

The Diocese of Baloie (*Ecclesia Baloiensis*)

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Izvleček

Zgodnje krščanstvo v globljem zaledju vzhodnega Jadrana je kljub več kot stoletju raziskav še vedno v velikem delu slabo poznano. Težave se pojavljajo predvsem pri ugotavljanju najzgodnejše cerkvene organizacije, mej posameznih škofij in župnij, njihovih izvornih imen, matičnih (katedralnih) cerkva, imen njihovih škofov, duhovnikov, diakonov itd. Lep primer za to je balojska škofija (*Ecclesia Baloiensis*), ki je predmet tega članka. Številni problemi, povezani s to tematiko, izvirajo iz aktov cerkvenih zborov, ki sta potekala v letih 530 in 533 v Saloni pod salonitanskim nadškofom Honorijem II. (528-547) in katerih prepisi iz 15./16. st. prinašajo mnogo nejasnih imen in kontroverznih podatkov. Dodatne težave povzročata tudi pomanjkanje epigrafskega in drugega gradiva, s katerim bi lahko primerjali podatke iz salonitanskih aktov. Nikakor pa ne moremo zanikati številnih sledov navzočnosti prvih kristjanov na tem prostoru, ki se med drugim manifestirajo v ostankih zgodnjekrščanskih bazilik in krstilnic, obokanih grobnic, sarkofagov s kriptokrščanskimi in krščanskimi simboli, napisih ter v predmetih liturgične in vsakodnevne rabe.

Ključne besede: rimska provinca Dalmacija, zgodnje krščanstvo, balojska škofija, *Ecclesia Baloiensis*

Abstract

The early Christian period in the mainland of the Eastern Adriatic is still mainly unknown even though research has been carried out for more than one hundred years. Major difficulties come forward particularly when trying to determine, with reasonable precision, the earliest ecclesiastical organisation, boundaries of singular dioceses and parishes, their original names, sites of cathedral churches, names of their bishops, priests or deans etc. The best example to illustrate this is the Diocese of Baloie (*Ecclesia Baloiensis*), which is the subject of this paper. Numerous problems related to it arise also from the Acts of the Church councils held in Salona in 530 and in 533 AD, presided by the Salonitan archbishop Honorius Iunior. The 15th and the 16th century manuscript copies provide us with numerous controversial data and rather unclear names. Further difficulties arise from the scarcity of adequate epigraphical or written sources to compare with the data supplied by the Acts of the Salonitan councils. However, there are numerous traces of the early Christians in these regions, manifested amongst others by the remains of early Christian basilicas, baptisteries, vaulted tombs, sarcophagi with crypto-Christian or Christian symbols, as well as inscriptions and small objects for everyday use.

Keywords: Roman province of Dalmatia, Early Christianity, Diocese of Baloie, *Ecclesia Baloiensis*

INTRODUCTION

In one of his works which can be considered of capital interest, Ivo Bojanovski (1915-1993) clearly and unambiguously related the ancient settlement at the site of Gromile (Grad) in Šipovo (central Bosnia), with the Roman *municipium* of Baloie.¹ This was a significant step forward if we keep in mind that Ćiro Truhelka (1865-1942),² a pioneer of early Christian archeology

in the Eastern Adriatic mainland, had identified Baloie with Bilajce (Mali Bilaj) to the northeast of Varcar Vakuf (modern Mrkonjić Grad), where the remains of a Roman settlement were found: two mausoleums and an inscription included.³ Truhelka's identification was accepted by others such as Frane Bulić (1846-1934), the leading expert on Christianity in the region,⁴ Nikola Bilogrivić (1893-1947) etc.⁵ Wilhelm Tomaschek

¹ Bojanovski 1974a; 1974b, 107-112, 127; 1988a, 287-292, 329; Šašel Kos 1997.

² Truhelka 1892a, pass.

³ Truhelka 1892b, 347.

⁴ Bulić, Bervaldi 1912-1913, 44.

⁵ Bilogrivić 1998, 25.

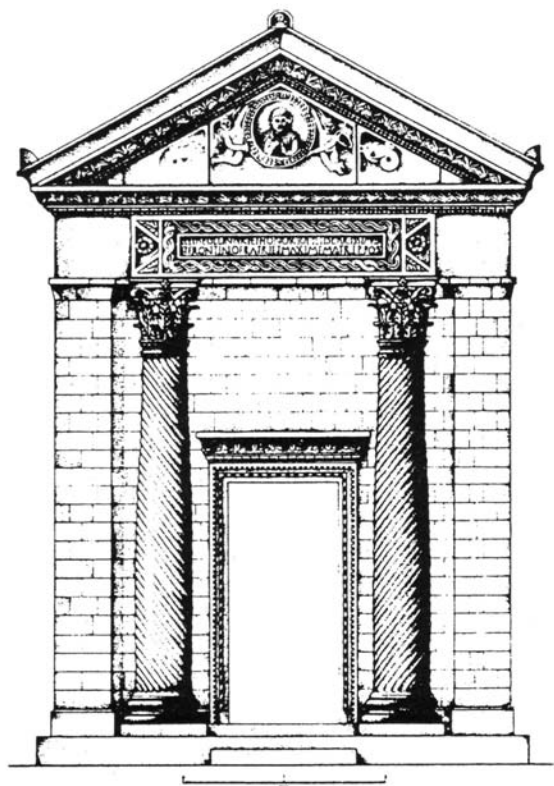


Fig. 1: An ideal reconstruction of the Roman mausoleum from Sarići - Šipovo (from Basler 1990).

