

## The state of research: Traces of Ancient Rome in Nevesinjsko Polje (‘Nevesinje Field’)

*Amra Šaćić Beća*  
Sarajevo

*Gligor M. Samardžić*  
Kosovska Mitrovica/Priština

*Abstract:* Nevesinjsko Polje (‘Nevesinje Field’) is one of the least explored microregions in Bosnia-Herzegovina. This region belonged administratively to the province of Dalmatia during the Roman period. Numerous sites have produced finds from that period (Udrežnje, Biograd, Zovi Do, Lukavac, Kifino Selo – Drenovik, Postoljani, Presjeka, Luka, Zaborani, Bratač, Džinova Mahala, etc.). This paper presents the four phases of research carried out at Nevesinjsko Polje. The archaeological research of this region began at the end of the 19th century. The first phase of exploration conducted in Nevesinjsko Polje focused on the publication of inscriptions from monuments and establishing the route of the Roman road that passed through the region. The second phase of research covered the period 1918–1950. In this phase, Dimitrije Sergejevski conducted preliminary archaeological research in Nevesinjsko Polje. His first significant find dates back to 1926 when he found the remains of a Roman settlement at the site of Drenovik. He revisited the region of Nevesinjsko Polje in 1946 and continued his explorations. The same year, Sergejevski meticulously analyzed the situation in the central and southern parts of the Polje. The following year, 1947, he did the same with the remaining northern part. The next phase of research was carried out by the scholar who made the biggest single contribution, Ivo Bojanovski. He made a significant contribution to the study of local ethnography and the ancient topography of this part of Herzegovina. Ethnographic research is analyzed in the last part of the paper. The fourth phase of research has involved the study of the identity of the indigenous population living in the Nevesinjsko Polje region.

*Keywords:* Nevesinje field, Roman Empire, Roman Provinces, historiography, research, archaeological site, Roman Dalmatia, indigenous communities

### Introduction (general notes)

Nevesinjsko Polje is part of a karst field in south-east Bosnia-Herzegovina between Crvanj mountain in the east and Velež mountain in the west. The subterranean river Zalomka flows through this field, and the entire area gravitates towards the valleys of the Neretva and Bregava rivers. Karst fields represent a kind of a geomorphological phenomenon which have an influence on flora and fauna, as well as its anthropological characteristics. In this case, the area is the only large, fertile and easily habitable oasis in the landscape of eastern Herzegovina. The oldest archaeological remains from this area can be dated to the Bronze Age (the remains of graves and

numerous hillfort settlements). The continued habitation in this region can be traced through other cultural and historic periods (the Iron Age, Roman period, the Middle Ages, the Ottoman period, etc.).<sup>1</sup> Two key factors influenced the cultural and historical development of this region: its geographic position in the Nevesinje Polje where there is an intersection of roads connecting the inland with the coast; and the very good conditions for agriculture and animal husbandry due to the geomorphological characteristics of this microregion.

<sup>1</sup> Čović 1988, 141–154.

## An overview of archaeological exploration in Nevesinjsko Polje since Antiquity – the first phase

During the Roman period, the region administratively belonged to the province of Dalmatia. Numerous sites have produced finds from that period (Udrežnje, Biograd, Zovi Do, Lukavac, Kifino Selo – Drenovik, Postoljani, Presjeka, Luka, Zaborani, Bratač, Džinova Mahala, etc.).<sup>2</sup> Archaeological research in the region began at the end of the 19th century, primarily influenced by the foundation of the National Museum of Bosnia-Herzegovina in Sarajevo in 1888.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, we should keep in mind that during their research of Roman archaeological sites, experts from the National Museum were not primarily focused on the region of eastern Herzegovina where Nevesinjsko Polje is located. The focus was more on other regions: eastern Bosnia due to the discovery of Roman mines, western Herzegovina due to the exploration of a Roman camp at Humac near Ljubuški, and a *villa rustica* in Mogorjelo near Čapljina, as well as the remains of municipal centers in central Bosnia.

When it comes to the first phase of research in Nevesinjsko Polje, the focus was on the publication of inscriptions from monuments and establishing the route of the Roman road that passed through the region. The first such publication was published in 1893 by Carl Patsch in the journal *Archäologisch-epigraphische Mitteilungen aus Österreich-Ungarn*.<sup>4</sup> It focused on a sepulchral monument from the site of Zalom.<sup>5</sup> In the same year, in the work *Römische strassen in Bosnien und der Hercegovina*, Ballif determined that the road between Narona and Sarajevo Polje (*Aquae*) went through Nevesinjsko Polje. Due to the scarcity of information at his disposal, Ballif was unable to form a complete understanding of this Roman road and did not recognize the full relevance of Nevesinjsko Polje to the road system during the Roman period.<sup>6</sup> Patsch accepted Ballif's thesis that the road that connected Narona with the

inland went through the Neretva valley, much like the present-day road section. The discovery of four milestones in the upper course of the river Neretva, in present-day Konjic municipality, prompted him to make such a conclusion.<sup>7</sup> Such an approach to the issue can be clearly observed in the 1902 article titled *Roman places in the Konjic district*.<sup>8</sup> During his research, Patsch neglected the possibility that this important road, that connected the inland with the coast, did not entirely pass through the Neretva valley: i.e. he did not recognize the value of the Nevesinjsko Polje in this context. This is not surprising since there was no information about this road in Roman *itineraria*. Ivo Bojanovski suggested that the absence of this road in the Antonine Itinerary (*Itinerarium Antonini Augusti*) and the Peutinger Table (*Tabula Peutingeriana*) could be attributed to the lack of an organized state courier and transport service (*cursus publicus*) including traffic police (*stationarius*). However, the newly discovered inscription to a *beneficiarius consularis* represents the first corroboration of the presence of provincial authorities in this region.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, the lack of this road in the Ravenna Cosmography (*Ravennatis Anonymi Cosmographia*) suggests that this author had not found the names of settlements (*civitates*) in his sources, which is why he omitted this road in his depiction of Dalmatia.<sup>10</sup>

## The second phase of research

Following the “Patsch era”, archaeological research on the Roman period in Bosnia-Herzegovina stagnated, with no research conducted in Nevesinjsko Polje and, consequently,

<sup>2</sup> Bojanovski 1978a, 78–95; 1988, 106.

