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The Destroyed Italian Monument “Ara ai Caduti Dalmati” in Zadar*

Uništeni talijanski spomenik „Ara ai Caduti Dalmati” u Zadru

ABSTRACT

The article deals with a monument commemorating the Dalmatian soldiers fallen in World War I, erected in the Croatian coastal city of Zadar in 1928. It was totally destroyed during and demolished after World War II. As a result of joint research in Croatia and Italy, this article presents the project of the Zadar Monument, those who participated in its construction, and the connections between the four Roman imperial sculptures (now located in the Archaeological Museum of Zadar) and the Italian Monument in Zadar, explaining the reason why some of the older citizens in Zadar still refer to this specific part of the historical centre of Zadar as Monumento.

Keywords: Zadar, Monument, WW I, Antonio Bassi, 20th Century, Italian Fascist Party, imperial sculptures, Ara ai Caduti Dalmati, Gabriele D’Annunzio

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SAŽETAK

Članak se bavi spomenikom koji je bio posvećen poginulim Dalmatincima u Prvom svjetskom ratu, a bio je podignut 1928. godine u hrvatskom priobalnom gradu Zadru. Spomenik je posve uništen tijekom bombardiranja grada i raščišćavanja ruševina nakon Drugoga svjetskog rata. Članak je nastao kao rezultat zajedničkih istraživanja provedenih u Italiji i Hrvatskoj, a u njemu predstavit će se projekt spomenika, ključne osobe zadužene za njegovu provedbu, te pobliže pojasniti veza između četiri antičke carske skulpture (danas smještene u Arheološkom muzeju u Zadru) i nekadašnjeg talijanskog spomenika u Zadru, kao i pojašnjenje zašto neki od starijih građana Zadra još uvijek određeni dio povijesne jezgre grada nazivaju Monumento.

Ključne riječi: Zadar, spomenik, Prvi svjetski rat, Antonio Bassi, 20. stoljeće, Fašistička stranka Italije, carske skulpture, Ara ai Caduti Dalmati, Gabriele D’Annunzio

Introduction

The city of Zadar was annexed to the Kingdom of Italy following the Treaty of Rapallo, signed on November 12, 1920. The Zadar area – including the city of Zadar, the villages of Bokanjac, Arbanasi, Stanovi, Crno, Ceraria, Ploča, and Puntamika, and the islands of Lastovo and Palagruža¹ – was between 1920 and 1923 assigned to the protection of the Italian city of Trieste and then to the Ancona Department for Antiquities under the Royal Decree (No. 3164) of December 31, 1923, which explained in detail the new organisation of the Departments for Artworks and Antiquities.²

A reference to the change in the territorial situation of Zadar in regard to the Department of Antiquities based in Aquileia or the one in Ancona can be found in the typewritten report drawn up in 1922 by the director of Brera Museum in Milan, Ettore Modigliani, and the director of the National Roman Museum and the general director of Antiquities and Fine Arts, Roberto Paribeni, on the “reorganization of the archaeological and artistic services in Venezia Giulia and Venezia Tridentina.”³ As Serena Brunelli writes, “the report stressed that the deep artistic links between Ancona and Zadar, together with their economic links, were valid reasons for making this transfer in jurisdiction; according to the writers of the report, one should not underestimate ‘la opportunità che la piccola città italiana rimasta sola e in difficile posizione sia attaccata a una parte centrale e saldamente unita al regno piuttosto che a una regione di nuovo acquisto, più periferica.’”⁴

In addition, after World War I, the resurging nationalist movement saw in Ancona the centre of the relationship between the Italian Peninsula and Dalmatia as well as the centre of the “Adriatic Cause”, according to which all of the Adriatic Sea was to be considered an Italian affair. As a consequence of the Austrian surrender, the Italian land and naval forces entered Trieste and Pula, taking possession of the Austro-Hungarian fleet docked in the two ports, while in individual operations the Italian warships managed to take control of the islands of Korčula, Cres, and Lastovo.

Subsequently, the Italian navy also entered the bay of Zadar, occupying the city. Under the command of General Armando Diaz, the Italian troops crossed the line of division established by the armistice and entered the Dalmatian hinterland, in the direction of Rijeka, a city that had been excluded from occupation both due to the clauses of the Villa Giusti agreement and those of the Treaty of London.⁵

The grip of Italian military occupation was so firm that it was considered, both by the public and by the military forces, as equivalent to annexation: Admiral Enrico Millo,⁶ for example, assumed the title of “Governor of Dalmatia.”⁷

The negotiations at Versailles failed to resolve the Dalmatian question; in fact, they led to the occupation of the city of Fiume (Rijeka) by the Allied forces, which only increased the discontent of both the nationalist intellectuals and the wider population, already extensively tried by the war.

It was precisely by riding the wave of such generalized discontent that Gabriele D’Annunzio managed to gain recognition among the Italian population when, in September 1919, he occupied the city of Rijeka⁸ with his militia, and two months later Zadar.⁹

Strongly opposing the decisions of the Treaty of Rapallo, D’Annunzio and his Legionaries fought against the Italian military forces both in Rijeka and Zadar on December 25 and 26, 1920, trying to achieve one last heroic feat of strong nationalist imprint, which however materialized as an actual defeat for the Legionnaires and for D’Annunzio himself. Some years later, he even refused the candidacy for Zadar’s mayor, still disappointed with the outcome of his campaign.¹⁰

Therefore, the transfer of competences from the Superintendence of Trieste to the one of the Marches region, which took place between 1924 and 1925, cannot be con-

sidered accidental or unconnected to this territorial context. It is necessary to consider the process that was going on politically and administratively from the beginning of the 1920s and harmonized with the totalitarian and imperialist designs of the National Fascist Party. Indeed, it can be assumed that such a decision may have been made to reawaken the interest in the “Adriatic cause”, which quickly waned a few years after the Treaty of Rapallo, almost to the point of disinterest, even in Ancona.¹¹

Our analysis of the archival documentation related to the Superintendence of the Marches, kept in Rome at the Central State Archives, has made it possible to reconstruct a story that is emblematic of the above assertion.