Sl. 1: Idealna rekonstrukcija mavzoleja iz Sarića pri Šipovu (po Baslerju 1990).

(1841-1901) searched for Baloie in Glamoč.⁶ In the remains of the ancient settlement in Šipovo, both Tomaschek and Truhelka⁷ searched for the Roman road-station Saritte, known from the *Tabula Peutingeriana*;⁸ Carl Patsh (1856-1945) searched for Pelva known from the *Itinerarium Antonini*,⁹ while Géza Alföldy located there the Roman *municipium* of Splonum.¹⁰ Considering the importance and the size of the settlement, as well as some other indications,¹¹ we are inclined to accept Ivo Bojanovski's conclusion that the Roman *municipium* of Baloie should be identified with the remains of the ancient settlement at the site of Gromile (Grad) in Šipovo.¹² Apart from the remains in Gromile (Grad), traces of ancient settlements and structures have been discovered and recorded at the sites of Crkvina, Tuk, on the

bridge over the Pliva River and at the mouth of the Lubovačka rijeka, too.¹³ At Sarići-Šipovo, by the course of the Pliva river, traces of Roman structures with mosaics and hypocaust,¹⁴ with a monumental mausoleum (Fig. 1)¹⁵ with an inscription dating back to the 4th century AD,¹⁶ have been recorded. A late Roman fortification (*castrum*) has also been confirmed in Šipovo.¹⁷ At the site of Gromile (Grad) in Šipovo there are fragments of a monument with an inscription in honour of C. Minicius Fundanus,¹⁸ the Roman consul of AD 107, and the governor of the province of Dalmatia (*legatus Augusti pro praetore provinciae Dalmatiae*) during the reign of Trajan (98-117), after AD 107.¹⁹ Unless new relevant proof be discovered, we are not inclined to accept the supposition of Ivo Bojanovski²⁰ and some other authors²¹ about the presence of the Benedictines in the territory of Šipovo at the very beginning of the Middle Ages.²² However, we consider it highly reasonable to search for the see of the early Christian diocese in the territory of Baloie.²³ The relatively inadequately researched territory of Šipovo and its vicinity, with numerous recorded archeological sites from various historical epochs,²⁴ leaves enough space for new insights and surprises. Among these, for example, belong the recent finding of a major early medieval cemetery at the site of Crkvina in Šipovo, discovered during the construction of the episcopal residence for the local bishop of the Serbian Church. Medieval tombs have been found there earlier, too.²⁵

¹³ Bojanovski 1974a; 1974b, 108-112; 1988a, 287-292.

¹⁴ Truhelka 1892a, 318-319; Sergejevski 1952, 43-48; Bojanovski 1974b, 111.

¹⁵ Basler 1972, 145, 146, fig. 157; 1985; 1986, 29, fig. 6, 30; 1990, 39, 40, fig. 13d.

¹⁶ CIL III 13237 (p. 2270); Bojanovski 1974b, 111 not. 335: *Fl(avii) Apollinari et Honorio filiis cariss[imis] / et Frontino fratri et Maxim(a)e matri [...].*

¹⁷ Truhelka 1892a, 318; 1904, 65-66; Patsch 1910, 184; Sergejevski 1926, 156-157; 1943, 169-170.

¹⁸ Sergejevski 1926, 155, fig. 1; Alföldy 1962, 11; Bojanovski 1974a, 354, 355 not. 27; *ILlug 1627: C. Minicio / L. filio Pap(irio) / Fundano, VII / vir(o) epulonum trib(uno) / 5 legionis VII Fulminatae, / questori tribuno / [pl]ebis praetori, leg(ato) / [legionis XV Apollinaris] / [.....] piae / 10 [.....] jur[.....].*

¹⁹ Thomasson 1984, 92 nr. 30.

²⁰ Bojanovski 1968, 4; 1974a, 364; 1974b, 110 not. 330; 111; 1991, 288.

²¹ Ostojić 1963, 80; Basler 1972, 19; 1991, 3.

²² Cf. Jarak 1998; Butković 2002.

²³ Šišić 1925, 151-152; 1962, 59; Bojanovski 1974a, 364.

²⁴ *Arheološki leksikon Bosne i Hercegovine 2*, 167-187.

²⁵ Bojanovski 1974a, 352 not. 20.

⁶ Tomaschek 1896, col. 2835.

⁷ Truhelka 1892a, 315; 1894, 90-91.

⁸ Tomaschek 1880, 516.

⁹ Patsch 1894, 768; 1906, 161.

¹⁰ Alföldy 1962; Alföldy, Mócsy 1965, 158.

¹¹ Cf. Sergejevski 1952; Cambi 1982.