<sup>3</sup> Dautbegović 1988, 13.

<sup>4</sup> Patsch 1893, 81.

<sup>5</sup> *CIL* 03, 02766c. = *CIL* 03, 02766c + p. 2256. = *CIL* 03, 08386. (B) = *CIL* 03, 12775. (B) = EHD 042468 = EDCS-28300095 = TM 184090 = lupa 23729.

<sup>6</sup> Ballif 1893, 36–37.

<sup>7</sup> [I]mp(erator) Caes(ar) / M(arcus) Iul(ius) Philip-/[pus Pius Fel(ix) Au]g(ustus) et / [M(arcus)] Iul(ius) Phil[i]p[us]/[p]us nob(ilissimus) C[ae]s(ar)] (*CIL* 17, 04, 00426 = EHD 065587 = EDCS-54900278 = TM 189254); Divo / Aug(usto) (*CIL* 03, 10164. = *CIL* 03, 10164 + p. 217 = EHD 014448 = EDCS-31400594 = TM 181897 = lupa 3035); Imp(eratori) C(aio) Iul(io) / M[aximino] / Pio Felici et C(aio) Iu[l(ius)] / Vero Maximo <sup>5/</sup> nobilissimi(!) / Caes(ari) Augg(ustis) (*CIL* 03, 10165 = *CIL* 03, 10165 + p. 2174; EDH-HD057970); Imp(eratori) Cae-/s(ari) M(arco) Iuli-/o Philipp/o P(io) F(elici) Aug(usto) (*CIL* 03, 10166. (B) = *CIL* 03, 10166 + p. 2174 = EHD 057971 = EDCS-31400596 = TM 185411 = lupa 23697)

<sup>8</sup> Patsch 1902, 311, 332.

<sup>9</sup> Vujović 2020.

<sup>10</sup> Bojanovski 1978a, 52.

no new research results. The situation only improved in the 1920s when Sergejevski focused his research on the study of eastern Herzegovina as well as Nevesinjsko Polje. In the last decade of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Sergejevski focused his academic studies on publishing monument inscriptions held in the depots of the National Museum in Sarajevo, as well as from monuments that were already known to archaeologists, but had not yet been published.<sup>11</sup> Among the ancient inscriptions on monuments from Bosnia-Herzegovina, analyzed by Sergejevski in the publications of the Serbian Royal Academy from 1934 and 1938, seven inscriptions were from eastern Herzegovina.<sup>12</sup> Regarding the Roman road passing through Nevesinjsko Polje, it was highly significant that Sergejevski published details from a milestone of Emperor Tacitus (275–276), which was discovered in the village of Polje Bijela near Konjic.<sup>13</sup> This milestone helped determine the route of the road that went from Narona, passed through the Nevesinjsko Polje, and led inland through the province of Dalmatia.

It is worth noting that Sergejevski made preliminary archaeological research in Nevesinjsko Polje with his first significant find dating back to 1926 when he uncovered the remains of a Roman settlement at the site of Drevnovik during his stay in nearby Kifino Selo.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, Sergejevski did not manage to do systematic research of this site because he was, at that time, the only classical archaeologist in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. He revisited Nevesinjsko Polje in 1946 and continued his research. That same year, he meticulously analyzed the central and southern parts of the polje. The following year, 1947, he did the same with the remaining northern part. He published the results of his research in an extensive article *Roman Road in the Nevesinje*

*Field in the Herald of the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina* in 1948.

Sergejevski's research was crucial as it led to the discovery of a significant number of finds dating to the Roman period. It is important to note that Sergejevski also took a critical approach to the previous research of Ballif and Patsch, stating that they had not recognized the importance of the Roman road that passed through the Nevesinjsko Polje.<sup>15</sup> Unlike some of his earlier papers, here he manifests a critical opinion. The most important result of his two-year research was the discovery of 30 kilometers of Roman road. By discovering a series of milestones, mostly anepigraphic, and following the route of the road, he confirmed a very important fact – not only did a Roman road pass through the Nevesinjsko Polje, but it was one of the most significant intersections in the province of Dalmatia. Subsequent research showed that Sergejevski was wrong about some of the sections<sup>16</sup> but this did not lessen his valuable contribution to this important academic matter.

In the territory of the Nevesinjsko Polje, Sergejevski discovered the remains of four Roman settlements at the sites of Bojište, Drevnovik, Kruševljani, and Presjeka. He also established the existence of smaller Roman sites at other sites in Nevesinjsko Polje. At these sites, Sergejevski found the remains of Roman building materials (primarily roofing tiles), the remains of anepigraphic milestones, profiled plates, a mausoleum, a *cippus* whose text has been ruined, a late antique vaulted tomb and a Roman bridge over the subterranean river Zalomka, etc.<sup>17</sup> Sergejevski rightly concluded that we cannot form a realistic image of the size of the Roman settlements in this region based on the materials discovered because the local population had re-purposed a significant amount of the remaining Roman period materials for construction since houses and public sites in this part of Herzegovina were traditionally made of stone. There are several examples that prove this. In the walls of an Orthodox Church in Luka,

<sup>11</sup> Examples of such monuments are tombstones discovered in Korita near Gacko in 1888 which archaeologists were familiar with, but its epigraphic text had not been published until 1938.

<sup>12</sup> The inscriptions originated from the wider region of the following municipalities: Konjic – three inscriptions (1934 and 1938), Stolac – two inscriptions (1934), Bileća – one inscription (1938), and Gacko – one inscription (1938).