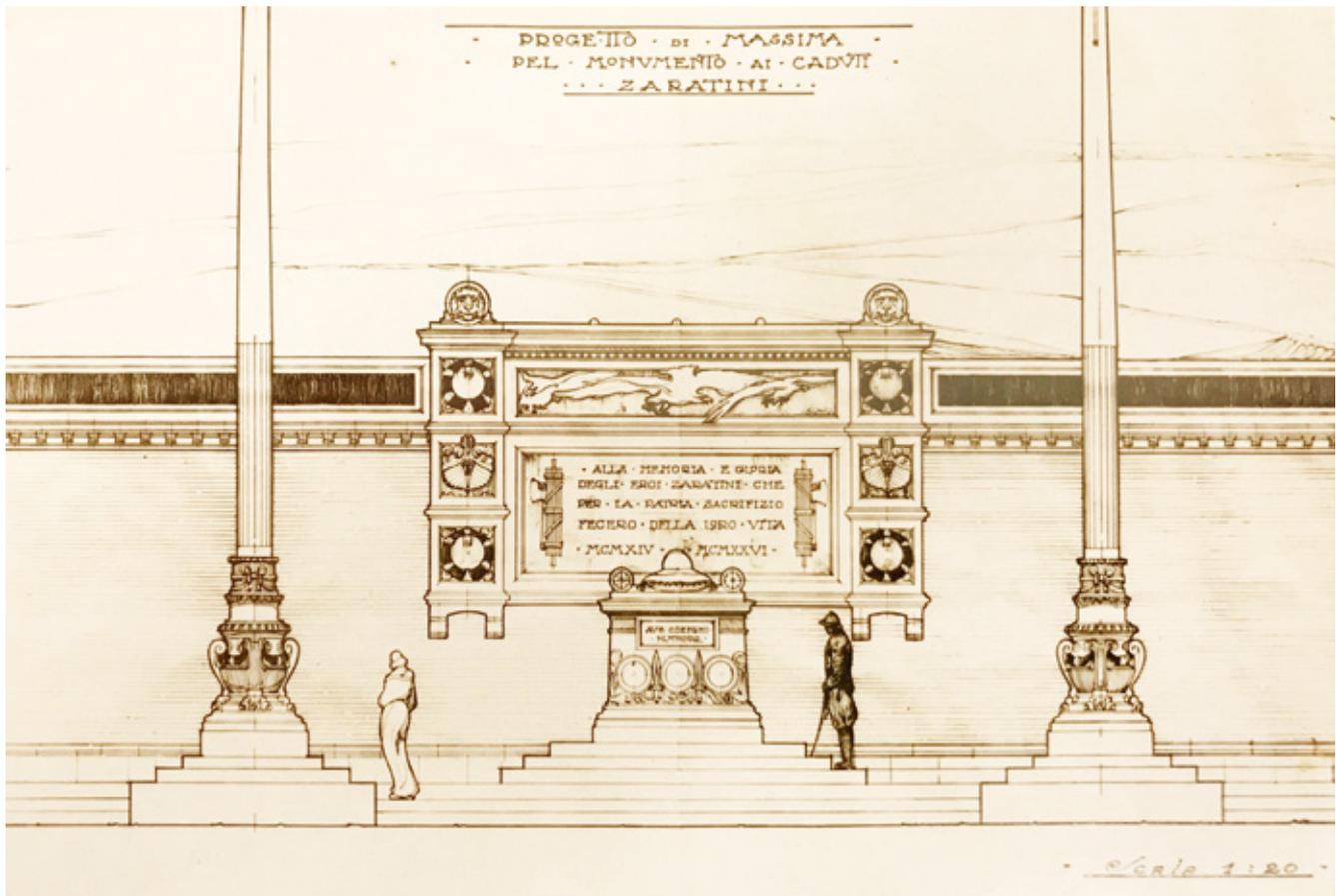
The Fascist Party and the Monument in Zadar

Almost at the same location as today’s widely known sculptural installation “Greeting the Sun” and the “Sea Organs”, the Italian Fascist Party in Zadar and the Association of Soldiers and Volunteers from World War I initiated already in 1921, as the newspapers stated, the erection of a monument commemorating the Dalmatian soldiers fallen in World War I.¹² An analysis of the documents preserved in the Croatian and Italian Archives has made it possible to reconstruct the events linked to the actual construction of the monument, which date back to 1926. On August 12, Head of the Italian Government, Mussolini, received a delegation from Zadar, on which occasion a proposal was made to erect a monument to Dante in the Dalmatian city, financed by national subscription.

On September 20, Mario Sani, the Podestà of Zara, addressed a letter to the Undersecretary to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Rome, in which he expressed Zara’s desire not to abandon the project, but to immediately honour, in a simple yet dignified way, its fallen in the war of redemption, “e non volendo ricorrere ai soliti monumenti, che, se non eccellenti, male rispondono allo scopo di glorificazione ed esaltazione, preferisce affidare i nomi e ricordo dei propri combattenti morti sul campo ad un’Ara ai Caduti.”¹³ Due to the small size of Zadar’s population, which at that time numbered 18,000, Sani declared that the subscription for the collection of funds needed to construct the monument could not significantly exceed 25,000 lire, of which 15,000 lire had already been collected. The project, which was to be combined with the monument to the fallen and a park of remembrance, would still need a triple allocation and for this M. Sani asked the Italian State for a contribution of 50,000 lire.¹⁴

By that date, probably trusting in the disbursement, a Committee had already been set up for the erection of the Monument to the Fallen Zaratini and on September 23, Venetian sculptor Cesco Stecca¹⁵ presented an outline of his plans for constructing an altar as a symbol of the sacrifice, framed by decorative architectural elements and inserted between two bronze flagpoles to be erected on the square dedicated to Francesco Rismondo, facing the sea. “La concezione principale della lapide commemorativa è ispirata al concetto dei due limiti italiani le Alpi e il Mare, simboleggiati nel volo delle aquile ai grandi voli avvezze, al rostro delle navi per il dominio dell’Adriatico.”¹⁶ The whole complex, surrounded by benches and trees, contained the three main elements in a single picture: the commemorative plaque with the inscription “Alla memoria e gloria degli eroi zaratini che per la patria sacrificio fecero della loro vita MCMXXVI” (To the memory and glory of Zadar’s heroes who sacrificed their lives for their homeland, 1926), flanked by two bands, the altar, and the flagpoles. As for the materials, C. Stecca foresaw bronze and stone, in contrast to the noble marble to be used for the altar. (Fig 1)

The total cost amounted to about 110,000 lire, too much for the Committee, which on October 13 received a reply from the Undersecretary to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers in Rome, regretfully declaring that he could not make contributions.¹⁷



1.
Design of the Monument in Zadar
by sculptor Cesco Stecca, State
Archive in Zadar
Nacrt spomenika u Zadru kipara
Cesca Stecce, Državni arhiv u Zadru



A few days later, another project was presented, signed by the Apulian sculptor Mario Sabatelli, author of numerous works dedicated to the Risorgimento and the soldiers fallen in battles.¹⁸

It is a report on the sketch¹⁹ he was working on for the monument to the fallen of Zadar, in which Sassatelli describes that he mainly dwelt on the carved part, consist-

ing of a group of two figures larger than life: an old man and a first-line soldier who dies in the arms of his son giving him the great legacy of victory, and a statue sitting on the forepart, representing Zadar and decorated with the signs of the maritime city.

The sculptures were to be made of bronze and the rest of the monument of stone from Trani or Pontirolo (Emilia Romagna). Excluding the foundations, the cost of the project was estimated to 70,000 lire.

A subsequent letter²⁰ accompanied two pen drawings depicting the monuments, two ideas to be developed later, which however have not been found. One represents an altar surmounted by a large entablature decorated with oak and laurel branches, crowning the beams on the sides.

The central part of the architectural section featured a bronze painting of “Sacrifice”, consisting of six figures in relief measuring 2.30 m each. The altar was 5 m high and 6.5 m wide and had two large plaques under the beams with the names of the fallen. For this first draft, the price was about 57,000 lire. The other project, more developed in height (10.5 m), included three bronze figures larger than life, representing Duty, Thought, and Action. On the sides of the altar, there were coats of arms of Trieste and Trento made of stone, protected by the wings of Roman eagles. In this case, the price was 60,000 lire.

On January 27, 1927, the Secretary General sent a letter to the two sculptors, C. Stecca and M. Sabatelli, attaching the Commission’s decision concerning the Altar of the Fallen in Zadar and its execution.²¹

Unfortunately, at this point of research, the decision has not yet been found, but it is fair to think that the cost of the projects was considered too high for the funds available and that a new project was sought, as simple as the one actually carried out.