¹² Bojanovski 1974a; 1974b, 109; 1988a, 287-292.

Salonitan councils and the Diocese of Baloie (*Ecclesia Baloiensis*)

It is well known that the Acts of the Salonitan councils are a kind of birth certificate for several early Christian dioceses in the territory of the Roman province of Dalmatia - for example, the Diocese of Sarsenterum (*Ecclesia Sarsenterensis*), the Diocese of Muccur (*Ecclesia Muccuritana*) and the Diocese of Ludrum (*Ecclesia Ludrensis*). Undoubtedly, in the Acts of the First Salonitan council there is no mention of a diocese which would in some way refer to Baloie. Contrary to the opinion of some authors, Bilogrivić included,²⁶ it seems that one early Christian diocese mentioned in the Acts of the Second Salonitan council could nonetheless be related to Baloie. It is the one which appears in some of the manuscript *codices* of the *Historia Salonitana Maior* under the names of *Baroensis Ecclesia*,²⁷ *Barcensis Ecclesia*²⁸ as well as *Baciensis Ecclesia*.²⁹ The well known 19th century Croatian historian Franjo Rački (1828-1894) thought that the name *Baroensis* stood for *Baloiensis*, and that it was to be identified with the Roman settlement of Baloie, or Baloe, known from the *Tabula Peutingeriana*.³⁰ This opinion was shared by the professor at Zagreb University, Ferdo Šišić (1869-1940), who located it in Varcar Vakuf (Mrkonjić Grad).³¹ Krunoslav Draganović, somewhat undecided about the names *Baloe* and *Baroe*, supposes that it could be located at the site of Baljvine near Varcar Vakuf,³² and this supposition was accepted by Ambrozije Benković (1890-1970)³³ as well. Modern editors of the Salonitan councils Acts: Stjepan Gunjača (1909-1981),³⁴ Nada Klaić (1920-1988)³⁵ and Milan Ivanišević,³⁶ just like Daniele Farlati (1690-1773) before them,³⁷ affirm that this diocese was called *Barcensis Ecclesia*. Rajko Bratož, who also agrees with them, locates the diocese approximately in (Varcar) Vakuf.³⁸ Đuro Basler (1917-1990) calls it the diocese in Baloe, that is, the bishop's residence of Baloie.³⁹ Nenad Cambi initially called it

the diocese of Baroe,⁴⁰ then the diocesan see of Baloie, locating it in Šipovo.⁴¹ Juraj Kolarić called it diocese Baloe, and located it around the Sana River spring in western Bosnia.⁴² Božo Goluža, too, initially located the diocese of Baloie around the Sana River spring⁴³ and then at Šipovo.⁴⁴ Franjo Šanjek⁴⁵ and Bruna Kuntić-Makvić follow the opinion of Đuro Basler,⁴⁶ placing it around Ključ in western Bosnia.⁴⁷ Milan Ivanišević thought that the merits for the foundation of the diocese go to the Salonitan archbishop Honorius Iunior⁴⁸ and that the Salonitan councils Acts undoubtedly confirm its existence.⁴⁹

In spite of the recent attempts to deny the authenticity of the Salonitan councils Acts,⁵⁰ we are convinced that this diocese is an undeniable historical reality; basing our conviction upon the fact that its bishop was clearly mentioned in the Acts of the Second Salonitan council (*...ordinari pontifices. Sicut etiam in Baroensi ecclesia...*).⁵¹ As for its name, we think precedence should be given to the version *Baloiensis Ecclesia*, which most probably originated from the name of the Roman *municipium* of Baloie, convincingly located at the site of Gromile (Grad) in Šipovo by Ivo Bojanovski. Other names appearing in different manuscript *codices* of the *Historia Salonitana Maior* could be distortions of the 15th and 16th centuries scribes who might have exchanged *Baloiensis Ecclesia* with *Baroensis*, *Barcensis* as well as *Baciensis*. Considering the similarities of the letters *O* and *C*, this is highly probable. That the name of this early Christian diocese could have indeed been *Baloiensis*, deriving from the name of the Roman Baloie, is confirmed by the *Tabula Peutingeriana*. On the main road recorded on this map, running across western Bosnia to link Pannonia with Dalmatia - that is Servitium with Salona - between the stations Indenea and Leusaba there is also Baloie. It is about 5 Roman miles distant from the first, and 12 from the second (*Fig. 2*).⁵² The Roman

²⁶ Bilogrivić 1998, 25.

²⁷ Šišić 1914, 161; Klaić 1967, 82 not. 235.

²⁸ Farlati 1753, 173; Klaić 1967, 82.

²⁹ Batthyany 1785, 291; Klaić 1967, 82 not. 235.

³⁰ Rački 1894, 15 not. *q*.

³¹ Šišić 1914, 161 not. 1; 1925, 152.

³² Draganović 1943a, 97; 1943b, 201.

³³ Benković 1966, 13.

³⁴ Gunjača 1973, 53.

³⁵ Klaić 1967, 82.

³⁶ Ivanišević 1994, 161.

³⁷ Farlati 1753, 173.

