

Recently discovered Basilica from Late Antiquity and a Tombstone Stela from Mramorak near Osmaci

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Abstract: The territory of north-eastern Bosnia is one of the least explored parts of the Western Balkans in archaeology. In 2015, the remains of a double-naved basilica from Late Antiquity were discovered in the village of Mramorak, at the archeological site of Crkvina, in the municipality of Osmaci. A comparative overview of similar findings from north-eastern Bosnia is given in the introductory part of this paper in order to comprehend the importance of this finding as much as possible. This is followed by specific research results of the basilica from Late Antiquity from Mramorak. It is important to note that one tombstone stela from the period of the Principate has been discovered at this site. This is a high-quality monument as seen by the portraits of the decedents and their successors. It is a beautiful example of Roman stelas that has been discovered in the territory of present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although the inscription field is physically damaged, the majority of the text can be reconstructed. This recently discovered basilica from Mramorak can be dated to the period from the 4th to 6th century, whereas the stela was probably produced in the 2nd century.

Keywords: Late Antiquity, Late Antiquity basilica, Christianity, north-eastern Bosnia, Mramorak, Osmaci, tombstone stela, the Principate, onomastics

Through historiography, many prominent scholars have explored the early history of Christianity, including the churches/basilicas from Late Antiquity as their most representative remains in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The pioneers in this field of study were the scholars who came to Bosnia and Herzegovina together with the occupation by the Austro-Hungary Empire in 1878. Those are Vaclav Radimsky,¹ Ćiro Truhelka² and Carl Patsch.³ Although many scholars dealt with this historical aspect during the 20th century, it is impossible to enumerate all of them in this paper. However, as the first

among equals, we should mention Dimitrije Sergejevski whose exploration and papers on the topic of the basilica from Late Antiquity, such as those from the sites of Klobuk,⁴ Nerezi and Dolac,⁵ as well as Mokro,⁶ have largely contributed to a better understanding of this problem. We should particularly emphasize his study on the basilica from Dabravine, published in the special edition of the National Museum Herald, where all of the aspects of this sacral building were addressed in detail.⁷ We should not forget to mention Đuro Basler as a person who was

¹Radimsky 1892a, 75-80; 1892b, 372-387.

²Truhelka 1892, 340-365.

³Patsch 1895, 285-292.

⁴Sergejevski 1954, 189-210 + Tab. 1-15.

⁵Sergejevski, 1959, 163-173.

⁶Sergejevski 1961, 211-228.

⁷Sergejevski 1956.

highly important for the study of this problem. Among many scholarly articles written during his career, we should emphasize two syntheses “*Arhitektura kasnoantičkog doba u Bosni i Hercegovini*” (Architecture of Late Antiquity in Bosnia and Herzegovina)⁸ and “*Kršćanska arheologija*” (Christian archaeology),⁹ reissued numerous times. Tomislav Anđelić also contributed to the study of this period, whose work is mostly associated with the excavations of basilicas from Late Antiquity in Cim and Žitomislići near Mostar.¹⁰ Finally, we should also mention Veljko Paškvalin who spent the majority of his career studying the early history of Christianity in the territory of present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina. His most important papers and studies on this topic were compiled into a book “*Kršćanstvo kasne antike u zaleđu Salone i Narone – Arheološka istraživanja kasnoantičkog kršćanstva u Bosni i Hercegovini*” (Christianity of Late Antiquity in the hinterland of Salona and Narona – Archaeological research of Christianity in Late Antiquity in Bosnia and Herzegovina).¹¹

There are more than seventy sites that contain the remains of Christian sacral architecture, more specifically basilicas or churches from Late Antiquity, in the territory of present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹² For more than two-thirds of these findings we can safely say that they belong to the remains of these buildings as there is specific evidence such as the foundations of

churches/basilicas, parts of stone furniture, and numerous other, larger or smaller artefacts that corroborate this fact. There is a smaller number of sites that are very likely to contain, or at least there is a real possibility, the remains of these sacral buildings, but due to different reasons, they have never been definitely corroborated.¹³ The traces that are present, as well as the accompanying findings, strongly indicate such an assumption, therefore it is only a matter of time before it becomes a fact. This is a respectable number, but what is more important it is certainly not definitive. Namely, the number of discovered churches from Late Antiquity keeps on growing and it is not a question of whether there are more of them, but of the time when they will be uncovered.¹⁴ The majority of these sacral buildings originate from the territory of central Bosnia and western Herzegovina. On the other hand, the territory of northern and north-eastern Bosnia are extremely poor in such a type of buildings.¹⁵ This is particularly true for the territory of north-eastern Bosnia, where there has been no finding of churches/basilicas from Late Antiquity. There are many reasons for this, but the cause could primarily be the chronic lack of systematic archaeological research throughout the period of the 20th century until today.

Unlike churches/basilicas from Late Antiquity in the neighboring littoral area, those in the territory of present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina have several common characteristics. They are primarily smaller in size and the majority of them have sides of equal length; they are square-shaped instead of the traditional rectangle. The construction quality was very poor as these churches were built very sloppily from spolia on older buildings to pagan tombstones. Such walls were usually plastered, rarely painted. The walls usually don't have right angles and are mostly oriented from east to west. Such sacral buildings are commonly followed by grave vaults, which represent one of the most consistent accompanying elements. A large number of

⁸ Basler 1972; German issue; Basler 1993.

⁹ Basler 1986; Basler 1990.

¹⁰ Anđelić 1974, 179-244; 1978, 629-640; 1980, 257-266.

¹¹ Paškvalin 2003.

¹² Veletovac 2013, 91-143; 2014, 277-299. We should certainly note the sites that will serve as an analogy in the analysis of the basilica from Late Antiquity from Mramorak, grave vault and accompanying finds. Some of the prominent sites are Blagaj-Japra which was a find site of the largest basilica in the territory of present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina (Basler 1975-76, 145-153), Vitrina (Borasi) near Ljubuški (Truhelka 1893, 676-677), Majdan near Mrkonjić Grad which was excavated by Vaclav Radimsky and Andrija Trokar in 1891 and 1892 (Radimsky 1893a, 332-337; Basler 1972, 92-94), Šiprage near Kotor Varoš where baron Schweiger discovered a church, its plan and finds were published by Vaclav Radimsky (1892, 75-78; Basler 1972, 115-116), Skelani near Srebrenica where two churches of different dimensions have been discovered (Patsch 1907, 460-463; Basler 1972, 113-115), Mogorjelo near Čaplina where Carl Patsch had discovered a double basilica as part of a complex from Late Antiquity (Basler 1958, 45-62; 1972, 97-100), Oborci near Donji Vakuf (Basler 1960, 59-72), etc.

¹³ More in: Veletovac 2013, footnotes 267, 285, 334, 345, 354.

¹⁴ See, for example, recently discovered basilica in Bakinci: Vujinović 2014.

¹⁵ Until recently, discoveries in Bakinci and well-known site in Ramići near Banja Luka have not identified churches/basilicas from Late Antiquity in this region.

churches/basilicas from Late Antiquity hold one or more of such tombs inside or adjacent to them.

