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The history of the eastern Adriatic region from the vth to the vIIth centuries AD: historical processes and historiographic problems

Hrvoje Gračanin

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The history of the eastern Adriatic region from the early vth to the early vIIth centuries is, for the most part, a collection of research questions that cannot be answered with much certainty. To be sure, historians are not forced to operate entirely in darkness since there are various types of sources at their disposal. However, the evidential input is not sufficient enough, thus making the historical reconstruction speculative in many aspects. Since it is intended here to give an historian's outlook, we are primarily concerned with the written sources, albeit the archaeological evidence is most often crucial for more complete and refined understanding of historical processes. Furthermore, over the past few decades there has been several theoretical advances in the history of Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages which have to be taken into account. With regard to the written evidence, the deconstructionism as a methodological criticism has undoubtedly improved our understanding of literary sources as multilayered and multifaceted products of certain times, socio-political contexts, intentions, experiences and beliefs of the authors, and views, interests and needs of the audience for which they were intended and to which they were directed¹. The discourse and the selection of presented facts also depend upon pre-existing texts and testimonies that the authors used or relied upon in creating their own narrative, and in doing so they could make mistakes intentionally or unintentionally². This is to say that the written sources, especially the narrative ones, cannot be taken at face value as an objective representation of historical truth, and one always has to bear in mind that historical narratives operate within certain intellectual and ideological frameworks which have to be first deciphered as to fully understand the nature of these texts and how their authors imagined and constructed the past. To be sure, historical texts are an invaluable source of historical information, and the pitfalls of the post-modernist and post-structuralist hypercritical reading of the written sources should be avoided if there is any chance at their meaningful evaluation and examination. Nevertheless, historians have always got to be conscious of the context and character of the

Jones 1999, 223-224. The basic bibliography includes Berkhofer 1997; Jenkins 1997; McCullagh 2004; Munslow 2006.

2 Bálint 2010, 148-149.

H. Gračanin, in : AdriAtlas et l'histoire de l'espace adriatique, p. 67-97

written sources to be able to interpret them properly. Moreover, they have to be aware that their interpretation, for all intents and purposes, is merely a historiographic construct, more or less convincing or plausible, and not a petrified truth of historical processes.

STATE OF THE RESEARCH

A comprehensive synthesis of the eastern Adriatic region in Late Antiquity remains yet to be written. This is not to say that there are no monographic treatment of the history of Dalmatia and Istria in Late Antiquity: a recently published book by Robert Matijašić³ is a first attempt – and by far the best handbook of Late Antiquity in the Croatian historiography - at a synthetic overview of the late antique history of the region between the river Drava and the Adriatic, where the main historical processes in Dalmatia and Istria have been duly treated. The book offers a well-founded narrative based on relevant sources and up-to-date scholarly literature, which are discussed in separate sections. An historical overview with an emphasis on the history of Christianity and the Church in the modern Croatian lands in Late Antiquity is offered by Radoslav Katičić⁴. A chapter written by Bruna Kuntić-Makvić for the first volume of the publication Croatia and Europe. Culture, Science and Art, rendered in English as Croatia in the Early Middle Ages: A Cultural Survey, similarly, though much more concisely, surveys the history of modern Croatian lands in Late Antiquity⁵. There are also two monographs by Croatian specialists that are oriented toward history of Dalmatia and Istria in Late Antiquity with specific geographical and chronological scope. Both books have appeared practically simultaneously and are based on the MSc theses of the respective authors. On Dalmatia, Vladimir Posavec deals, strictly speaking, with a mere quarter of a century (454-480), but, given the limitations of the source material, the author has expanded his examination to cover the period from the late IVth to the late Vth centuries⁶. He has analyzed the literary sources and discussed the archaeological evidence, and successfully managed to provide a coherent picture of the principal historical processes and events, which gives more than a sound basis for further research. He has explored the role of Marcellinus and Julius Nepos in the then military-political events as well as the socio-economic cricumstances of the vth century Dalmatia, surveyed the moveable archaeological material, funerary sculpture, architecture, monuments and inscriptions, and dealt with towns and settlements, population and religion, and the burial practices. In a separate section of the book he has gathered the selected passages from the extant literary sources (mainly from chronicles and histories) relevant for the history of the late antique Dalmatia, both in the original Latin and Greek and in Croatian translation. With the history of Dalmatia in Late Antiquity Posavec has also dealt in a paper that offers a view on the province's history in the first half of the vth century⁷. The other book is by Andrej Novak who examines the features of the Ostrogothic and early

3 Matijašić 2012.

4 Katičić 1998, 97-151.

5 Kuntić-Makvić 1997, 80-85, *Ead.* 1999, 81-86.

6 Posavec 2007.

7 Posavec 1997.

Byzantine rule over Istria⁸. The emphasis is on the analysis of the available literary sources, scarce as they are for Istria in the vith century, with particular attention on Cassiodorus' letters and papal correspondence. Understandably, the church history looms large in the book.

Another overview of political, socio economic and ecclesiastical circumstances in the v1th century Istria is offered by Marina Vicelja Matijašić in her art history book⁹. Danijel Dzino, an Australia-based scholar of Croatian/Bosnian descent, has much interpretatively interesting to offer in his monograph, especially with regard to the written sources on the migrations of the Slavs, however brief and succinct his overview of Dalmatia in Late Antiquity is¹⁰. Ivo Goldstein's bookⁿ, based on his PhD thesis, deals extensively with Justinianic age on the eastern Adriatic, drawing much of its conclusions from the archaeological record, and it is still the most comprehensive treatment of the history of the eastern Adriatic region during the rule of Emperor Justinian I and his immediate successors. The non-Croatian specialists, too, have turned their attention to the history of the eastern Adriatic region. A still valid narrative for Dalmatia in Late Antiquity is offered by John J. Wilkes¹². More recent is a detailed regional study of Western Illyricum in Late Antiquity by Friedrich Lotter (in collaboration with Rajko Bratož and Helmut Castritius)¹³. It deals with the military-political history of the late Roman and post-Roman Western Illyricum with special emphasis on the changes of Roman political-administrative and ecclesiastical structures, movements of various non-Roman, mostly Germanic groups, and the emigration and survival of the Roman provincial population.

The monographic surveys are supplemented by a number of specific studies and papers covering the variety of research topics. Mate Suić's monograph is indispensable when it comes to the transformation of the Roman town in the eastern Adriatic region in Late Antiquity, especially with regard to the process of castrization¹⁴. Suić has also presented his findings in a synthetic paper¹⁵. Miroslav Katić has focused on the late antique towns that developed from the late rvth century onwards in the coastal Dalmatia¹⁶. For the transformation of the late antique settlement landscape as well as the question of settlement continuity on the eastern Adriatic important are several studies and surveys: the still unpublished PhD thesis by Maurizio Levak, Slavko Ciglenečki's studies, the works by Zlatko Karač, Bruna Kuntić-Makvić, Nikolina Maraković and Tin Turković, and Duje Rendić-Miočević¹⁷, while Perica Špehar's study is primarily concerned with the inland of the Late Roman Dalmatia, but has some valuable remarks and conclusions for the coastal area, too¹⁸. The transformation of the urban structure of individual towns in the late antique Dalmatia has also received

- 8 Novak 2007.
- 9 Vicelja Matijašić 2007, 5-52.
- 10 Dzino 2010, 74-117.
- 11 Goldstein 1992, 17-111.
- 12 Wilkes 1969, 416-437.
- 13 Lotter *et al.* 2003.
- 14 Suić 2003, 341-375 (2nd revised and supplemented edition). The first edition appeared in 1975.
- 15 Suić 1997a, 103-111, also in Eng.: Id. 1999, 101-111.
- 16 Katić 2003.
- 17 Levak 2009; Ciglenečki 1987, 69-72, 78-79, 86-87 and 104-107; Id. 2003; Karačić 1995; Kuntić-Makvić 1998a; Maraković & Turković 2006; Rendić-Miočević 1984 and 2011.
- 18 Špehar 2008.

scholarly attention¹⁹. A particular set of research problems concerning the patterns of functionality of the late antique settlements is inseparably related to the question of continuity and discontinuity, for which two papers particulary offer valuable insights²⁰.

The structural and functional changes of the late antique villas on the eastern Adriatic has not yet been adequately explored, but recent studies have started to make up for this shortcoming²¹. The complex in Polače bay on the island of Mljet is one of rare examples of well studied late antique villa sites along the coastal Dalmatia, having spawned a number of papers²².