On August 29, 1927, in fact, the Commission for the Monument Commemorating the Fallen Soldiers, with its President, Colonel Mario Sani, Podestà of Zara; Attorney Natale Krekich, President of the Royal Commission; Commissioner Dr Maurizio Mandel, Secretary of the National Fascist Party; Cavaliere Giorgio Antonio; Giuseppe Benevenia, President of the Soldiers’ Section; Captain Arrigo Dall’Olio, President of the Invalids’ Section; and Attorney Antonio Troiani, President of the Volunteers’ Section, decided to ask the Superintendence of Modern Art for the Marches and Zara for the permission to use, for the construction of the “Monumento”, the remnants of the Venetian walls in front of the villa of the Military Commander in Zadar.²² It was the last remaining part of the southern section of the Venetian bulwark, as the rest had been demolished around the last quarter of the 19th century to make room for the seafront promenade, called Riva Vittorio Emanuele III, and had already lost its monumental character with the addition of a concrete balustrade. “The addition of the Legionary’s eagle and four rostrums from Roman ships to the wall, connected by a band of stone that will bear the inscription ‘O mare non mi rendere i miei morti, nè le mie navi, rendimi la Gloria,’ will only add value and decoration to the wall and the place, also for the meaning of the monument, dedicated to those who fell in the war.”²³ Hoping that the Superintendence in Ancona would give the necessary consent, the Commission declared that the request had also been made on behalf of Carlo Delcroix, Honorary President of the Committee and the Italian War Invalids’ Association, which contributed to the success of the project in Zadar, a member city of the association. The Committee also asked the permission to apply a plaque to the wall in memory of Francesco Rismondo, offered to the Municipality by “Adriatico Nostro”, of which it provided a reproduction, together with a drawing of the monument. A month later, on September 25, 1927, the Ministry, on behalf of Arduino Colasanti,²⁴ wrote to the Superintendent of Ancona, authorizing the construction of the altar provided that it strictly maintained the dimensions indicated in the proposal.²⁵ (Fig. 2)

2.

View of the Monument and the new park located between the Venetian bastion and the sea, postcard, personal archive, of A. Mlikota

Pogled na spomenik i novi park smješten između venecijanskog bastiona i mora, razglednica, Osobni arhiv A. Mlikota



The monument was solemnly inaugurated on September 22, 1928. At the time, it was seen as “an affirmation of will and power”, as it was observed in the local newspaper *Il Littorio dalmatico*, which had particular importance for Italy.²⁶ Five days later, an elaborate report was published on the inauguration ceremony, which started at 9:00 a.m. with exalted patriotic music as a large crowd of fascists gathered, and a loud applause of the population. The ceremony featured not only politicians and prominent members of the Fascist Party, from Italy, Zadar, and other parts of Dalmatia, but also army troops with music, schoolchildren, sports clubs from Zadar and Italy, cultural associations, citizens, and relatives of the fallen soldiers (parents, widows, and children), and groups in traditional costumes from the surrounding villages, all of them carrying Italian and Dalmatian flags, flowers, ordains, and medals. As the report stated, the whole city was prepared for the Day of Remembrance.²⁷ When Filiberto Lodovico Massimiliano Emanuele Maria of Savoy-Genoa, Duke of Pistoia, arrived in Zadar on his yacht *Aquila* at 8:30 a.m., he found there other honourable guests: His Excellency Filippo Pennavaria, representative of the Italian Government; Eugenio Coselschi, President of the national Association of War Volunteers, Senator Antonio Tacconi, Conte Alessandro Dudan, representatives from Fiume with a group of avant-gardist representatives from Trieste, Venezia Giulia, Trentino, army officials, veterans, etc.²⁸

For this important day, the monument was decorated with large laurel crowns enclosing the seal of ancient Rome with the letters S.P.Q.R. inscribed in white and black mosaic on the floor in front of the Monument.²⁹ The inscription “Senātus Populusque Rōmānus” was the ultimate symbol of internal *italianità* on the Croatian soil. (Fig. 3)

The Monument was erected between the Venetian bastion and the sea, and had an even greater importance for this small enclave on the *altra sponda* than the similar monuments erected in other parts of Italy.³⁰ After the ceremony with numerous emotional speeches, loud applauses, fascist greetings, prayers, and blessings of Zadar’s Monsignor Pietro Doimo Munzani, assisted by the cleric Signor Ballarin, the honoured guests visited the Archaeological Museum in St Donatus’ church, accompanied by the local conservator Rodolfo Valenti. After the visit, the chariots passed through the main street, Calelarga, cheered by the citizens, officials, and guests, to



3.
Monument “Ara ai Caduti Dalmati” with the coat-of-arms of ancient Rome, with letters S.P.Q.R. inscribed in white and black mosaic on the floor in front of the monument, postcard, personal archive of A. Mlikota

Spomenik „Ara ai Caduti Dalmati” s grbom antičkog Rima sa slovima S.P.Q.R. u crno-bijelom mramoru na podu ispred spomenika, razglednica, Osobni arhiv A. Mlikota

visit the local industrial facilities. After the lunch in Hotel Bristol at the New Seafont (Nova riva), the guests and officials visited a newly built school building and the new military barracks in the nearby village of Bokanjac (which is a part of the city today). In the afternoon, the governor of Zadar, Pietro Carpani, and his wife Countess Costanza Galleani Carpani, invited the honoured guests and officials to the Governor’s Palace. The banquet took place in the White Ballroom “Sala Re d’Italia”; while the orchestra was playing, the room was illuminated with electrical bulbs.³¹

Official congratulatory notes reached Zadar from both shores of the Adriatic Sea. They were published in the local newspapers *Il Littorio dalmatico* (telegrams and official letters came from the Roman Governor, the Podestates of Ancona, Trieste, Trento, Lussin Piccolo, Trani, Lussin Grande, and Isola, from Senator Cippico, A.F. Caduti di Trieste, Arditi Bolognesi, Volonteri di Guerra Calbresi, C.N. Dalmazia di Milano, Console di Sebenico, Italiani di Ragusa, Vittorio Verbano, Combattenti Irpini, Segretario Generale dell'Associazione Volontari di Guerra, Federazione Fascista dell' Isonzo, Associazione Politica fragli Italiani Irredenti (Sezione Dalmata), Avvocato Miagostovich a Gorizia, Comitato Nazionale Dalmazia di Milano, Segretario generale della Lega Nazionale, Societa Ginnastica, Combattenti Italiani).³²

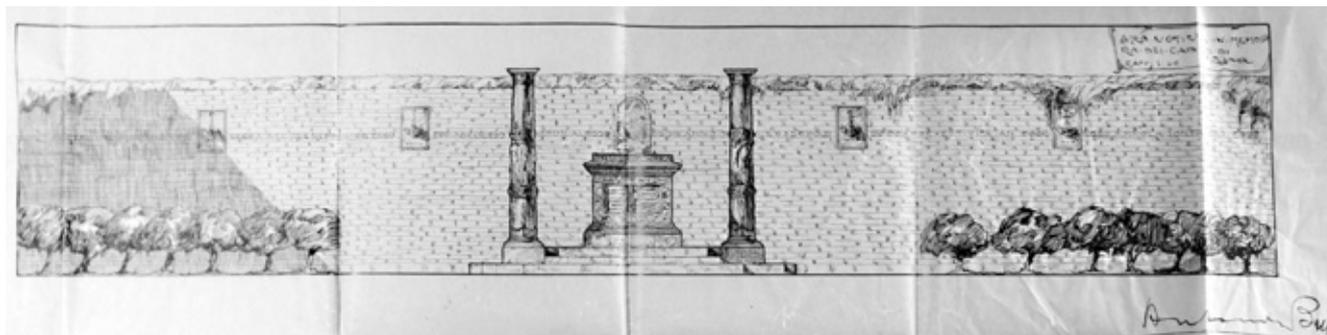
Four Roman Sculptures Requested as Decoration for the New Monument