Late Antiquity in the territory of north-eastern Bosnia in the light of archaeological findings

When it comes to the territory of the Osmaci municipality and the village Mramorak that is being referred to in this paper, no archaeological traces from Late Antiquity have been recorded.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the situation is quite different in larger administrative units (Kalesija and Zvornik) that are located in its vicinity. At the site of Gradina in Gornja Petrovica near Kalesija, there is a smaller fort from Late Antiquity, size 40 x 20 m, with visible stone walls joined by lime mortar, and smaller findings such as fragments of Roman dishes, tips of an iron arrow, as well as one worn-out Roman copper coin.¹⁷ Unlike Kalesija, many sites from Late Antiquity were registered in the wider territory of Zvornik. This is no surprise as this territory could have been the location of the road station *Ad Drinum* on the road *Sirmium – Argentaria*.¹⁸ Two ancient quarry pits have been discovered at the site of Bandera in the settlement Kučić kula that contain stone sarcophagus without a cover, parts of the base, and many other blocks that have never been finished during the construction.¹⁹ Not far away from this place, in the village Dardagani at the site of Sige, in the third pit that was part of the same ancient quarry, several findings from Late Antiquity have been discovered. We should certainly emphasize the monument dedicated to the cult of Mithra which

shows tauroctony on a stone relief.²⁰ Moreover, other discoveries at this location include parts of pillars, unprocessed stone blocks, sarcophaguses, Roman ceramic fragments, fibula, iron tools, as well as several bronze coins of Valentinian II (*Flavius Valentinianus Augustus*, 364–375) that enable us to date this site to the second half of the 4th century. The remains of a Roman settlement have been recorded in Gradac in Branjevo where we can observe the walls of a building, but this could also be the location of a smaller ancient fort on a Roman road.²¹ Several small findings were also found at this location, such as an iron pickaxe, iron dish, as well as an anepigraphic tombstone. The remains of a *refugium* from Late Antiquity have been discovered in Gradina in Sapna where we can observe poorly constructed walls and fragments of dark gray ceramics on the top of a hill.²² The remains of a larger building (dimensions about 80 x 40 m) have been discovered at the site of Kučiće in Donji Šepak. Although there is no definite corroboration, this may be a Roman *vila rustica* from the period from the 3rd to the 4th century.²³ The site of Ulice in Šetići also holds the remains of a Roman settlement. In the fields, we can observe the remains of walls, ceramics, and stones from the period from the 5th to the 6th century.²⁴ There is another fort from Late Antiquity of smaller dimensions at the site of Ograda in Diviči. We can observe parts of the walls of this fort, as well as stone staircases with an embedded altar dedicated to Jupiter.²⁵ There are the remains of a fort (dimensions about 25 x 15 m) above the village Skočić on a hill Kostur. Judging by the position, architecture and the very name Kostur (*Engl.* Skeleton), that probably originates from the Latin word *castrum*, it may be a fort from Late Antiquity.²⁶ The archaeology of this site has not been explored; thus apart from the fact that the building was made of crushed stone, we cannot say anything more about this site for certain. Four kilometers south-east from Mramorak, in the settlement Papraća, in 1930 a local teacher found in his backyard

¹⁶ Nevertheless, we should mention a prehistoric fort at the site of Gradina Kosovača in the present-day Osmaci municipality that was modified and upgraded by the Romans upon their arrival to suit their needs. The plateau inside the fort holds the remains of smaller buildings built by the Romans after taking control over the fort (More in: Radimsky 1895, 220–222; Also see: Fiala 1893, 152–153). We cannot safely say for how long this fort was used, given that subsequent research has never been undertaken. However, bearing in mind numerous other sites in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina and their continual habitation, we shouldn't dismiss the possibility that the fort in Gradina Kosovača was used for a long time in Late Antiquity.

¹⁷ Radimsky 1893, 483–484.

¹⁸ *Itin. Rom.* 472; Bojanovski 1981, 190, 177–185; 1988a, 156.

¹⁹ Bojanovski 1967, 193.

²⁰ Kosorić 1965, 49–56.

²¹ Vorliček 1896, 197–199; Bojanovski 1981, 153.

²² Bojanovski 1981, 152; Basler 1988, 91 = 6. 72.

²³ Paškvalin 1988, 93 = 6. 123.

²⁴ Čremošnik 1988, 98 = 6. 227.

²⁵ Sergejevski 1941 (1942), 3–4.

²⁶ Bojanovski 1981, 153; See also: Basler 1972, 59.

three pieces of Roman imperial coins belonging to emperors Marcus Aurelius (*Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Augustus* 161–180), Licinius (*Caius Valerius Licinianus Licinius Augustus*, as Augustus in the west 308–313, as Augustus in the east 313–324), and probably Constantius II (*Flavius Iulius Constantius Augustus*, together with his brothers Constantine II and Constans 337–340, only with Constans 340–350, and as a sole ruler 350–361).²⁷ The only finding from this period that would suggest the existence of a Christian architecture from Late Antiquity has been discovered at the site of Zamlaz near Zvornik. This is a grave vault from Late Antiquity, but without a bed (klina), that can be dated approximately to the period between the 4th and 6th century.²⁸ The discovery of this grave could indicate that the remains of a church or basilica from Late Antiquity are located nearby. Although quite plausible, it is only an assumption due to the lack of systematic archaeological exploration and any direct evidence.

It is clear that during the late Roman period and immediately after it, the territory of the present-day Osmaci municipality gravitated toward the region of Zvornik, rich in archaeological sites, where many Roman settlements and archaeological materials from Late Antiquity have been discovered. Settlement remains indicate that organized Christian communities may have lived in this territory with an established church organization, which could lead us further to conclude that a certain number of churches/basilicas from Late Antiquity could have existed in the territory of north-eastern Bosnia, around Kalesija, and particularly Zvornik.

Christianization and church organization in the territory of north-eastern Bosnia

Bearing in mind all the above, it is difficult to speak of the Christianization of this region, when it began and its intensity. First of all, this requires representative Christian findings from Late Antiquity, particularly written information, which are chronically lacking in this case. This unfav-

orable situation is additionally hampered by the lack of monuments dedicated to pagan cults that could be very useful in a comparative aspect. However, if we compare north-eastern Bosnia with neighboring regions in present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina, it seems very likely that the process of Christianization began quite late (the second half of 4th century), and that the intensity of this process was low until the end of the 5th century.²⁹ We should not forget to mention the fact that regardless of the chronic lack of archaeological findings, only one accidental finding of the provenance of Christianity has been recorded in this territory, which, compared to other territories, is insufficient. No matter how cynical the previous sentence sounds, there is still a significant number of such findings in the territory of present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina. When presenting the situation in this way, it would suggest that there are less Christian findings from Late Antiquity than it was usually believed by some members of the scholarly community.

Moreover, we should briefly address the issue of the church organization in Late Antiquity in the territory of far north-east of Bosnia. Unfortunately, addressing this issue is difficult due to the lack of written and archaeological traces. The current situation makes it difficult to form any specific opinion. Nevertheless, we can make some general conclusions. Bearing in mind that the majority of this territory mainly belonged to *Pannonia Secunda*, it seems reasonable that the center of this diocese was located in this province. Although this is not mentioned in any written source, certain solutions are imposed by themselves.³⁰ It is a well-known fact that there were three dioceses in the territory of the province of *Pannonia Secunda* in the second half of the 4th

²⁹ Numerous papers have been written about the church organization in the territory of present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina during Late Antiquity. The major contribution was given by Ante Škregro who addressed this problem directly or indirectly in several of his papers (Škregro 2005, 369–389; 2006, 69–82; 2007a, 59–92; 2007b, 9–24; 2007c, 357–365; 2008, 111–141; 2009, 191–204; 2010, 229–244; 2011a, 449–456; 2011b, 103–123; 2011c, 99–115; 2014, 171–184).