The Ostrogothic period on the eastern Adriatic has attracted some attention. Among the first Croatian researchers who studied specifically the aspects of the Ostrogothic presence in Dalmatia was Mihovil Abramić²³. There are two relatively recent surveys dedicated to the Ostrogoths in Dalmatia²⁴. A still useful overview of the Ostrogothic period in Dalmatia, along with the brief narrative on the early Byzantine rule in the vrth century, is also offered by Mate Suić in his 1981 study²⁵. The question of the province of Liburnia, i.e. *Liburnia Tarsaticensis* in Late Antiquity, has been treated several times, most thoroughly thus far by Mate Suić, Julijan Medini and Tin Turković and Ivan Basić²⁶. Three studies are dedicated specifically to individual late antique towns on the eastern Adriatic during the Ostrogothic period²⁷. Branko Marušić has produced a monographic study of Pula in the late antique and early Byzantine period as well as a study of a late antique fortified settlement of Novigrad (Istria)²⁸. Mihovil Abramić's succinct treatment of the late antique and early Byzantine period of Salona in his short general survey still provides a valid and informative narrative²⁹. Another study of the life of the Dalmatian capital in Late Antiquity, with a broader chronological scope and from an archaeologist's point of view, is by Zdenko Vinski who has analyzed the archaeological evidence for the functionality and importance of Salona between the early vth and early VIIth centuries³⁰. Cassiodorus' letters relevant for Istria in Late Antiquity have been examined by Robert Matijašić³¹. A brief overview of political-military and administrative effects of the Ostrogothic rule over the region between the Drava and the Adriatic can be found in Andreas Schwarcz's paper³². Julijan Medini and Slobodan Čače have investigated the settlement network in the late Roman Dalmatia based on an early medieval source that appa-

- For instance: Chevalier & Mardešić 2006; Jeličić-Radonić 2007; Maraković & Turković 2012; Marin 1988; 19 Čaušević 2006.
- Babić 1996; Cambi 1999. 20
- Such as Begović & Schrunk 2001 and Zeman 2012. 21
- Prijatelj 1949; Karaman 1957; Dyggve 1959; Cagiano de Azevedo 1968; Fisković 1997 and 1998; Stošić et 22 al. 2002 and Turković 2011.
- Abramić 1956. 23
- Uglešić 1992; Posavec 1996. 24
- Suić 1981, 319-326, 340-343. 25
- Suić 1970; Medini 1980b, 393-434; Turković & Basić 2011, 63-71, 83-89; Iid. 2014, 45-58 and 69-73. 26 27
- Antoljak 1973; Id. 1992; Dyggve 1949; Uglešić 2005. 28
- Marušić 1967; Id. 1989.
- Abramić 1917a; Id. 1991. 29
- 30 Vinski 1967.
- Matijašić 1988. 31
- Schwarcz 2000. 32

rently derives its information from the v1th century Gothic authors writing in the Ostrogothic Kingdom of Italy³³.

Closely related to the research of the Ostrogothic period is the investigation of Justinianic and post-Justinianic age on the eastern Adriatic, which has spawned a number of different studies and papers, covering a variety of research themes: archaeological, art history, chronological, cultural history, military history, medical history, numismatics³⁴. A number of studies by Croatian and non-Croatian scholars have dealt specifically with the administative and organizational questions concerning Istria and/or Dalmatia in the vth to vrth centuries³⁵.

The military-political circumstances of the vth and vrth centuries have been examined by Frank E. Wozniak³⁶. The socio-economic history of the late antique Istria has been explored by Robert Matijašić³⁷. Certain aspects of the economic history of the late antique and early Byzantine Dalmatia have been examined by Ivanka Nikolajević³⁸. Unfortunately, the late antique period is not in the focus of two detailed regional monographic studies on economic history of Istria and Dalmatia in Antiquity, Robert Matijašić's and Ante Škegro's³⁹. András Mócsy has provided an insight into the ethnic structure of the Late Roman Dalmatia based on the epigraphic evidence, especially in relation to the Ivth and vth century *Salona*⁴⁰. John J. Wilkes has examined an epigraphic evidence for the emigration of Roman population from Pannonia to Dalmatia, and Rajko Bratož has also explored the examples of the refugees' influx from Pannonia to the adjacent regions, including Dalmatia⁴¹. Two epigraphic testimonies for the emigration of Pannonians to Dalmatia, i.e. *Salona* have been lately presented by Ivan Basić⁴². Ivanka Nikolajević has dealt with the fate of the people captured by the barbarians in Dalmatia⁴³.

Two personages of the late Roman history who had direct links to the eastern Adriatic have attracted considerable scholarly interest. The life and career of Marcellinus, a high ranking army officer who seems to have been in effective control of Dalmatia for quite some time around the middle of the vth century, has been extensively examined by both Croatian and non-Croatian specialists⁴⁴. The life and career of Julius Nepos, the last legitimate Western Roman Emperor who met his doom in Diocletian's Palace in Dalmatia, has

- 33 Medini 1980a; Čače 1995.
- 34 For instance, Antoljak 1956; Cambi 1998; Ciglenečki 2009, 208-10, 213-15; Goldstein 2000; Id. 2005; Grmek 1998; Jeličić-Radonić 1998; Margetić 1997; Marović 1995; Tomičić 1998.
- Bileta 2011; Ferluga 1957; Id. 1978; Id. 1992, 175-178; Gračanin 2005, 28-30, and note 29; 2006a, 54-8; 2006b, 109-10; Margetić 1997a-b; Ravegnani 1999; Rogošić 1962, 95-104, 115-63, 167-77; Zaninović [1987] 1996.
- 36 Wozniak 1981.
- 37 Matijašić 2009.
- 38 Nikolajević 1971.
- 39 Matijašić 1998; Škegro 1999.
- 40 Mócsy 1965.
- 41 Wilkes 1972, 377-393; Bratož 2007a = 2011a.
- 42 Basić 2008, 84-90.
- 43 Nikolajević 1974.
- 44 Recent relevant contributions: Demandt 1970, 684-687; Gaggero 1982; Henning 1999, 277-281; Kulikowski 2002; MacGeorge 2002, 15-67 and 294-296; Martindale 1980, 708-710; Nikolanci 1985, 5-14; Posavec 2007, 35-38, 51-55, 59-65, 66-67.

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 Posavec 2007, 35-38, 51-55, 59-65, 66-67.

been repeatedly examined. Apart from the already mentioned contributions by Demandt, Henning, Martindale, Nikolanci, and Posavec, John P. C. Kent's study deserves to be mentioned⁴⁵. Four studies by Croatian scholars analyse Julius Nepos' coinage, of which three are dedicated to the issues from the Salonitan mint⁴⁶. Another short-term Western Roman Emperor, Glycerius, ended his days in Dalmatia as bishop of *Salona*. The latest study of his life and career is, next to Henning's contribution, by Massimo Gusso⁴⁷.

Rather well researched, particularly since recent times, is the history of early Christianity and the ecclesiastical organization on the eastern Adriatic in Late Antiquity. There are nu-merous studies with general or specific scopes, on the history of Christianity and church in *Salona*⁴⁸, on the Salonitan church councils of 530 and 533 and their acts⁴⁹, on the features of the early Christian architecture in Dalmatia⁵⁰, on the early Christianity in Dalmatia⁵¹, on the early Christianity in Istria, to which the previously mentioned monograph by Andrej Novak is to be added, where the ecclesiastical history of Istria in the 6th century is extensively examined⁵² and on papal possessions on the eastern Adriatic and the early ecclesiastical organization in the southeastern Dalmatia⁵³. Especially rich and encompassing is the research contribution by Rajko Bratož⁵⁴. Individual late antique bishoprics in Dalmatia and Istria have also attracted much scholarly attention⁵⁵. Finally, one recent paper investigates the late antique and early medieval monasteries on the islands in Kvarner Bay⁵⁶.