³⁸ Bratož 1986, 378 not. 80; 1987, 183 not. 74, 194.

³⁹ Basler 1972, 65, 142; 1991, 3.

⁴⁰ Cambi 1976, 240.

⁴¹ Cambi 2002, 209.

⁴² Kolarić 1993, 8; 1998, 9.

⁴³ Goluža 1998, 97.

⁴⁴ Goluža 2004, 23.

⁴⁵ Šanjek 1996, 33.

⁴⁶ Basler 1991, 3.

⁴⁷ Kuntić-Makvić 2003, 38.

⁴⁸ About this bishop: Kuntić-Makvić 1998.

⁴⁹ Ivanišević 1993, 235.

⁵⁰ Babić 1993.

⁵¹ Farlati 1753, 173; Batthyany 1785, 291; Šišić 1914, 11; Klaić 1967, 82; Gunjača 1973, 53.

⁵² *Tabula Peutingeriana* segm. VI, 2; Bojanovski 1974a, 363.

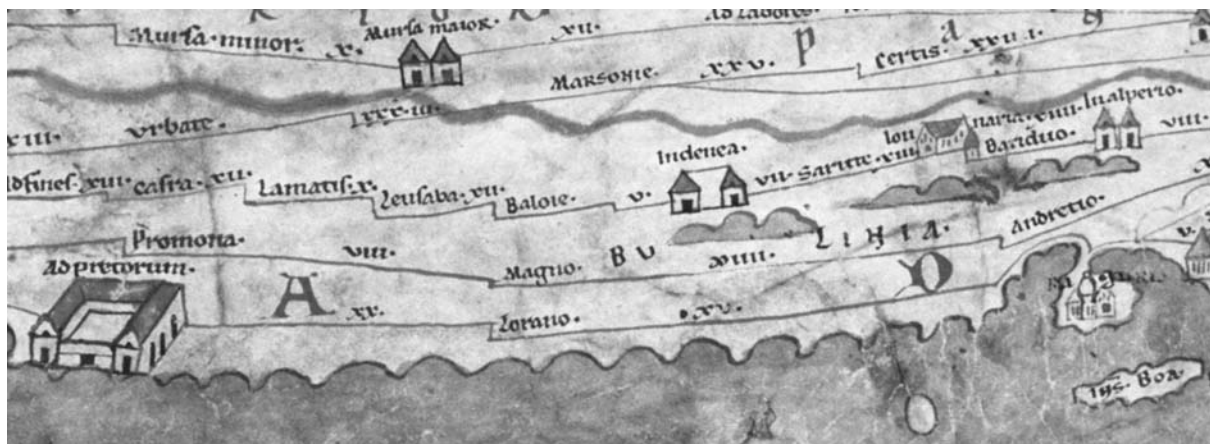


Fig. 2: Place of the station *Baloie* from the *Tabula Peutingeriana*.
Sl. 2: Lega municipija *Baloie* na Tabuli Peutingeriani.

statio of *Indenea* was located at Donji Mujdžići near Šipovo by Ivo Bojanovski,⁵³ whereas that of *Leusaba* was established by him at Bjelajce near Mrkonjić-Grad.⁵⁴ Confirmation can also be found in the early medieval *Geography* of Anonymous Ravennas,⁵⁵ where the *civitas Baloia* is mentioned in a similar context.⁵⁶ The Papal chronicler Anastasius the Librarian (about 800/817 - about 877/879) also mentioned a place called *Balea*.⁵⁷ If this Roman settlement from Gromile (Grad) in Šipovo was called *Baloia* (*municipium Baloie*) - which can hardly be denied after the research conducted by Ivo Bojanovski⁵⁸ - then the early Christian diocese located in its territory must have been called *Ecclesia Baloiensis*. Other names found in the manuscript *codices* of the *Historia Salonitana Maior* could only be corrupted versions of its name.⁵⁹ Since the territory of this early Christian diocese predominantly extended over the territory of the modern diocese of Banja Luka, in a certain sense this diocese could be considered a descendant of the spiritual and cultural heredity of the early Christian *Baloiensis* diocese.⁶⁰ Similarly, the Bosnian diocese (that is, the archdiocese of Vrhbosna) can be considered the successor of the *Bestoensis Ecclesia, Bistuensis*

Ecclesia, the see which has recently been located at the Roman settlement at Grudine (Čipuljić) in Bugojno.⁶¹ Both *Baloian* and *Bestoan* dioceses must have been destroyed - along with some other forty fortifications and settlements - during the Avaro-Slavic migration wave in AD 597; the barbarians swept over Dalmatia from Pannonia, using the road *Servitium-Salona*.⁶²

Sacred buildings

Unlike the majority of other early Christian dioceses known from the Acts of the Salonitan councils, almost nothing is known about the *Baloiensis* diocese - apart from the name. It has not been mentioned in one of the oldest lists of world dioceses, the *Provinciale vetus*.⁶³ According to analogies, it can reasonably be presumed that the diocese extended within the naturally confined region. Thus, if the Roman *municipium* of *Baloie* was at Gromile (Grad) in Šipovo, and if it gave its name to the early Christian diocese, then the valleys of the rivers *Pliva* and *Janj*, confined by the mountains *Vitorog*, *Crna Gora*, *Lisina* and *Gorica*, made up a part of its territory (Fig. 3), as well as the regions which extend up to the river *Vrba* to the east and the mountain *Manjača* to the north. The basin of the *Crna rijeka* (Black river) with Roman settlements at *Majdan* (with *Sinjakovo*), *Mrkonjić-Grad*, *Bjelajac* and others could be included within the boundaries of this early Christian

⁵³ Bojanovski 1974a, 363; 1974b, 110-114; 1988a, 291, 292.