³⁰ It is possible that the territory of the Osmaci municipality, including Mramorak, belonged to the province of Dalmatia in the early Roman period, i.e., it was located in the border area between these two administrative units. Such conclusion is based on the recent research of disputable border line between Dalmatia and Pannonia (More in: Šaćić 2016, 91–95).

²⁷ Sergejevski 1932, 29.

²⁸ Bojanovski 1967, 193.

century: diocese centered in Cibalae (Vinkovci), diocese centered in Mursa (Osijek), and the most important diocese centered in Sirmium (Sremska Mitrovica).³¹ Diocese centered in Mursa cannot be associated with this territory given that it was located to the north of Cibalae and in this case, it would divide its territory, which of course is out of the question. It also isn't logical if we know that Cibalae and Simirum were closer to this territory than Mursa. The most probable solution is that this territory was under the jurisdiction of the bishop of Sirmium.³²

This territory quite logically gravitated toward Sirmium in terms of geography, politics, and economy. It seems that the entire region to the south of the Sava river up to Zvornik (present-day Semberija and the region around Zvornik) belonged to the ager of Sirmium colony (*coloniae Sirmi*).³³ Bearing in mind that ecclesiastical territorial organization mostly corresponded to the civilian administrative units in Late Antiquity, then it is reasonable to assume that this territory could be an integral part of the diocese of Sirmium, and archdiocese later on. As already mentioned, road station *Ad Drinum* on the road *Sirmium – Argentaria*,³⁴ is usually located in the region of Zvornik connecting it directly with the provincial metropolis, and one of the most important cities in the Empire in Late Antiquity. Although not a definitive proof, this fact quite logically relies on the previous opinion and additionally supports it. Therefore, apart from connecting the metropolis with the mining district of Argentaria, this road was at the same time important for connecting the region within the ager of Sirmium, as well as the diocese of Sirmium later on.

However, this being true, such situation could have lasted only up to 441 AD when the bishop of Sirmium had to leave his seat before the in-

vasion of the Huns when the town was heavily destroyed.³⁵ After the retreat of the Huns due to the defeat at the Nedao river in 454 AD and the final breakup of the Hunnic Empire established by Attila, Sirmium was dominated by the Germanic peoples for more than one hundred years. During this period, the Ostrogoths and Gepids held Sirmium under their control on two occasions. It remained under the control of the Gepids until 567 AD when it fell under Eastern Roman authority.³⁶ No bishop of Sirmium is mentioned in the sources from this period, therefore it is not too far-fetched to believe that the episcopal see of Sirmium remained vacant during this time.³⁷ As soon as the Roman government was established in 567 AD, the ecclesiastical organization led by Bishop Sebastian was restored. Nevertheless, such situation did not remain for too long as already in 582 Sebastian had to flee from the Avars. This marked the definitive collapse of the ecclesiastical organization in south Pannonia.³⁸

The results of archaeological excavations at the site of Crkvina in the village Mramorak

“Our country Herzeg-Bosnia holds many antiquities. Some are crushed on the surface by the passing of time, others are waiting for their resurrection in the earth; some are distributed around, and we, the natives, are standing with our arms folded, peacefully looking at all of this. That is, faith and god, our shame and disgrace. Our antiquities that hold the past of our predecessors and us, are going to waste.”³⁹

These are the words with which Petar Mirković began his paper in the first issue of the National Museum Herald of Bosnia and Herzegovina back in 1889. Today, 129 years later, nothing changed much. Our antiquities are still being

³¹ Bratož 1986, 384-385; 1987, 156. On Christianization, development of early Christian communities and diocese organization in *Pannonia Secunda* see: Jarak 1994, 17-39.

³² One of the possibilities is that the territory of north-eastern Bosnia, or at least certain border areas, was under the jurisdiction of the bishop of Cibalae. The fourth, and the least probable, option is that this territory was located in a separate diocese unknown in the written sources.

³³ Bojanovski 1988b, 341-342; More on the northern region of present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Roman period in: Bojanovski 1977, 147-154; 1988b, 325-344.

³⁴ More on road Sirmium – Argentaria in: Bojanovski 1981, 177-185.

³⁵ *Prisc. Frag.* 11, 330-335.

³⁶ See an overview of Sirmium during the second half of the 5th century until the arrival of the Avars and its final collapse in: Mirković 2006, 99-104.

³⁷ The same can be said for seats in Cibalae, Mursa, and Iovia Botivo. (Gračanin 2013, 161)

³⁸ Although no written sources explicitly mention Sebastian as the bishop of Sirmium, from the context of the circumstances we can conclude that it was highly plausible. More on Bishop Sebastian in: Popović 2003, 265-278.

³⁹ Mirković 1889, 12.

distributed around and left to waste, while those antiquities that remained in the country are still waiting for a better time to see the light of the day.

All recent explorations, as well as the protection of the existing findings, mostly depend on the initiative and personal commitment of certain enthusiasts. One of them is Željko Božić, a priest from Osmaci. In 2013 he initiated archaeological excavation at the site of Crkvine, in a small mountainous village Mramorak in the Osmaci municipality.⁴⁰

Mramorak is located about 5 km from Osmaci. Today this is an abandoned village on the eastern slopes of Bišina mountain, 629 m above sea level. The river of the same name flows below this village and pours into the Spreča river several kilometers downstream. Bišina mountain is abundant with unexplored and unknown material remains, not only from the antiquity but also from the medieval period. Its top holds the remains of forts that the local inhabitants call Gradina (hill forts). After decades of removing stones from this site, only the foundations of three buildings of circular shape remain visible.

The first out of two discovered sections of the Roman road is located immediately below Gradina. The remains of this road from east to west are visible for about 550 m. The existence of 2 km-long Roman road section has been determined at about 900 m to the north-west from Gradina, at the site of Suljina Voda. Unlike the road section below Gradina, whose upper layer consists of small stones, the road section at Suljina Voda is paved with large stone blocks at certain locations.⁴¹

There are three tombstone necropolises in the area of the village Mramorak. The largest of them is located at the site of Raskršće, about 500 m to the west from Gradina.⁴² A large number of tom-



Fig. 1 Mramorak on the map of Bosnia and Herzegovina

bstones, that are scarce in north-eastern Bosnia, clearly suggests that this region was inhabited in the middle ages. The site of Crkvine is located to the north from Gradina, only about 100 m away.

The archaeological excavations at the site of Crkvine can be divided into two phases. Explorations in the first phase during 2013 and 2014 were not systematic and planned. They were not carried out by experts in archaeological excavation and did not have sufficient support by the competent institutions. The discovery of a tombstone in 2014 represents a turning point as it initiates the second phase of archaeological excavations. Namely, under the financial support of the Osmaci municipality, archaeological explorations at the site of Crkvine were conducted during the summer of 2015 by a team of experts from the Museum of Semberija from Bijeljina, led by MA Mirko Babić, in cooperation with the advisor of the National Museum in Užice, Serbia, MA Ljiljana Mandić. On this occasion, it was determined that the site of Crkvine holds the remains of a double-naved basilica from Late Antiquity. However, due to the lack of financial resources, the excavations were aborted, and their results have never been published and presented to the public. Moreover, conservation works have not

destroyed during the roadworks that divided the necropolis into three parts.

