

5.3 THOUGHT AND BELIEF – DEATH



Type: Gravestone of Titus Calidius Severus

Chronology: 1st century AD

Findspot: Carnuntum (Austria)

Actual location: Kunsthistorisches Museum, Wien (Austria)

Inventory nr. Collection of Antiquities, III 365

Website:

<https://www.khm.at/en/objectdb/detail/52825/?pid=2295&back=270&offset=3&lv=listpackages-5434>

The inscription on the stele reads in translation: "Titus Calidius Severus, son of Publius, from the tribe Camilia, rider, then Optio and finally Decurio of Cohors I Alpinorum, then Centurio of Legio XV Apollinaris, 58 years old, 34 years of service, lies buried here. Quintus Calidius built this tomb for his brother. "

The inscriptions shows that Titus Calidius Severus came from Italy and likely moved to Carnuntum when he became a centurion of the 15th Legion (which stationed intermittently in the centre from AD39/40 to 114).

The relief shows the equipment of a centurion: a scale armor, a staff as insignia of the centurion, a helmet and shin guards. In the bottom of the stele a groom holds the saddled horse of the officer.

The stele offers an excellent example of how status and cultural identity (and in this case of belonging to Roman military society) were visually displayed in a variety of means (use of writing and images are the ones represented here) during the life but also after the death of an individual and of the role of the military in spreading Roman visual culture across the empire.

MY RESEARCH

How far can Roman visual culture offer an understanding of cultural identity in the Roman empire?