<sup>13</sup> *ILJug* 03, 2973 = *CIL* 17, 04, 00419; Fig. A; Fig. B = EHD-035339 = EDCS-10101979 = TM 183765 = lupa 30627; Sergejevski 1934, 25–26.

<sup>14</sup> Sergejevski 1948, 44.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 44–46.

<sup>16</sup> The main cause of incorrect tracing of part of the Roman road towards the east was the wrong assumption that certain milestones were found *in situ*. Bojanovski revised Sergejevski's research during the 1970s (Bojanovski 1978a, 58–59).

<sup>17</sup> Sergejevski 1948, 52–60; Čović 1988, 143–154.



Fig 1. *Depiction of a nymph built in as spolia in an Orthodox Church in Luka* (Photo by: J. Radmilović)

Sergejevski found two stone slabs with relief carvings. The slab used as a *spolia* in the northern church wall depicts a nymph (Fig. 1), whereas the stone slab built on the southern side of the church contains a relief of five persons (Fig. 2).<sup>18</sup> Whilst analyzing the depiction of carved images on the slab, Sergejevski concluded that this was a late Christian relief. Through conversations with the local population, he discovered that a large number of epigraphic monuments and other types of archaeological materials had been destroyed

through anthropogenic activities. The newly-discovered inscription of a decurion, found in the Church of the Holy Trinity in Drenovik, illustrated the secondary usage of Roman material in Nevesinjsko Polje.

### The third phase (1950–1992)

In the mid-20th century, Esad Pašalić addressed the issue of the Roman road section between Narona and Sarajevsko Polje that passed through Nevesinjsko Polje. In his monograph *Ancient Settlements and Roads in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (1960), Pašalić summarized the results of his research. In the chapter *Narona–Nevesinje Field Road and Settlements Along this Road*, he gives preference to Sergejevski's results compared to those of Patsch and Ballif.<sup>19</sup> Interestingly, Pašalić notes that no numismatic evidence had been found in the territory of Nevesinjsko Polje, which is common in territories associated with important roads. The same information appears in other literature.<sup>20</sup>

The scholar who made the biggest contribution to the research of Nevesinjsko Polje is,



Fig 2. *Late antique relief built in as spolia in an Orthodox Church in Luka* (Photo by: J. Radmilović)

<sup>18</sup> We would like to thank colleague Jelena Radmilović for the provided photos.

<sup>19</sup> Pašalić 1960, 61.

<sup>20</sup> Bojanovski 1988, 107; Samardžić 2017, 29–35.

undoubtedly, Ivo Bojanovski. Unlike the previously mentioned archaeologists, Bojanovski did not study Nevesinjsko Polje only from the aspect of Roman roads. He also made a significant contribution to the study of local ethnography and ancient topography of this part of Herzegovina. He began his research of Roman archaeology sites in eastern Herzegovina in the 1970s intending to eliminate prejudice that existed in the archaeology of Bosnia-Herzegovina regarding the cultural and historical development of this territory in the Roman period. He rightly concluded that his predecessors observed this area through contemporary views, meaning that they identified the rural lifestyle that dominated the first half of the 20th century with ancient times. Such a perception of Roman heritage of this karst field placed this region on the margins of archaeologists' interests who believed this microregion did not contain any urban units. Bojanovski determined that modern construction practices largely destroyed archaeological material from the Roman period.<sup>21</sup> For him, there was no doubt that this region developed in line with the legacy of Roman civilization and culture in the period between the 1st and the 5th centuries.

The first paper that deals in-depth with the issue of the cultural and historic development of Nevesinjsko Polje during the Roman period was published by Bojanovski in 1976 in the *Tribunia* journal and titled *Gatačko Polje in the Classical Period*. Although the topic of the paper was not focused on analyzing the archaeological material from neighboring Gatačko Polje, the author nevertheless addressed several key issues regarding Nevesinjsko Polje. In the context of Romanization, he highlights the importance of inscriptions found in the northern part of Nevesinjsko Polje (Zalon) where, according to him, the first Romanized members of the indigenous population from this region appear. He based his conclusion on the fact that the cognomen *Tatta*, typical of the indigenous population, appears on the monument next to

the nomen *Aelius*.<sup>22</sup> According to this comparison, Bojanovski established that the process of division of the Roman population in the territory of Gatačko Polje field and Nevesinjsko Polje began in the first half of the 2nd century during the reign of Hadrian (117–138) or Antoninus Pius (138–161).<sup>23</sup> It should be noted that no evidence has been found to refute Bojanovski's conclusions.

In the above article, Bojanovski published the results of his research of the Roman road Nevesinjsko Polje – Gatačko Polje – Nikšić (*Anderba*). Through a hodological approach, Bojanovski determined the remains of the Roman road in Nevesinjsko Polje and, in its eastern part, he found a fragment of an anepigraphic milestone. At the same site, Sergejevski also found an anepigraphic milestone. This road, in present-day Nikšić (*Anderba*), connected with an important provincial road *Narona – Skodra*.<sup>24</sup> Bojanovski concluded that his milestone additionally corroborated the thesis of the importance of the Roman road in this part of the Roman Dalmatia, previously set forth by Sergejevski.

In 1978, in honor and memory of Sergejevski, Bojanovski published a study *Prehistoric and Roman Road Narona – Sarajevo Polje with Limitrophic Settlements* in the Annual of the Center for Balkan Studies of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia-Herzegovina. In this paper, Bojanovski focused especially on defining the route of the Roman road through Nevesinjsko Polje. In the introductory part, he made a critical overview of the previous research, specifying the omissions of his predecessors who dealt with this topic (Ballif, Patsch, Sergejevski, and Pašalić). Bojanovski determined that, although the road passed through karst fields, most of its route was supplied with running water and springs, while cisterns and wells were built at locations where there was no spring water.<sup>25</sup>

It is important to note that Bojanovski located watchtowers (*speculae, burgusi*) at several

<sup>21</sup> These building activities include the construction of religious facilities, modern roads, a shift to building houses with solid materials. This destroyed old Roman roads and settlements in eastern Herzegovina (Bojanovski 1976, 17–18).