⁵⁴ Bojanovski 1974a, 357, 358, 362; 1988a, 230, 297, 299.

⁵⁵ Rav. IV 19, pag. 57.

⁵⁶ Čače 1993, 424-425; 1995, 89-90.

⁵⁷ Anastasius 1649, 129.

⁵⁸ Šašel Kos 1997, 427.

⁵⁹ About the origin of the *Historia Salonitana Maior* cf.: Klaić 1979, 171-198.

⁶⁰ *Opći šematizam Katoličke Crkve u Jugoslaviji, Crkve u Jugoslaviji*, 368, Zagreb 1975; http://www.biskupija-banjaluka.org/povijest_II.htm (Sept. 30, 2007).

⁶¹ Paškvalin 2003, 129-204; Škegro 2005a.

⁶² Tomaschek 1896; Bojanovski 1968, 4; 1974a, 364; 1974b, 110; 1988a, 292; 1991, 288.

⁶³ Škegro 2005b, pass.

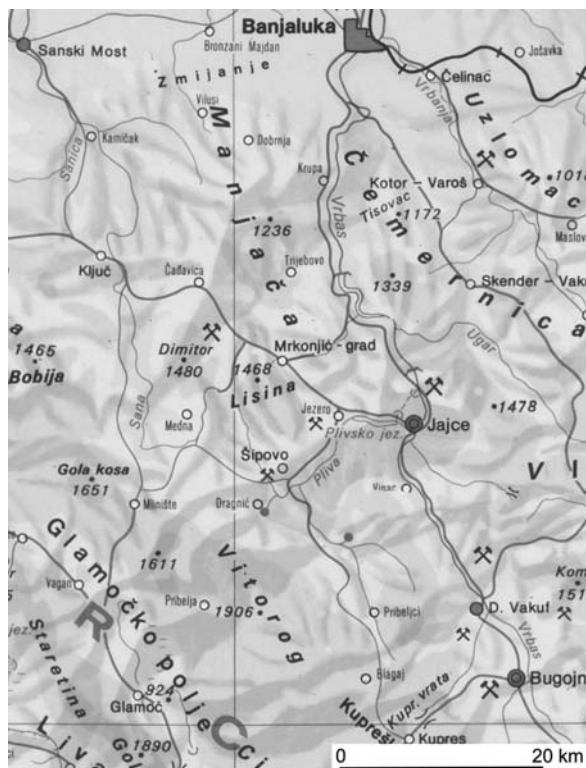


Fig. 3: Probable territory of the Diocese of Baloie.
Sl. 3: Verjetno območje balojske nadškofije.

diocese.⁶⁴ Nowadays, the whole region belongs to the communities of Šipovo, Mrkonjić Grad and Jajce. During antiquity the territory was probably settled by the Illyrian-Pannonian tribe Maezaei,⁶⁵ or the closely related Sardeates (Sardeati).⁶⁶ This can be concluded on the basis of the boundary inscription encarved in the canyon of the Vaganjac River in the village of Vaganj (Fig. 4) some twenty kilometres south of Šipovo, which is dated to the first half of the 1st century AD, that the territory was inhabited by the *civitates* of the *Sapuates* and (*Ae*)*matini*.⁶⁷ Several early Christian sacred buildings - basilicas included - have been found there. At the site of Crkvina in Donji Mujdžići near Šipovo (Fig. 5) the early Christian basilica with the baptistry (28 x 24.50 m), as well as a

⁶⁴ Bojanovski 1974a, 358; 1988a, 287-300.

⁶⁵ Radivojac 1983, 111-133.

⁶⁶ Bojanovski 1968, 3; 1974a, 354; 1988a, 250-256, 286; 1991, 289.

⁶⁷ *CIL* III 9864a; 10159; Wilkes 1974, 267 nr. 23; Bojanovski 1974b, 115, fig. 10, not. 355: *L(ucius) Arruntius Camill[us] Scri[b]o[nia]n[us] le[g]at[us]] pro / pr(aetore) C(ai) [C]lae[s]aris Aug(usti) / 5 Germanici iudicem / dedit M(anium) Coelium (centurionem) / leg(ionis) VII inter Sapuates e[st] ...]matinos ut fines / [re]g[er]et et terminos po[n]t[er]et). Cf. also Bojanovski 1988a, 295-297.*



Fig. 4: Boundary inscription from Vaganj in the canyon Vaganjac - Šipovo (from Bojanovski 1974).

