

## EARLY BYZANTINE DOCLEA AND ITS CITIZENS: *LONGE AB PATRIAM?*\*

Little more than three centuries after the names of the last known early Byzantine bishops of Doclea were recorded,<sup>1</sup> in the office of emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus a document was written, known under its later name *De Administrando Imperio*. In this famous document Doclea, or more precisely Diocleia (Διόκλεια), was mentioned three times. At the beginning of Chapter 29 it is mentioned that the town was built (ὠκοδόμησεν) by Diocletian, „for which reason those of that country have come to be called by the name of `Diocletians` (Διοκλητιανοί)“.<sup>2</sup> In Chapter 30 it is recorded that „Dioclea is neighbour to the forts of Dyracchium, I mean, to Elissus and to Helcynium and Antibari, and comes up as far as Decatera“.<sup>3</sup> At last, Chapter 35, titled „Of the Diocletians and of the country they now dwell in“, starts with the words: „The country of Diocleia was also previously possessed by the Romani whom the emperor Diocletian translated from Rome...and was under the emperor of the Romans. But this country also was enslaved by the Avars and made desolate, and repopulated in the time of Heraclius the emperor“, and continues with the statement that „Diocleia gets its name from the city in this country that the emperor Diocletian founded (ἐκτίσεν), but now it is a deserted city, though still called Diocleia. In this country of Diocleia are the large inhabited cities of Gradetai (τό Γράδεταί), Nougrade (τό Νουγράδε), Lontodokla (τό Λοντοδόκλα).“<sup>4</sup>

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\* Ovaj rad proizisao je iz istraživanja u okviru projekata Hriscanska kultura na Balkanu u srednjem veku: Vizantijsko carstvo, Srbi i Bugari od 9. do 15. veka (br. 177015) i Srpska srednjovekovna umetnost i njen evropski kontekst (br. 177036) Ministarstva obrazovanja i nauke Republike Srbije.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Д. и М. Гарашанин, *Историја Црне Горе I. Од најстаријих времена до краја XII вијека*, Подгорица 1967, 262; V.D. Nikčević – A. Klikovac (preveli i priredili), *Monumenta Montenegrina I*, Podgorica 2001, 144-147.

<sup>2</sup> Gy. Moravcsik – R.J.H. Jenkins (eds.), *Constantine Porphyrogenitus De Administrando Imperio*, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington D.C. 1967, 122-123 (=DAI); Serbian translation with extensive comments in: Б. Ферјанчић, *Византијски извори за историју народа Југославије II*, Београд 1959 (=2007), 10 (=ВИИИЈ II).

<sup>3</sup> DAI, 144-145; ВИИИЈ II, 34.

<sup>4</sup> DAI, 164-165; ВИИИЈ II, 63.

Side by side with older but unknown sources and contemporary state of affairs, upon which imperial officers defined borders and area of at that time already existing Doclean archontia,<sup>5</sup> two citations conjoint by the person of Diocletian came in the centre of attention of these testimonies. In the first testimony, with which begun the display of history of province Dalmatia, in the narration that obviously originated from the archive of imperial office, the roman emperor was designated as the builder of Doclea, but with the term *ᾠκοδόμησεν*, which must not exclusively mean that he was the *founder* of the city. That means that, in the time of Porphyrogenitus, Constantinople was familiar with the fact that Diocletian had some, but not necessarily the main role in the development of Doclea. On the other hand, within the chapter which was obviously written by some Byzantine officer who dwelled in „the land of Diocleia“ or in its neighbourhood, a typical simplified version of local legend appeared according to which Diocletian, literary citing, „created“ (*ἔκτισεν*) Doclea.<sup>6</sup> Redactors of Porphyrogenitus` text were led by the tradition of ties between the name of the roman emperor and the contemporary dwellers; without unifying the role of Diocletian in city`s past, they constructed two statements that make single but insufficiently clear whole. Because long time had passed from Diocletian to Heraclius, and especially to Constantine Porphyrogenitus.

The fact that citations from considerably later source are the most elaborate assembly of data about Doclea for the period longer than half of millennium, testifies sufficiently about how difficult it is to track its history exclusively from the point of view of these and several others, even humbler information.<sup>7</sup> It seems, at first glance, that only few doubtless facts could be deduced about the second largest city of roman Dalmatia and one of the centres of later province Praevalis, especially when having in mind that the pioneer archaeological investigations, conducted in several occasions during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, were restricted to the search of perceptible material finds and not of the stratigraphy of the urban life, as was usual for the time, and that the sum of finds assuredly dated to the early Byzantine period is very modest, as well as that the remains of Doclea were devastated for decades and finally, that the Christian necropolis was never systematically excavated.<sup>8</sup> But, that „first glance“, emanated from frequent reflex to base the deductions about the life of inhabitants from the

<sup>5</sup> J. Ферлуга, *Византиска управа у Даламацији*, Београд 1957, 68-86; V. Popović, *Byzantins, Slaves et autochtones dans les provinces de Prévalitane et Nouvelle Épire*, in: *Villes et peuplement dans l'Illyricum Protobyzantin* (G.Dagron ed.), Rome 1984, 182-185; I. Basić, *Dalmatinski biskupi na crkvenom saboru u Hijereji 754.godine*, in: *Spalatumque Dedit Ortum*. Zbornik povodom desete godišnjice Odsjeka za povijest Filozofskog fakulteta u Splitu (ur. I. Basić – M. Rimac), Split 2014, 149-196, in particular 189-190; П. Комагина, *Идентитет Дукљана према De Administrando Imperio*, Зборник радова Византолошког института LI (2014), 33-46.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, Oxford 1961, 233.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *supra*, note 1.

<sup>8</sup> Т. Корпивица, *Nikola I Petrović Njegoš i istraživanje Duklje*, Историјски Записи LXXXIII,4, (2010), 215-223; Ead., *Русские авторы путевых заметок и исследователи о Дукле (Диоклетији)*, in: *Россия и Балканы в течение последних 300 лет/ Русија и Балкан током последња три столећа* (ред./ур. Р. Распоповић), Подгорица 2012, 515-526.

past upon „small“ finds of their legacy, has sometimes as its consequence the neglecting of the specific contents offered by those physically incomparably larger finds – in this case the remains of Christian sacred buildings. Within the city area there are almost no visible traces of them. In older historiography they remained uninterpreted and presented only according to small scale published documentation.<sup>9</sup> However, since it was recently discovered at whole its richness, these objects became convincing hint of one completely new and essentially important landmark of early Byzantine Doclea as well as of its importance in region as well as in wider frames of Adriatic-Mediterranean basin.

