

Population Trends of Bogomolje Parish (Island of Hvar, Croatia) According to Registers from 1855-1894

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents historical-demographic movement and population development of Bogomolje parish on the island of Hvar, according to the registers of births/christenings and deaths from 1855 to 1894. Bogomolje, a hill settlement on the eastern side of the island of Hvar, was mentioned as early as in the 15th century, but it was intensively populated during the period of the Ottoman conquests when it was colonised by population who had fled from the mainland of the Adriatic coast, mostly from the coastal area of Makarska. An analysis of natural movement data has served in this paper as an indicator of birth and mortality rates, natural increase and migration balance, based on which the migration wave that had affected Bogomolje parish at the end of the 19th century was presented.

Key words: Bogomolje, island of Hvar, registers, 19th century, population, migration, settlement, demographic anthropology

Introduction

A population study can be based on recent data, but also on rich archival material. For historical demography, it is important to know and consider any historical and social processes that influenced population development. Several papers have been published on history of the population of the Croatian island of Hvar and individual Hvar settlements, mostly based on traditional anthropological and documentary approaches, without any in-depth historical-demographic analysis and interpretation.

Croatian anthropologists have carried out excellent investigations on the population of the island of Hvar in the past, covering various aspects, from biomedical to linguistic and archaeological. Their results are consolidated in the book *Anthropological investigations of the Eastern Adriatic, 2. Biological and cultural microdifferentiation of the rural populations*¹, and in several notable studies, especially those related to linguistic distances² and archaeological analysis.³ Historical migration phenomenon occurred as an inevitable result of the wars between Venice and the Ottoman Empire. A part of the coastline and

islands on the eastern coast of the Adriatic, precisely the geographical entity known as the province of Dalmatia, was under the administration of the Venetian Republic from the beginning of the 15th century and was considered their so-called old acquisition (*Acquistovecchio*). The island of Hvar was an integral part there of. The first mention of Bogomolje (in Slavic *a village or a field belonging to a certain Bogomol*) dates back to the 15th century³, when a nobleman Paladino (Paladinić), a son of the late Dujma, and his nephew Nikola received a municipal grant “of 30 hoes of land in the cove of Veprinova Luka between the settlements of Gdinj and Bogomolje in 1489”.⁴ The first data on the population of Bogomolje⁵ (Italian: Bogomoglie) can be found in the report of Bishop Valier’s apostolic visitation to Dalmatia in 1579 in which Bogomolje was mentioned as a village belonging to Gdinj parish, which had 177 inhabitants. The settlement of Bogomolje, like the whole Dalmatian region, was under the rule of the Venetian Republic until the end of the 18th century, which in 1673 made a census of the population of the island of Hvar for a purpose of salt distribution. That document is an indicator of the demographic picture of the island of Hvar,

according to which the settlement of Bogomolje had 177 inhabitants⁶ in 1673. The eastern area of the island of Hvar was economically poorly developed in the 17th and 18th century. It experienced an economic growth only in the middle of the 19th century, at the time when the two main economic activities, viticulture and olive growing experienced their peak.

The aim of this paper is to show the movement of population of Bogomolje settlement in the period from 1855 to 1894. It is a historically and demographically completely unexplored area of a relatively closed mountain settlement on the island of Hvar with a low population turnover.

Material and Methods

Data source

For this paper, population trends of Bogomolje parish for the period from 1855 to 1894 were collected from several historical sources: birth/christening registers and death registers of Bogomolje parish and from Austrian population censuses. Data on births and deaths were obtained from registers of Bogomolje parish, that are archived in the State Archives in Zadar, the State Archives in Split and the Archives of the Diocese of Hvar. The registers were written in a table form in Italian until 1875, and from that period on they have been written in Croatian.

The registers contain the following columns: Numero (ordinal number of child's birth/christening), *Data della nascita e della presentazione al Battesimo del Neonato* (time, date and year of birth/christening), *Indicazione del Neonato* (child's name, sex, whether a child was born in or out of wedlock, information about a pastor who christened the child), *Indicazioni dei Genitori* (names and surnames of parents, their place of residence, their wedding date, a parish in which they were married, parents' religion), *Nome, Cognome, Domiciliato e Condizione dei Padrini, Testimoni* (names and surnames of godparents and witnesses of christening), *Annotazioni* (notes in which additional circumstances that occurred after the birth/christening of the child were registered, for example, the rite of the christening ceremony that was performed, if the child was christened in life danger, then data on the subsequent marriage of the parents if the child was born before marriage, father's statement on child recognition if a child was conceived before marriage, in a period of less than 9 months from a wedding day, as well as data on a child's death).

Data on the number of inhabitants were collected according to the censuses conducted by the Austrian authorities in the period from 1857 to 1890 (1857, 1869, 1880 and 1890).

