Romanesque sculpture as a whole, the church furniture is considerably fragmented and meagre in comparison to the many structures for which it was produced. Obviously, these monuments were either destroyed or lost with the passage of time, which is, given the exemplary quality of the preserved pieces, a particularly great loss.