What is known and what can be reasonably supposed about Doclean citizens, based on ruins that were discovered during the few weeks lasting excavations of English archaeological team led by J.A.R Munro in 1893, who published only summary terrain rapport documented by only two drawings of ground plans of discovered churches? There is no place nor need to exhibit here the entire corpus of information, since they are long ago known, completely translated,<sup>10</sup> analyzed all over again,<sup>11</sup> compared with the information gained by the use of modern archaeological technologies,<sup>12</sup> and adequately presented thanks to the extremely valuable discovery of journals and unpublished photographs.<sup>13</sup> For this topic it

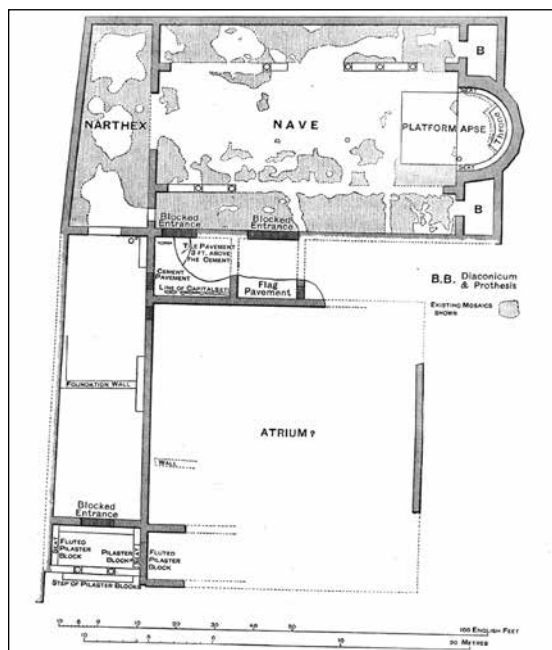


Fig. 1 Doclea, basilica A, ground plan (after J.A.R. Munro 1896)

Сл. 1 Доклеја, базилика А, основа ( J.A.P. Мунро, 1896.)

<sup>9</sup> Cf. J.A.R. Munro-W.C.F. Anderson-J.G. Milne-F. Haverfield, *On the Roman Town of Doclea in Montenegro*, *Archaeologia* LV (1896), 1-60, in particular 23-28.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *O rimskom gradu Dokleji u Crnoj Gori*, dostavljeno Društvu starina od strane Dž.A.R. Munro, V.K.F. Anderson, J.G. Milne, F. Haverfield, Podgorica 2013.

<sup>11</sup> M. Zagarčanin, *O nekim pitanjima ranohrišćanskog i srednjovjekovnog graditeljstva u Dokleji i Baru, sa posebnim osvrtom prema paganskim kulturnim predstavama/ On some issues on early Christian and Medieval Construction in Doclea and Bar; with a special reference to pagan cult scenes*, *Nova antička Duklja/New Antique Doclea III* (2011), 41-70.

<sup>12</sup> S. Gelichi – C. Negrelli – S. Leardi – L. Sabbionesi – R. Belcari, *Doclea alla fine dell' antichità. Studi e ricerche per la storia di una città abbandonata della Prevalitania/Duklja na kraju antičkog doba. Studije i istraživanja istorije jednog napuštenog grada Prevalitanije*, *Nova antička Duklja/New Antique Doclea III* (2011), 7-40.

<sup>13</sup> T. Koprivica, *Journal Entries and Photographic Documentation of J.A.R. Munro*

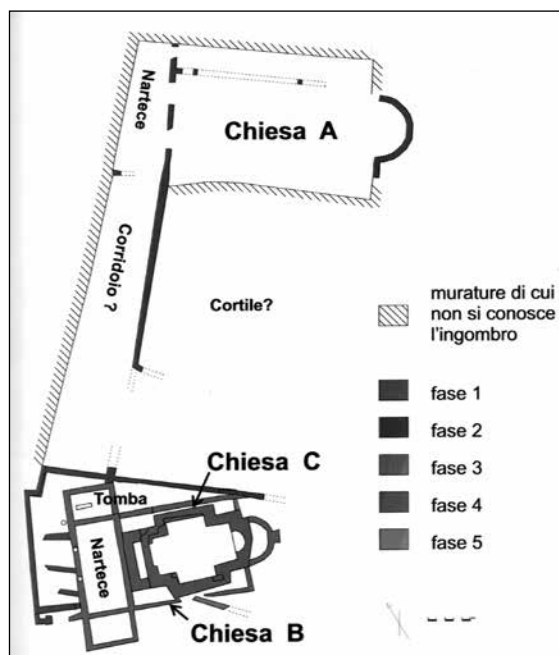


Fig. 2 Doclea, traces of oldest Christian complex (after S. Gelichi – C. Negrelli – S. Leardi – L. Sabbionesi – R. Belcari)

Сл. 2 Доклеја, остаци најстаријег хришћанског комплекса (С. Гелићи – К. Негрели – С. Леарди – Л. Саббионези – Р. Белкари)

is of uttermost importance the find of building which is by J. Munro marked as „basilica A“ (Fig. 1). Its dimensions, spatial arrangement and stratigraphy were clearly determined, but because of some incomprehensible reasons those were unusually poorly described in words. Unified, long ago published rapport, newly discovered documents and results gained by total station still leave several opened questions but, at the same time, allow more precise insight into architectural minutiae, layers of relative chronology and, the most important, into architectural origin of this object.

