

# Rivine – Crkvina: An Example of Production Quarters by a Church

Josipa Baraka Perica – Ante Uglešić

The site of Rivine – Crkvina is a late antique site situated in the vicinity of the city of Stolac (about 6 km in a straight line in NW direction, coordinates 43°6'58.64"N/17°53'55.23"E) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, fig. 1 (area of the Roman province of Dalmatia in Late Antiquity). The biggest part of the site has been discovered in the archaeological excavations, and only a small part of the central vaulted tomb in the sacral segment of the complex has been known before the archaeological excavations (fig. 2).<sup>1</sup>

Four excavation campaigns have been conducted in the period from 2011 to 2014 covering the area of 700 m<sup>2</sup>. Systematic archaeological research at the site was organized and conducted by the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Mostar, program study

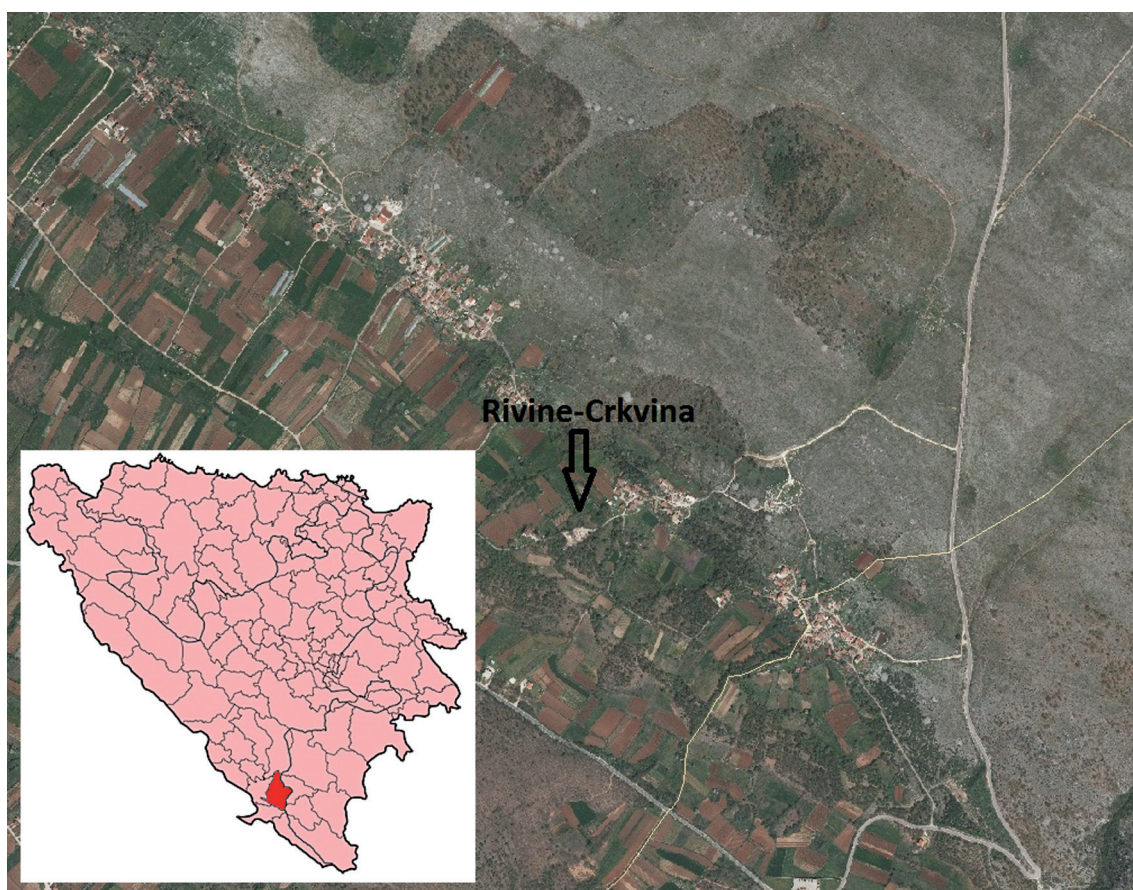


Fig. 1: a) Position of the city of Stolac on the map of Bosnia and Herzegovina and b) aerial photograph of the site of Rivine-Crkvina.



Fig. 2: Aerial photograph of the site of Rivine-Crkvina.

of archaeology (led by Brunislav Marijanović to whom we thank for giving us research results for publication). The excavations were organized within the field practice of the students of archaeology of the University of Mostar.<sup>2</sup>

The site consists of a sacral and funerary segment and outbuildings or production quarters that may have had residential function as well (fig. 3). The relationship of the Early Christian church and the production quarters is a special characteristic of this site that has proven to be unique for the Roman province of Dalmatia that is exceptionally rich in late antique and early Christian sites.