According to the quantitative indicators on the population: number of births, number of deaths and number of inhabitants, the rates of birth, mortality, natural increase and migration balance were created to identify the direc-

tion of population development (growth or decline). In the analysed period, the rates of birth, mortality, natural increase, as well as the general migration rates (migration balance) will be presented through four ten-year periods: 1855-1864, 1865-1874, 1875-1884 and 1885-1894.

Results

Based on the analysis of registers of Bogomolje parish for the period from 1855 to 1894 it was established that in the analysed period 713 children were born, of which 343 were males and 370 females. The gender structure shows the dominance of the female gender over the male gender, 51.9% versus 48.1%. During the four ten-year periods, there was an increase in the number of births for both sexes (Figure 1), and the birth rate ranged from 34.13‰ to 42.52‰ (Figure 3).

The analysis of the death registers showed that 379 inhabitants died in the analysed period, of which 172 were male, 197 were female, and for ten of them gender was not recorded. The share of deceased men was 44.28%, while the share of deceased women was 53.14%. In the last two decades there was an increase in the number of deaths of both sexes (Figure 2). Both, the mortality and birth rates

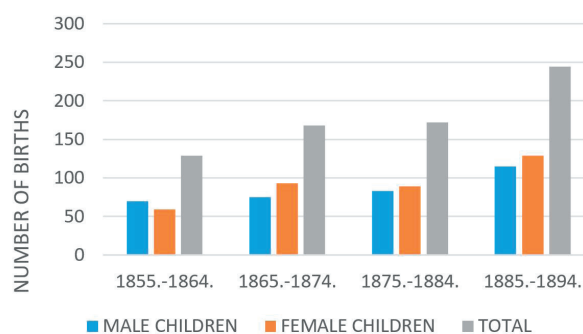


Fig. 1. Number of births by gender in Bogomolje parish from 1855 to 1894.

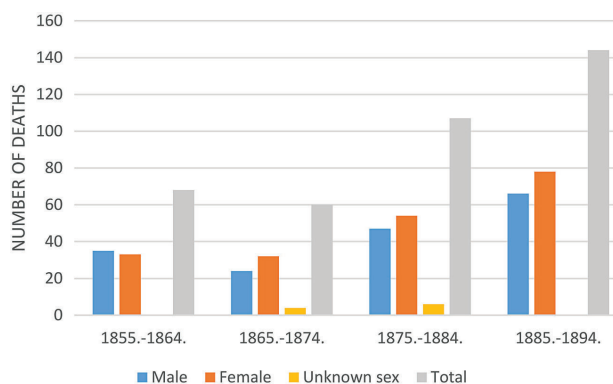


Fig. 2. Number of deaths by gender in Bogomolje parish from 1855 to 1894.

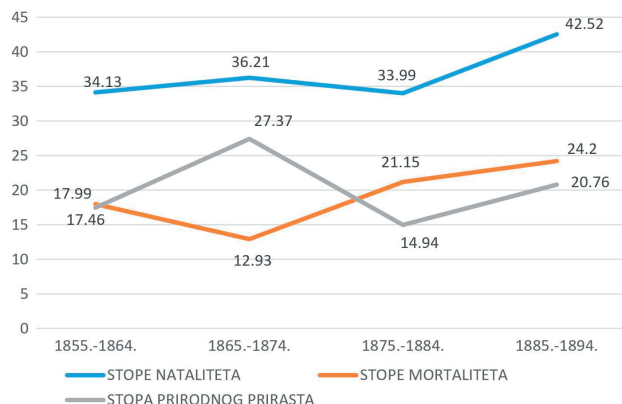


Fig. 3. Rates of birth (stope nataliteta), mortality (stope mortaliteta) and natural increase (stopa prirodnog prirasta) in Bogomolje parish from 1855 to 1894.

show an increase, with the highest mortality rate in the period 1885-1894 of 24.20% (Figure 3).

Natural increase rates ranged from 17.46% to 27.37%. The highest rate of natural increase was observed in the period from 1865-1874, with 27.37%, (Figure 3).

In the analysed period Bogomolje parish had a negative migration balance due to emigration of 233 of their inhabitants (Table 1). The most active migration wave was in the period from 1874-1883, when the migration balance was negative and amounted to -17%. An analysis of the population census of Bogomolje parish in the period from 1857-1890 shows that the largest increase in the number of inhabitants was recorded in the period from 1880-1890, when the population grew by 37.6%.

TABLE 1

MIGRATION BALANCE OF BOGOMOLJE SETTLEMENT FROM 1855-1894

Period	Population number (estimate)	Total number of births	Number of deaths	Natural increase	Migration balance
1855-1864	378	126	63	17.46	
1865-1874	464	168	46	27.37	-8.86
1874-1883	506	172	111	14.94	-17
1884-1893	595	253	159	20.76	-8.26

Discussion

In the period from 1855 to 1894 an increase in the number of inhabitants was recorded in Bogomolje parish, which is visible based on the data on the natural increase rate.