<sup>22</sup> [D(is)] M(anibus) s(acrum) / [A]el(ius) Maximus / et Ael(ia) Tatta p(arentes) / Ael(iae) Marcellae 5/ f(iliae) def(unctae) an(norum) XX / vivi sepulcr(um) / fecerunt et sibi / et suis (CIL 03, 02766c. = CIL 03, 02766c + p. 2256. = CIL 03, 08386. (B) = CIL 03, 12775. (B) = EHD 042468 = EDCS-28300095 = TM 184090 = lupa 23729).

<sup>23</sup> Bojanovski 1976, 36.

<sup>24</sup> Samardžić 2016, 308–311.

<sup>25</sup> Bojanovski 1978a, 63.



Fig. 3. New beneficiary altar from Nevesinje, Drenovik  
(Photo by: M. Marić)

sites in Nevesinjsko Polje (Udrežnje, Drenovik, Postoljani, Luka, and Lješće) during his research. He rightfully believed that the only place in Nevesinjsko Polje where one should look for stations of *beneficarii consularis* was Drenovik,<sup>26</sup> making the discovery of a votive monument at this site in 2018 very important (Fig. 3).<sup>27</sup> This is an inscription to a *beneficiarius consularis* from *Legio I Adiutrix*, which is evidence that Bojanovski was not wrong in his estimate that there was a station of *beneficarii consularis* at Drenovik monitoring traffic safety.

In his 1978 paper, Bojanovski paid special attention to milestones and concluded that the majority of them can be dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>28</sup> It is obviously a period of increased us-

<sup>26</sup> Bojanovski 1978a, 64; Vujović 2020, 64–66.

<sup>27</sup> It should be noted that the monument has been preserved today with the help of the personal engagement of Mr. Radoš Buha and Mr. Miroslav Marić. We would like to use this opportunity to thank them for the selfless help offered during the preparation of this paper. We also thank our colleague, Dr Adnan Kaljanac for helping us to make maps with archaeological sites.

<sup>28</sup> In the Nevesinje field, Sergejevski distinguished two types of milestones: round and ellipse-shaped. This scholar believed that round milestones originated from the reign of Maximinus Thrax (229–236), whereas ellipse-shaped

age of this road due to the intensive exploitation of mines in the interior of Dalmatia. The origin of the road from Narona via Nevesinjsko Polje can be dated to the 1<sup>st</sup> century, i.e., the reign of Emperor Tiberius (14–37).<sup>29</sup> Bojanovski was also the first to note another type of monument in Nevesinjsko Polje that served to organize traffic. These were large, ellipse-shaped stone columns, standing on elevations along the road,<sup>30</sup> whose purpose was to mark communication in case of a large snowdrift. It is worth noting that this region has a quite colder climate compared to the Mediterranean part of Herzegovina.

### Research relating to the identity of the indigenous population – fourth phase.

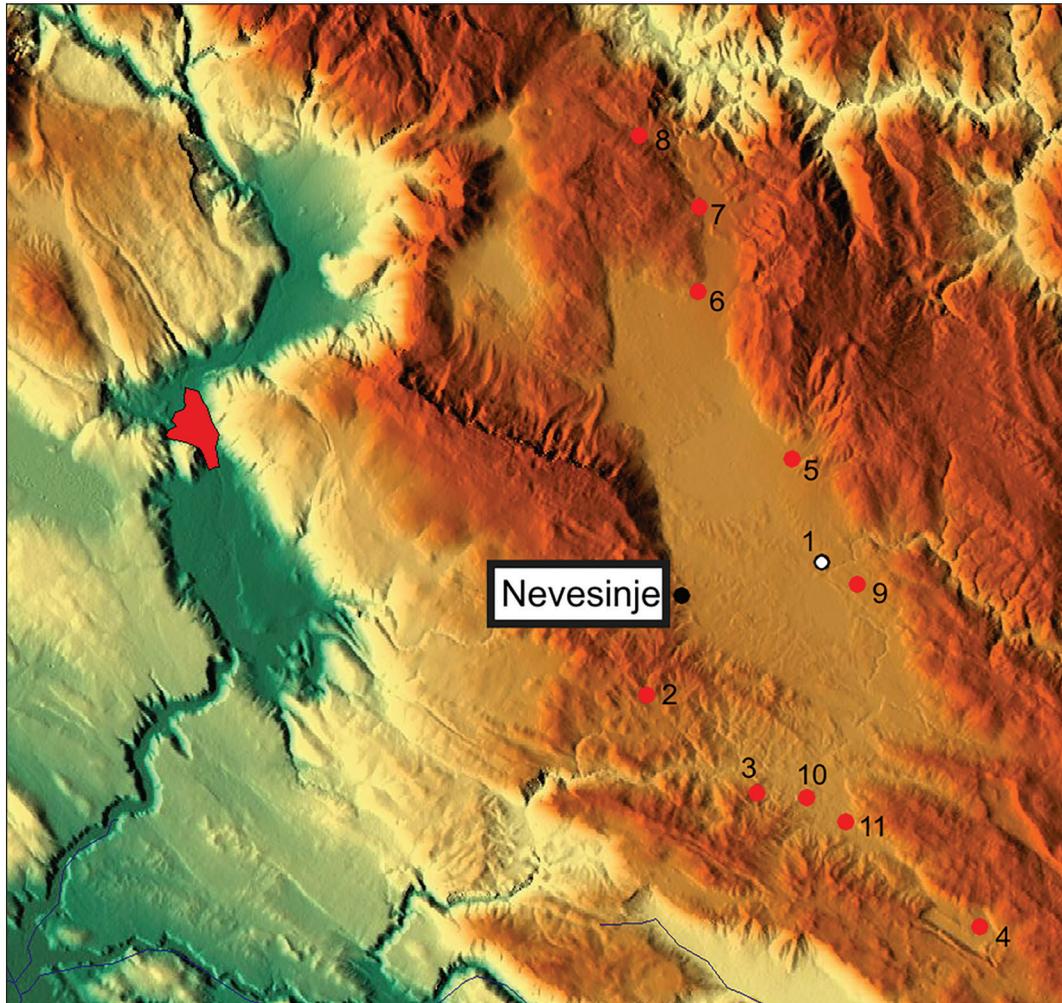
In the context of historical topography, Bojanovski thoroughly documented all visible archaeological remains along the road in Nevesinjsko Polje. He particularly emphasized the importance of the site of Drenovik, which he determined was, in essence, a crossroads where where local paths intersected with the main road. Among his research findings, he confirmed the existence of a fort at this site which was apparently the station of *beneficarii consularis*. After inspecting the archaeological material found in *spolia* in nearby medieval necropolis, he concluded that the settlement of Drenovik, during Roman times, also contained several monumental buildings.<sup>31</sup> Bojanovski was also the author of a part of the text for this site in the important work of Bosnian and Herzegovinian science the *Archaeological Lexicon of Bosnia and Herzegovina* (1988). Regarding the site of Drenovik (named after a spring of the same name), this publication notes that it was the location where remains of a larger Roman settlement were discovered (processed stone, remains of brick, tiles, tombs, and