⁴⁰ The Osmaci municipality is a small post-Dayton municipality in the north-eastern part of Republika Srpska. Its total area is 78.67 km². It was named after the largest village and the center of the municipality. In the east, the Osmaci municipality borders with the Zvornik municipality, in the south it borders with the Šekovići municipality, and in the west and north, it borders with the Kalesija municipality. Bošković 2013, 17.

⁴¹ The dimensions of one of the stone blocks that I have measured is 11.6 x 6.8 cm.

⁴² This necropolis consists of 34 tombstones. Initially, there were more of these tombstones, but one part of them was



Fig. 2 The view of the narthex and southern nave



Fig. 3 The view on the basilica's naos

been carried out, which led to the decay of the basilica. One of the objectives of this paper is to present the results of the past explorations to the wider expert public and encourage new archaeological explorations, which will help us get a better insight about this, so far unknown site.

The orientation of the basilica from Late Antiquity in Mramorak is west-east. Its dimensions are 17.60 x 11 m. Whereas the dimensions of the apse are 4.90 x 2.20 m.⁴³ Compared to the biggest basilica that has been discovered in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the basilica in Mramorak is 2.4 times smaller.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, if we compare it to the smallest discovered basilica, we can notice that it is bigger somewhat more than 2 times.⁴⁵

The basilica consists of a naos with apse (room A), narthex (room B) and two south naves (rooms C and D). In the eastern navel out of two south naves, there is a grave vault (room D).

We can observe two construction phases of the basilica, older and younger phase. The central part of the basilica (room A) and the room

with the grave belongs to the older phase. The construction technique clearly shows that the narthex and southern nave were subsequently added, i.e., they belong to the younger construction phase of the basilica.

The basilica is made of crushed stone with cut edges, whereas lime mortar was used as the binding agent. Apart from crushed stone, properly cut rectangular flowstone blocks were used only for the construction of the apse. Basilica's naos was built using a technique called *opus incertum*, where the stone is layered, while *opus spicatum* is noticeable in certain parts of narthex and southern nave. The walls of the basilica are well-preserved and at certain places can be up to 1.80 m. The exception is only the central part of the apse and a smaller part of the outer wall of the southern nave where the wall is damaged. Compared to other explored basilicas in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the walls of the basilica in Mramorak are in the best state of preservation.⁴⁶ The walls are 0.70 m wide. With the only exception being the outer wall of the narthex which is 0.63 m.

The inside of the basilica is plastered. We can make such a conclusion based on the plaster remains visible on the inside of the apse. However, nothing makes us assume that the walls were plastered on the outside as well. The floor of the basilica had a layer of plaster preserved within the naos.

The entrance into the basilica was on the western side originally, but this changed after the addition of the narthex and southern nave. The front door may have been located at the place

⁴³ The aforementioned data were partially taken from the unpublished text by Ljiljana Mandić. (Mandić 2015, 2) This document, scarce in information, was supposed to be sent to the Institute for the protection of the cultural, historical and natural heritage of Republika Srpska requesting the basilica in Mramorak to be proclaimed protected cultural heritage. However, the aforementioned document finally reached this institution thanks to the efforts of one of the authors. Apart from this document, I used the information from the persons who participated in the excavations from the very first day, particularly Milan Popović from Gojčin and Ljubiša Erić from Pantelići.

⁴⁴ The largest basilica from Late Antiquity has been discovered in the village Blagaj, near the mouth of the Japra river into the Sana. Its length was about 42 m. More in: Basler 1972, 67-69.

⁴⁵ So far the smallest discovered basilica from Late Antiquity in Bosnia and Herzegovina is located in Vitina near Ljubuški. It is square-shaped and only 8.20 m long. (Truhelka 1893, 676-677)

⁴⁶ The walls are on average about 1 m tall. The walls of the basilica in Majdan, near Mrkonjić Grad, have been in the best state of preservation, which were up to 1.50 m tall. Basler 1972, 92.

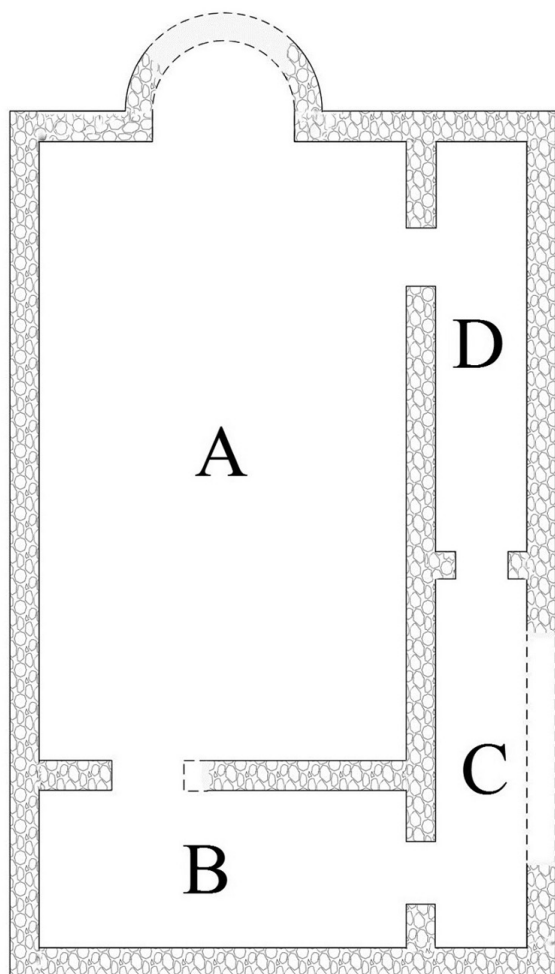


Fig. 4 The base of the basilica in Mramorak

where a part of the wall of the southern nave is missing. This means that the entrance into the basilica in Mramorak was on the southern side. The only basilicas with southern entrance from Late Antiquity in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been discovered in Dabravine⁴⁷ and in the village Šiprage, near Kotor Varoš.⁴⁸ However, a certain number of discovered basilicas is quite damaged, so it was impossible to determine the exact location of front doors.⁴⁹

The central room of the basilica – the naos – is about 13.70 m long and 6.80 m wide. Given that no remains of altar rails have been found, we can assume that it was made of wood since a large amount of charcoal has been discovered

⁴⁷ Ibid., 78-82.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 115-116.

⁴⁹ An example is a basilica in Skelani (Skelani II). (Basler 1972, 114-115)



Fig. 5 Tombstone at the moment of discovery

during the excavation at the location where altar rails was supposed to be placed.⁵⁰

During the archaeological excavation in the naos, immediately adjacent to the door that led to the naos, a significant finding of this archaeological site has been discovered. This is a Principate tombstone that was used as a building material in this case. During the excavation, the tombstone was split into two parts. Depictions in the niches and inscription field on the monument were turned upwards.