The local officials and politicians (later supported by the Fascist Party) launched the campaign for reclaiming four imperial sculptures.³³ The sculptures had been excavated in a small town called Nin near Zadar in the mid-18th century, and were part of the largest private collection in Dalmatia, owned by the Zadar physician Ante Danieli Tommasoni. After his death, the collection was inherited by the Pellegrini family and then sold to a collector, P. Cernazai in Udine, and later to the Archdiocesan Seminary in Udine. Finally, the collection was auctioned in 1900-1901; many items were sold and ended up in different parts of Europe.³⁴ On that occasion, the Archaeological Institute of Vienna purchased a part of the monument for the Museum in Zadar and the four Roman imperial sculptures were bought by the State (the Kingdom of Italy) and located in Venice.³⁵ However, documents from the Archivio Centrale di Roma show that, instead of the Archaeological Museum in Venice, at the time of the request the four Roman imperial sculptures from Nin were located in a private house in Venice due to the shortage of space.³⁶ After six years of correspondence between experts and politicians on both sides of the Adriatic, the Ministry of Public Affairs decided to send the sculptures to Zadar despite the objections

4.
Four Roman imperial sculptures displayed in the open, in the newly formed square in front of the Museum in St Donatus' church, Archive of the Department of Archaeological Heritage of the Marche, holdings of the Soprintendenza alle Antichità di Marche, Abruzzi, Molise e Zara, Ancona

Četiri antička carska kipa izložena na novoformiranom otvorenom trgu ispred muzeja u crkvi sv. Donata, Arhiv Odjela za arheološku baštinu regije Marche, fond Soprintendenza alle Antichità di Marche, Abruzzi, Molise e Zara, Ankona





5.
Design of the Monument in Zadar
by sculptor Antonio Bassi, Central
State Archives in Rome

Nacrt spomenika u Zadru kipara
Antonija Bassija, Središnji državni
arhiv u Rimu

of some experts and curators from the Archaeological Museum in Venice. At the time, the Fascist Party and some officials wanted to apply them as decoration to the new monument to the Fallen Soldiers (*Ara ai Caduti Dalmati*), planned to be built in front of the bastion and the Millo Palace (headquarters of the Navy Command, today's headquarters of the Zadar County). The sculptures were intended to serve as a monumental testimony of *italianità* and the continuity of Italian influence in the Eastern Adriatic.³⁷

The Ministry of Public Affairs and various experts pointed out that the sculptures could not stand in the open and in the vicinity of the sea. They therefore decided to bring them back to Zadar, but they needed to be kept in an enclosed space. The first idea was to place them in the city's Renaissance Loggia in the main square. However, since the Loggia was used as a municipal library, it was not possible to arrange everything in such a short time. It was therefore decided to place them in the Archaeological Museum, in St Donatus' church.³⁸ (Fig. 4)

The four sculptures arrived in Zadar on a ship on August 8, 1928. It was an expensive undertaking, but it was important for the Ministry of Public Affairs in Rome, the local officials and Fascist Party members to send them to "this great", as they stated, and "now finally Italian city."³⁹ One month later, on September 22, 1928, The Monument to the Fallen Soldiers was inaugurated in front of many distinguished guests from Dalmatia and Italy, but without the four antique sculptures. The imperial sculptures did not remain for long in the interior of the museum, due to the fact that, during the isolation of the church of St Donatus' surrounding structures, including the south annex that had originally been part of St Donatus' church, were demolished.⁴⁰ It seems that what really mattered to the representatives of the Italian government in Zadar was to focus on the role of the monuments as the testimonies of *italianità*. As in the historical towns of Italy during the 1920s, elements of urban landscape were put in hierarchical order, with acts of isolation and stripping of the monuments, in this case of St Donatus' church, "as well as radical transformation of the whole historic areas, turning heterogeneous into homogeneous sites. Furthermore, stylistic purity was meant to correspond to ethnic or racial purity."⁴¹ As a result of such infrastructural works, the Museum obtained a new open area for its lapidarium in front of the church of St Donatus. After stripping the surrounding walls and mostly private houses, the four imperial sculptures were kept in their former place, but this time displayed in the open, in the newly formed square in front of the Museum.⁴²

“Ara ai Caduti Dalmati”

Author of the Monument in Zadar called “Ara ai Caduti” was the Italian sculptor Antonio Bassi, popular at the time for this type of monuments in Italy. (Fig. 5) There were many works that he produced “with great love”: monuments in Ortanova, Can-

dela, Ginosa, Trani, Pavia, Martina Franca, Sammichele di Bari, Bernalda, Como (which bestowed him honorary citizenship), Mola di Bari, and others. The landscape park between Ara and the seafront was designed by Gino Tosoratti from Milan.⁴³ The monument was installed at the bottom of the Venetian bastion, with four rostrums incorporated in the bastion with memorable names of naval battles inscribed on a golden background: Milae, Lepanto, Dardanelli, Premuda. They were linked with a stone band bearing the verses of D’Annunzio, the “Poet of the Adriatic passion,” engraved in Roman characters: O MARE NON MI RENDERE I MIEI MORTI NE LE MIE NAVI: RENDIMI LA GLORIA.⁴⁴

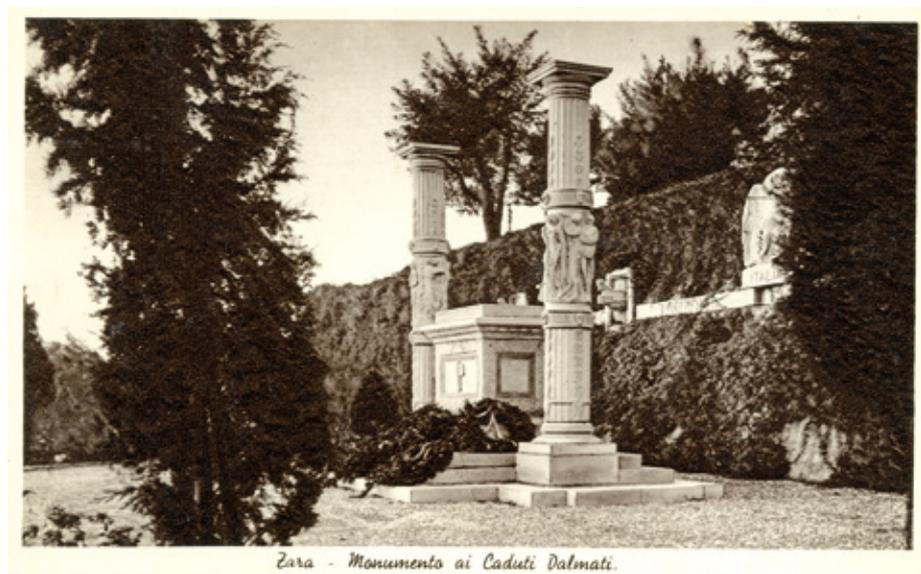
In the central part of the assembly, between the rostrums and above the Ara, there was the Roman eagle (ready to fly), with the Latin sign Italia overlooking the Ara as a faithful reproduction of an antique fragment preserved, at the time, in the Archaeological Museum. The Ara stood on the central pedestal with three long and shallow steps. On the sides of central part of the monument, there were two columns, a modern reproduction of the classical Doric order with a massive base and wide capitals at the top. The columns flanked the central altar in the form of “two votive candles” (4.50 m in height).⁴⁵ The columns were divided into three decorative sections, delimited by bands with the heads that represented the fallen soldiers. Between the bands, there were reliefs with allegories of Zara’s sacrifice and an allegory of Victory. (Fig. 6, 6a)