milestones can be dated to the reign of Emperor Philip the Arab (244–249) (Sergejevski 1948, 56). Bojanovski, on the other hand, proved that such a distinction is not based on facts because there are ellipse-shaped milestones discovered mentioning emperor Maximinus Thrax and vice versa (Bojanovski 1978a, 64).

<sup>29</sup> Bojanovski 1974, 246; Samardžić 2018a, 181.

<sup>30</sup> Bojanovski 1978a, 64–65.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.



Map 1. Locations in the Nevesinje field with marked archaeological sites

1. Kifino selo (Drenovik); 2. Udrežanj; 3. Biograd; 4. Lukavac; 5. Postoljina; 6. Presjeka; 7. Luka; 8. Zaborani; 9. Bratač; 10. Zovi Do; 11. Džinova Mahala. (©Google Maps. Illustration source A. Kaljanac)

small archaeological material). This settlement developed on both banks of the Zalotka river where the remains of a Roman bridge had been found.<sup>32</sup> At this site, Bojanovski found the remains of a Roman wall with diced ceramics in mortar, as well as larger ceramic fragments and remains of a Roman road 3.5 meters wide.<sup>33</sup>

Bojanovski examined the ethnogenesis and ancient ethnography of Nevesinjsko Polje in two papers – the article *Illyrian Tribes in Eastern Herzegovina and their territory*, published in 1985 in *Tribunia Journal*, and the chapter of the book *Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Classical Period* (published in 1988) titled *Other civitates in Eastern Herzegovina (Glinditiones, Melcumani,*

<sup>32</sup> Sergejevski 1948, 58.

<sup>33</sup> Bojanovski 1976, 39–44.

*and Daraemistae*) (map. 2). He approaches the study of this academic issue using traditional archaeological methods, and on the basis of analysis of narratives, onomastics, and archaeological materials, he concluded that the population of this territory in the Early Empire period was homogenous in the context of culture.<sup>34</sup> Bojanovski acknowledged that he used the elimination method from Pliny's list to locate the Glinditiones in Nevesinjsko Polje.<sup>35</sup> Namely, Bojanovski underlined that Pliny the Elder listed the *civitates* in the *Narona conventus* alphabetically (Latin alphabet), so we cannot with certainty determine which community inhabited Nevesinjsko Polje in the Early Empire. However,

<sup>34</sup> Bojanovski 1985, 8.

<sup>35</sup> Pliny, *HN* 3. 143; Bojanovski 1985, 13; 1988, 107.



Map 2. Illyrian communities in Eastern Herzegovina according to I. Bojanovski (Edited by A. Šaćić Beća)

he further states that these could only be the Melcumani with 24 *decuriae* and Glinditiones with 44 *decuriae*. Following the analysis of the data recorded by Appian and Claudius Ptolemy and comparison of these data with Pliny's text, Bojanovski nevertheless rejected the possibility that this territory belonged to the Melcumani. He located this *peregrine civitas* in the neighboring Gatačko Polje based on Ptolemy's data that the Melcumani and Ardiaei lived near the Daorsi.<sup>36</sup> Since the Ardiaei had been located in the lower course of the Neretva River, he believes that it is reasonable to locate the Melcumani to the northeast of the Daorsi, i.e. in Gatačko Polje. On the other hand, he believes that Appian's data about how Octavian had a hard time defeating the Glinditiones is possible proof that this indigenous community lived in inaccessible parts

– matching the description of Nevesinjsko Polje.<sup>37</sup> In the Early Empire, Nevesinjsko Polje represented an inaccessible field due to mountain ranges that separated this karst field from the Neretva valley. In terms of surface area, the Nevesinje field is also larger than Gatačko Polje, which is another argument supporting Bojanovski's location the Glinditiones in Nevesinjsko Polje. Some scholars disagree with the thesis of Ivo Bojanovski that Nevesinjsko Polje was part of the Glinditiones' territory. Scholars such as Géza Alföldy, John J. Wilkes, Svetlana Lome, and Dragana Grbić associated the Nevesinjsko Polje with the Melcumani.<sup>38</sup> Grbić believes that a little-known boundary stone on the border of Gatačko Polje represents the final western

<sup>36</sup> Ptol. *Geog.* 2. 16. 8.

<sup>37</sup> App. *Ill.* 16. 46–48; Bojanovski 1985, 13; 1988, 107; Marić 2015, 59.