The monument was broken after it fell on the ground. Given that the ceilings of basilicas from Late Antiquity in Bosnia and Herzegovina were mostly made of wood, we should not dismiss the possibility that the monument was not part of the ceiling. Moreover, the monument would probably be broken into many smaller pieces, not only into two parts. The position of the broken pieces suggests that before it was broken, the monument was in the upright position.

The southern nave, with an approximately rectangular base, was about 7.50 m long, whereas its width varies from 2.25 m in the south-western corner to 2.45 at the grave entrance. The narthex (dimensions 6.80 x 3.20 m) was accessed through the southern nave through 1.35 m wide doors. There was a sitting bench (0.35 m high and 0.60 m wide) alongside western the wall of this room.

In the south-eastern part of the basilica, immediately adjacent to the apse, a rectangular

⁵⁰ The basilica in Mogorjelo and both basilicas in Skelani indicate that altar rails were built entirely out of wood in some cases. Basler 1972, 98-115; Patsch 1907, 461-463.

grave with partially preserved vaulted ceiling has been discovered in the room D. This room could be accessed through the 1.27 m wide passage in the southern nave or through the 1.11 m wide passage from the naos. “The grave was built using flat stone, in many lines with crushed stone and lime mortar.”⁵¹ The vault of the grave was built using right-angle cut flowstone blocks. Grave dimensions are 2.30/3.70 x 0.89/1.35 m, whereas its width is 0.92 m. The entrance to the grave is step-like, 0.70 m long and 0.65 m wide.⁵²

There are two stone-lined beds⁵³ alongside the southern and western grave wall between which there is a recess similar to a canal. The purpose of these canals in grave vaults from Late Antiquity remains unknown.⁵⁴ Although no traces of plaster have been found, based on the explored graves from Late Antiquity, we should assume that the interior of the grave was plastered, but that this layer was worn out over time. Skeletal remains of five persons have been found in the grave. Scattered bones suggest that the grave was subsequently opened.

The only discovered grave goods are glass dishes and one small iron knife. This quantity of grave goods inside this grave vault is no surprise given that such findings have been discovered in only 22 graves out of over 70 grave vaults from Late Antiquity.⁵⁵

Glass dish has only been found in a grave in the village Vrdolje near Konjic,⁵⁶ and glass fragments have been discovered in Karahodže⁵⁷ and Čitluk.⁵⁸ Apart from the grave in Mramorak, an iron knife has been discovered only in a grave in Oborci.⁵⁹

When it comes to movable findings, a large quantity of pottery and glass fragments, pliers, a lot of iron wedges, and many iron products of undefined purpose have been discovered in the debris on the floor of the basilica. However, as



Fig. 6 Skeletal remains discovered inside the grave

the excavations were unplanned, it is impossible to list the rooms in which certain artefacts were discovered.

These approximately circular buildings near the basilica which are still unexplored may represent grave vaults from Late Antiquity. Namely, the existence of a grave vault inside, as well as immediately adjacent to a basilica from Late Antiquity is a common phenomenon in the Roman province of Dalmatia.⁶⁰ This is explained by the fact that Christians from Late Antiquity preferred to be buried next to the burial sites of Christian martyrs.⁶¹ The same explanation applies for the presence of many persons in a grave. Scattered bones suggest that the grave had been opened, meaning that there were subsequent burials, as in the example of a basilica in Oborci.⁶² A large quantity of charcoal discovered during the archaeological excavations that can be seen around the remains of grave vaults suggests undoubtedly that the basilica and the graves had been destroyed in a fire.

⁵¹ Mandić 2015, 2.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Beds are bearings for placing decedents. (Paškvalin 1959, 150)

⁵⁴ Paškvalin 1959, 150; 2003, 82. According to Busuladžić, the canal served to carry in the deceased person (Busuladžić 2012, 160)

⁵⁵ Bujak / Lepić 2014, 200, 204.

⁵⁶ Paškvalin 1959, 150; 2003, 80-84.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 97.

⁵⁸ Bojanovski 1964, 109.

⁵⁹ Basler 1960, 66.

⁶⁰ Paškvalin 1959, 159; 2003, 76; Veletovac 2014, 295.

⁶¹ Casiday / Norris 2008, 719-721.

⁶² Basler 1960, 66-68.

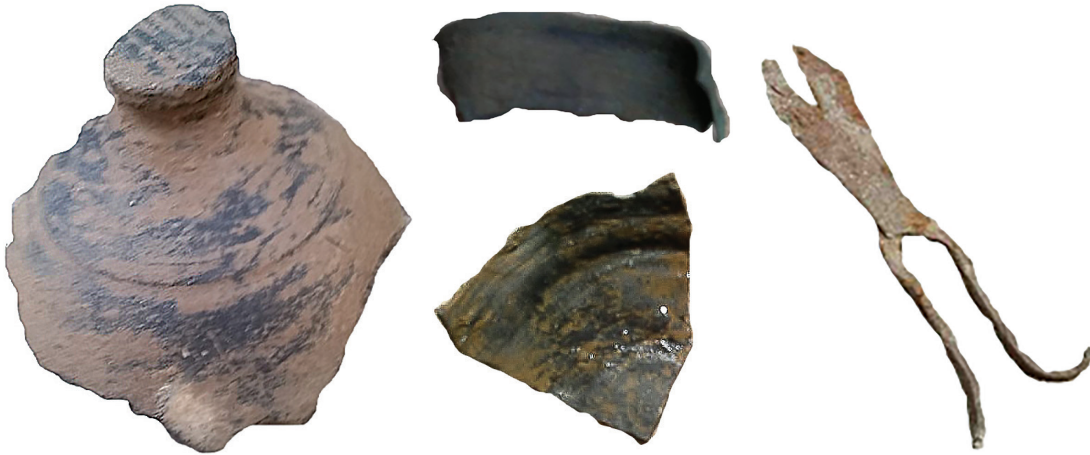


Fig. 7 Movable finds from the basilica in Mramorak

Unplanned and largely amateurish excavation interferes with the dating of the basilica in Mramorak. Nevertheless, after analyzing similar findings in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as circumstances in late Roman Empire, we can reach a certain timeframe when this ecclesiastical building was built.

The period between the 4th and 6th century is taken as the period when Early Christian basilica emerged in Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁶³ Grave vaults that appear within, as well as around basilicas are very important for dating the emergence of Early Christian ecclesiastical buildings. Based on grave goods, Đuro Basler believed that grave vaults emerged in the 4th century and that they were particularly intensively built during the 5th century.⁶⁴ Paškvalin supports a similar theory stating that grave vaults emerged during the 4th century, but their construction reached its end probably by the end of the 5th century with the beginning of the Gothic rule in this territory. Moreover, Paškvalin rightfully noticed the relationship of grave vaults with Early Christian basilicas. Basilicas with one or more grave vaults are identified by Paškvalin as the buildings that emerged in the 4th and 5th century, whereas those basilicas without grave vaults emerged in the period of the 6th century.⁶⁵

One of the main characteristics of Late Antiquity architecture is the use of building materials from older buildings, such as the tombstone

from the Principate period.⁶⁶ Namely, the new state religion broke ties with the pagan customs and knowingly destroyed all heritage of classical Roman period.