Walking along more than a century old archaeological traces, one encounter the first in line of all the dilemmas at the very beginning of the corridor which led from the oldest identified horizons toward basilica A. Based on *in situ* preserved basis of columns that he found there, J. Munro concluded that those were propylea.<sup>14</sup> It could be right judging by the analogies. Similarly formed access ran along Episcopal complex in Salona, while one of the variants of similar entrance

was preserved on the south side of the Lateran baptistery.<sup>15</sup> What confuse are the circumstance that only 3m to the north a transversal wall was discovered, which had it doors walled somewhat later, and recently the information that the small approaching space of rectangular ground plan was, most probably, within contemporaneous and quite larger architectural structure.<sup>16</sup> Its purpose and relation to older horizons as well as to the mentioned construction can be precisely determined only after new excavations. What can firmly be foreshadowed is that this entrance, built even 30 m south of basilica A, originally designated the starting point of the complex that included different buildings, among them most certainly the city's oldest Christian places of worship. The only methodologically allowable and reasonable hypothesis, based on available knowledge,

*Related to the Archaeological Exploration of Doclea (Montenegro) in 1893*, Зорпаф 37 (2014), 1-15; Ead., *J.A.R. Munro, Doclea. Diary of Excavation 1893*, Podgorica 2016 (in print).

<sup>14</sup> Munro – Anderson – Milne – Haverfield, *op.cit.*, 24.

<sup>15</sup> E. Marin, *Starokršćanska Salona*, Split 1988, 106; M. Fabricius Hansen, *The Eloquence of Appropriation: Prolegomena to an Understanding of Spolia in Early Christian Rome*, Rome 2003, 72, fig. 49.

<sup>16</sup> Gelichi – Negrelli – Leardi – Sabbionesi – Belcari, *op.cit.*, 24-26.

Fig. 3 Doclea, fragments of sculpture and mosaic pavement in the southwestern corner of basilica A (after J.A.R. Munro – T. Koprivica 2014)

Сл. 3 Доклеја, фрагменти клесаног украса и мозаика у југозападном углу базилике А (Ј.А.Р. Мунро – Т. Копривица 2014.)



is that it was the place of city's *domus ecclesia*. Next to the traces of atrium, south of basilica A, there must have existed some kind of baptistery which in time suffered different functional and architectural transformations.<sup>17</sup> Entire situation will, however, seem much clearer and more logical if it is ascertained that more than 25 m long wall, parallel to the southern facade of basilica A and detected by "total station", was actually a remain of another sacred building, which in that case was raised above the first Christian house of Doclea (Fig. 2).

Inside the basilica A, conducted excavations resulted in the discovery of mosaic floor, as well as of several column bases which separated the nave and the aisles (Fig. 3). Focusing on citations, that indicate some changes in the corpus of the temple, one of the important data is that north of the apse mosaics ran below stone seats, which means that synthronos was made after the church was built and decorated. It, however, does not necessarily mean that long time passed between these two phases. On the contrary, having in mind the doubtless importance not only of the church but likewise of the city that even after 313 competed with Skodra as the centre of the province, as well as the fact that synthronos did not exist only in urban churches, it is difficult to expect that first bishops of Doclea didn't have their canonical and physically defined and accentuated space. Therefore Munro's hypothesis about three chronologically differentiated horizons in apse is not well-grounded.<sup>18</sup> Walking further along the building, it is wise to point that the best preserved column is found in the layer of broken bricks, which testifies that the roof had fallen before the falling of the columns.<sup>19</sup> What remains unclear is how this situation relates to the situation

<sup>17</sup> Cf. R.M. Jensen, *Material and Documentary Evidence for the Practice of Early Christian Baptism*, *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 20-3 (2012), 371-405 (with references).

<sup>18</sup> Koprivica, *J.A.R. Munro, Doclea*; the remains of synthronos were discovered in several churches outside ramparts, which were surveyed by M. Jovanović, *Počeci hrišćanstva na prostoru rimskog grada Dokleje i njenog agera* (magistarski rad odbranjen jula 2014. na Istorijskom institutu Univerziteta Crne Gore, Podgorica); for synthronoi in churches on private properties cf. K. Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values, and Religious Change in Late Antiquity*, Cambridge University Press 2008, 140-149; it is important to mention that all the churches inside and outside ramparts of Byllis had synthronoi, cf. P. Chevalier et al, *Trois basiliques et un groupe épiscopal des V<sup>e</sup> – VI<sup>e</sup> siècles réétudiés à Byllis (Albanie)*, *Hortus Artium Medievalium* 9 (2003), 155-166.

<sup>19</sup> Zagarčanin, *op.cit.*, 46.



Fig. 4 Doclea, fragments of stone crosses and sculpture in the apse of basilica A (after J.A.R. Munro – T. Koprivica 2014)

Сл. 4 Доклеја, фрагменти камених крстова и клесаног украса у апсиди базилике А (Ј.А.Р. Мунро – Т. Копривица 2014.)

in western angle of southern aisle, where a row of stone slabs was discovered that were partially laid over the mosaics. Their obverses were carved with floral motifs enframed within a circle and rosettes. In the rapport it was stated that those were funerary stelae of late Roman type, but even the summary description of their decoration along with the data about the place of their discovery and with what can be seen on photographs, doubtlessly suggest that those were parapet slabs with Christian symbols. They were used to divide southern aisle, or one part of it, from the nave.<sup>20</sup> Although about the original place of discovery of architectural sculpture can be discussed with utter reserve, inside the apse were likewise noticed significant amount of broken stone crosses and shreds of other stone decoration (Fig.4), which could be the result of some later tendency to collect parts of mobilier as spoils. Finally, the repertory of capitals also allows interesting hints: one ionic capital with cross incised between volutae was discovered, as well as several rudimentary impostes and only two Corinthian capitals that were almost identical to those found in older civilian basilica.<sup>21</sup> The latter could be the testimony that the praxis of using ancient architectural sculpture and its symbolical meaning were well known in the time of building the earliest large roman Christian temples. Since the church of St. Peter, Corinthian capitals were often positioned against each other in order to separate nave from transept or solea.<sup>22</sup> Therefore it could be supposed that within basilica A those capitals from its beginning stood on easternmost columns.

When viewed from strictly positivistic perspective thus would, in large frames and burdened with individual doubt, appear basilica A, which was the most probable cause of its long lasting absence from historiography. Fortunately, thanks to data gained from published rapport, and even more from until recently

<sup>20</sup> Munro – Anderson – Milne – Haverfield, *op.cit.*, 25; Koprivica, *Journal Entries*, 11-12.

<sup>21</sup> Munro – Anderson – Milne – Haverfield, *op.cit.*, 25; Zagarčanin, *op.cit.*, 46-47; Koprivica, *op.cit.*, 9sq.