<sup>38</sup> Alföldy 1965, 49; Wilkes 1969, 166; Loma 2004, 40; Grbić 2014, 159–161.

frontier of the Melcumani territory before the Narensi.<sup>39</sup> This means that the position of the Melcumani should be sought to the southeast of the Narensi not to the south as before, which proves that the Nevesinjsko Polje should be territorially linked with the Melcumani and not with the Glinditiones.

However, Marjeta Šašel Kos and Alka Domić Kunić believe that we should not dismiss the thesis that the Glinditiones were the community which in the Early Empire inhabited the Nevesinjsko Polje. Both of these scholars presented different theses regarding their territory, and then specify why we should not dismiss Bojanovski's conclusions.<sup>40</sup> Domić Kunić is careful to accept the location of Pliny's Glinditiones in Nevesinjsko Polje. She believes that this thesis is supported by the fact that they are mentioned

<sup>39</sup> --] et inte(r) Mel(cumanos)? or in(ter) te(rritorium) Mel(cumanorum) (ILJug 03, 1739 = HD034020 = EDCS-10100709 = TM 182614). This inscription was found in the 1920s and in the earlier literature, it was believed that it served to mark the delimitation of two pastures. However, Grbić's analysis shows that this inscription delimits two *peregrine civitates* (Grbić 2014, 159–162).

<sup>40</sup> There are different theses about the territory of the Glinditiones. The first theses represented by Patsch, Swoboda, Mayer associate the Glinditiones with the Ditiones based on the similarities in their names (Patsch 1899, 165; Swoboda 1932, 70; Mayer 1957, 151). This thesis was dismissed in contemporary scholarship because the Ditiones belonged to the Salona *conventus*. Based on Dolabella's inscription from Salona, this *peregrine civitas* can be located in the northwest Bosnia (CIL 03, 3198b (p. 2275, 2328, 19) = CIL 03, 10156b = CIL 17/4 (p. 130–122) = EDH 018013). On the other hand, the Glinditiones belonged to the Narona *conventus* (Pliny, HN 3. 142–143). Although the names of both *peregrine civitates* have the root *dit*, it does not indicate a significant connection, because *dit* appears in Dalmatian and Pannonian names *Ditus*, *Ditius*, *Diteius*, *Ditueius*, *Dito*, *Tuditanus* (Šašel Kos 2005, 415; Domić Kunić 2006, 84; Mesihović 2011, 61; Grbić 2014, 157). The second thesis on the location of the Glinditiones is present in the works of Alföldy, Wilkes, Zotović, Grbić who believe that the territory of this indigenous community should be searched for in the valleys of the rivers Tara and Piva, i.e., the territory of the upper course of the Drina River, near present-day Foča in southeast Bosnia (Alföldy 1964, 93; 1965, 59–60, Wilkes 1969, 176; 1992, 217; 1996, 578; Zotović 2002, 5; Grbić 2014, 157). This area most certainly belonged to the imperial *fiscus* as part of the mining area. It should be noted that southeast Bosnia and northern Montenegro are the least explored territory in the context of indigenous communities. The third thesis is the already mentioned thesis of Ivo Bojanovski regarding the Nevesinje field in the context of the territory where we should locate the Glinditiones (Bojanovski 1985, 13; 1988, 107).

as one of the communities that Augustus had to defeat again, and who had to pay him the due taxes after their defeat.<sup>41</sup> Domić Kunić also finds important the fact that Pliny lists the Glinditiones in the Narona *conventus* whose western border could, according to him, be at the Vrbas River.<sup>42</sup> This scholar also introduced an interesting thesis regarding how Strabo listed the Pannonian communities, stating that there was a possibility that they were part of the Daesitiatian alliance during Strabo's time. Given the large territory of the Daesitiates, by analyzing Strabo's text, Domić Kunić concluded that the number of *decuriae* mentioned by Pliny the Elder is disproportionately small compared to the Delmatae, Ditiones, and Maezaei. She assumed that the Glinditiones were one of the communities that comprised the Daesitiatian alliance and later seceded as a separate *peregrine civitas* after the Great Illyrian Revolt in AD 9. This was part of the measure implemented by the Roman authorities to prevent the formation of new hostile local groups.<sup>43</sup> Contemporary scholarship tends to see indigenous communities through the prism of the needs of Roman provincial politics.<sup>44</sup> Roman authorities certainly influenced the creation of *peregrine civitates* in Pannonia and Dalmatia through their military and political needs. If the Glinditiones were part of the Daesitiatian alliance during the Great Illyrian Revolt, which is a possible scenario, their location in eastern Herzegovina would be entirely reasonable.

Šašel Kos also accepted the possibility that the territory of the Nevesinjsko Polje belonged to the Glinditiones and suggests that their territory should be searched for between the Nare(n)sii and Pirustae in the area rich in livestock pastures.<sup>45</sup> Unlike Bojanovski, Šašel Kos pointed out that the issue of the territorial distribution of the Glinditiones should be left open.

Considering the above analyses, we can assume that Nevesinjsko Polje in the Early Empire period was probably part of the Melcumani and Glinditiones territories. If we compare the

<sup>41</sup> App III. 16. 46–48.

<sup>42</sup> Domić Kunić 2006, 84.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 83–84.

<sup>44</sup> Džino 2009, 82; 2010, 177–184; 2012, 84–85; Džino / Domić Kunić 2012, 103–104; 2013, 63, 129; Šačić Beća 2017, 112.

<sup>45</sup> Šašel Kos 2005, 415–416.

number of *peregrine civitates* specified by Pliny the Elder in his *Naturalis Historia*, it seems that Bojanovski's thesis is the most acceptable on i.e. the territory of Nevesinjsko Polje should be linked with the Glinditiones. This narrative source states that the Melcumani had only 24 *decuriae* indicating that they could only control two big karst fields in eastern Herzegovina due to their small numbers. Their presence in Gatačko Polje is corroborated in terms of epigraphy and thus can be located in this field, whereas Nevesinjsko Polje contains no traces of their existence. On the other hand, the territory of northern Montenegro and the Drina valley is associated with the Sicels (*Siculi*), Ozuaei, Partheni, and Pirustae, according to certain epigraphic and narrative sources, so we should dismiss the possibility of it being part of the Glinditiones territory.<sup>46</sup> Bearing this in mind, we can conclude that the Nevesinjsko Polje territory can be seen as the assumed territory of the Glinditiones – although the issue remains open.