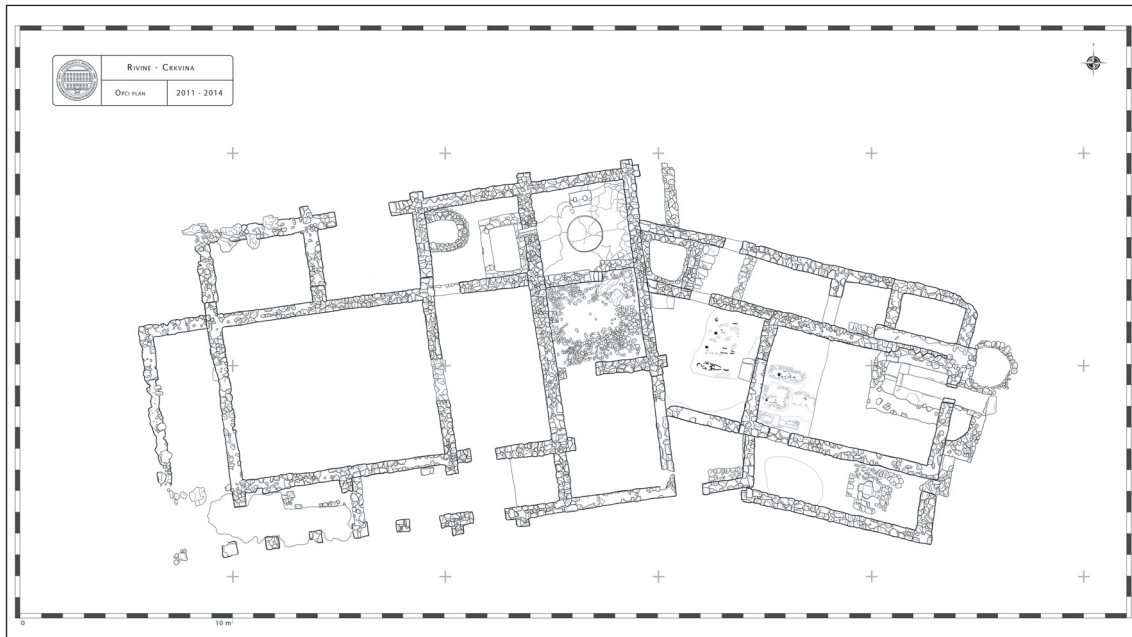


Fig. 3: Ground plan of the site of Rivine-Crkvina.

### Production Quarters

Production quarters are situated in the western part of the site (fig. 4) and the architectural remains have different orientation in relation to the sacral and funerary part of the complex. These two parts had not been originally joined together, but only at some later point, as evident from firmly joint walls that do not indicate that some walls were removed in order to build new ones i.e. that one part of the complex destroyed a segment of another.

Production quarters of the complex also exhibit several building phases. The base of this complex was a rectangular room (dimensions  $10,75 \times 8$  m) with a wide entrance (2 m) on the eastern side, and three buttresses on the northern and southern side. Since there is a doorstep on the southern side, it is possible that there was an entrance on this side as well. In the following building phase new rooms were built around the central room, and some of its buttresses were extended growing into walls (as clearly visible). A porch was built on the southern side. Several more additional rooms were built in the next phase and the wide entrance on the eastern side of the central room was closed. In this phase a segment of the porch was walled in and a plastered floor was made. In the north-eastern part of the object new rooms were added, and constructions for processing grapes or olives were added in the existing rooms. We refer primarily to the segment of a press called *ara* (a round base used for pressing grapes or olives).

Squeezed liquid poured through a channel into a closed basin – a rectangular container on the western side. Another semi-circular object of unknown function was lo-