Given the discovery of the Roman tombstone stela in the basilica from Mramorak that served as a building material, we should exclude the 4th century as its period of origin. Namely, pagans are still an important element in the Late Roman Empire in the 4th century. This is particularly prominent in less urban areas such as Mramorak in Late Antiquity. Only at the beginning of the 5th-century polytheists became marginalized in the Roman society and persecuted. Moreover, if we accept the aforementioned theory on grave vaults of two leading experts in Early Christian architecture in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina as accurate, then it means that the basilica could not have been built in the 6th century. I believe that we can conclude that the central part of the basilica from Mramorak was built in the 5th century, whereas the narthex and the southern nave were added later, possibly in the 6th century. However, only a further detailed research would provide a definite answer to this question.

In my opinion, the recently discovered basilica from Mramorak had to be a part of the settlement that had formed in the immediate vicinity of Gradina. The purpose of this hill fort was probably to defend the traffic on the ancient road whose remains have been discovered to the north-west from Gradina. Although not fully explored, the recently discovered road section had

⁶³ Veletovac 2014, 277.

⁶⁴ Basler 1960, 68.

⁶⁵ Paškvalin 1959, 159; 2003, 111-124.

⁶⁶ Basler 1972, 35; Stewart 1954, 17.

certainly been part of a wider network of roads in the Roman province of Dalmatia. One road section connecting Salona with the mining district of Argentaria apparently went further south in the region of Breza–Vareš.⁶⁷ Passing near Olovo and Kladanj, it descended into Bišina, where its remains have been confirmed. The aforementioned road went in parallel with Sajtovička rijeka up to Suljine Vode, from where we can trace its remains up to the entrance into the hamlet Like near Osmaci. Passing near Gradina in Kosovača,⁶⁸ this road apparently joined with the road that connected Sirmium with Argentaria.

The discovery of a double-naved basilica with a grave in Mramorak, as well as the discovery of an ancient road in its vicinity, represents a very important scientific finding. This undoubtedly indicates that the territory of north-eastern Bosnia, which was believed to be “without a settlement with only several passable roads to the valley of the Drina river” during the entire 20th century, was inhabited in the Late Antiquity.⁶⁹

Tombstone stela from Mramorak near Osmaci

As already pointed out in this paper, this tombstone was discovered in 2015 in the village Mramorak in the Osmaci municipality. In the context of the classification of sepulchral monuments, we should note that this is a Roman tombstone stela. This recently discovered monument is 165 cm long and 72 cm wide. The upper and lower niches are both 45 cm long. Massive physical damages have been documented on this stela as the result of its secondary usage. The stela is broken off into two parts. This monument might have been used for secondary purposes already in Late Antiquity when it was used as a building material. However, the stela could have suffered damages after its discovery in 2015. Although the inscription field has been preserved as a single unit, we can observe surface cracks as the result of strokes by a blunt object. The left central part of the inscription field is chipped off. Luckily, the text was carved deeply so the major-

ity of the text can be reconstructed. The monument is currently kept in one of the rooms of a local Orthodox church in Osmaci.

When it comes to damages, we should first of all note that the upper part of the stela, represented by two rows of shallow niches with images, was chipped off from the inscription field. The first niche displays a relief with three persons. This is probably a couple with a child between them. All three persons are wearing tunics with long sleeves. The left person is holding the child in the right hand and the right person is holding the child in the left hand. The face of the upper left person has been destroyed. We can assume that it was the wife, i.e., the mother, because the left person is carrying a silver anchor-like fibula decorated with chains and pendants in the form of ivy leaves. Such fibulae appear on female images carved on tombstones discovered in the valley of the Drina river (Bajina Bašta, Voljevica, Crvica, Skelani, Seča Reka, Vrhpolje near Ljubovija).⁷⁰ The female person had her hair pulled up. The right male person is holding a *testamentum* (scroll) that represents his final will. Under this relief, we can observe the same square niche depicting a relief with two persons. The images carved in the second niche are not depicting decedents but successors erecting the stela. The second niche is broken in half so that the bottom part of the carved figures remained along the inscription field. An animal motif separates the niche with the decedents from the niche with their successors. Three carved animals are clearly observed. At first, it seems as a hunting scene, so the central image could represent a rabbit, and the two other animals are dogs attacking from the left and right side. As common on the Roman stelae, the niches are bordered with Corinthian columns. These are smooth semi-columns with stylized Corinthian capitals with a similar ornament on the stela's tympanum. A stylized grapevine is depicted along the semi-columns.

The stela is apparently made of limestone. The region of Podrinje is rich in this type of stone, and local workshops in the wider area of eastern Bosnia used this stone abundantly in the antiquity. In terms of iconography, a similar stela has been discovered at the site of Bosanska Crkvina

⁶⁷ Pašalić 1960, 50.

⁶⁸ For more information about Gradina in Kosovača see note 16.

⁶⁹ Basler 1972, 81.

⁷⁰ Popović 2010, 95-110.

near Srebrenica.⁷¹ According to the classification of ancient stelae in the territory of present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina made by Veljko Paškvalin, this would be type E (variant C) stela. To this group of stela variants, Paškvalin included rectangular stelae with an added cornice with two niches in two rows on the front side with elements of semi-columns.⁷²

The square inscription field had a double molded frame. The inscription field with frame is 60 cm long. Without the frame, the inscription field is 43 cm long and 40 wide. The text is carved in eight lines. The central part of the inscription field has been destroyed as the result of human factor which hinders the reading of the inscription. The letters are quite even suggesting that they were carved by a good local workshop. Horizontal lines representing text lines on the monument are not visible.

Text reconstruction:

D(is) M(anibus)

T(iberio?) Cl(audio) Licen[tian]is?

T(iberio?) Cl(audi) L[----] f(ilio)[an]no II p(atri)

q(ui) [vix(it)] [an]n(os) XXX [---] et n?

⁵ *IVSP X? viv(o) s(ibi) et T(?)*

[---]ant[a]e con(iugi) p(ientissimae)

[vi]vis posuit

H(oc) m(onumentum) h(eredes) n(on) s(equatur).⁷³

Translation: To the Spirits of the Departed. To Tiberius Claudius Licentianus, the son of Tiberius Claudius L(?) who was two years of age, of the father who lived thirty years and ... ten ... During his lifetime and T(...?) the most pious wife erected... This monument does not belong to the successors.