We can finally conclude that the archaeological research from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries corroborated the existence of Roman settlements at the borders of Nevesinjsko Polje. Unlike pre-Roman settlements, founded on elevated locations, Roman settlements were formed on flat fields. This is certainly no exception because there are many examples throughout the former Roman province of Dalmatia. Sergejevski's and Bojanovski's archaeological research corroborated the fact that Roman roads that passed through this part of eastern Herzegovina played a vital role in the development of settlements. The remains of epigraphic and anepigraphic milestones confirmed that two roads passed through the Nevesinjsko Polje: Naronā – Sarajevo Polje (*Aquae S*) and Nevesinjsko Polje – Gatačko Polje – Nikšić (*Anderba*). Today, the remains of the Roman road have been preserved at the borders of the Nevesinjsko Polje at Kifino Selo, Bratač and Stupi pod Stopotom.<sup>47</sup> Numerous archaeological finds were corroborated in Udrežnje, Biograd, Zovi Do, Lukavac, Kifino Selo (Drenovik), Postoljani, Presjeka, Luka, Zaborani, Bratač,

Džinova Mahala, etc.<sup>48</sup> Based on the material discovered, the largest Roman settlement was at Drenovik near Kifino Selo.

There have been no systematic explorations in classical archaeology in this region during the past 30 years. The archaeological material that has been discovered has been purely on an accidental basis. This also applies to the finds that are published in this paper as well.

## Rezime

### Stanje istraženosti: tragovi starog Rima na Nevesinjskom polju

Nevesinjsko polje je jedna od najmanje istraženih mikroregija u Bosni i Hercegovini. Kako bi se ukazalo na potrebu za novim arheološkim istraživanjima, u ovom radu su predstavljeni rezultati ranijih istraživanja iz rimske provincijalne arheologije i historije. U rimskom periodu ovaj prostor je administrativno pripadao rimskoj provinciji Dalmaciji. Na više lokaliteta na Nevesinjskom polju potvrđeni su nalazi iz rimskog perioda (Udrežnju, Biogradu, Zovom Dolu, Lukavcu, Kifinom Selu – Drenoviku, Postoljinama, Presjeci, Luci, Zaboranima, Brataču, Džinovoj Mahali itd.). Kombiniranjem hronološke i tematske metode prepoznate su četiri faze istraživanja Nevesinjskog polja. Prva faza započinje istraživanjima Karla Pača (Carl Patsch) i Filipa Balifa (Philipp Ballif) krajem 19. stoljeća. U početnoj fazi istraživanja naglasak je bio na objavljivanju epigrafskih spomenika i određivanju trase rimske ceste koja je prolazila kroz ovo polje. Tako je prvi epigrafski nalaz sa prostora Nevesinjskog polja objavio 1893. godine Karl Pač u časopisu *Archäologisch-epigraphische Mitteilungen aus Österreich-Ungarn*. S druge strane Balif je u djelu *Römische Strassen in Bosnien und der Hercegovina* utvrdio da je trasa rimske ceste Naronā–Sarajevsko polje (*Aquae*) išla do Nevesinjskog polja. Ipak, prilikom svojih istraživanja u Hercegovini Pač uopće nije razmatrao mogućnost da važna komunikacija koja je povezivala unutrašnjost s primorjem nije cijelom svojom dužinom išla dolinom Neretve, odnosno nije prepoznao važnost Nevesinjskog polja u tom kontekstu. To ne iznenađuje, jer o ovoj komunikaciji koja je išla preko Nevesinjskog polja nema nikakvih podataka

<sup>46</sup> Bojanovski 1988, 204–213; Mesihović 2009, 56; Mirković 2013, 26–30, 65–67; Šačić Beća 2018, 113.

<sup>47</sup> Samardžić 2018b, 152.

<sup>48</sup> Sergejevski 1948, 58; Bojanovski 1978a, 84; 1978b, 183; 1988, 106; Samardžić 2018b, 148.

u rimskim itinerarima. Međutim, kasnija istraživanja i novootkriveni natpis konzularnog beneficijara Drenovik dokazuju da je Nevesinjsko polje bilo važno komunikacijsko čvorište.

Nakon, uslovno rečeno, "Pačove ere" dolazi do stagnacije arheoloških istraživanja rimskog perioda na prostoru cijele Bosne i Hercegovine. U tom razdoblju nije bilo istraživanja na prostoru Nevesinjskog polja, pa samim tim ni objavljivanja njihovih rezultata. Tek dvadesetih godina prošlog stoljeća situacija se u ovom kontekstu popravlja zahvaljujući radu Dimitrija Sergejevskog. Treba naglasiti da je Sergejevski izvršio preliminarna arheološka istraživanja na Nevesinjskom polju. Prvi njegov značajan nalaz potječe iz 1926. godine, kada je boraveći u Kifinom Selu na lokalitetu Drenovik pronašao ostatke rimskog naselja. Ipak, Sergejevski nije uspio izvršiti sistematsko istraživanje tog lokaliteta iz razloga što je u periodu Kraljevine SHS/Jugoslavije bio jedini klasični arheolog u Bosni i Hercegovini. Tek 1946. godine ovaj naučnik je ponovno došao na prostor Nevesinjskog polja i nastavio svoja istraživanja. Iste godine je u svrhu istraživanja studiozno obišao središnji i južni dio polja. Naredne, 1947. godine isto je učinio i s preostalim sjevernim dijelom. Važno je naglasiti da Sergejevski kritički pristupa ranijim istraživanjima Balifa i Pača navodeći kako nisu prepoznali važnost rimske komunikacije koja je prolazila kroz Nevesinjsko polje. Za razliku od nekih njegovih ranijih radova, ovdje se jasno očituje kritički stav i oslobađanje od zaključaka do tada neprikosnovenih autoriteta. Kao najznačajniji rezultat svog dvogodišnjeg istraživanja Sergejevski je s pravom označio otkriće 30 kilometara rimske ceste. Pored toga, Sergejevski je na prostoru Nevesinjskog polja otkrio ostatke četiri rimska naselja na lokalitetima Bojište, Drenovik, Kruševljani i Presjek, kao i značajan broj sitnih arheoloških nalaza.