WRITTEN SOURCES

When approaching the study of the eastern Adriatic in Late Antiquity, a researcher is almost immediately struck by a lack of literary source material. The available body of evidence that can be used for historical reconstruction is rather meager, and it is obtainable primarily from histories and chronicles written by writers who flourished in the Eastern Roman Empire in the vth to vIIth centuries. The focus of the late antique writers is rarely on the eastern Adriatic since the region was, on the one hand, mostly spared barbarian incursion and military clashes, and, on the other hand, did not play significant role in the collapse of the Roman rule. The exception are the 530's to 550's when the eastern Adriatic held importance

- 45 Demandt 1970, 677-680; Henning 1999, 51-55, 172-176, 204-208, 282-288; Martindale 1980, 777-778; Nikolanci 1985, 14-22; Posavec 2007, 38-48, 55-56, 65-67; Kent 1966, 146-150.
- 46 Zmajić 1957; Demo 1988; Id. 1989; Id. 2005.
- 47 Henning 1999, 50-51, 171-172 and 203-204; Gusso 1992.
- 48 Abramić 1917b = 1991; Dyggve 1951 = 1989; Caillet 2008; Kuntić-Makvić 1998; Musa 2008; Rizzo 2008; Škregro 2001b = 2002; *Id.* 2007a; *Id.* 2008a.
- 49 Basić 2009a; Prozorov 2011; Škegro 2009a.
- 50 Basler 1972 = 1993; Chevalier 1995; Cvijanović 2006; Migotti 1992a.
- 51 Gabričević 1987 = 1991 (reprint) ; Zeiller 1906 (2nd edition 1967).
- 52 Marušić 1978; Margetić 1983, 113-30, 155-66; Sotinel 2005, 306-370 (with Bratož 2007b); Novak 2007, 86-153.
- 53 Škegro 2001a; *Id.* 2004 = 2005a; *Id.* 2010c.
- 54 Bratož 1986 = 1987a; *Id.* 1987b, 1990a = 1994 ; 1990b; 1996; 2002; 2011b.
- 55 Basić 2009b; 2010; Migotti 1992b; Puljić & Škegro 2006; Škegro 2005b; 2007b; 2007c; 2008b-c; **20**08d; 2009b; 2009c; 2010a-b; 2011; Vučić 2005; Zgrablić 2012.
- 56 Bully & Čaušević-Bully 2011.

take command of the army (a. 540.6)⁶⁰. The Continuator also provides a sole testimony on the effects of the Justinianic plague on *Illyricum* (presumably both Eastern and Western): a great mortality ravages Italy after it had already oppressed the East and *Illyricum* (a. 543.3).

Procopius of *Caesarea* (VIth c.) wrote his *History of the Wars* at Constantinople, and it is the first-rate narrative source for events on the eastern Adriatic during Justinian's war against the Ostrogoths in Italy⁶¹. A brief overview of the pertinent information is as follows: Mundus' military operations and the Gothic counterattack in Dalmatia around Salona until Mundus' death on the battlefield (5.5.2, 11, 5.7.1-5); neither the Roman troops nor the Goths, who fear the enmity of the Roman population in Salona, enter the city following the battle in its vicinity, in which the Romans prevail, but Mundus is killed (5.7.9-10); Constantianus, comes sacri stabuli, forces the Goths under Gripas to quit Dalmatia, puts the entire Dalmatia with Liburnia under his control, winning over the Gothic population settled in the province, and renovates the decaying walls of Salona (5.7.26-37); the Gothic commanders Asinarius and Uligisalus are given a strong army and many large ships so they would lay siege to Salona from the land and the sea, Asinarius recruits the barbarians in *Suabía*, while Uligisalus leads his Goths into Liburnia, but suffers a defeat at Scardona and retreats to Burnum, where he avaits the arrival of Asinarius, Constantianus prepares for the siege, which the Goths start, but the Romans thwart the Gothic attempt (5.16.8-18); Vergentinus, Roman senator, escapes from Mediolanum through Venetia and the adjacent regions to Dalmatia (6.21.41); Vitalis, Roman commander, arrives with his troops from *Dalmatia* to Italy and guards the northern bank of the river Po (6.28.2), Constantianus is ordered to go from Dalmatia to Ravenna (6.30.2); Belisarius and Vitalis, after mustering troops, arrive in Salona (7.10.3); Belisarius travels with his troops to Salona and thence to Pola, where he lands (7.10.12); Belisarius travels across Dalmatia on his way to Epidamnus (Dyrrachium) (7.13.19); Constantianus controls the territory all the way to Liburnia (7.15.16), Totila sends a strong force and a fleet under the command of Indulf against places in Dalmatia, Indulf first plunders a place called Muikuron, which is close by to Salona, Claudianus, Roman commander of Salona, tries to stop the Goths and sends a naval force against them, but the Romans suffer a heavy defeat at the place called Laureate, and thus the Goths return to Italy with a rich booty (7.35.25-29); strayed Roman soldiers that fled in every direction after Verus and other Roman commanders suffered defeats at the hands of the Goths gather in Istria at the news of Germanus' arrival (7.39.4); the Roman commanders John, nephew of Vitalianus, and Justinian, son of Germanus, march to Dalmatia and arrive in Salona for the winter (7.40.11, 27); John winters in Salona and intends to march against Totila and the Goths in Italy, but receives the orders from the Emperor to stay put and await the arrival of Narses (7.40.30, 8.21.4-6, 8.22.1, 8.23.4); John leaves Salona on his own and sails to Scardona, where he is shortly met with Valerianus (8.23.8); he returns to Salona after he and Valerianus forced the Goths to lift the siege of Ancona following their defeat at Sena Gallica (8.23.42); Totila's envoys offer Justinian to cede Sicily and Dalmatia to the Romans, provinces

⁶⁰ Whereas the Continuator has Constantianus sent to Rome, Procopius mentions *Ravenna* (cf. *De bellis*, 6.30.2).
61 The literature on Procopius and his *Wave in the sense*

The literature on Procopius and his *Wars* is abundant. Recent studies include: Cameron 1985; Greatrex 2003; Howard-Johnston 2002; Kaldellis 2004; Treadgold 2007, 176-227 and Whitby 2007. The standard edition: Jakob Haury, Gerhard Wirth (Leipzig 1962-1963).

they already hold (8.24.4); Narses sets off from *Salona* leading his army against Totila (8.26.5); a Goth named Goar had come from *Dalmatia* to Constantinople as a prisoner of war at the time when Vitiges fought the Romans (8.27.5). Procopius provides occasional testimony for movements of barbarian groups: the Longobards, setting off from the area south of the Danube, plunder *Dalmatia* and *Illyricum* up to the region of *Epidamnus*, and take the local inhabitants into slavery (7.33.12); the Slavs retreat from Thessalonica through the mountainous area of *Illyricum* in *Dalmatia* (7.40.8). The historian also makes meteorogical and geographical observations: a very strong, dry wind often blows in *Dalmatia*, which forces everyone to clear the streets and seek shelter in their houses (5.15.5-6); *Beneventum* lies opposite of *Dalmatia* (5.15.7); *Dalmatia* is situated to the north of *Precalis*, i.e. *Praevalis* and belongs to the West, and is ajoined by *Liburnia*, *Istria* and *Venetia* (5.15.25). Procopius offers much debated pieces of information about Marcellinus of *Dalmatia*: Marcellinus controls *Dalmatia* in the time of the great Eastern Roman naval expedition against the Vandals in *Africa*, and he got in the possession of the province after rebelling against the (unnamed) Emperor following Aetius' death and inducing the inhabitants of *Dalmatia* to follow his suit (3.6.7-8).

Jordanes wrote his *Getica* and *Romana* at Constantinople in the mid-vtth century⁶². In the *Getica*, he touches upon the regions on the eastern Adriatic several times. Apart from two general geographical observations – a ship bound for *Ravenna* from Greece sails along *Epirus*, then *Dalmatia*, *Liburnia* and *Istria*, and finally *Venetias* (149); *Pannonia* borders *Dalmatia* on the south (264) – Jordanes has two entries pertinent to *Dalmatia* in the vth century: after hearing about the accession of Romulus Augustus Nepos, son of *patricius* Marcellinus' sister (239), flees to *Dalmatia* and, deprived of his throne, dies in the very province where already Glycerius, a former emperor, holds the bishopric of *Salona* (241); the Suevi under their king Hunimund make an inroad into *Dalmatia*, which is near *Suavia* and not far from the parts of *Pannonia* where the Goths live (273-274). In the *Romana*, there is an entry on the wedding between Valentinian III and Licinia Eudoxia, Theodosius II's daughter, on which occasion the Western Roman government is said to have relinquished its rights to the entire *Illyricum* (328), and an entry on Nepos, son of Nepotianus, who is first made Caesar in *Ravenna*, and then overthrows Glycerius and has him ordained bishop of *Salona* in *Dalmatia* (338).