Sl. 4: Mejni napis iz kanjona Vaganjca v vasi Vaganj pri Šipovo (po Bojanovskem 1974).

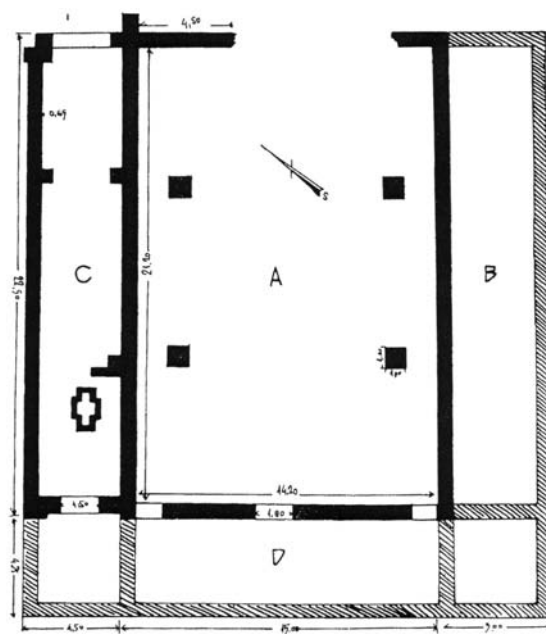


Fig. 5: Ground plan of the Christian basilica from Crkvina in Donji Mujdžići - Šipovo (from Basler 1993).

Sl. 5: Tloris bazilike na Crkvini v Donjih Mujdžićih pri Šipovo (po Baslerju 1993).

late Roman cemetery with vaulted tombs and two sarcophagi have been discovered and recorded.⁶⁸ The inscription on one of the sarcophagi, dated

⁶⁸ Sergejevski 1938a, 51-60; Bojanovski 1964, 103-105; Paškvalin 1988a, 174-175 nr. 12.20; Marijanović 1990, 129-130; Basler 1993, 66-67, pl. 25, fig. 70, 71; Chevalier 1995a, 168-171; 1995b, pl. XXX.

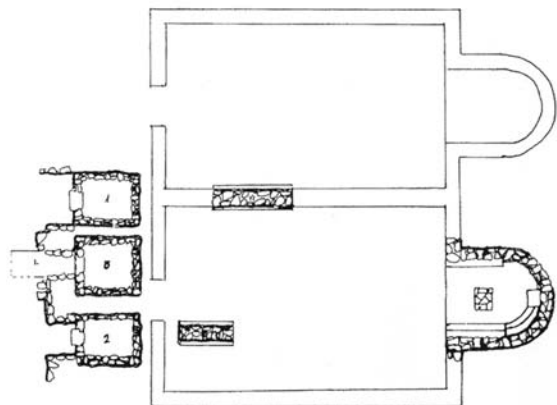


Fig. 6: Ground plan of the Christian basilica from Crkvina in Čifluk - Grahovci, Šipovo (from Bojanovski 1964).
Sl. 6: Tloris bazilike na Crkvini v Čifluku (Grahovci) pri Šipovu (po Bojanovskem 1964).

to the second half of the 4th century⁶⁹ is one of the oldest early Christian inscriptions found in Bosnia. Along the single naved basilica at Crkvina in Čifluk-Grahovci near Šipovo (19 x 10 m) three vaulted tombs have been recorded (Fig. 6).⁷⁰ The basilica discovered at Crkvine in Volari in Šipovo was also single naved. One vaulted tomb was recorded there, too. This basilica was not far from the Roman settlement at the site of Gromile (Grad) in Šipovo, where Ivo Bojanovski located the Roman Baloie.⁷¹ The single naved basilica (22.20 x 16.60 m) was recorded at the site of Crkvina (Gromile) in Majdan near Mrkonjić Grad (Fig. 7).⁷² Bearing in mind that vaulted tombs in this region most frequently came along with, or very close to, the early Christian basilicas,⁷³ two vaulted tombs and two late Roman sarcophagi - similar in style to those in Donji Mujdžiči and Čifluk-Grahovci near Šipovo⁷⁴ - indicate an analogous situation at the site of Crkvina in Divičani near Jajce. One vaulted tomb and a shutter,⁷⁵ along with other remains,⁷⁶ indicate the presence of at least another early Christian basilica on the territory of Jajce;⁷⁷

⁶⁹ Sergejevski 1938b, 9 nr. 7; ILIug 1621: *Maxim[i]no / carissimo / quem posuit / infelix Vincentia / 5 /*.

⁷⁰ Sergejevski 1938a, 49-51; Bojanovski 1964, 103-121; Paškvalin, Kraljević 1988, 174 nr. 12.18; Basler 1993, 49-50; Chevalier 1995a, 166-168; 1995b, pl. XXIX.

⁷¹ Basler 1988, 175 nr. 12.25; Chevalier 1995a, 165-166.

⁷² Radimsky 1893; Patsch 1900, 176; Paškvalin 1988b, 143 nr. 10.23; Basler 1993, 59-61, pl. 21. fig. 59, pl. 60; Chevalier 1995a, 163-165; 1995b, pl. XXIX.