On the sides of the Ara, there was the sign of Fascio Littorio and the names of the fallen: Francesco Rismondo, brothers Renato and Egidio Croce, brothers Cneo Cornelio and Ezio Zink, brothers Umberto and Giacomo Zongaro, Ferruccio Fabrovich, Gregorio Linz, Lana Umberto, Francesco Codognato, brothers Roberto and Mirando Kreljevich Orlandini, Menotti Benevenia, and Antonio Tommaseo Ponzetta.⁴⁶ Except for Francesco Rismondo, who was from Split, and Antonio Tommaseo Ponzetta, who was from Postira on the island of Brač, all of them originated from Zadar. The four Roman imperial sculptures were planned as decoration for the surrounding park, named Park of Remembrance. The park was planted with flowers, evergreen plants and fifteen trees of laurels for each of the fallen persons. There was also a small plaque in the park, commemorating Riccardo Vucassovich and Spiridione Stoian, who died in 1921, as it was inscribed, for the Dalmatian and Fiuman causes.⁴⁷ The park was divided in two parts by a wide path with six

6, 6a.

View of the Monument from
the East and the West, postcard,
personal archive of A. Mlikota

Pogled na spomenik s istoka i
zapada, razglednica, Osobni arhiv
A. Mlikota

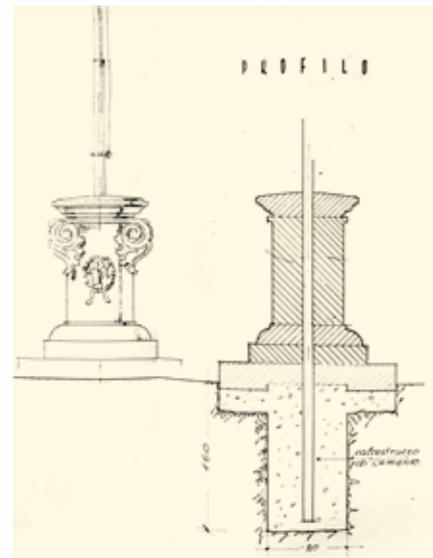


7.
An unidentified lady sitting on one of the stone benches in the park in front of the Monument in 1938, unknown photographer, personal archive of A. Mlikota

Nepoznata gospođa sjedi na jednoj od kamenih klupa u parku ispred spomenika 1938., nepoznati fotograf, Osobni arhiv A. Mlikota

8.
View of the Monument from the sea, postcard, personal archive of A. Mlikota and design of the pedestal for flags, State Archive in Zadar

Pogled na spomenik s mora, razglednica, Osobni arhiv A. Mlikota i nacrt postamenta za zastave, Državni arhiv u Zadru



stone benches, three on each side of the path. The stone benches were decorated with laurels and winged lions on both sides of the seats. (Fig. 7) The path ended up with two large flag pedestals made of stone with San Mark's Lion on the first and the Fascio Littorio on the second, closing the central visual line of the Monument and surrounding the Park of Remembrance from the seafront and the promenade on the New Riva. Each pedestal was a stylistic reinterpretation of the classical Ionic capital, with holders for two large flags: one with the insignia of Zara and the other of the Kingdom of Italy.⁴⁸ (Fig. 8) The monument was built with different types of stone, brought to Zadar from Trani and Puglia.

9.
An unknown priest celebrating the Mass, with the Ara serving as the altar, May 24, 1933, postcard, made by photographer Biagio Cigliano, personal archive of antique dealer Ivica Ćurković

Nepoznati svećenik vodi bogoslužje, a Ara je u službi oltara, 24. svibnja 1933., razglednica, fotograf Biagio Cigliano, osobni arhiv antikvara Ivica Ćurkovića



The Monument after WWII

During the Italian rule, Zadar was the capital of the Province (Provincia di Zara). As a result of Italian “nationalistic exclusionism”, 9000 Croats left Zadar in just two years and 8000 Italians immigrated from Italy between 1920 and 1922.⁴⁹ Almost the same happened during and after World War II, but this time in different directions. Many citizens died during the heavy bombardments of Zadar, and those Italians who survived mostly emigrated to Italy. The Croats who left the city during the Italian rule returned to the city, along with the population from the surrounding islands and villages.

The monument known as the “Ara ai Caduti Dalmati” and most of the surrounding park were damaged during and after World War II. Only a recollection of it was preserved in the memory of a few citizens who still lived in Zadar, who continued to call that part of the city “Monumento”. (Fig. 9)

The younger generation was oblivious of the existence of the Monument and the surrounding park on that location or the reason for calling that part of the city “Monumento”.⁵⁰

10, 10a.
View of the Monument and the overgrown park before WWII and an aerial view of the location today (photo: M. Gospić)

Pogled na spomenik i izrasli park neposredno prije Drugog svjetskog rata i pogled iz zraka na taj prostor danas, fotografija iz zraka Marin Gospić



Before World War II, the monument locality and the surrounding park were called Piazza Rismondo and played an important role in the everyday life of youngsters, who loved that location less for patriotic, and more for romantic reasons. (Fig. 10, 10a) The officials and the older generation often criticized such behaviour of the young generation, and these criticisms were published in the newspapers.⁵¹ In the decades after World War II, this pre-war young generation turned to an elderly one, yet continued calling that location “Monumento”, even though the monument had been totally demolished. Thus, the only local recollection of the monument was preserved in urban legends and oral tradition, rarely in the use of the local name “Monumento” and in images of the monument on a few old postcards and in some family albums. This article, based on the scholarly research of the preserved documentation, presents the monument as a lost and unwanted memory of the past, whose erection was supported by the Italian Fascist Party in Zadar, a monument with the local names and the Italian fascist insignia. The article will be published on the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I, in which those fallen had passed away.

NOTES

* Our research was conducted in the framework of HERA project/15.080 TransCultAA (Transfer of Cultural Objects in the Alpe Adria Region in the 20th Century, <http://www.transcultaa.eu>).

In documents from this period, one finds both Croatian and Italian names for the city (Zadar – Zara), but in this article we have used the current Croatian name for the city – Zadar.

¹ ODDONE TALPO, *Per l'Italia: centocinquanta anni di storia Dalmata 1797-1947*, Ancona: Editrice periodico Zara, 1987, p. 103.