Two fragmentary classicising Greek historians from the vth century and one from the vIth century, whose works are only reconstructed from later excerpts and citations, have also valuable pieces of information pertinent to *Dalmatia*. The *History* of Olympiodorus of Thebes (vth c.) mentions Alaric's withdrawal from "the barbarian lands" near *Dalmatia* and *Pannonia*, where he had been dwelling, and his crossing to *Epirus* (fr. 3.2 Blockley = Sozomen 9.4.4); and an Eastern Roman expedition against the usurper John that is led by generals Ardabur and Aspar, who, accompanied by Galla Placidia and Valentinian III, cross *Pannonia* and *Illyricum* and take *Salona* by storm (fr. 43.2 Blockley = Philostorgius 12.13)⁶³. The *History* of Malchus of

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On Olympiodorus and his *History*, see Baldini 2000; 2004; Blockley 1981, 27-47 abd 137-43; Gillett 1993;

⁶² For more recent studies on Jordanes and his work, see Amici 2002; Amory 2003, 291-307; Bradley 1993; Christensen 2002; Croke 1987, 117-134, 2003, 373-375; 2005; Giordano 1973; Goffart 1989, 58-105; Liebeschuetz 2011; O'Donnell 1982; Wagner 1967, 3-59; Weißensteiner 1994; Zottl 2004, 93-123. Standard editions: Theodor Mommsen (*MGH* AA 5.1; Berlin 1882), Francesco Giunta & Antonino Grillone (Fonti per la Storia d'Italia 117; Roma 1991).

Philadelphia (vth c.) refers to Theodoric Amal's offer to Emperor Zenon's envoy Adamantius to go to *Dalmatia* and restore Julius Nepos (fr. 20, 221 Blockley)⁶⁴. Menander the Guardsman's *History*, which was composed in the late vith century, records the Avar threat to (the inland) Dalmatia⁶⁵: the Kutrigurs cross the river Save and devastate the land towards Dalmatia (fr. 12.5, 90-93 Blockley); Emperor Tiberius II sends military commanders through Illyricum and Dalmatia to provide assistance to Sirmium that is being beleaguered by the Avars (fr. 25.2, 89-93 Blockley); the Avars have built a bridge to *Dalmatia* (fr. 27.3, 1-3). Menander's information on the Avar raid against *Dalmatia* is supple-mented by Theophylact Simocatta's *History* (VIIth c.)⁶⁶, which refers to an Avar attack led by the Khagan and reaching a Dalmatian place called Bonkeis that is taken by siege engines and afterwards forty forts are sacked by the Avars (7.12.1). A v^{th} century church historian Evagrius Scholasticus, who wrote his *Ecclesiastical* History at Antioch in Syria in the early 590's⁶⁷, found it interesting enough to record that Nepos, after expelling Glycerius, has him appointed bishop of the Romans in Salona, a city in Dalmatia (2.16). The information that Glycerius was ordained bishop of Salona after his deposition also caught interest of John of Antioch who probably wrote his historical work, preserved only in fragments, in the vIth century or the beginning of the vIIth century at the latest (fr. 232.2 Mariev)⁶⁸. Even a prophetic-apocalyptic writing in Greek entitled The Oracle of Baalbek, which was composed in the province of Phoenice Libanensis in the early vith century, has a valuable note: Geiseric, King of the Vandals, will capture and humble Rome, and Dalmatia will altogether be plunged into the sea, and Campania and Calabria captured (133-135)⁶⁹. This "ruin of *Dalmatia*", obviously due to Vandal raids on its coasts, is substantiated by Victor of Vita, a bishop from Africa, who, in 489/90, wrote the History of the Persecution of

Matthews 1970; Rohbacher 2002, 73-81; Thompson 1944; Treadgold 2004; 2007, 89-96. The standard edition: Roger C. Blockley, in *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire. Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus*, vol. II (ARCA 10, Liverpool, 1983, 151-220). It is worth pointing out that Socrates Scholasticus (*Historia Ecclesiastica* 7.32.2; ed. Günther Christian Hansen, Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte, Neue Folge 1, Berlin 1995) merely says that, after the death of Honorius, Emperor Theodosius II dispatched troops to *Salona* in a preventive attempt to check any seizing of imperial power in the West. It is believed that Galla Placidia's initiative was actually behind this action (Wilkes 1972, 388; MacGeorge 2002, 21, note 23).

- 64 On Malchus and his History, see Baldwin 1977; Blockley 1981, 71-85, 150-154; 2003; Errington 1983; Treadgold 2007, 103-107; Wiemer 2009; 2014. The standard edition: Roger C. Blockley, in The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire. Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus, vol. II (ARCA 10, Liverpool, 1983, 402-62).
- 65 On Menander and his *History*, see Baldwin 1978; Brodka 2007; Treadgold 2007, 293-9. The standard edition: Roger C. Blockley, in *The History of Menander the Guardsman* (ARCA 17, Liverpool, 1985).
- On Theophylact Simocatta and his *History*, see Frendo 1988; Efthymiadis 2010, 169-186; Olajos 1988; Whitby 1988; Treadgold 2007, 329-40. The standard edition: Carl Gotthard de Boor (Leipzig 1887), repr. P. Wirth (Stuttgart 1972).
- 67 On Evagrius Scholasticus and his *Ecclesiastical History*, see Allen 1981; Leppin 2003 and 2012; Treadgold 2007, 299-307. Standard editions: Joseph Bidez & Léon Parmentier (London 1898, repr. Amsterdam 1964), Adelheid Hübner (2 vols, Fontes Christiani 57; Turnhout 2007).
- 68 On John of Antioch and his historical work, see Sotiroudis 1989; Treadgold 2007, 311-29. Standard editions: Sergei Mariev (Corpus fontium historiae Byzantinae 47; Berlin-New York 2008), Umberto Roberto (Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur 154; Berlin 2005).
- 69 The standard edition: Paul J. Alexander, in *The Oracle of Baalbek. The Tiburtine Sibyl in Greek Dress* (Washington 1967).

the province of Africa *under Vandal kings Geiseric and Huneric*, a Latin account of the cruelties that the orthodox Christian population had to endure at the hands of Arian Vandal kings⁷⁰. Victor enumerates provinces, which suffered from Vandal raiding: *Hispania, Italia, Dalmatia, Campania, Calabria, Apulia, Sardinia, Bruttium, Lucania, Epirus Vetus*, and *Hellas* (1.17)⁷¹.

Several late antique Western Latin chronicles preserve information pertinent to *Dalmatia*, but they solely record Nepos' flight from Italy and his subsequent demise in *Dalmatia*: Auctarium Havniensis Prosperi ordo prior (a. 475.1, 480); Auctarium Havniensis Prosperi ordo posterior (a. 475.1, 480); Auctarium Havniense ordinis posterioris margo (a. 475.1, 480); Fasti Vindobonenses priores (616, 626: omitting the province where Nepos was assassinated); Cassiodorus' Chronicle (1301, but omits Nepos' death); Anonymus Valesianus pars posterior: Chronica Theodericiana, VII, 36: mentions Salona as a place to which Nepos fled from Ravenna)⁷². Both Auctarium Havniensis Prosperi ordo prior and Auctarium Havniensis Prosperi ordo posterior (a. 482.1) as well as Cassiodorus' Chronicle (1309) record that Odovacer defeated and killed Ovida, i.e. one of Nepo's assassins Odiva (Cassiodorus) in Dalmatias, whose death was undoub-tedly also noted by the Fasti Vindobonenses priores, but the name is now missing (630). It is worth noting that these sources consistently use the province's name in a plural form⁷³. On the other hand, Prosper Tiro's Chronicle (mid vth c.) has an entry on Aetius' escape from Italy to Dalmatia and then to the Huns in Pannonia (1310)⁷⁴.