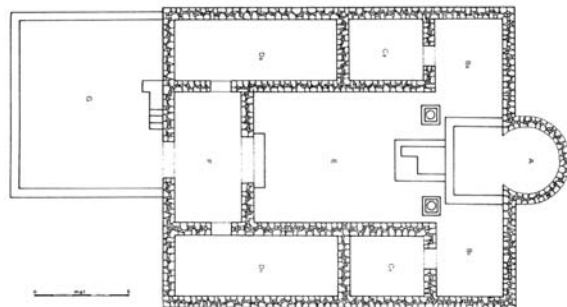
⁷³ Cf. Paškvalin 1970, 667-687.

⁷⁴ Bojanovski 1988a, 295 not. 52; Paškvalin 2002, 28-29.

⁷⁵ Paškvalin 2002, 27-28.

⁷⁶ Škegro 1990, 140, fig. III, 2.

⁷⁷ Paškvalin 2001, 85-95.



Sl. 7: Ground plan of the Christian basilica from Crkvina (Gromile) in Majdan - Mrkonjić Grad (from Basler 1993).
Sl. 7: Tloris bazilike na Crkvini (Gromile) v Majdanu pri Mrkonjiću Gradu (po Baslerju 1993).

another vaulted tomb also indicates the possible existence of an early Christian basilica at Vinac near Jajce.⁷⁸

CONCLUSION

Early Christianity left numerous and undeniable traces in the Eastern Adriatic mainland. Among them the most important are the remains of early Christian basilicas, with or without baptistry, liturgical objects, vaulted tombs, sarcophagi, symbols and inscriptions with clear crypto-Christian contents, as well as objects belonging to everyday use. Less frequent are the written sources which could shed more light on the organisation and institutions, the names of bishops, clerics, and simple lay persons. This is also true of the diocese researched in this paper. If the name of the Roman settlement at Gromile (Grad) in Šipovo was Baloie (*municipium Baloie, civitas Baloia*), convincingly proven by Ivo Bojanovski, then the diocese related to it must have been called *Ecclesia Baloiensis*. Some of the manuscript *codices* of the *Historia Salonitana Maior* also lead us to this conclusion. Yet, the precise name of the diocese can definitively be resolved only by an inscription, which can still be expected to be found on the territory of Baloie.

⁷⁸ Paškvalin 2002, 29.

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Balojska škofija (*Ecclesia Baloiensis*)

Povzetek

Globlje zaledje vzhodnega Jadrana je bilo v zatonu antike oz. na začetku srednjega veka relativno dobro pokristjanjeno. O tem pričajo ne le številni sledovi kršćanskih objektov, kot na primer bazilike, krstilnice, grobišča, obokane grobnice, sarkofagi, napisi, kulturni predmeti in predmeti vsakodnevnice rabe, ampak tudi cerkvene institucije, kot na primer škofije in župnije, cerkveni prvaki - škofje, duhovniki, diakoni itd. Razpoložljivi viri, še posebno narativni in epigrafski, in arheološke raziskave so bistveno osvetlili problematiko poznoantične oz. zgodnjerednjeveške cerkvene organizacije na tem območju. Po drugi strani pa so v globljem zaledju vzhodnega Jadrana ta vprašanja v veliki meri še vedno zavita v temo. Vzrok za to ni le v pomanjkanju ustreznih virov, ampak tudi v znatnem zaostanku

arheoloških raziskav. Med številna sporna vprašanja spada tudi problem tako imenovane Balojske škofije (*Ecclesia Baloiensis*). Ta zgodnjekršćanski center je omenjen le v prepisu akta drugega cerkvenega zbora iz 16. stoletja (*Historia Salonitana Maior*), ki je potekal pod salonitanskim nadškofom Honorijem II. leta 533 v Saloni. V razpoložljivih kodeksih *Historiae Salonitanae Maior* se *Ecclesia Baloiensis* omenja tudi kot *Baroensis Ecclesia*, *Barcensis Ecclesia* in *Baciensis Ecclesia*, kar je ostalo sporno vprašanje vse do danes.

Kljub dejstvu, da se zadnje čase pojavljajo dvomi v verodostojnost aktov salonitanskih zborov, menimo, da je ta škofija nedvomna zgodovinska resničnost. Tudi zato, ker se v aktih salonitanskega zbora izrecno omenja posvetitev njenega škofa