<sup>22</sup> Fabricius Hansen, *op.cit.*, 119-136, in particular 124-128.



Fig. 5 Doclea, basilica A, view from the west during excavations  
(after J.A.R. Munro – T. Koprivica 2014)

Сл. 5 Доклеја, базилика А, поглед са запада током ископавања  
(Ј.А.Р. Мунро – Т. Копривица 2014.)

unknown photographs of the site, temple could be observed as the completely uncovered building with all its elements clearly defined (Fig.5). The height of the walls uncovered during the campaign was between 0.9 and 1.5 m. Along with the preserved parts in its interior, it was sufficient to establish its three-aisled ground plan and dimensions of about 34 m in total length and something less than 17 m in width.<sup>23</sup> The most distinctive characteristic of the church was the spatial organization of its eastern part. It was divided in three units, apse which was semicircular inside and polygonal outside, in front of which an altar rail and a platform lift above the nave floor were placed, while by its northern and southern sides were two transversally projected rooms which could be entered only from the aisles.<sup>24</sup> According to the spatial arrangement, as well as to the form of altar rail which leaned onto the walls of inception of the apse, it is obvious that these eastern rooms, built without any trace of protrusions or

<sup>23</sup> Munro – Anderson – Milne – Haverfield, *op.cit.*, 24. The dimensions were gained by the summing the length of different parts of the basilica according to the existing scale, which was not given in the text written by the English archaeologists.

<sup>24</sup> P. Mijović, *Ranohrišćanski spomenici Praevalisa*, *Arheološki Vestnik* XXIX (1978), 641-678, in particular 669, stated that lateral rooms beside the apse of basilica A were added later, to which there is no allusion in documentation from the first or revisional excavations. By the newest prospection, conducted in November 2015, as well as by the photography that will be published in Koprivica, J.A.R. Munro, *Doclea*, it could be noticed that the *opus*, used for the wall of southern aisle and for the southern room next to the apse, differs from the frontal surfaces on the inceptions of the apse only by larger stone blocks used for treatment of those walls.

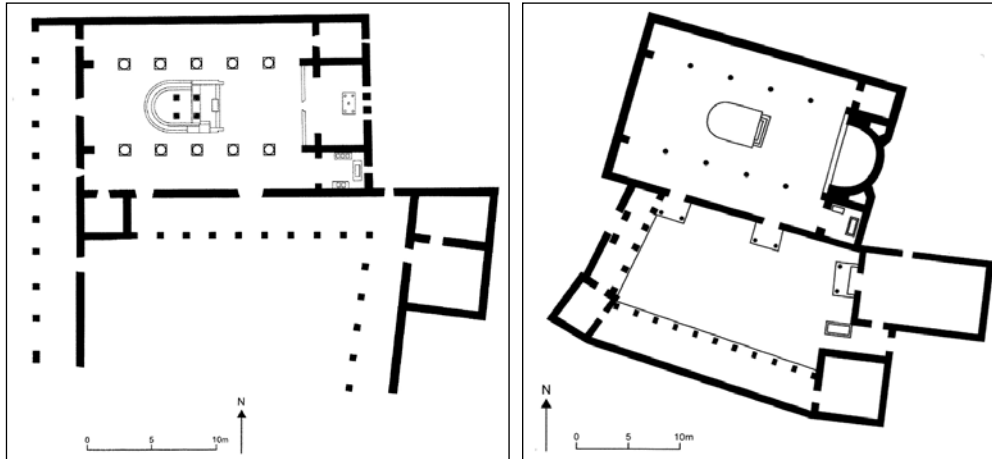


Fig. 6 Syria, Behyó, western church, ground plan; Babisqā, eastern church, ground plan (after A.M. Yasin)

Сл. 6 Сирија, Бехјо, западна црква, основа; Бабска, источна црква, основа (А.М. Јасин).

recesses in walls, weren't created with the intention to have direct communication with the apse. In other words, those were compartments with some distinct function. In absence of relevant finds, that function can't be strictly proved, but if basilica A is envisioned as a whole, its architectural concept appears as the solution known and very disseminated in early Byzantine architecture.

Within the traditional typological classification of architecture, the group of monuments analogous to basilica A is on the first glimpse immeasurably large, since it encompasses the layers and layers of regional architectures. From the 4<sup>th</sup> to the first decades of the 7<sup>th</sup> century their foundations marked the Christian triumph in vast area from the bottom of Persian plane and Armenia, across Palestine, Cilicia and Isauria, to the cities in the western part of Asia Minor and northern Africa. On all of those territories numerous basilicas were discovered, that had axially or transversally positioned square or rectangular rooms next to the apses.<sup>25</sup> However, functional differences among them were demonstrated in existence or in absence of spatial connections between the lateral rooms and the middle of eastern part of the temple, or in the organization of its interior which could be additionally articulated with small apses, niches or windows, depending on liturgical and ritual acts officiated inside those annexes

<sup>25</sup> The survey of the sanctuaries of this type is given by R. Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, Harmondsworth 1986<sup>4</sup>, passim; for churches in Palestine, cf. A. Ovadiah – C.G. da Silva, *Supplementum to the Corpus of the Byzantine Churches in the Holy Land I*, *Levant* 13 (1981), 200-261; *Supplementum II*, *Levant* 14 (1982), 122-170; in Syria, cf. I. Peña, *The Christian Art of Byzantine Syria*, Garnet Publishing 1996, passim; in North Africa, cf. N. Duval, *Études d'architecture chrétienne nord-africaine*, *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Antiquité* 84-2 (1972), 1071-1172; in Asia Minor, cf. S. Hill, *The Early Byzantine Churches in Cilicia and Isauria*, University of Birmingham 1996, passim.