A principal literary source for *Dalmatia* and *Istria* under the Ostrogothic rule in the first decades of the vIth century is Cassiodorus' *Variae*⁷⁵. There are several letters that specifically deal with the Eastern Adriatic region: Theodoric commands *vir illustris* and *comes* Osuin to make sure that the soldiers at *Salona* engage in regular military exercises (1.40); he sends *vir clarissimus* and *comes* Simeon to Dalmatia entrusting him with the duty of col-lecting the arrears of siliquaticum, and the search for the iron ore (3.25); he commands *vir illustris* and *comes* Osuin to provide all the necessaries for Simeon's mission in Dalmatia (3.26) and he directs *vir senatorius* and *consularis* of the province of *Dalmatia* Epiphanius to reclaim

- 70 On Victor of Vita and his *History*, see Howe 2007; Lancel 2000; Schwarcz 1994. Standard editions: Serge Lancel (Collection Budé, Paris, 2002), Konrad Vössing (Darmstadt 2011).
- 71 It is likely that the information about Vandal raids against *Dalmatia* and *Epirus Vetus* is hidden in Procopius of Caesarea's note that Geiseric pillaged *Illyricum* (*De bellis* 3.5.23-25).
- Standard editions: Theodor Mommsen (MGH AA 9, Chronica minora I; Berlin 1892, repr. 1961), 274-98 (Fasti Vindobonenses posteriores), 298-339 (Continuatio Havniensis Prosperi), 306-28 (Anonymi Valesiani pars posterior); (MGH AA 11, Chronica minora II; Berlin 1894, repr. 1961), 120-61 (Cassiodori Senatoris Chronica); Anonymus Valesianus pars posterior: Jacques Moreau & Velizar Velkov (Leipzig, 2nd ed., 1968), Ingemar König, in Aus der Zeit Theoderichs des Großen (Darmstadt 1997); Cassiodorus, Chronica: Michael Klaasen, in Cassiodorus' Chronica. Text, Chronography and Sources (PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2010, 36-110).
- 73 On this issue see now Basić forthcoming.
- 74 On Prosper Tiro and his work, see Muhlberger 1990, 48-135; Yoon Hwang 2009. The standard edition: Theodor Mommsen (*MGH* AA 9, Chronica minora I, Berlin, 1892 [1961], 385-485).
- On Cassiodorus and the Variae, see Amory 2003, 50-78; Barnish 2008, 7-22; Bjornlie 2013; Gillett 1998, 37-50; Kakridi 2005; Krautschick 1983; Macpherson 1989; O'Donnell 1979; especially 55-102, Pferschy 1986. Standard editions: Theodorus Mommsen (*MGH* AA 12; Berlin 1894, repr. 1961, 1-385), Åke Johansson Fridh, in *Magni Aurelii Cassiodori Senatoris Opera* I (Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina 96, Turnhout 1973, 1-499).

for the royal treasury the estate of a late Joanna, widow of Andreas, if, after an inquiry, it is acertained that she has died intestate and withouth heirs (5.24); the *formula* of the *comes* of Krk and Cres Islands (comes insulae Curitanae et Celsinae) (7.16); the formula of the princeps of Dalmatias (7.24); Athalaric asks the Romans settled in Italy and Dalmatias for the oaths of allegiance (8.4); Athalaric appoints vir illustris Aratus, who hails from the province and was once sent by the provincials of Dalmatias on an embassy to Theodoric, to the post of comes domesticorum (8.12); Athalaric appoints vir illustris and comes Osuin to the duty of governer of Dalmatias and Savia, the provinces which he had governed once before as a young man (9.8); Athalaric informs the Goths and Romans settled in the provinces that he sends back Osuin as governer and, with him, vir illustris Severinus who has fiscal duties, and that he has ordered a remission of the tax *augmentum* fixed at the fourth indiction (9.9); Cassiodorus, praefectus praetorio of Italy, writes to the provincials of Istria ordering the requisition of wine, oil, and corn, products with which the province abounds, in the amount of the solidi due for the payment of tribute for the first indiction, and informs the provincials that he has provided money from the treasury for the additional purchase of these products, saying that Istria is to Ravenna what Campania is to Rome, praising the beauty of the province and calling it loyal (12.22); Cassiodorus orders vir experientissimus Laurentius to carry out the task of requisition and purchase in Istria (12.23); Cassiodorus instructs the tribuni maritimorum to provide ships for transport of wine, oil, and corn from Istria (12.24); Cassiodorus informs vir strenuus Paul that in Istria he may buy wine, which is normally supplied for the use of the army from the towns of Concordia, Aquileia and Forum Iulii (12.26). The Variae also provides a testimony that Valentinian III's and Licinia Eudoxia's wedding was connected with the division of the provinces of Illyricum between the Eastern and Western Roman Empire (11.1.9).

Valuable information can also be extracted from legal documents. For instance, imperial constitutions of the *Codex Theodosianus* testify to the general situation in *Illyricum* due to the insecurity caused by barbarian incursions in the early vth century⁷⁶. In two constitutions dated to 408 and 412 respectively, the Emperors order the reparation of town walls in *Illyricum* (11.17.4, 15.1.49), and in two others dated to 408 and 410 respectively, they forbid the enslavement of the refugees (10.10.25, 5.7.2). In the *Codex Iustinianus* there is a law, dated to 1 June 473, on property that children who are in their father's power acquire through marriage or in some other way, which is issued in the names of Emperors Leo I and Anthemius and directed to Julius Nepos, who is called *magister militum Dalmatiae* (6.61.5)⁷⁷. A document known as the *Notitia Dignitatum*, which is believed to be up to date for the Western Roman in 420's, is indispensable for the study of the late Roman administration in *Dalmatia* and *Istria*⁷⁸. It records administrative division as well as diocesan and provincial offices and posts with jurisdiction over *Dalmatia* and *Istria: comes Italiae* (*Not. Dign. Occ.* 1.31), *consularis Venetiae et Histriae* (1.53), *praeses Dalmati<c>arum* (1.86), *provincia Venetiae* in the diocese of Italy (2.11), *provincia Dalmatiarum* in the diocese of *Illyricum* (2.31), *comes Illyrici* (7.40), *fabrica*

⁷⁶ The standard edition: Theodor Mommsen & Paul Martin Meyer (2 vols, Berlin, 1904-1905).

⁷⁷ The standard edition: Paul Krüger, in *Corpus iuris civilis*, vol. II (8th ed., Berlin, 1904).

⁷⁸ On the Notitia Dignitatum, see Brennan 1996, Kulikowski 2000, Purpura 1995. Standard editions: Robert Ireland (Stuttgart-Leipzig, 1999; München, 2002), Concepción Neira Faleiro (Nueva Roma - Bibliotheca Graeca et Latina Aevi Posterioris 25, Madrid, 2005).

Salonitana armorum in the diocese of Illyricum (9.22), comes largitionum per Illyricum (11.4), rationalis summarum per Pannoniae secundae, Dalmatiae et Saviae (11.10), praepositus thesaurorum Salonitanorum, Dalmatiae (11.23), praepositus thesaurorum Aquileiensium, Venetiae (11.27), procurator gynaecii Bassianensis, Pannoniae secundae - translati Salonis (11.46), procurator gynaecii Iovensis, Dalmatiae - Aspalato (11.48), procurator gynaecii Aquileiensis, Venetiae inferioris (11.49), procurator bafii Salonitani, Dalmatiae (11.66), procurator bafii Cissensis, Venetiae et Histriae (11.67), comes commerciorum per Illyricum (11.86), rationalis rei privatae per Italiam (12.8), rationalis rerum privatarum per Illyricum (12.6), procurator rei privatae per Dalmatiam (12.20), praefectus classis Venetum, Aquileiae in the province of Lower Venetia (42.4), praeses Dalmatiae, vir perfectissimus (45.4), with the subordinate officials: princeps officii (45.7), cornicularius (45.8), two tabularii (45.9), commentariensis (45.10), adiutor (45.11), ab actis (45.12), subadivua (45.13), exceptores and other cohortalini (45.14).

The letters of Jerome, who was writing from the safety of the distant Palestine, depict a grim picture of the situation in *Dalmatia* in the late Iv^{th} and early v^{th} century⁷⁹. In a letter to Helfodorus dated to 396 (60.16, 2-3), Jerome mentions the twenty-year long hardships that the provinces between Constantinople and the Julian Alps – *Dalmatia* among them – had to endure at the hands of various barbarians, and in a letter to Julian dated to 406, he notes that the entire province was overrun by a barbarian enemy and that in the general devastation Julian's estate has also been destroyed (118.2). At the turn of the VIIth century Pope Gregory I offers valuable information on Slavic incursions in Dalmatia and Istria⁸⁰. In a letter to the Salonitan bishop Maximus, dated to July 600, the Pope notes that the Slavs threaten *Salona* and that they have already started entering Italy through *Istria* (10.15 Ewald). Two other letters, dated to 599, inform us of the efforts by Callinicus, *Exarchos* of *Ravenna*, to fight off the Slavs who had invaded *Istria* (9.141 Ewald; 9.154 Ewald).

One geographic work, albeit dating from the early Middle Ages, but thought to reflect the situation in the first half of the vIth century, is particularly worth mentioning since it is usually adduced as an important evidence for the continuity of settlements. The *Cosmographia* of the *Anonymous* of *Ravenna* lists place-names covering the known world from India to *Hibernia* (Ireland)⁸¹. In the *patria Dalmatia*, which the *Anonymous* locates around the sea coast near *Illyricum*, he mentions 62 *civitates*, some of which had actually belonged to the province of *Praevalis*, and six rivers (4.16). In the *patria Liburnia Tarsaticensis* or just *patria Liburnia* (4.22). *Istria* is also listed among eighteen provinces of Italy (4.29), and it is designated once as *regio* with seven *civitates* (4.30). The *Anonymous* defines *Arsia* as the border between the province of *Liburnia* and *Istria*, and then proceeds to list the *civitates* in both *Istria* and

79 The standard edition: Isidor Hilberg (Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum Latinorum 54-56; *Pars I-III*, Wien-Leipzig, 1910-1918).