Treće istraživanje ovog prostora poduzeli su Esad Pašalić i Ivo Bojanovski. Pašalić se primarno sredinom pedesetih godina bavio rimskom cestom *Narona – Aquae S(...?)* koja je prolazila kroz Nevesinjsko polje. U monografiji *Antička naselja i komunikacije u Bosni i Hercegovini* (1960) Pašalić je sumirao svoja istraživanja. Ipak, najveći doprinos istraživanju Nevesinjskog polja u rimsko doba dao je bez sumnje Ivo Bojanovski. Pored cesta, Bojanovski je dao nemjerljiv doprinos izučavanju lokalne etnografije i antičke topografije ovog dijela Hercegovine. Svoja istraživanja arheoloških lokaliteta iz rimskog perioda u istočnoj Hercegovini Bojanovski je započeo sedamdesetih godina dvadesetog stoljeća s ciljem da ukloni ranije predrasude koje su postojale u bosanskohercegovačkoj arheologiji u vezi s kulturnohistorijskim razvojem ovog prostora u rimskom periodu. S pravom je zaključio da su njegovi prethodnici ovu oblast promatrali iz savremene vizure, što znači da su na neki

način poistovjetili ruralni način života koji je tu dominirao u prvoj polovini dvadesetog stoljeća s antičkim vremenom. Rezultate svojih istraživanja Nevesinjskog polja Bojanovski je objavljivao u časopisu Zavičajnog muzeja Trebinje (danas Muzej Hercegovine) *Tribunia* i *Godišnjaku Centra za balkanološka ispitivanja Akademije nauka i umjetnosti Bosne i Hercegovine*. Koristeći se horološkom metodom, analizom rimskih itinerara i arheološkog materijala, ovaj je arheolog definisao trase rimskih puteva koje su prolazile kroz Nevesinjsko polje. Važno je napomenuti da je Bojanovski prilikom svojih istraživanja locirao stražarnice (*speculae*, *burgusi*) na nekoliko lokaliteta na Nevesinjskom polju (Udrežnju, Drenoviku, Postoljanima, Luki i Lješću). S pravom je smatrao da je jedino mjesto na Nevesinjskom polju gdje bi trebalo tražiti stanicu konzularnih beneficijara Drenovik. Stoga je posebno važno otkriće votivnog spomenika na tom lokalitetu 2018. godine. To je krunski dokaz da Bojanovski nije pogriješio u svojoj procjeni da se na prostoru Drenovika nalazila stanica konzularnih beneficijara koji su nadzirali sigurnost prometa.

Bojanovski je pionir etnografskih istraživanja Nevesinjskog polja i začetnik posljednje faze koju smo definisali prema tematskom kriteriju. Izučavanju ovog naučnog problema on pristupa u skladu s tadašnjim metodološkim postavkama tradicionalne arheologije, te na osnovu analize narativnih izvora, onomastike i arheološkog materijala zaključuje da je stanovništvo ovog prostora u ranocarsko doba bilo u kulturološkom smislu homogeno. Bojanovski priznaje da je metodom eliminacije iz Plinijevog popisa locirao *Glinditiones* na Nevesinjskom polju. Dio naučnika se ne slaže s tezom Ive Bojanovskog kako je prostor Nevesinjskog polja bio dio teritorija *Glinditiones*. Odgovor na pitanje teritoriji kojoj indigenoj zajednici je pripadalo Nevesinjsko polje bavili su se još Géza Alföldy, J. J. Wilkes, Svetlana Loma, Alka Domić Kunić i Dragana Grbić (Nikolić).

## Abbreviations

- AE* *L'année épigraphique* published in *Revue Archéologique* and separately (1888–).
- CIL 03* *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum III* (ed. Th. Mommsen), Berlin 1873: Supplementa 1889–1902.
- CIL 17* *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum XVII, Miliaria Imperii Romani / Pars quarta, Illyricum et provinciae Europae Graecae. Fasciculus primus, Miliaria provinciarum Raetiae et Norici* (eds. A. Kolb, G. Walsser; Gerhard Winkler, Manfred Gerhard Schmidt; Ulrich Jansen), Berlin 2005.

- EHD Epigraphische Datenbank Heidelberg (Service provider: Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften). <http://edh-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/home?&lang=de>.
- EDSC Epigraphik Datenbank Clauss/Slaby (Frankfurt). [http://db.edcs.eu/epigr/epi\\_de.php](http://db.edcs.eu/epigr/epi_de.php).
- ILJug *Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia inter annos MCMXL e MCMLX repertae et editae sunt* (ed. A. et J. Šašel), Situla 5, Ljubljana 1963 (št. 1–451); *Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia inter annos MCMLX e MCMLXX repertae et editae sunt* (ed. A. et J. Šašel), Situla 19, Ljubljana 1978 (št. 452–1222); *Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia inter annos MCMII et MCMXL repertae et editae sunt* (ed. A. et J. Šašel), Situla 25, Ljubljana 1986 (št. 1223–3128).
- LCL Loeb Classical Library (Harvard University Press)
- lupa UBI ERAT LUPA – Roman Stone Monuments (Friederike und Ortoľ Harl, Bild-datenbank zu antiken Steindenkmälern). <http://lupa.at>.
- TM *Trismegistos: An Interdisciplinary Portal of the Ancient World*.
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