in certain area.<sup>26</sup> Syria, especially Antioch, Edessa, Nysibis, cities with the oldest Christian tradition and strong church organization, was long ago recognized as the nucleus wherefrom the type of church with such structured eastern space expanded, with different local modifications, toward the central and western Mediterranean.<sup>27</sup> Out of the large corpus of these early Christian churches, the most similar to the basilica A, by their general morphological characteristics, would be one of the temples in eastern part of the pilgrimage complex of St. Simeon Stylite (Qalaat Semaan), basilica A in R'safah, church of St. Paul and Moses in Dar Qita, as well as the one in Qasr Serij. The time of their foundation, with relative certainty, is mostly tied to the period from the beginning of 5<sup>th</sup> to the first decades of the 6<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>28</sup> There are even less data about the chronology of buildings in provinces on the territory of modern south-eastern Turkey.<sup>29</sup> However, what draws the attention is the fact that, far to the west, an altar space was formed in identical manner, and that is the altar of the eastern church of pilgrimage complex dedicated to Virgin in Ephesus, which was finished by 400.<sup>30</sup>

In newer historiography enriched with lot of arguments, the real impulse that led to the appearance of that type of church building could be approached much closer. Their quite uniform composition was envisioned as the practical echo of *Constitutiones Apostolorum*, the compound of canonical rules which had its redaction finished by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century at the latest, most probably in Antioch itself. During the next century this writing became the nucleus of religion and liturgy in entire Patriarchy of Antioch and all those areas that were close to it in their dogmatic principles, as well as in those areas where numerous Syrian Diaspora lived.<sup>31</sup> Leaning on the authority of two most famous Antiochian Christians, Ss. Peter and Paul, *Constitutiones Apostolorum* spread parallel with charismatic activity of St. John Chrysostom.<sup>32</sup> Important parts of the canon were minute descriptions of single religious acts, hierarchy of believers according to their sex and age, the way the feasts should be celebrated or the heresy should be fought against, as well as the detailed rules about the ap-

<sup>26</sup> The main problem can be found in the fact that the functions of lateral spaces next to the apse were not identical in different regions nor even within one center. Good example is the research of the function of those spaces in churches of Ravenna, cf. J. Ch. Smith, *Form and Function of the Side Chambers of Fifth- and Sixth-Century Churches in Ravenna*, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 49-2 (1990), 181-204; N. Duval, *Les installations liturgiques dans les églises paléochrétiennes*, *Hortus Artium Medievalium* 5 (1999), 7-30 (with references).

<sup>27</sup> Peña, *op.cit.*, passim (with references).

<sup>28</sup> Krautheimer, *op.cit.*, passim; D. Oates, *Qasr Serij – a Sixth Century Basilica in Northern Iraq*, *Iraq* 24-2 (1962), 78-89.

<sup>29</sup> S.Hill, *op. cit.*, passim.

<sup>30</sup> Krautheimer, *op. cit.*, 107.

<sup>31</sup> D. Fiensy, *Redaction History and the Apostolic Constitutions*, *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 72-4 (1982), 293-302; Peña, *op.cit.*, 64-65; J.L. Maxwell, *Christianization and Communication in Late Antiquity. John Chrysostom and his Congregation in Antioch*, Cambridge University Press 2006, passim; M. Lenk, *The Apostolic Constitutions and the Law*, in: *The Levant: Crossroads of Late Antiquity* (E. Bradshaw Aitken – J.M. Fossey eds.), Leiden – Boston 2014, 113-122.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Maxwell, *op.cit.*, passim.

pearance and spatial arrangement of the basilica. Its length should be twice as large as its width, and its eastern part should be organized as the semicircular central space flanked by diaconicon/sacristy to the north, and a room for relics to the south.<sup>33</sup> Recently repeated archaeological excavations resulted in statement that mentioned monuments similar to the bishopric centre in Doclea are actually product of accepted and gradually developed liturgical and architectural praxis. As its initial outcome it had an even older stratum of sanctuaries in rural neighbourhood of Antioch, accordingly organized by the regulations of the canon, *and with all the necessary features recognized likewise in the remains of basilica A*. Churches in Mshabbak, Babisqā and Behyô (Fig. 6), dated to the end of 4<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, were built as relatively small temples, but all three of them had positively detected atria south of them, rooms positioned south of the apse with discovered small stone reliquaries, and finally, two portals each opened in southern walls of these buildings. Their function was in close connection with the feasts during which the believers were allowed to enter into the chamber with relics.<sup>34</sup> In identical positions the remains of two entrances were found in Doclea by J. Munro and designated as „blocked entrance“.<sup>35</sup> It is certain that these buildings weren't the direct role model for the early Byzantine sacred centre of Doclea, but it is likewise certain that their entire structure reproduced in small scale incomparably more monumental but less preserved or only according to written sources known temples of Antioch.<sup>36</sup> What architecture of basilica A doubtlessly acknowledges is that, like in Salona, city religious institution was organized and in its beginning led by the colony of inhabitants originating from Syria. *There does not exist even a hint about it in any known written or material sources*. Likewise, it seems certain that, at first, the cathedral of Doclea cherished the relics of martyrs, which could be brought from at least one memoriae from the Christian necropolis, as well as from some of at least five early Christian temples whose remains were detected in circle of 5-7 km around the city walls.<sup>37</sup> On the other hand, several facts observed as the totum, like circumstance that the English archaeologists found the doors in southern wall of the basilica A closed, as well as the lack of traces of any serious devastation that would have as its result the destruction of its altar rail, the fact that parts of mobilier seam ritually devastated and, finally, the erection of two temples in neighbouring location, could all testify about the destiny of Syrian Christians in Doclea. Since the time of Theodosius this province belonged to Eastern Roman empire. In the vicinity of his capital, Council was held

<sup>33</sup> Peña, *op.cit.*, 64-65.

<sup>34</sup> A.M.Yasin, *Saints and Church Spaces in the Late Antique Mediterranean. Architecture, Cult and Community*, Cambridge University Press 2009, 168-169; E. Loosley, *The Architecture and Liturgy of the Bema in Fourth- to Sixth-Century Syrian Churches*, Leiden – Boston 2012, 125 dated the church in Babisqā in 390-407/408, and the one in Behyô in 5<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>35</sup> Munro – Anderson – Milne – Haverfield, *op.cit.*, 24.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. W. Mayer – P. Allen, *The Churches of Syrian Antioch (300-638 CE)*, Leuven – Paris – Walpole, MA 2012.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. I Stevović, *Praevalis. Obrazovanje kulturnog prostora kasnoantičke provincije/Praevalis. The Making of the Cultural Space of the Late Antique Province*, Podgorica 2014, 89sq (with references).