⁸⁰ Standard editions: Paul Ewald & Ludwig Moritz Hartmann, (2 vols, Monumenta Germaniae Historica Epistolae, Berlin, 1891-1899), Dag Ludvig Norberg (Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina 140-140A, Turnhout, 1982).

⁸¹ On the Anonymous of Ravenna, see Schillinger-Häfele 1963; Staab 1976; 1998; Stolte 1949. The standard edition: Joseph Schnetz & Marianne Zumschlinge, in *Itineraria Romana* II (Leipzig 1940, repr. 1990, 1-110).

Venetia, even though he fails to mention the latter (4.31). Finally, the epigraphic evidence can also provide very valuable insights. For instance, a fragment of an inscription found at *Porta Andetria* in *Salona* in 2002, combined with another fragment of an inscription discovered at *Salona's Porta suburbia* in 1946, has revealed that an extensive reparation of the city's walls and towers was carried out – it is believed in or around 425 – at the formal behest of two praetorian prefects (presumably of *Illyricum* and Italy) and in the names of Emperors Theodosius II and Valentinian III, while *vir illustris* Publianus was entrusted with the immediate supervision of the works⁸². One magistrate of Dalmatias, probably from the (late) vth century, is only known from an inscription found in the municipality of Podstrana in 1976: *Ausonius vir spectabilis comes sacri consistorii et Dalmatiarum consulens*⁸³. Furthermore, as it has already been noted, epigraphic evidence provides a clear testimony on the migration of population from *Pannonia* to *Dalmatia*. Three inscriptions from *Salona* illustrate *mina* from *Pannonia*, the other to an abbess Joanna, and the third to a young girl Domnica, both of the latter two hailing from *Sirmium*⁸⁴.

SELECTED RESEARCH PROBLEMS

The history of *Dalmatia* in Late Antiquity may tentatively be divided into several chronological segments mirroring political and administrative changes. This periodization, in itself only conditional since there had never been any break in the life of the province, is wrought with problems of chronology as well as the question of jurisdiction, i.e. whether or not *Dalmatia* belonged to the Eastern Roman Empire at some point during the vth century. The chronology of the late antique *Dalmatia* suggested here may be divided into following periods: Western Roman rule (395-437); Eastern Roman rule (437-481/482), a period which may be subdivided into Marcellinus' age (?454-468), Julius Nepos' age (468-474/480), and a short prelude to Odovacer's rule when *Dalmatia* was in control of Nepos' assassins (480-481/482); Germanic rule (481/482-537), which may be subdivided into two periods: Odovacer's rule (481/2-493), and Ostrogothic rule (493-537); and Eastern Roman rule (from 537), with two periods: the Justinianic age (537-565) and the post-Justinianic age (565 onwards). As for Istria, it had remained a part of Italy all this time and shared Italy's political fate.

When it comes to the issue of chronology, three questions particularly stand out: when did Marcellinus came to power in *Dalmatia*; when did Istria and *Liburnia* passed from the Ostrogothic to the Eastern Roman rule; and when did *Salona* ceased to exist as an organized late antique urban entity? It is conventionally thought, on the strength of what Procopius

For both inscriptions and the interpretation, see Jeličić-Radonić 2007.
 For the inscription see Topic seifers and the interpretation.

For the inscription, see Zaninović 1987; Prévot *et al.* 2010. Zaninović's identification of Ausonius with the Gothic comes Osuin is not likely. However, a *consularis* of Dalmatia named Epiphanius is known from Cassiodorus's *Variae* (5.24).

For inscriptions, see Wilkes 1972, 377 (*clarissima femina*); Basić 2008, 84 (*CIL*, III, 9551 = *ILCV*, 1653: *Iohanna*), 85 (*CIL*, III, 9576 = *ILCV*, 4455: *Domnica*). The date of abbess Joanna's death is controversial (for an insightful overview, see Basić 2008, 84-88).

of *Caesarea* says, that Marcellinus took over the province in 454⁸⁵, which has recently been contested and Marcellinus' rise to power shifted to the early 460's⁸⁶. The matter remains undecided since Procopius' passage cannot easily be reconciled with what is known from other sources. Istria is usually thought to have been left by the Ostrogoths to the Eastern Roman control by 540, which has been disputed, more or less on the strength of the ex silentio argumentation, and the Ostrogothic domination over Istria extended to the year 552⁸⁷. The same has been maintained for Liburnia and Jadera (as a part of Liburnia)⁸⁸. The subsequent refutal of the assumption that the Byzantines had wrested the control of Istria from the Ostrogoths at the later date has not done much to clarify the issue since the available source material had not been properly discussed⁸⁹. This has tipped some scholars more in the favour of the later date⁹⁰. However, based on the evidence provided by Procopius of *Caesarea* (the escape of senator Vergentinus through Venetia and the adjacent regions, under which surely Histria and Liburnia are to be understood, in 539 – 2.22.41; Belisarius' stop and say at Pola from the summer to the autumn of 544 - 7.10.12), it seems that the earlier date should be preferred, especially since the last certain references to the Ostrogothic control of Istria are Cassiodorus' letters which are dated around 537⁹¹. Another piece of evidence adduced to support the later dating is a letter by Pope Pelagius I to *patricius* Valerianus written in 559, which mentions the time when the *tyrannus* Totila held *Istrias et Venetias*⁹². The letter is partially cited in Andrea Dandolo's *Chronicle* written in the XIVth century, where the letter is said to have been directed to patricius Narses and the name of the province is changed to read Ystriam et Veneciam⁹³. It is fairly certain that the designation Istriae et Venetiae in the papal letter refers to the Italian province of Venetia et Histria, most likely in a purely administrative sense, and thus it does not necessarily corroborate the hypothesis that the Ostrogoths really controlled the Istrian Peninsula in the time of Totila (541-552). It is more probable that only the Venetian part of the province is meant, which had had more strategic importance in the war between the Byzantines and the Ostrogoths. The plural form of the province's name is probably to explain with the existence of an inner division as testified by the Notitia Dignitatum, where Venetia inferior is mentioned as the part of the province where Aquileia was situated (Not. Dign. Occ. 11.49, 42.4), and which also encompassed Istria, whereas Venetia superior is deduced accordingly. This division is further attested by Zosimus' mention of both Venetias (5.48.3). With regard to the last chronological issue here presented, the exact date of Salona's 'fall' has been

- 85 Cf. for instance, Wilkes 1969, 420; Martindale 1980, 708; Wozniak 1981, 355-356; Posavec 2007, 35 and 59-61. MacGeorge 2002, 40, too, says that Marcellinus established himself as an independent ruler in *Dalmatia* by the 450's.
- 86 Kulikowski 2002.
- 87 Antoljak 1956; 1973, 214-217; Medini 1980, 429.
- 88 Medini 1980, 430-434; Antoljak 1973.
- 89 Goldstein 1992, 26; 2000, 55. Cf. Novak 2007, 75.
- 90 Novak 2007, 80-82.
- 91 Cf. Matijašić 1988, 363-364.
- 92 Antoljak 1956, 42-43. For the letter, see Epistolae Merowingici et Karolini aevi, vol. I, ed. Wilhelm Gundlach (Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Epistolae 3, Berlin, 1892), 445-446. For the date, cf. Martindale 1992, 1361.
- 93 Andreae Danduli Chronica, 5.10, in: Andreae Danduli Chronica per extensum descripts aa. 46-1280, ed. Ester Pastorello (Rerum italicarum scriptores 12.1, Bologna, 1938), 71.

a historiographic topic for a long time. The 'fall' was first set to 614⁹⁴, and later to the 630's⁹⁵. The matter has recently shifted to a more balanced and less dramatic explanation of what happened to *Salona* and when it happened, even though the final outcome also meant a disintegration of a late antique urban center. Thus scholars today prefer to speak of a gradual decline and demise over a longer period of time, during the vIIth and possibly even the vIIIth centuries⁹⁶.