² PAOLA MONARI, *The Creation of the Regional Architectural and Cultural Heritage Superintendency*, source: <http://www.emiliaromagna.beniculturali.it/index.php?en/125/la-nascita-delle-soprintendenze-in-emilia-romagna>, “Royal Decree no 3164 of 31st December 1923 regarding the new legal system revolutionised the Superintendencies, which were pared from 47 to 35 and divided into two groups: those in charge of antiquities and archaeological heritage and those with responsibility for medieval and modern art, i.e. artistic and historic heritage (moveables and unmoveables) from the Middle Ages to the modern day, as well as all pertinent museums and public art galleries. There were drastic staff cuts that left many offices practically unmanned. The subsequent collapse of the whole system was (only partially) remedied by the laws passed in 1939”; SERENA BRUNELLI, Twenty years of the Archaeological Museum in Zadar in the documents of the Department for Antiquities of Marche, Abruzzi, Molise and Zadar, *Il Capitale Culturale. Studies on the Value of Cultural Heritage*, 14, Macerata, 2016, p. 90.

³ Central State Archives in Rome (henceforth abbreviated as ACS, AABBA), Div. I, 1908-1924, b. 1542, fasc. Trieste 1922-23-24, *Relazione Paribeni e Modigliani sul riordinamento dei servizi archeologici e artistici nella Venezia Giulia e nella Venezia Tridentina*, August 18, 1924.

⁴ SERENA BRUNELLI (n. 2), p. 91.

⁵ TULLIO VALLERY, *Zara e la Dalmazia nel pensiero e nell'azione di Gabriele d'Annunzio*, Zara: Comune di Zara, 1970, p. 38. The London Pact was signed on April 26, 1915 between Italy, France, the United Kingdom, and the Russian Empire. Article 5 points out: “In this way Italy will receive the province of Dalmatia in its current administrative borders including in the north Lisarica and Tribania and in the south up to a line leaving from the coast from Cape Punta Planca and following the watershed to the east so as to leave in Italian territory all the valleys and streams descending to Sibenik (...). It will also receive all the islands located in the north and west of Dalmatia from Premuda, Selve, Ulbo, Scherda, Maon, Pago and in the north to Melada in the south including Sant'Andrea, Busi, Lissa, Lesina, Tenda, Cursola, Cazza a Lagosta and all the surrounding islands and rocks, and Pelagosa, but without the islands of Zirona large and small, Bua, Solta and Brazza.”; N.N. Okupacija Zadra sa strane Italije, *Narodni list, Glasilo za interes hrvatskog naroda*, November 7, 1918, p. 1. An army ship with one hundred soldiers under Commander Felice de Bocard entered the bay of Zadar on November 4, 1918. The Commander stated that he had direct orders from the Italian King to conquer Zadar, but he also said that they were coming to Zadar as the allies of Yugoslavia.

- ⁶ Enrico Millo (1865-1930) was the Chief Maritime Commander for Dalmatia from November 15, 1918 to December 22, 1920. Cf. MARCO GEMIGNANI, Millo Enrico in: *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 74, Istituto della Enciclopedia, Rome, 2010, pp. 528-530; N.N. Okupacija Dalmacije, Podadmiral Millo u Zadru, *Narodni list, Glasilo za interese hrvatskog naroda*, 1 (November 8, 1918), p. 1; N.N. Podadmiral Millo stvara kaos u upravi Dalmacije, *Narodni list, Glasilo za interese hrvatskog naroda*, November 23, 1918, p. 1.
- ⁷ IVO JOHN LEDERER, *La Jugoslavia dalla Conferenza di Pace al Trattato di Rapallo 1919-1920*, Il Saggiatore, Milano, 1966, p. 75.
- ⁸ Cf. ODDONE TALPO (n. 1), p. 98. On September 12, 1919, Gabriele d'Annunzio, at the head of a battalion of Grenadiers and other troops that joined them during the march, left Ronchi and entered Fiume manned by the Allied forces, in contravention of the established official agreements, and proclaimed the annexation of the city to Italy.
- ⁹ ODDONE TALPO (n. 1), p. 98. On November 14, G. D'Annunzio disembarked in Zadar with a thousand volunteers.
- ¹⁰ ODDONE TALPO (n. 1), p. 98. The conflicts between D'Annunzio's Legionaries and the Italian army are remembered in the news as the “Bloody Christmas”.
- ¹¹ MAGDA PEDACE NASO, *La questione adriatica nella pubblicistica fra le due guerre. L'imperialismo italiano e la Jugoslavia*, Atti del convegno italo-jugoslavo, Ancona, 14-16 October, 1977 (ed. M. Pacetti), Urbino, Argalia editore, 1981, pp. 235-237.
- ¹² N.N. Per l'inaugurazione del Monumento ai nostri Caduti, *Il littorio dalmatico: organo della Federazione dei fasci di combattimento di Dalmazia*, September 26, 1928, p. 1.
- ¹³ State Archive in Zadar, inv. number 121, Općina Zadar (R. Comune di Zara) 1918-1943 (henceforth abbreviated as HR-DAZD-121), box no. 126 (year 1928), folder no. 173. Letter from Mario Sani to the Undersecretary to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers dated September 20, 1926: “... and not wanting to resort to the usual monuments, which, if not excellent, badly respond to the purpose of glorification and exaltation, prefers to entrust the names and remembrance of their fighters who died on the battlefield to an 'Altar of the Fallen'”
- ¹⁴ HR-DAZD-121, Općina Zadar (R. Comune di Zara) 1918-1943, box no. 126 (year 1928), folder no. 173. The contribution was to come from the remainder of the subscription for the construction of a monument to Cesare Battisti, which in the answer of October 13 is instead referred to as the Monument to Italian Victory in Bolzano.
- ¹⁵ HR-DAZD-121, Općina Zadar (R. Comune di Zara) 1918-1943, box no. 126 (year 1928), folder no. 173. Author of the bronze work that decorates the Monument to the Fallen of Mirano, made in 1927, and the Monument to the Fallen of Palmanova (UD), in a note accompanying the project declared as Dalmatian.
- ¹⁶ HR-DAZD-121, Općina Zadar (R. Comune di Zara) 1918-1943, box no. 126 (year 1928), folder no. 173, Progetto di Massina del Monumento ai Caduti Zaratini. “The main concept of the commemorative plaque is inspired by the two Italian boundaries, the Alps and the Sea, symbolized in the flight of eagles accustomed to great flights, to the rostrum of ships for the domination of the Adriatic.”
- ¹⁷ HR-DAZD-121, Općina Zadar (R. Comune di Zara) 1918-1943, box no. 126 (year 1928), folder no. 173, letter from the Undersecretary to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers to Senator Antonio Cippico of October 13, 1926.
- ¹⁸ HR-DAZD-121, Općina Zadar (R. Comune di Zara) 1918-1943, box no. 126 (year 1928), folder no. 173. Mario Sabatelli (Bari, 1882 - ?), was a sculptor of civil, patriotic, and religious subjects. He worked mainly between 1903 and 1940 and, concerning monuments to the fallen, authored the monument of the city of Dovadola (FO); the sculptural group of the monument of S. Elia Fiumerapido (FR), the monument of Alta Val d'Elsa (CU); the central statue of the monument of Bisceglie; decorative statues at the Ossuary to the Fallen of Bari; and the project for the monument of Locorotondo to Alpino.
- ¹⁹ HR-DAZD-121, Općina Zadar (R. Comune di Zara) 1918-1943, box no. 126 (year 1928), folder no. 173. Letter from Mario Sassatelli dated October 21, 1926.
- ²⁰ HR-DAZD-121, Općina Zadar (R. Comune di Zara) 1918-1943, box no. 126 (year 1928), folder no. 173, Letter from Sassatelli to the President of the Pro Monumento ai Caduti Committee of Zara, November 30, 1926.
- ²¹ HR-DAZD-121, Općina Zadar (R. Comune di Zara) 1918-1943, box no. 126 (year 1928), folder no. 173, letter from the Secretary General to Cesco Stecca and Mario Sabatelli, January 27, 1927.
- ²² ACS, AABBA, DIV. II, b. 233, fasc. 6, Zara 1927-1928-1929, Monumento ai caduti.
- ²³ Ibidem.
- ²⁴ Arduino Colasanti (Rome, June 24, 1877 – Rome, November 23, 1935) was an Italian art historian. Having graduated in 1900 from the University of Rome with a degree in literature, two years later he was hired by the administration of Antiquities and Fine Arts and held the post of the General Director of Antiquities and Fine Arts in Rome until 1928.
- ²⁵ ACS, AABBA, DIV. II, b. 233, fasc. 6, Zara 1927-1928-1929, Monumento ai caduti, Lettera del Ministero al Soprintendente all'arte medievale e moderna di Ancona, from September 25, 1925, doc. no. 10467, in folder: Zara – Monumento ai Caduti.
- ²⁶ N.N., Lauri e fiori ai Morti per la Patria! Ai Caduti in Arme, *Il littorio dalmatico: organo della Federazione dei fasci di combattimento di Dalmazia*, September 22, 1928, p. 1; ILDEBRANDO TACCONI, I Caduti della Dalmazia irredenta, *Il littorio dalmatico: organo della Federazione dei fasci di combattimento di Dalmazia*, September 22, 1928, p. 1: “Fra i monumenti ai caduti che la religione dei superstiti ha eretto in ogni parte d'Italia, questo di Zara acquista una importanza particolare che trascende la stessa verità del suo simbolo; e la sua inaugurazione non è una semplice offerta nè un puro atto pietoso di amore, ma una affermazione di volontà e di potenza.”
- ²⁷ N.N. Per l'inaugurazione del Monumento ai nostri Caduti, *Il littorio dalmatico: organo della Federazione dei fasci di combattimento di Dalmazia*, September 26, 1928, p. 1: “L'ordine, ancorché spesso le vie, le piazze, ed in specie le rive, fossero gremite da folle in fervore, fu, durante tutta la giornata, più ché esemplare.”
- ²⁸ N.N. Per l'inaugurazione del Monumento ai nostri Caduti, *Il littorio dalmatico: organo della Federazione dei fasci di combattimento di Dalmazia*, September 26, 1928, p. 1.