in Chalcedon in 451, marked by the dogmatic break of Constantinopolitan patriarchy with eastern churches, in which Antiochian Christian organization became the biggest loser, since being definitely forced to relinquish its primate in East to church dignitaries of Alexandria.<sup>38</sup> *Constitutiones Apostolorum*, which was observed by Rome and Constantinople with variable, often quite reserved attitude, lost much of its influence by that same Council, being at the end of century officially declared apocrypha by pope Gelasius.<sup>39</sup> Since the relations of church fractions could easily generate situation similar to the one described by Procopius when writing about Ulpiana,<sup>40</sup> it is not impossible that after 451 occurred some schism within Christian community in Doclea. It could have as its consequence not only limited destruction of the cathedral, but the beginning of an end of memory of

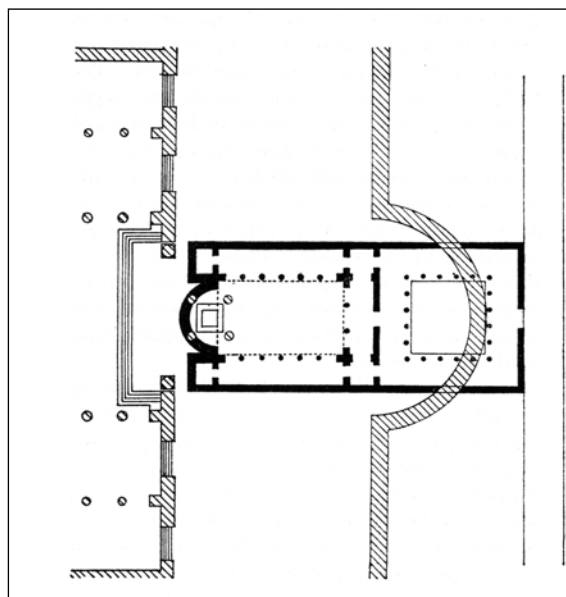


Fig. 7 Rome, San Paolo fuori le mura, first church, ground plan (after R.F. Hodinott)

Сл. 7 Рим, прва црква Св. Павла изван зидина, основа (Р.Ф. Ходинот)

those martyrs whose remains were until then kept in it. It could also happen because Doclea was even before 313 extremely cosmopolitan ambient. So it must not be excluded that some of the cults celebrated in city were actually imported by Syrian Diaspora. Since the architecture of basilica A, along with until today preserved tradition, equally suggest the possibility that Syrian stratum of the Christians in the city could have arrived indirectly. In accordance with the citations in Porphyrogenitos writings, that road lead to Rome, in which several decades after 313 existed similar shrine. It was quite small and didn't last long, but it's importance from the beginning was in disproportion with its size. That is somewhat forgotten foundation of Constantine built outside city walls, the first church erected on the spot of martyrdom of Apostle Paul (Fig.7).

As eloquent as it is, the language of architecture with its formal similarities on one and apparently negligible, but actually crucial, differences on the other

<sup>38</sup> Cf. R. Price – M. Whitby (eds.), *Chalcedon in Context. Church Councils 400-700*, Liverpool University Press 2011.

<sup>39</sup> For pope Gelasius cf. R. Collins, *Keepers of the Keys of Heaven. A History of the Papacy*, New York 2009, 74sq. (with references).

<sup>40</sup> According to Procopius, a revolt of citizens broke in Ulpiana in 552, which was provoked by the dispute over *Tria Capitula*, which had as its consequence the intervention of Justinian's troops and their retain in the city quite longer than it was planned, cf. М. Миљковић, *О тзв. Женском германском гробу из Улпијане*, in: Споменица Јована Ковачевића, Београд 2003, 143-178, in particular 144.

side, can often delude researchers to premature conclusions about the direct connection of different monuments. Having in mind this methodological postulate, one should primarily wonder about the reasons which could speak against the idea of the oldest roman temple of St. Paul as the role model for basilica A in Doclea. At first glance, those appear easy to find: because of its size, disproportionately smaller than the increasing popularity of the cult of the saint, the church of Constantine lived only for several decades. From the 383/384 it was incorporated in gigantic complex of new temple known by the name „Basilica of three emperors“, which was dedicated in 390/391, and finished in the time of Emperor Honorius (395-423).<sup>41</sup> As distinct from it are data diverse in character, which suggest the real possibility that the origins of architectural features of basilica A could be sought for in Rome. With the exception of their dimensions and position of atrium, the ground plans and structures of eastern parts of both churches are almost identical. Among numerous Christian communities that lived in Rome, one of the most influential consisted of Syrian Christians or those to whose ancestors St. Paul addressed directly;<sup>42</sup> two preserved basilicas testify of their presence, of St. John in Porta Latina and St. Symphorosa.<sup>43</sup> Besides, after this large architectural enterprise was finished, it became the goal of many pilgrims from the East. Their itinerary didn't imply only the visiting of main temple of Apostle, but also implied walking along traces and shrines that in certain region remained behind him and his comrades in struggle for faith.<sup>44</sup> Doclea belong to those frames not only by its vicinity to Rome,<sup>45</sup> but by the contours of tradition that led back to the time of Paul's activity and a familiar ci-

<sup>41</sup> H. Brandenburg, *Ancient Churches of Rome from the Fourth to the Seventh Century*, Louvain 2004, 103, 114-130; D.L. Eastman, *Paul the Martyr: The Cult of the Apostle in the Latin West*, Atlanta GE 2011, 24-29.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. in general A. Brent, *Hyppolitus and the Roman Church in the Third Century. Communities in Tension Before the Emergence of a Monarch-Bishop*, Leiden – New York - Köln 1995; C.K. Barret, *On Paul. Essays on His Life, Work and Influence in the Early Church*, London – New York 2003; T.J. Burke – B.S. Rosner (eds.), *Paul as Missionary. Identity, Activity, Theology, and Practice*, London – New York 2011, and in particular D. Noy, *Foreigners at Rome. Citizens and Strangers*, London 2000, 234-244; id., *Immigrants in Late Imperial Rome*, available at <https://www.academia.edu/1338255>; W. Mayer, *Antioch and the West in Late Antiquity*, *Byzantinoslavica LXI* (2003), 5-32.