(*ordinari pontifices. Sicut etiam in Baroiensi ecclesia ...*). Glede vprašanja njenega imena menimo, da je treba dati prednost imenu balojska škofija (*Baloiensis Ecclesia*). To ime verjetno izhaja iz imena municipija *Baloie*, za katerega je Ivo Bojanovski (1915-1993) prepričljivo dokazal, da se je nahajal na Gromilah (Grad) v Šipovem v osrednji Bosni. Ostala imena, ki se pojavljajo v drugih kodeksih *Historae Salonitanae Maior*, so verjetno popačenke prepisovalcev iz 16. stoletja, ki so ime *Baloiensis Ecclesia* spremenili v *Baroensis*, *Barcensis* oz. *Baciensis*. Glede na podobnost črke *O* s črko *C* v omenjenih kodeksih je to zelo verjetno. Da bi se ime te zgodnjekrščanske škofije zares lahko glasilo *Baloiensis*, je potrjeno na Tabuli Peutingeriani: na magistralni cesti, ki je preko zahodne Bosne povezovala Panonijo z Dalmacijo - oz. *Servitium* s Salono - je med cestnima postajama *Indenea* in *Leusaba* zabeležena *Baloia*. Od prve je oddaljena 5 in od druge 12 rimskih milj (*sl. 2*). Cestno postajo *Indenea* je Bojanovski lociral v Donje Mujdžice pri Šipovem in Lausabo v Bjelajce pri Mrkonjić Gradu. Podoben dokaz najdemo pri anonimnem geografu iz Ravene, ki omenja mesto Baloie (*civitas Baloia*). Papeški kronist Anastazij Bibliotekar (ok. 800/817-ok. 877-879) prav tako omenja mesto, ki se imenuje *Balea*. Če se je torej rimsko naselje na Gromilah (Grad) v Šipovem imenovalo *Baloia* oz. *municipium Baloie* - v kar je po raziskavah Bojanovskega težko podvomiti, se je tudi zgodnjekrščanska škofija verjetno imenovala balojska škofija (*Ecclesia Baloiensis*). Škofija je verjetno propadla ob avaro-slovanski priselitvi na začetku srednjega veka. Predvidoma je bilo antično naselje *Baloie* uničeno skupaj s še štiridesetimi utrdбами leta 597 med avaro-slovanskim rušilnim pohodom, ki se je po cesti *Servitium-Salona* usul iz Panonije v Dalmacijo. Ni znano, iz katerih zgodnjekrščanskih župnij (*parochiae*) oz. občin je bila sestavljena ta škofija, niti en njen škof, duhovnik, diakon, laik ipd. Kljub temu lahko glede na današnje izkušnje pri raziskovanju te tematike s precejšnjo gotovostjo predpostavljamo, da je ta škofija zaobsegala naravno zaokroženo regijo. Če je bila torej rimska *Baloie* v Gromilah (Grad) v Šipovem in če je ta zgodnjekrščanska škofija dobila po njej ime, lahko predpostavimo, da sta k njej morali spadati dolini Plive in Janje, torej območje med planinami Vitorog, Crna gora, Lisina in Gorica, dalje območja do reke Vrbas na vzhodu in planine Manjača na severu. Utemeljeno je torej v okvir te zgodnjekrščanske škofije vključiti tudi dolino Crne rijeke, v kateri

so antična naselja zabeležena v Majdanu (s Sinjakovim), Mrkonjić Gradu, Bjelajcu idr. To območje je zajeto v današnjih občinah Šipovo, Mrkonjić Grad in Jajce (*sl. 3*). Ta prostor so v antiki verjetno naseljevali ilirsko-panonski Mezeji (*Maezei*) oz. njim bližnji Sardeati. Kot izhaja iz mejnega napisa (*sl. 4*), vklesanega v kanjonu Vaganjca v vasi Vaganj 20 km južno od Šipovega, je bilo to območje dveh *civitates*, Sapuatov in (E?)matinov. Na tem območju je bilo do zdaj najdenih več zgodnjekrščanskih objektov, tudi nekaj bazilik. Zraven zgodnjekrščanske bazilike s krstilnico (28 x 24,50 m) na Crkvini v Donjih Mujdžicah pri Šipovem (*sl. 5*) so bili najdeni tudi antična nekropola z obokanimi grobnicami in dva sarkofaga. Napis z enega se uvršča med najstarejše zgodnjekrščanske napise iz Bosne in je datiran v drugo polovico 4. st. Zraven enoladijske bazilike na Crkvini v Čifluku (Grahovci) pri Šipovem (19 x 10 m) so bile prav tako najdene tri obokane grobnice (*sl. 6*). Bazilika s Crkvine v Volarih v Šipovem je bila enoladijska. Tudi ob njej je bila najdena ena obokana grobnica. Ta bazilika se je nahajala nedaleč od antičnega naselja na Gromilah (Grad) v Šipovem, kamor je Ivo Bojanovski lociral Baloie (*municipium Baloie*). Enoladijska bazilika (22,20 x 16,60 m) je bila najdena na Crkvini (Gromile) v Majdanu pri Mrkonjić Gradu (*sl. 7*). Glede na dejstvo, da so obokane grobnice na tem območju najpogosteje v sestavu zgodnjekrščanskih bazilik oz. neposredno poleg njih, na obstoj take bazilike na Crkvini v Divičanih opozarjata dve obokani grobnici in dva poznoantična sarkofaga, ki sta stilistično blizu tistim iz Donjih Mujdžic in Čifluka (Grahovci) pri Šipovem. Obokana grobnica in drugi ostanki opozarjajo na obstoj vsaj ene zgodnjekrščanske bazilike tudi na področju Jajca. Obokana grobnica prav tako opozarja na možnost obstoja zgodnjekrščanske bazilike tudi v Vincu pri Jajcu.

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