- ²⁹ N.N. Per l'inaugurazione del Monumento ai nostri Caduti, *Il littorio dalmatico: organo della Federazione dei fasci di combattimento di Dalmazia*, September 26, 1928, p. 1: “Bellissima la tribuna per la autorità, disegnata con molto buon gesto artistico dall'ingegnere dal Comune, signor Dusciano Biedov. Sulle antenne, con le bandiere della Patria, grandi corone di lauro, racchiudenti il suggello di Roma: S.P.Q.R. resto dell'addobbo sobrio ed elegante.”
- ³⁰ ILDEBRANDO TACCONI (n. 26), p. 1: “L'ara, sacrata al ricordo degli olocausti compiuti e dei consumati dolori, l'aquila, che sovrasta i rostri coi nomi della gloria, infissi nel veneto bastione, onde scese in una grande ora di fiamma la promessa del Poeta, che suonò vaticinio, sogguardano colla fissità terribile di tanti occhi ciechi di pietra l'ombra di un grigio confine sul mare. Tutta la mole del monumento, raccolto e complesso come un tempio, in cui tremi una muta preghiera, si stacca dal masso e si protende, sul mare, sopra una lingua di terra aguzza, come uno sperone di nave, pronta a salpare per le sue nuove fortune. Nelle sue linee non vi ha l'espressione della forza placata nel gesto dell'orgoglio e della pietà che consola del secondo sacrificio di eroiche vite a una idea, ma vi ha come un raccoglimento che dilata l'anima di un religioso fervore, onde nasce una aspirazione, una volontà, una speranza. Gli è che esso è posto là ad eternare nel marmo una tappa, una ascensione in potenza, ma si erige così solitario, in cospetto di un chiuso orizzonto non suo, a specchio di un augusto mare non tutto ancor suo, ad incitamento delle anime, per suscitarle a visioni di cieli più ampi, di più liberi e più festosi orizzonti che, oltre il braccio di mare e gli scogli brulli che oggi gli fanno ombra e catena e lo cingono di iniqua frontiera, inghirlandino del loro sorriso tutte le città nostre, divallanti dai monti lontani, tutte la isole nostre, in un unico amplesso di amore.”
- ³¹ N.N. Il ricevimento in onore di S.A.R., *Il littorio dalmatico: organo della Federazione dei fasci di combattimento di Dalmazia*, September 26, 1928, p. 2.
- ³² N.N. Adesioni e consensi, *Il littorio dalmatico: organo della Federazione dei fasci di combattimento di Dalmazia*, September 26, 1928, p. 3.
- ³³ N.N. Cronaca di Zara, Note arheologiche, *Il littorio dalmatico: organo della Federazione dei fasci di combattimento di Dalmazia*, August 14, 1928, p. 3.
- ³⁴ KORNELIJA A. GIUNIO, Religion and Myth on Monuments from Zadar and the Surroundings in the Archaeological Museum in Zadar, in: *Religion and Myth as an Impetus for the Roman Provincial Sculpture: Proceedings of the 8th International Colloquium on the Problems of Roman Provincial Art*, Zagreb, May 5-8, 2003 (ed. Mirjana Sanader, Ante Rendić Miočević), Golden marketing - Tehnička knjiga, 2005, pp. 213-222.
- ³⁵ ŠIME BATOVIĆ, 150 godina Arheološkoga muzeja u Zadru, Zadar, 1982, 8-9; MARIJA KOLEGA, Rimski portretna plastika iz zbirke Danieli u Arheološkom muzeju u Zadru, Zadar, Arheološki muzej Zadar, Katalozi i monografije, 1, 1989; NENAD CAMBI, Collezione Danieli-Pellegrini (Zara, Padova) e i monumenti antichi della Dalmazia a Venezia, in: *Venezia e l'archeologia. Congresso internazionale, Venezia*, 25-29 March, 1988.
- ³⁶ ACS, AABBA, DIV. II, b. 233, fasc. 6, Zara 1927-1928-1929.
- ³⁷ Ibidem.
- ³⁸ N.N. (n. 33), p. 3; ARNOLFO BACOTICH, Appunti per la storia della città di Nona con speciale riguardo all'origine della sua chiesa, *Archivio storico per la Dalmazia*, Anno III, vol VI, Fasc. 31, October 1928, Roma, 392-404; GIUSEPPE PRAGA, Il tempio di San Donato di Zara, *Archivio storico per la Dalmazia*, anno VII, Vol. XII; Fasc. 72, March 1932, Rome, 575-592.
- ³⁹ ACS, AABBA, DIV. II, b. 233, fasc. 6, Zara 1927-1928-1929.
- ⁴⁰ SERENA BRUNELLI (n. 2), p. 89-130.
- ⁴¹ Ibidem.
- ⁴² The four imperial sculptures would again become objects of interest for the politicians during and after WWII. In 1943, after the capitulation of Italy, Zadar became part of the German occupied territory. During 1943 and 1944, the city was heavily bombed by the Allies. Because of the position of the harbour (the old city was built on a peninsula), the historical core was heavily damaged. Miraculously, the sculptures survived the bombing, even though they were displayed in the open with no protection. At the end of the war, the historical core was abandoned as it was largely devastated and in ruins. In April 1944, fourteen boxes with valuable works of art were taken from Zadar to Italy by Stefano Salvagno, assistant of Superintendent Fausto Franco from Trieste. Most of the objects in these wooden boxes were taken from Zadar's Museum. After the war, the holdings of the Museum were examined, verified and packed for shipping, but the items remained in Venice, and the negotiations over their destiny were transferred to the inter-state level and left to the politicians to solve. Once again, the four art objects proved really important to the politicians. Fourteen years after signing the Peace Treaty of 1947, a new contract between the Italian Republic and the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia was signed on September 15, 1961, which in its first Article regulated the exchange of four sculptures from Nin located in Zadar for the archaeological material of the Zadar Museum located in Venice. More in: ANTONIJA MLIKOTA, MFAA – New Insights about the Works of Art taken from Zadar to Italy during World War II, *Asseria* 10 (2012), Zadar, pp. 239-310; ANTONIJA MLIKOTA, Monuments Men - “Operation Zara”, book of abstracts for the international conference *Looted Art and Restitution in the Twentieth Century: Europe in Transnational and Global Perspective*, Newnham College, Cambridge, 18-20 September 2014, pp. 14-15; ANTONIJA MLIKOTA, After War Restitution and the Case of Museum St. Donatus in Zadar, 6th International Conference on the confiscation, thefts and transfers of works of art as a result of Nazi rule over Czechoslovakia and Europe during the Second World War and in the post-war period; *Plundered – but by whom?, Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and Occupied Europe in the Light of the Nazi-Art Looting*, Prague, 2016, pp. 81-90; SERENA BRUNELLI, I piani di protezione antiaerea e il ruolo delle Soprintendenze marchigiane a Zara: cronistoria di un ventennio (1925-1945 circa), in *In difesa dell'arte. La protezione del patrimonio artistico nelle Marche e in Umbria durante la seconda Guerra mondiale* (ed. P. Dragoni and C. Paparello), Florence, 2015, pp. 181-198.
- ⁴³ GIUSEPPE BASSI, Lo scultore Antonio Bassi ed il Monumento ai Caduti di Zara, *La Rivista Dalmatica, Associazione Nazionale Dalmatia*, vol. LIV, 1983, Rome, pp. 53-58; N.N. Il Monumento, *Il littorio dalmatico: organo della Federazione dei fasci di combattimento di Dalmazia*, September 22, 1928, pp. 2-4; N.N.