<sup>43</sup> R. Krautheimer, *An Oriental Basilica in Rome: S. Giovanni a Porta Latina*, *American Journal of Archaeology* 40-4 (1936), 485-495. It remains unclear why English archaeologists saw similarity between basilica A and church of St. Clemente in Rome, since this later in its earliest phase had no lateral spaces beside the apse, cf. J.E. Barclay Lloyd, *The Building History of the Medieval Church of S. Clemente in Rome*, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 45-3 (1986), 197-223; Brandenburg, *op. cit.*, 142-152.

<sup>44</sup> Brandenburg, *op. cit.*, 114-130; the sources that testify about the motifs for the pilgrimage to the earliest Paul's sanctuary in Rome are cited by M. Dietz, *Wandering Monks, Virgins, and Pilgrims. Ascetic Travels in the Mediterranean World, A.D. 300-800*, The Pennsylvania State University Press 2005, 119; see also Eastman, *op. cit.*, 24-29.

<sup>45</sup> For the influence of Rome in Praevalis and neighboring areas cf. И. Николајевић, *Велики посед у Далмацији у V и VI веку у светлости археолошких налаза*, *Зборник радова Византолошког института* 13 (1971), 277-292; R. Bratož, *Die frühchristliche Kirche in Makedonien und ihr Verhältnis zu Rom*, in: *Klassisches Altertum, Spätantike und frühes Christentum* (K. Dietz – D. Hennig – H. Kaletsch hrsg.), Würzburg 1993, 509-527.

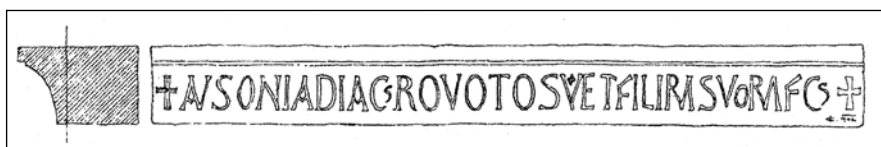


Fig. 8 Doclea, votive inscription of Ausonia, site of excavation (after J.A.R. Munro – T. Koprivica 2014) and text

Сл. 8 Доклеја, вотивни натпис са именом Аузоније, место налаза (Ј.А.Р. Мунро – Т. Копривица 2014.)

tation in his *Epistle to the Romans* (Rom. 15, 19), in which it is stated that apostle took the word of God „from Jerusalem, and around as far as to Illyricum“. A lot is written about this statement, from the survey of entire concept of St. Paul's missionary act, based to which „Illyricum“ would be understood according to ancient Greek model as the end of civilized, i.e. Christian world,<sup>46</sup> to the attempt of geographical definition of „Illyricum“. It is identified as *Illyria Graeca*, later province of *Epirus Nova* (New Epirus), in which apostle arrived from Nicopolis, and the centre of which was Dyrrachium.<sup>47</sup> There are relatively reliable historical facts which testify that St. Paul's taught Christianity in the area that earlier existed as entity culturally equivalent to Doclea. However, it is still impossible to be more precise about the intensity or continuity of the local echo of his activity, or to indulge in speculations about its direct endurance materialized in architecture, i.e. in liturgical rite held at basilica A. But it should

<sup>46</sup> <sup>46</sup> J. Knox, *Romans 15:14-33 and Paul's Conception of His Apostolic Mission*, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 83-1 (1964), 1-11.

<sup>47</sup> R.E. Osborne, *St. Paul's Silent Years*, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 84-1 (1965), 59-65; E. De Witt Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, London 2004, xxvi.

not be overlooked that an intense cult of St. Thecla survived in area surrounding Doclea. The only way it could arrive in this region is from farther or nearer East, certainly in early period of Christianity, and those who knew legend of St. Thecla must have known, eo ipso especially honoured, apostle Paul.<sup>48</sup>

With the persistent cult of St. Thecla, Paul's movement often left behind one insufficiently palpable institution within early church. It is the title and function of diaconissa, held by certain Ausonia, the only citizen known by name from early Byzantine Doclea, the person registered in votive inscription discovered by English archaeologists in the vicinity of basilica A, in the area of neighbouring basilica B and cruciform temple (Fig. 8).<sup>49</sup> Information that the inscribed architrave was 2.3 m long, in accordance with the ground plans, i.e. with the dimensions of both buildings, give no reliable indication that would explain the original place where it stood.<sup>50</sup> Even more obscure is the history of this church „order“, as well as all the changes that occurred with it within numerous church organizations of Rome and the East. It additionally aggravate the discussion about chronology and character of Ausonia's activity in Doclea, especially when having in mind that mentioned title in praxis purported number of actions, from liturgical and protective to strikingly economical tied to church organization in cities as well as to monasteries inside or outside the city walls.<sup>51</sup> Indirectly, something can be supposed thanks to the assertiveness of comparable examples. Namely, mentioning of Ausonia's sons in the inscription suggest that she joined the order after the death of her husband, since diaconissae were theoretically exclusively chosen out of virgins or widows. As the woman with children, she could not take part in liturgical rites, which narrows her activity to helping those in needs and teaching the younger of everyday behaviour appropriate to the true Christians. Somewhat similar status held, as it seems, the female buried at the end of 4<sup>th</sup> or the beginning of 5<sup>th</sup> century in basilica *extra muros* in Philippi, one of the most famous centres of Paul's teachings. She was diaconissa Agatha, whose earthly remains were laid in tomb together with the body of her husband, who held the prominent position as the officer of city's treasury.<sup>52</sup> Implications of this find are instructive example of local traditions. From one region to another, traditions confronted the attempts of forming unified church canons, like the one initiated by pope Damassus at the end of 4<sup>th</sup> century in attempt to unite

<sup>48</sup> Cf. S.J. Davis, *The Cult of Saint Thecla. A Tradition of Women's Piety in Late Antiquity*, Oxford University Press 2001; Stevović, *op.cit.*, 85-87.

<sup>49</sup> Munro – Anderson – Milne – Haverfield, *op.cit.*, 43; M. Sanader, *O sudjelovanju žena u radu rane crkve na primeru jednog epigrafskog spomenika iz Duklje/On the Participation of Women in the Work of the Early Church based on one Epigraphic Inscription from Doclea*, Nova antička Duklja/New Antique Doclea IV (2014), 7-18.