Line 1: The letters are carved in square capitals. **Line 2:** The first two words are abbreviated, while the third word that represents the cognomen was carved in full form. The letters TIAN are missing. There are punctuation marks between the letters in the form of a dot (*punctum distinguens*). **Line 3:** The first two words are abbreviated as in the previous line. In the inscription, the *punctum*

distinguens is preserved only after the second word, but we can assume that the first two words were also separated by this mark. Only the first letter L of the cognomen, the third word, is preserved. The fourth word *annus* was carved in the dative case, but the first syllable is destroyed. It is noticeable that the letter O is smaller, which is not rare in Latin epigraphy. The words *filius* and *pater* are abbreviated. **Line 4:** Only the letter Q is visible at the beginning of the line. The bottom line of the letter is destroyed so it is reminiscent of the letter O. The second word *vivo*, carved in the third person singular indicative perfect active – *vexit* is destroyed. Only the letter X can be discerned in the inscription field. Of the third word, only the letter N is preserved. On the other hand, the number 3 is clearly visible. Conjunction ET is carved in ligature. The letter N at the end of the line is smaller. In this case, we should not dismiss the possibility that it is the letter M that might have represented the beginning of the plural form of the word *mēnsis* (month). There is also a possibility that a stonemason made a mistake and carved N instead of M. **Line 5:** This line is destroyed the most. It is possible that the first letters of this line are a continuation of the word started in the previous line. There are the remains of two transverse lines in the middle of the line that could represent the letter or the number X. The verb *vivo* was carved as an abbreviation. The pronoun *sibi* was also carved as an abbreviation. Conjunction ET is also carved in ligature. The letter T at the end of the line appears as an abbreviation. It could be an abbreviation for some Roman female name such as *Tulia*. The name must have been Roman since local names don't appear in inscriptions in an abbreviated form. *Praenomina* rarely appear with female persons in provincial Roman epigraphy, so in this case, it could be *nomen gentilicium*. If decedents were immigrants, then this *nomen gentilicium* could be of non-imperial origin, which certainly complicates its reconstruction. **Line 6:** The first word carved in full form cannot be reconstructed because it lacks at least two words. We can only assume that it was a female *cognomen* as suggested by the following text reconstruction of this monument. Only first three letters are carved of the dative of the word *coniūnx*, as customary. The superlative of the word *pia* was carved as an abbreviation. **Line 7:** At least two letters at the

⁷¹ Patsch 1907, 431-470.

⁷² Paškvalin 2012, 142.

⁷³ The inscription is also to be published in the journal "Bratstvo", the yearbook of the Society "Sveti Sava" from Belgrade. However, this article represents revised and supplemented version of the inscription reading and analysis.



Fig. 8 Stela's tympanum with two niches



Fig. 9 Inscription field

(Photo: M. Popović)⁷⁴

beginning of the line are missing. These could be the letters VI, the first part of the word *vivis* (the second person singular indicative active of the verb *vivo*). The verb *pono* that appears in the third person singular indicative active, i.e., in the form *posuit*, was carved without an abbreviation. The letters are somewhat larger than in the previous two lines. **Line 8:** The letters in the final line are quite smaller than the letters in the previous lines. We get the impression that the stonemason did not arrange the carving space on the inscription field. All the words are abbreviated, which is not unusual because they are standard abbreviations. There are punctuation marks between the second and third word and the third and fourth word in the form of a dot (*punctum distinguens*). Although carved on the edge of the inscription field, the letters don't go over the provided space for the text.

The text reconstruction is quite uncertain due to the physical damage suffered by the inscription field. The invocation of the Manes (deity of

the afterlife – the veneration of the dead), which is customary among Roman tombstones. The name of the father was carved in the second line. The full onomastic formula was undoubtedly carved. The preserved letters on the monument suggest that the son's *cognomen* was *Licentianus* (carved in the dative). This Roman *nomen* has already been corroborated in the Roman province of Dalmatia.⁷⁵ Father's name was also carved in its full form. We can assume that his *cognomen* was *Licentianus* or some derivative of *cognomen Licentinus*. Unfortunately, the preserved letters don't allow us to make a more precise reconstruction. Judging by this reconstruction, the son died at the age of two. The father who erected the monument died at the age of thirty. It is possible that the word *mēnsis* (month) was carved in the fifth line in the plural form. Such conclusion is suggested by the fact that there is a Roman number ten in the middle of the fifth line. Mentioning years and months is common in the formulation *qui vixit* that is noticeable in the fourth line on this monument.

⁷⁴ Figs. 2-7 are made from the authors of this paper. We would like to thank Mr. Milan Popović from Gojčin for providing the photos 8-10.

⁷⁵ Alföldy 1969, 230; Mócsy 1983, 164.



Fig. 10 Tombstone stela from Mramorak near Osmaci (Photo: M. Popović)

Mother's name was carved at the end of the fifth and the beginning of the sixth line. Unfortunately, it cannot be reconstructed, but it is certain that only *nomen gentilicium* and *cognomen* were carved. The abbreviation HMHNS appearing at the end of the inscription suggests that this grave is not inherited. This abbreviation rarely appears in inscriptions in the inland of the Roman province of Dalmatia.⁷⁶ We should also point out that the Claudian *nomen* is extremely rare in the in-

land of the Roman Dalmatia. Judging by the onomastics, we can assume that these persons are immigrants to the north-eastern Bosnia.

When it comes to the dating of the monument, we can only claim indisputably that *terminus ante quem* of monument's origin is the period of the rule of Emperor Claudius (41–54 AD). The abbreviation *h(oc) m(onumentum) h(eredes) n(on) s(equatur)* suggests the 1st century as it appears in Dalmatia mostly on inscriptions from the 1st century. The full onomastic formula is mostly associated with the 1st and 2nd centuries.

⁷⁶ Paškvalin 2012, 30.

On the other hand, the images (clothes and jewelry) carved on the monument can be associated with the 2nd and 3rd centuries. Therefore, if we observe all of the aforementioned elements, we can conclude that this monument can be dated to the first half of the 2nd century. Finally, we should point out that this stela is one of the most representative examples of ancient epigraphic monuments that have been discovered in the territory of present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina. Its value is even more greater given that this part of Bosnia and Herzegovina is extremely scarce in epigraphic monuments.⁷⁷ Therefore, we should treat this archaeological finding as the source for studying the territory of north-eastern Bosnia in the period of Principate in the context of municipalization and Romanization.

Conclusion

The double-naved basilica from Late Antiquity discovered in Mramorak in the Osmaci municipality represents an important scientific discovery for the study of the territory of present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina in the period of antiquity. Although the existence of more than seventy sites of Early Christian sacral architecture has been determined in the territory of present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina, they are not distributed evenly throughout the country. We should point out that the territory of north-eastern Bosnia is scarce in such findings, which increases the value of the remains of the architecture from Late Antiquity in the territory of the Osmaci municipality. The dimensions of the recently discovered basilica are 17.60 x 11 m, whereas basilica's apse is 4.90 x 2.20 m. Two construction phases of different age have been determined. The second phase, in fact, represents the addition to the already existing building. This indicates that the

number of worshippers increased in time thus requiring expansion of the basilica.

In the context of this topic, it is important to emphasize that compared to other explored basilicas in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the walls of the basilica in Mramorak are in the best state of preservation. *Terminus post quem* of the basilica's origin is the 4th century, while *terminus ante quem* is the 6th century. When it comes to church organization, this basilica could have belonged to the diocese with the center in Sirmium. We can make such a conclusion based on the fact that the basilica is geographically close to Zvornik (road station *Ad Drinum* on the road *Sirmium – Argentaria* can be located in Zvornik) whose wider territory gravitated toward Sirmium.

The discovery of this basilica will initiate new scientific questions that we hope will be answered to. One of those questions is certainly the cultural and historical development of this part of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the period of the Roman rule to Late Antiquity. Namely, a large Roman settlement has not been corroborated in the wider territory of north-eastern Bosnia. The discovery of a Roman tombstone stela in the basilica's building complex is indicative of this fact. Although the stela has not been discovered *in situ*, its discovery could indicate municipalization and urbanization of north-eastern Bosnia. The origin of its initial location is difficult to determine, but the degree of preservation clearly shows that the monument had been brought from a large distance. It is one of only four epigraphic monuments discovered in this territory. Stela is very beautifully crafted and it is one of the most beautiful examples of sepulchral monuments discovered in Bosnia and Herzegovina in general. Portraits of decedents and their successors and hunting images are carved on the monument. The inscription field is large and richly decorated. The onomastic analysis shows that the decedents had Claudian *nomen*. This is an imperial *nomen*, quite rare in the inland of the Roman province of Dalmatia. The territory south of mountain Majevisa, where the village Mramorak or the location of this stela is located, belonged to this province in the Principate (1st – 3rd century). In case of this tombstone stela from Mramorak, these persons could have been immigrants, possibly Italic people.