Per l'inaugurazione del Monumento ai nostri Caduti, *Il littorio dalmatico: organo della Federazione dei fasci di combattimento di Dalmazia*, September 26, 1928, p. 1.

⁴⁴ N.N., (n. 43), pp. 2-4; HR-DAZD-121, Općina Zadar (R. Comune di Zara) 1918-1943, box no. 126 (dated 1928), folder no. 173. In the telegram, M. Santi reported to G. D'Annunzio that the Monument was almost finished and asked him a permission to use his verses, either the planned ones or perhaps some other that he preferred, to be inscribed on the Zadar Monument.

⁴⁵ Ibidem; HR-DAZD-121, Općina Zadar (R. Comune di Zara) 1918-1943, box no. 126 (year 1928), folder no. 173, letter from the company “Domenico Gasperini & Figli” to the Prefettura in Zadar, November 10, 1927. The monument was sculpted by the local stonemasons' company “Domenico Gasperini & Figli.”

⁴⁶ N.N., (n. 43), p. 2; HR-DAZD-121, Općina Zadar (R. Comune di Zara) 1918-1943, box no. 126 (dated 1928), folder no. 173, list of the names of the Fallen, with the names of their parents, military service records, and the dates and places of birth and death.

⁴⁷ N.N., (n. 43), pp. 2-4.

⁴⁸ Ibidem. “Nell'insieme adunque il monumento e quella pinta di terra protesa sul mare, sulla quale sorge, assegna come un ufficio di Faro splendente di tutte le italiche virtù e di tutte le nostre speranze. Lo scultore Antonio Bassi cui si deve l'Ara dei Caduti, è nativo di Trani, in quella regione meravigliosa di luci, di spazii, di memorie che è la Puglia. Benché molto giovane ha già creato parecchie bellissime opere tra la quali ricordiamo: I Monumenti ai Caduti di Ginosa, di Candela, di Trani, di Martina Franca e l'ossario per i Caduti di Trani. È artista sensibile ed equilibrato, delicato e forte nello stesso tempo, puro e alto nelle intenzioni quanto efficace nelle manifestazioni. Chi lo conosce da vicino sa come egli lavori: senza impazienze e senza deviazioni, mae-

stro di se stesso, attivo sempre il cuore e la fantasia: l'uno come suscitatore, l'altra come conduttrice idealizzando, determinando cioè e perfezionando. Ma soprattutto sotto i suoi sforzi artistici non si esauriscono mai in sé stessi, bensì rispondono, in ogni più piccola vibrazione del suo spirito, a un desiderio di bellezza perenne; che nessuna preoccupazione mediocre gli sta alle spalle quando studia; che il suo lavoro quindi non è mai triste schiavitù, ma pienezza di vita, gaudio e travaglio in sé raccolto.”

⁴⁹ DAMIR MAGAŠ, Zadar on the Crossroad of Nationalisms in the 20th Century, *Geo Journal*, vol. 48, No. 2, *Territorial Change and National Identities in Eastern and Western Europe*, (123-131), Springer, 1999. Netherlands, here p. 127; ANTONIJA MLIKOTA, Forgotten City; Zadar after WWII, in: *Architectura, Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Baukunst - Journal of the History of Architecture*, No. 46/2016, pp. 50-71, Deutscher Kunstverlag, Munich, 2017, here pp. 53-54.

⁵⁰ ANTONIJA MLIKOTA, Na razmeđu arhitekture i skulpture: Morske orgulje i Pozdrav suncu, in: *Anali Galerije Antuna Augustinčića*, ed. Božidar Pejković, Klanjec: Muzeji Hrvatskog zagorja – Galerija Antuna Augustinčića, 2010, pp. 307-321, here p. 307.

⁵¹ N.N., Cronaca di Zara, Del rispetto all'Ara dei Caduti, *Il littorio dalmatico: organo della Federazione dei fasci di combattimento di Dalmazia*, November 29, 1930, p. 3. “Ci giungono gravi lagnanze per il fatto che delle coppie, insensibili ai doveri di rispetto per la sacra memoria di Coloro che offrirono la vita in olocausto alla Patria, approfittino della mistica solitudine di Piazza Rismondo per abbandonarsi ad audaci carezze. Denunziamo la cosa alle competenti autorità perché agiscano senza riguardi nei confronti di coloro che al riguardo non sentono per quello che di più sacro ha la città.”