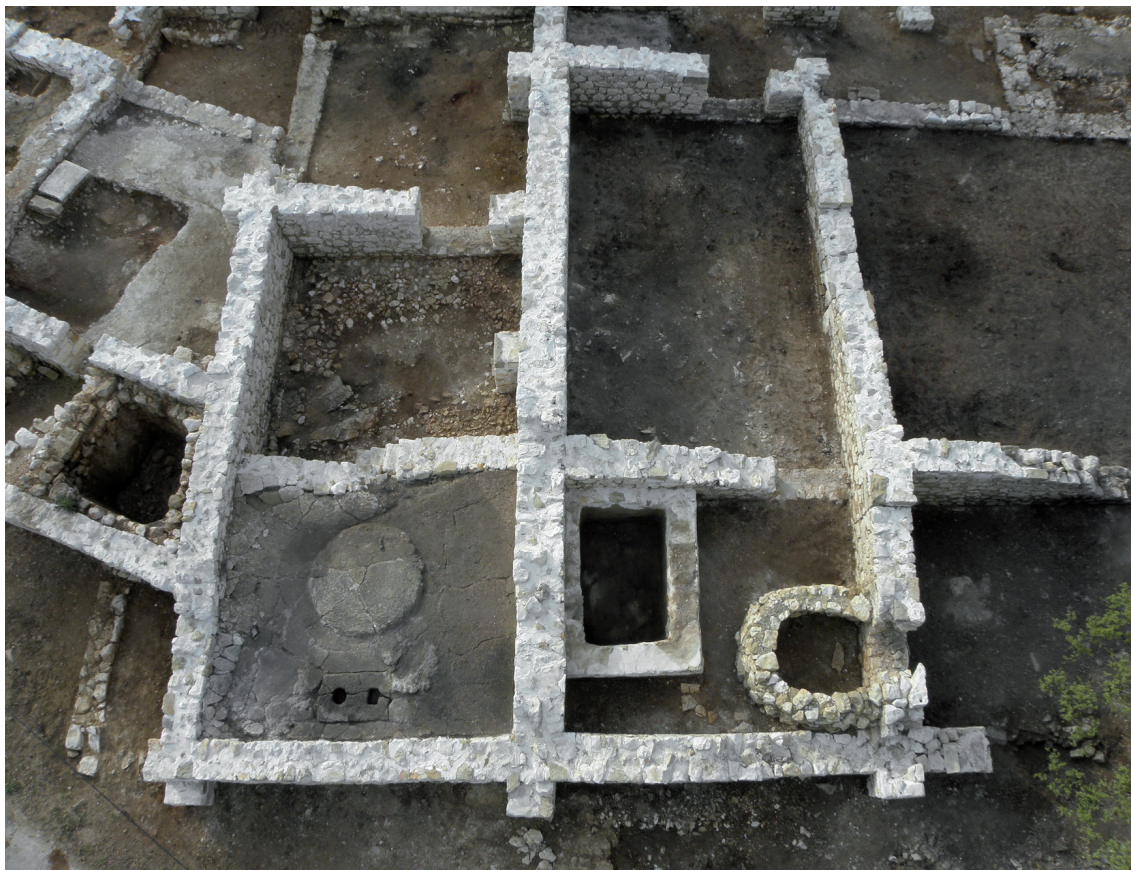


Fig. 4: Production quarters of the site of Rivine-Crkvina.

cated next to it, but it was evidently associated with the production in this part of the complex (it was not plastered; therefore, it was not used for keeping liquid). Upper part of the press construction has not been preserved, except for the stone base of the horizontal beam support.

### **Sacral and Funerary Segment of the Site**

Sacral and funerary segment is in the eastern part of the site (fig. 5). It consists of a church with a baptistery and a small cemetery. Different building phases can be recognized. The oldest part of this complex is a late antique vaulted tomb that was preceded by older, probably funerary architecture (similar situations are found on several archaeological sites of Roman Dalmatia).<sup>3</sup> Then a church was erected so that a presbytery was built directly over the vaulted tomb that determined the church orientation. Then a baptistery with a cruciform baptismal font was built, extending from the southern wall of the church.



Fig. 5: Sacral and funerary segment of the Rivine-Crkvina site.

The architecture analysis indicates that at a certain point the baptistery was no longer connected with the church and probably it lost its primary function. It is possible that the church area changed its function. The area in front of the baptistery and in the baptistery was used for burials as well as the church area. In this phase eastern and western part of the complex were connected. A cistern lined with hydraulic mortar with corresponding stairway represents the youngest part of the site built at the very end of Late Antiquity or beginning of the Early Middle Ages. Building characteristics are far inferior in comparison to the other phases.

### Conclusion

This late antique complex is most likely a part of a larger settlement whose remains are situated in immediate vicinity. Namely, in the last century, along northern and north-western side of the site, a road was built, unfortunately destroying thereby a large part of architectural remains. Furthermore, west of the excavated part is a small wood

where architectural remains from antiquity have been recorded but not excavated as yet.

The site can be dated to Late Antiquity for the most part, but it was built in different phases that are difficult to date precisely for now. We can only broadly date bigger part of the site to the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The position has not been published so we will use an opportunity to present it to wider professional and scholarly public exactly at this congress dealing with archaeology and economy.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Čović 1988, 170; Miličević-Capek 2011, 225; Raguž 1987, 27–28.

<sup>2</sup> The information about the course of excavation see in Čuljak, Tomas 2013, 330–348.

<sup>3</sup> Rašić, Baraka Perica 2018, 149–153.

### Image Credits

Fig. 1: Figure 1a. Wikipedia; 1b. GeoPortal of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Fig. 2: GeoPortal of Bosnia and Herzegovina. – Fig. 3: Photo from documentation of Department of Archaeology of University of Zadar, Croatia; Department of Archaeology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Photo by Dario Vujević. – Fig. 4: Photo from documentation of Department of Archaeology of University of Zadar, Croatia; Department of Archaeology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Photo by Dario Vujević. – Fig. 5: Photo from documentation of Department of Archaeology of University of Zadar, Croatia; Department of Archaeology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Photo by Dario Vujević.

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