⁷⁷ This has been the only discovered monument in the region of Osmaci and Kalesija. In the territory of neighboring Zvornik, only two epigraphic monuments have been discovered (*ILJug I*, 82; *ILJug I*, 84). One monument has been discovered in the territory of Semberija (*AE* 1925, 134 = *ILJug III* 2960). These data demonstrate the importance of this finding in the context of studying ancient history of north-eastern Bosnia.

Finally, we can conclude that the archeological site of Crkvina in the village Mramorak in the Osmaci municipality is a site of paramount importance. Therefore, this site certainly deserves more scientific attention. Namely, the discovery of the basilica from Late Antiquity corroborates scholarly theses that Sirmium, one of the most important Roman administrative centers on the Balkans, had a strong influence in the territory of north-eastern Bosnia. The discovery of the tombstone and other archeological material in Mramorak represents a new challenge for scholars dealing with ancient archeology and history.

Translation: Samra Čebirić, MA

Sažetak

Novootkrivena kasnoantička crkva i nadgrobna stela iz mjesta Mramorak kod Osmaka

U selu Mramorak, na arheološkom lokalitetu Crkvina u opštini Osmaci, 2015. godine pronađeni su ostaci dvobrodne kasnoantičke bazilike. Treba istaći da je prostor sjeveroistočne Bosne siromašan ovakvim nalazima, pa je stoga vrijednost pronalaska ostataka kasnoantičke arhitekture na prostoru opštine Osmaci posebno značajna. Dimenzije novootkrivene bazilike su 17,60 x 11 metara, a apsida bazilike je dimenzija 4,90 x 2,20 metara. Utvrđeno je da su u gradnji bazilike postojale dvije faze koje se razlikuju po starosti. Kako bi se što bolje mogao sagledati značaj ovog pronalaska, u uvodnom dijelu ovog rada urađen je komparativni pregled sličnih nalaza u regiji sjeveroistočne Bosne. Potom su navedeni konkretni rezultati istraživanja kasnoantičke bazilike iz Mramoraka. S tim u vezi treba istaći da je bazilika građena od lomljenog kamena sa pritesanim ivicama, dok je kao vezivni materijal korišćen krečni malter. Jedino su za izgradnju apsida, pored lomljenog kamena, korišćeni pravilno isječeni blokovi sige, oblika pravougaonika. Naos bazilike je zidan tehnikom *opus incertum*, sa kamenom redanim u slojevima, dok se na pojedinim dijelovima priprate i južnog broda pojavljuje i *opus spicatum*. Zidovi bazilike su dobro očuvani i na pojedinim mjestima dostižu visinu od 1,80 metara. Izuzetak je samo središnji dio apsida i manji dio spoljnog zida južnog broda, gdje

postoje oštećenja zida. U kontekstu ove teme važno je podvući da, u poređenju sa drugim istraženim bazilikama na prostoru Bosne i Hercegovine, bazilika u Mramorku ima najveću visinu očuvanosti zidova. U jugoistočnom dijelu bazilike, neposredno uz apsidu, nalazi se prostorija D u kojoj je otkrivena pravougaona grobnica sa djelimično sačuvanom konstrukcijom krova na svod. Unutar grobnice su pronađeni skeletni ostaci pet osoba. Zatečene razbacane kosti navode na pretpostavku da je grobnica naknadno otvarana. Od grobnih priloga pronađeni su samo dio staklene posudice i jedan manji željezni nož. Od pokretnih nalaza, u šutu iznad poda bazilike, pronađena je velika količina fragmenata grnčarije i stakla, jedna kliješta, veliki broj gvozdrenih klinova različite veličine, kao i više predmeta od gvožđa, za sada nedefinisane namjene.

Terminus post quem nastanka ove bazilike je četvrto stoljeće, a *terminus ante quem* jeste šesto stoljeće. Po svemu sudeći ova bazilika je u pogledu crkvene organizacije pripadala biskupiji sa središtem u Sirmijumu. Ovakav zaključak se nameće zbog geografske blizine Zvornika (putna stanica *Ad Drinum* koja se nalazila na komunikaciji *Sirmium – Argentaria* se locira u Zvorniku) za čiju širu teritoriju je utvrđeno da je gravitirala Sirmijumu.

Važno je istaći da je na ovom lokalitetu pronađena i jedna nadgrobna stela iz principata. Riječ je o spomeniku koji krasi visoka kvaliteta izrade, što se ogleda kroz uklesane portrete pokojnika i njihovih nasljednika. Stela je izuzetno lijepo stilski urađena i jedan je od općenito najljepših primjera sepulkralnih spomenika pronađenih na tlu Bosne i Hercegovine. Na spomeniku su uklesani portreti pokojnika i njihovih nasljednika te scene lova. Natpisno polje je dosta veliko i bogato ukrašeno. Zbog djelovanja ljudskog faktora nakon pronalaska, natpisno polje je pretrpjelo krupna oštećenja. Onomastička analiza sačuvanog teksta je pokazala da su pokojnici imali klaudivjevski nomen. U pitanju je carski nomen koji je dosta rijedak u unutrašnjosti rimske provincije Dalmacije. Navedenoj provinciji je u principatu (I–III stoljeće) pripadao prostor južno od planine Majevice gdje se nalazi Mramorak, odnosno lokalitet na kojem je pronađena ova stela. U slučaju ove nadgrobne stele iz Mramorka po svemu sudeći se radi o doseljenicima, moguće Italijanima.

Može se zaključiti da je arheološki lokalitet Crkvina koji se nalazi u selu Mramorak u općini Osmaci od prvorazrednog značaja. Zbog toga spomenuti lokalitet zaslužuje veću naučnu pažnju u odnosu na dosadašnju. Naime, otkriće kasnoantičke bazilike potvrđuju dosadašnje naučne teze da je na prostoru sjeveroistočne Bosne bio jak utjecaj Sirmijuma, jednog od najvažnijih rimskih administrativnih centara na Balkanu.

Abbreviations

AE	<i>L'année épigraphique</i> , Paris
ILJug	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia inter annos MCMXL e MCMLX repertae et editae sunt</i> (ed. A. et J. Šašel), Situla 5, Ljubljana 1963 (št. 1–451); <i>Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia inter annos MCMLX e MCMLXX repertae et editae sunt</i> (ed. A. et J. Šašel), Situla 19, Ljubljana 1978 (št. 452–1222); <i>Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia inter annos MCMII et MCMXL repertae et editae sunt</i> (izd. A. et J. Šašel), Situla 25, Ljubljana 1986 (št. 1223–3128).
Itin. Rom.	<i>Itineraria Romana: Römische Reisewage an der Hand der Tabula Peutingeriana</i> , Konrad Miller, Stuttgart 1916.

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