

Herm with inscriptions from Serdica (Abstract)

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In 2015, a herm with inscriptions was discovered built in the southwestern corner of Building A5 (of the archaeological site under Knyaginya Maria Luiza Blvd.), together with four more without inscriptions. Earlier, in 2012, two other herms were discovered built in the northern stylobate of the inner courtyard of the same building (fig. 3).

The herm is shaped like an upturned truncated four-sided pyramid (fig. 1), with the following dimensions: 80 cm preserved height, width 28 cm at the top and 24 cm at the base, thickness from 26 cm (top) to 25 cm (base). The head is missing and only part of the neck and stylized draperies of a garment are preserved (fig. 2).

On one of the sides, male genitals are depicted, with a Greek inscription in four lines above and beneath them (fig. 4). Letter height: 4-4.5 cm. The inscription reads:

Ἄρριος
Λούκιος
βουλευτῆς
Νέστορι

Translation: “Arrius Lucius, *bouleutes*, (erected/dedicated?) to Nestor.”

On the opposite side of the herm, there is a second Greek inscription in five lines (fig. 5). The first letters of the second, the third, and the fifth line have been effaced by the weathering of the limestone. Letter height: 3.8-4 cm. The inscription reads:

Ἄρριος
Π]άππος
β]ουλε-
τῆς
ό]ρ(ο)ιάρι(ο)ς 5

Translation: “Arrius Pappus, *bouleutes*, owner of *horreum*.”

The inscribed herm has been reused for the construction of the Late Antique wall, which fact provides a *terminus ante quem* - the second half of the 5th - early 6th c., when the reconstruction of the building is dated. Based on another inscription from Serdica, dated to late 2nd - early 3rd c. and mentioning Arrius Pappus (IGBulg, № 1910), the inscribed herm under consideration could be dated to the same period.

The discovery of at least six identical herms, reused in the walls of the building, suggests that the inscribed herm was part of the decoration of the inner courtyard of the earlier building from the 3rd c. on the same place. Based on the evidence from the inscriptions, the building could be identified as the house of the *bouleutai* Arrius Lucius and Arrius Pappus, among the wealthy citizens of Serdica in the early 3rd c.

Similar monuments are typical of the Imperial Period and were used in the private sphere as a cheaper version of representation and paying homage to relatives and ancestors. The herm from Serdica could also be interpreted in this way, as the inscriptions suggest kinship between the named individuals, based on the *nomen* Arrius.

The mention of Arrius Pappus as ὄρριάριος deserves attention. The Greek term corresponds to the Latin *horrearius*. From the early 3rd c., it was used for owners of a warehouse/warehouses (*horreum/horrea*). The chronology of the inscription and the designation of Arrius Pappus as *bouleutes* support such an interpretation and reveal one of the sources of his income.

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