<sup>50</sup> И. Николајевић, *Две белешке за историју Превалиса*, Зборник радова Византолошког института 20 (1981), 9-14, brings in the possibility that the architrave was later brought from some other location.

<sup>51</sup> V. Karras, *Female Deacons in the Byzantine Church*, Church History 73-2 (2004), 272-316; K. Madigan – C. Osiek (eds.), *Ordained Women in the Early Church: a Documentary History*, The John Hopkins University Press 2011, *passim*.

<sup>52</sup> V. Abrahamsen, *Women in Philippi: the Pagan and Christian Evidence*, Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion 3-2 (1987), 17-30.

all Christian communes in Rome, or Gelasius' encyclica of 494, proclaimed with goal to exclude women from Eucharist.<sup>53</sup> Based on situation in Philippi it can logically be conclude that this practice accepted in the city was not applied when the election of diaconissa is in question, since Agatha obviously had the title while still in marriage. In this case it was explained by the custom that female priests in general, and in Philippi at least since the end of 5<sup>th</sup> century, had high rank in ancient cults of Diana and Isis, or more precisely by the possibility that the position of women in early church was inherited from its traditional role in society of polytheistic religiosity.<sup>54</sup> Although in this spot one could reach for the reminder that the existence of Diana's sanctuary was one of the small amount of testified facts of roman Doclea,<sup>55</sup> there are still not sufficient arguments which would suggest direct connection of these two regions, although the shadows of similar phenomena derived from the activity of St. Paul must not be thrown away, because Ausonia must not have been the first diaconissa in the city. It is certain that she was the ktetor of a Christian building, promoter of an enterprise that necessitated material resources, and even despite the lack of direct hints it is possible that she, like Agatha, was the wife of some city magistrate. But, something else seems more important, which emanate directly from the incised text. Namely, the building was built as legacy (*pro voto*) of her and her sons or, more precisely, as family foundation built on private property. That property could lay in one of densely populated suburbia, where traces of villas with churches were detected, but it can be neither proved nor rejected. What is basically certain and proved by sources as well as by archaeological finds is the fact that soon after 313 apartment buildings in cities all over Mediterranean became intensively Christianized. In other words, urban villas remained the ambient of everyday life, as well as of frequent and completely opened expression of private piety, especially expressed by the members of family. One of the consequences was the erection of new and adaptation of older parts of complexes to serve women piety. Among numerable examples, like the one in Ephesus, where in the late 4<sup>th</sup> century one third of buildings were houses that at the same time had residential, economical and religious function,<sup>56</sup> female piety expressed in chamber ambience was most impressively illustrated by the data we possess about rich sisters widows Marcella and Albina, on whose property on Aventine enjoyed hospitality young Eusebius Sophronius Hieronymus (St. Jerome). In Constantinople, diaconissa of blue blood, named Olympia, turned *oikos* situated south of St. Sophia into some kind of monastery, or more precisely ascetic commune, putting under its jurisdiction her broadest family with all the servants.<sup>57</sup> Eruptive dissemination of the popularity of the most rigorous church rules of behaviour inside baptised elite, parallel with the replication of

<sup>53</sup> Collins, *op. cit.*, 51-77.

<sup>54</sup> Abrahamsen, *op. cit.*; R. Shepard Kraemer, *Her Share of the Blessings. Women's Religions Among Pagans, Jews and Christians in the Greco-Roman World*, Oxford University Press 1992.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. P.Sticotti, *Rimski grad Doclea u Crnoj Gori*, Podgorica 1999, 85-98.

<sup>56</sup> Bowes, *op. cit.*, 104.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, 80 (for the property of Marcella and Albina), 105,113 (for the house of Olympia).

official monastic communities, from the 4<sup>th</sup> century onward gave strong impulse to the act of personal addressing to God which, in relation to former life in polytheistic religiosity or the role of mother, couldn't be limited only to monastery. To most part of female population on the top of social hierarchy, separated space in family house was substituted by monastic cell, introducing one basically traditional but much transformed dimension into the Roman concept of home as the wellspring of upbringing and virtues, in which woman was once again in its centre. From such spiritual climate and personal impulse emanated Ausonia's act of piety, which implied building of private church outside city walls or Christian house with clearly separated chamber which, for that time only provisionally, can be called chapel. The fact that Ausonia left her sons in charge of her foundation, quite similar to Olympia who dedicated her younger sister to diaconissae,<sup>58</sup> guaranteed not only the retaining of the property within family but guaranteed also that the complex should continue to live by truthful religious rules after her death. On conceptually opposite pole of public space of basilica A, early Byzantine Doclea grow out to be, in its inner mental structure as well as in physical sense, truly a Christian city.

\*Researches needed for this work were achieved by the assets of scientific projects *Christian Culture on the Balkans in the Middle Ages: Byzantine Empire, Serbs and Bulgarians from 9<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> century* and *Serbian medieval art and its European context*, supported by the Ministry of Education and Science of Republic of Serbia.

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РАНОВИЗАНТИЈСКА ДОКЛЕЈА И ЊЕНИ СТАНОВНИЦИ:  
*LONGE AB PATRIAM?*

На основу писане и недавно откривене техничке документације са ископавања хришћанског кварта античког града Доклеје код Подгорице, спроведених 1893. године од стране екипе енглеских археолога предвођених Џ.А.Р. Мунроом, у раду се анализирају архитектонске форме храма у историографији познатог као „базилика А“. Из наведене грађе са знатним степеном сигурности установљено је да је споменуто здање представљало градско катедрално средиште чије се поједине градитељске карактеристике, попут односа мера и структуре олтарског простора, разложно дају упоредити са великим бројем ранохришћанских односно рановизантијских базиликалних цркава подизаних током IV-VI столећа на ширем простору Медитерана. Појава посебних градитељских својстава у организму „базилике А“ темељ је претпоставци да је, као и у Салони, прва, или једна од најстаријих хришћанских колонија у граду, била устројена од стране становништва које је потицало са простора Сирије или са територија везаних за патријаршију у Антиохији. Судићи по укупном фонду археолошких налаза на простору Доклеје и њеног континенталног и приморског окружења, оваква ситуација представљала је одјек само једног од многих миграционих таласа који су из источних медитеранских области од класичне антике до раног средњег века константно пристизали у ареал јужног дела источне обале Јадрана.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, 113.