Concerning the political-administrative circumstances, several problems have attracted debate: the western Illyricum as a contested area between the Western and Eastern Empires, i.e. the jurisdiction over *Dalmatia* in the vth century and *Dalmatia* as a semi-independent region; the existence of the separate province of Liburnia within Dalmatia, which is closely related to the usage of the name Dalmatia in plural form; who governed Dalmatia in the late $v_{I_{i}}^{th}$ century; and did *Histria* and *Venetia* have separated civil administration in the late vI^th century? The first matter has spawned a variety of theorizing, but the prevalent opinion is that, in 437, a large part of the western diocese of Illyricum, probably including Dalmatia, had been ceded to the Eastern Empire⁹⁷. Such an arrangement appears to have lasted until 474 when Julius Nepos became the western emperor and after his death in 480, Dalmatia was supposed to be reverted to the East, but instead was occupied by Odovacer, which precipitated the break between Ravenna and Constantinople. The Eastern Roman suzerainty seems to have been only formal during Marcellinus' and Julius Nepos' control of the province and Julius Nepos' position had even been formalized with the anomalous post of magister militum Dalmatiae. The fact that a variety of the late antique sources mention Dalmatia in plural form is best explained by the existence of the separate province of Liburnia within Dalmatia⁹⁸. This division, if not formalized with the appointment of a separate governor, seems to have been acknowledged by the Ostrogoths as testified by Cassiodorus (7.24, 8.4, 12, 9.8), Procopius of Caesarea (5.7.36, 5.15.16, 25, 5.16.13, 18), the Continuator of Marcellinus Comes (a. 540.6), and the Anonymous of Ravenna (4.22, 31). The Ostrogoths even introduced changes in the provincial administration, since Dalmatias and Pannonia Savia were united under a single *comes* (9.8), and there existed the *comes* of Krk and Cres Islands (7.16), who was subordinate to the comes of Dalmatias. The exact administrative position of Dalmatia in the late vrth century is not clear. The letters of Pope Gregory the Great refer to a proconsul of *Dalmatia* named Marcellinus, who is directly summoned by the Emperor⁹⁹. Probably the same Marcellinus is mentioned in an inscription of the Salonitan priest John¹⁰⁰. Due to the extant evidence some scholars have thought Dalmatia to be a province immediately subordinate to the Emperor, with a governor in the proconsular rank, who had had extensive civil and military prerogatives, whereas others have believed this to be a honorary title, and that

- 94 Bulić 1906; 1984.
- 95 Marović 1984; 1991.
- 96 Cf. Goldstein 1992, 83-95. See also Basić 2008, 94-98; Matijašić 2012, 234-237.
- 97 For the discussion of evidence and the overview of opinions, see MacGeorge 2002, 32-39; Gračanin 2006a, 54-58.
- 98 Cf. Medini 1980, with Matijašić 2012, 176-177 and Basić forthcoming. Škegro 2001, 11 concludes that the plural points to the former unity of the provinces of *Dalmatia* and *Praevalis*.
- 99 Epistolae 9.158 Ewald; 9.237 Ewald.
- 100 *CIL*, III, 9527 + p. 2139 = *AE*, 1890, 80 = *ILCV*, 79a+b.

Dalmatia had been governed by a local military commander and belonged administratively to the Exarchate of Ravenna¹⁰¹. Previously it has also been proposed that *Dalmatia* had been under a split jurisdiction, i.e. dependent on the *Exarchos* of *Ravenna* in military matters and on the prefect of *Illyricum* in civil matters¹⁰². Finally, it is not certain whether Istria had had a separate civil administration from *Venetia* in the second half of the vIth century, with which it had been united earlier, even though Istria had now had its own military commander in the rank of *magister militum*¹⁰³.

In relation to the movements of peoples and barbarian incursions in the eastern Adriatic region, one of the most resiliant theories in the Croatian, and not only the Croatian, historiography of Late Antiquity is that, in the late IVth and early Vth centuries, the Alaric's Goths had penetrated the province of Dalmatia as far as the coast, directly jeopardized local communities and even devastated some urban centres. Unquestionably, the Goths had reached the coastal area on the northern Adriatic, to which Jerome provides a testimony, saying that the Goths destroyed his birthplace Stridon, which had once been a border between Dalmatia and Pannonia and had probably been situated in the hinterland of Tarsatica, and that they had laid waste the estate of Jerome's neighbour Julian¹⁰⁴. However, some scholars have been of opinion that the Goths had reached Salona and raided the city, or that they had been responsible for the destruction of Mogorjelo villa in modern Čapljina or the damage inflic-ted to Jadera¹⁰⁵. On balance, there is no real evidence for such a far reaching Gothic raid, especially since the Goths had been intent on reaching Italy, and all these destructions may as well be attributed to other causes, particularly in view of the fact that they cannot be exactly dated, and thus the interpretation involving a Gothic attack may be dismissed¹⁰⁶. Accordingly, the reparation of town defences in Dalmatia in the early vth century is best explained as a result of a general psychological impact of the Gothic danger as well as the instructions issued in two imperial constitutions dated to 408 and 412 respectively. It has also been inferred that, in 402, the Goths had retreated from northern Italy to Istria, even to the vicinity of Tarsatica, but this is hardly acceptible¹⁰⁷. Finally, at the other end of the chronological span of this paper, traces of the Slavic devastations in Istria have been seen in the damage detected at several Istrian sites, Vizače (Nesactium), Vrsar, Žminj and Muntajna¹⁰⁸. The damage might have been the result of the attacks by the Slavic raiders, but it is in no way certain that this had been so in all these cases.

The hypothesis about the so-called *limes maritimus*, which has been devised to describe a network of maritime strongholds along the coast and on the islands of the eastern Adriatic

- Cf. for instance, Wilkes 1969, 419; Kovačić 1992, 306; Jeličić-Radonić 2007, 22, and n. 24 (Salona); Dyggve & Vetter 1966, 44, Cambi 1985, 54 (Mogorjelo villa); Ilakovac 1961, 298-299 (Jadera).
- 106 Posavec 2007, 73, 105, n. 448, 112 and 125.
- 107 Schmidt 1934, 440; Margetić 1990, 29-31. Cf. Posavec 1997, 11, n. 21.

108 Marušić 1957, 64, 65, 91; Piteša 2006, 194. See also Matijašić 2012, 234 for Nesactium.

¹⁰¹ Ferluga 1957 and 1978; Margetić 1997a and 1997b.

¹⁰² Hartmann 1889. Cf. also Matijašić 2012, 232.

¹⁰³ On the administration of Istria in the 6th century, see Novak 2007, 156-77.

¹⁰⁴ De viris illustribus 125, ed. Ernst Cushing Richardson (Texte und Untersuchungen 14.1A, Leipzig, 1896), ed. Aldo Ceresa-Gastaldo (Firenze, 1988); Epistolae 118.2. For the location of Stridon in the hinterland of Tarsatica, see Suić 1986; with Bratož 1990a, 20-25 and 1990b, 533-536.

in the Justinianic and post-Justinianic ages, has also become one of the *topoi* of Croatian historiography of Late Antiquity¹⁰⁹. However, the hypothesis has recently been contested¹¹⁰. Quite justifiably, since there is no real basis for such a designation. A similar *limes* has not been discovered anywhere in the Mediterranean, nor it would have any point to create such a military defense system in the Adriatic, since the Byzantines enjoyed an undeniable supremacy at sea. Furthermore, the term itself in the late Roman times appears solely in relation to land survey¹¹⁰. Accordingly, these strongholds had not been a part of a military defense system, which the term would imply, but rather served to improve navigation conditions on the main maritime routes by providing additional protection and safety for the ships. Moreover, some strongholds had also probably served as refuges for the nearby population in times of need.

