

## THE URBAN DEVELOPMENT OF KAMENICA (DELVINE) A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

**Irklid Ristani**

Department of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, Institute of Archaeology, Research  
Center Albanological, Albania, E mail: [iristani@gmail.com](mailto:iristani@gmail.com)

### Abstract

The studies done so far in Kamenica, belong to the early '70 and were focused on the study of the architecture of the main ruins situated in three relevant areas: the top of the big hill (2 churches, 2 tower houses), the center of the village called “*Qafa e Pazarit*” (4 churches, 9 houses) and the top of the smallest hill (1 church). This paper aims to discuss the preliminary results of the studies done in the last two years (as part of the doctoral school), with the intention to clarify the urban structure and its development in the village and the suburb territory. These new data would help to answer the questions about the foundation and the abandonment of the village. The research is based but not limited on the archaeological methodology as survey, stratigraphy, analysis of the walls and archeology of architecture. Useful data about the demographic evolution and the urban organization of Kamenica are provided from the Ottoman cadastral registers (1431-1432, 267 houses; 1519-1520, 3 districts; 1582, 4 districts 606 families). The first surveys have been made in the south and southeast territory of the stream “*Qafëdardha*” with the intention to localize these districts. In each of the areas called “*Fiqt' e Lape*” and “*Jominai*” it has been found a church and the ruins of several houses; in the west of the existing village of Palavli, it has been found the ruin of a church. However, these evidences may confirm the localization of the mentioned district but to clarify their urban organization, it is necessary to make excavation. The surveys done in Kamenica permit to make a preliminary concept of its urban structure. It is made of narrow streets that mostly follow the topographic lines of the steep terrain. The main street (in its well conserved segments) has a width of 2-2.2m leads to the principal square called “*Qafa e Pazarit*” situated mostly in a plain area, where are built the structures of public interest as churches, mills and the greatest houses. The public open spaces are limited to the courtyards of the churches and a high construction density characterizes the village. The houses are built in groups very close to each other, have two floors and a small courtyard surrounded from high walls. The village reflects the principles of the medieval urban planning.

**Keywords:** *byzantine archaeology, medieval urbanism, medieval village, medieval house*