This brief presentation of selected research problems may be concluded with two questions, among many others, regarding the ecclesiastical organization in Late Antiquity. The first question is related to the observance of the Arian cult during the Ostrogothic domination in *Dalmatia*, and the problem of the existance of a church dedicated to the Arian worship at *Salona*. It has been proposed that one *basilica urbana* had actually served the Arian worshipers¹¹². However, the arguments are not conclusive enough and the scholarship has rejected this proposal, which does not imply that an Arian church had not existed at *Salona*, possibly near the governor's palace, which would create a situation analogue to that in *Ravenna*, where the Arian basilica was located in the immediate vicinity of Theodoric's palace¹¹³. The second question concerns the localization of the seat of the Bishopric of *Cissa*, which attracted the most of attention of the scholarship. The right localization seems undoubtedly to be Istria as opposed to *Cessa* (modern Novalja) on the island of Pag or *Ceneta* in *Venetia*¹¹⁴. It is usually conjectured that the Bishopric of *Cissa* had been located on the island of Brioni/Brijuni¹¹⁵. However, there exists also an opinion that it should be searched for in modern Betiga/Betika on the southeastern coast of Istria¹¹⁶.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As shown, the study of history of the eastern Adriatic region, i.e. Istria and Dalmatia, in Late Antiquity has produced a number of valuable studies on a variety of research topics. What is generally clear from the scholarly examination and interpretation of the available sources – in spite of all the limitations caused by the scanty evidence – is the continuity of Roman way of life in the period from the early vth to the early vIIth century. There was no significant disruptions before the early vth century since Dalmatia and Istria were more or

- 109 Cf. Rapanić 1985; Goldstein 1992; Suić 1997.
- 110 Brusić 1989; Katić 2003.
- 111 Guillaumin 2007, 137-55.
- 112 Dyggve 1948.
- 113 Cf. Gabričević 1987, 310-311; Id. 1991, 349-50.
- 114 Šonje 1981; Škunca 1991 (Cessa on the Pag); Margetić 1983, 126-130 (Ceneta).
- 115 Suić 1987 and 1992.
- 116 Marušić 1990.

less completely spared the raiding that had plagued the frontier provinces. Before the Slavic incursions in the late vrth and early vrth centuries, the only major threat was posed by the Goths in the incipient years of the vth century, but the assumption that they had raided the towns and settlements in *Dalmatia* as far as *Salona* and *Jadera* is to be dismissed. The Vandal raids and a Suebic incursion in the 460's in *Dalmatia* were isolated incidents. When there arose a gap in the continuity of the political authority, with the Germanic power wielders, first Odovacer and then the Ostrogoths, in control of the eastern Adriatic from the 480's to the 530's, this did not entail any break with the Roman political, administrative, economic and cultural traditions. Even the Ostrogothic-Byzantine war, which had done much to destroy the prosperity of Italy, did not gravely impact *Dalmatia* and *Istria*. The late Roman provincial organization had survived, even though the Ostrogoths introduced certain changes to it that corresponded to their needs (for instance, the fusion of the administration of *Dalmatia* and *Pannonia Savia*), and the separation of military and civil competences had been retained under the Ostrogoths as well as under Justinian I.

A relative security that was enjoyed by Dalmatia and Istria made them a sort of a safe haven for the population from neighbouring provinces who wanted to escape the dangers of the exposed frontiers. There seems to have been two major waves, one in the early vth and the other in the late v1th century (however, the epitaph of abbess Joanna's cannot be aduced as an evidence for the second wave as opposed to that of Domnica's). Moreover, the major urban center such as Salona surely continued to attract population independently of the current military-political situation. The written evidence also testify to the presence of the new ethnic groups on the eastern Adriatic, primarily the Ostrogoths, which is further confirmed by the archaeological evidence. At the same time, the Roman population remained prevalent. The majority of settlements retained its vitality and functionality until the VIIth century, especially those in the coastal area. The evidence of imported goods from North Africa and Eastern Mediterranean in the vth to the vIIth centuries testify to long-distance commercial contacts and economic activity¹¹⁷. The strength of the ecclesiastical organization is an evidence of the vigor of urban communities. This was especially evident in the Justinianic age, which saw a significant rise in building activity. To be sure, the fundamental changes in form, pattern, structure and function of settlements could not be avoided. The process of castrization and the creation of refuge sites was particularly characteristic of Istria. Rural settlements such as villas and villages, and ecclesiastical structures such as monasteries and rural churches also underwent the functional transformation. In the end, what had a decisive impact on the survival of many a settlement in the eastern Adriatic was their immediate access to the sea and their location on the Byzantine maritime routes.

To conclude, the research done in the past decades has ellucidated many aspects of the history of the eastern Adriatic region in Late Antiquity. Many questions will surely remain open or, in the lack of better, in the domain of speculation, more or less probable theories and assumptions. Others still await a mre comprehensive study and in-depth approach, such as the transformation of settlements and rural and urban communities, population changes and dynamics, ethnic identities and inter-ethnic relations, socioeconomic conditions and

117 Cf. Brusić 1988, 141-142 (Polače, Mljet) and Jurišić 2006, 190 (Mali Brod, Lastovo).

regional eco-history. Nothwithstanding the scarcity and inconclusiveness of the written sources, their re-interpretation might offer new and valuable insights. However, having said this, the future answers to the majority of fundamental questions lies with archaeology.

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VÄHD: Vjesnik za arheologiju i historiju dalmatinsku

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ERRATA CORRIGE

p. 72

instead of "Apart from the already mentioned contributions by", read "Apart from the contributions by"

instead of "nu-merous studies", read "numerous studies"

p. 73

instead of "sta-tioned in Italy", read "stationed in Italy"

p. 76

instead of "is supple-mented by", read "is supplemented by"

p. 77

instead of "was undoub-tedly", read "was undoubtedly"

instead of "the duty of collecting", read "the duty of collecting"

p. 78

instead of "Athalaric appoints *vir illustris* Aratus, who hails from the province and was once sent by the provincials of Dalmatias on an embassy to Theodoric, to the post of *comes domesticorum*", read "Athalaric appoints *vir illustris* and *comes domesticorum* Arator, who was once sent by the provincial of Dalmatias on an embassy to Theodoric, to a *comes* post"

instead of "The Variae also provides", read "The Variae also provide"

p. 78

instead of "when did Marcellinus came to power in *Dalmatia*; when did Istria and *Liburnia* passed from the Ostrogothic to the Eastern Roman rule; and when did *Salona* ceased to exist as an organized late antique urban entity?", read when did Marcellinus come to power in *Dalmatia*; when did Istria and *Liburnia* pass from the Ostrogothic to the Eastern Roman rule; and when did *Salona* cease to exist as an organized late antique urban entity?"

note 83

instead of "from Cassiodorus's Variae", read "from Cassiodorus' Variae

p. 81

instead of "Belisarius' stop and say at *Pola*", read "Belisarius' stop and stay at *Pola*"

instead of "is probably to explain", read "is probably to be explained"

p. 81

instead of "the damage inflic-ted to", read "the damage inflicted to"

p. 84

instead of "the problem of the existance", read "the problem of the existence"

p. 85

instead of "Others still await a mre comprehensive study", read "Others still await a more comprehensive study"

ADDENDA

p. 70

add in note 21 after Zeman 2012:

See also Turković 2011, 213-215, 223, 227 (note 6), 229 (notes 37 and 38), 233 (notes 111 and 112).

add after the sentence "A brief overview of political-military and administrative effects of the Ostrogothic rule over the region between the Drava and the Adriatic can be found in Andreas Schwarcz's paper":

while Frank E. Wozniak has examined the Ostrogothic administration in Dalmatia.

add in note 32 after Schwarcz 2000: Wozniak 1984, 374-384.

p. 71

add in note 38 after Nikolajević 1971: with 1975.

p. 72

add after the sentence: "Finally, one recent paper investigates the late antique and early medieval monasteries on the islands in Kvarner Bay":

whereas another study has examined the evidence for early monasticism on islands of central Dalmatia.

add in note 56 after Bully & Čaušević-Bully 2011:

Uroda 2013.

p. 74

add after the sentence "the Roman commanders John, nephew of Vitalianus, and Justinian, son of Germanus, march to *Dalmatia* and arrive in *Salona* for the winter (7.40.11, 27)":

the Roman commander Artabanes makes forced landing on the island of *Melita* (Mljet) after the fleet under his command has suffered losses off Calabria due to storms and adverse winds and his own ship has been carried off by currents (7.40.14-17);

p. 93

add after — (1974): "The Redemption of Captives in Dalmatia in the 6th and 7th century", *Balcanoslavica*, 2, 73-79:

— (1975): "Salona Cristiana aux VI^e et VII^e siècles", *Disputationes Salonitanae 1970*, ed. Željko Rapanić, Split: Arheološki muzej, 1975, 91-95.

p. 97

add after — (2005): "O Naroni u istočnogotsko doba na temelju arheoloških nalaza [On Narona in the Time of the Ostrogoths on the Basis of Archeological Evidence]", *Diadora*, 21, 201-212.

Uroda, N. "Beginnings of monasticism on central Dalmatian islands - problems and perspectives", *Hortus Artium Medievalium*, 19 (2013), 113-20.

add after Wozniak F. E. (1981): "East Rome, Ravenna and Western *Illyricum* 454-536", *Historia*, 30, 351-82:

— (1984): "The Continuity of Roman Traditions and the Ostrogothic Administration of Dalmatia in the Sixth Century", in: *Papers of the Vth Congress of Southeast European Studies (Belgrade, September 1984)*, eds. Kot K. Shangriladze & Erica W. Townsend, Columbus 1984, 374-382.