Various socio-political factors played a key role in the development of the population in Bogomolje parish throughout history. We can observe their effects through two prisms: external and internal.

External factors that influenced the development of the population were primarily associated with the state-political organization of the Habsburg Monarchy, climate conditions and the level of economic development⁷. In the second half of the 19th century Bogomolje parish had outlines of an agrarian society, and the economy depended on the available arable land and climate conditions.⁸ The under-developed agrarian production, which was based on the use of primitive agricultural techniques, and the complexity of land holdings related to the colonate, which presented a private-legal relationship between peasants and landowners, according to which a peasant had freedom but was obliged to share an income from a harvest to a landowner,⁹ complicated economical development of the region. This is evidenced by the fact that according to the list of cadastral municipalities compiled by the Austrian authorities in the middle of the 19th century, there were only 960 hectares of arable land in the municipality of Bogomolje. Furthermore, there was a lack of manure, a lack of water needed for livestock and field irrigation, as well as a problem regarding supply of salt to the population.¹⁰ Due to austerity and harshness of the landscape and fragmentation of plots, agricultural production did not manage to provide population with even a minimum necessary for existence.¹⁰ Production was also affected by climatic difficulties, i.e. dry periods, hence population of Bogomolje parish, as well as those in other Dalmatian regions, lacked food but also quality nutrition. Thus, hunger combined with poor hygienic living conditions caused death of population, as well as a wave of emigration in search of a better life.

Population development was a result of introduction of new food stuffs into population diet, primarily potatoes, which had an impact on hunger reduction and thus on number of deaths. An important tool in reducing mortality of children and adults was introduction of vaccination against smallpox.¹

The economy of the settlement of Bogomolje flourished thanks to incomes from viticulture and olive growing, which were rapidly developing as of the middle of the 19th century. Namely, when in 1858 blight appeared on wine in Italy, export of Dalmatian wines to Italy began, which influenced development of viticulture in particular. Since the demand was high, farmers from Hvar began to cut down olive groves and orchards and plant vines instead. Phylloxera also started destroying French vineyards in 1874, hence France started importing Dalmatian wine all the way until 1885, and the island of Hvar continued to develop economically.¹¹

The period of prosperity lasted until 1891, when the trade agreement between Austria-Hungary and Italy prevented Dalmatian products from being traded on the Austro-Hungarian market, which caused an economic crisis in Dalmatia and ultimately led to the downfall of Dalmatian peasants and viticulture. The wine clause, as well as the appearance of wine Phylloxera in Dalmatian vineyards in 1894, led to impoverishment of the population and initiated their intensive emigration to overseas coun-

tries.¹² The immigration wave affected other islands as well, for example, the migration balance recorded in Lopud parish in 1870-1880 was 22.84%.¹⁰ On the other hand, in the period from 1869-1880 a significant immigration wave was recorded in mainland Slavonia, for example in Drenovci parish the positive migration balance was 66%.¹⁰

The analysis of birth registers shows dominance of the female gender over the male gender. These data are of similar values to those in Betina parish on island of Murter, where the ratio of male and female children was 884:1007.¹³ However, they are different from the data of other parishes in Croatia, where a larger number of male children were born. Namely, due to the high mortality of infants, a lack of health care, and also due to paying more attention to male children than to female children, a surplus of men was created and the masculinity coefficient was above 1000. The birth rates of Bogomolje parish were within the Dalmatian average (33.9%), which was expected for a rural area.

The highest mortality rate in Bogomolje parish was recorded in the period 1885-1894, when it was 24.20%. The mortality rate in Bogomolje parish had similar values to the general mortality rate in Dalmatia, which ranged between 27.39‰ and 31.02‰. Significantly higher mortality rate was recorded in Betina on the island of Murter where in 1875 it was 45‰¹⁰. According to the death registers, the largest number of inhabitants of the settlement of Bogomolje died in 1890, probably of typhus, when 28 inhabitants died. The infant mortality rate was 27.1%, of which female infants were more at risk than male infants. The mortality rate of children aged under 4 was 22.3%.

Total mortality rate of infants with children up to 4 years of age was as high as 49.4%, similar to mortality in Buzet (Istria) with 49.29%¹⁴ (1870-1880), and lower than in parish Pupnat on the island of Korčula with 52.42%.¹⁵ Slightly lower mortality rates for children under the age of four were recorded on the islands of Lopud, 39.07%,¹⁶ and Mljet, 39.7%.¹⁷ These rates are higher in comparison to parishes in mainland Slavonia, where this percentage was around 6%. The death rate of people over 70 years of age in Bogomolje parish was similar to that of the other southern Dalmatian islands, 17%, while it was significantly lower compared to the islands of Dubrovnik, where

it was around 30%.¹⁰ The rates of natural increase were unbalanced and depended on the rhythm of births and deaths. Throughout the analysed period birth rates were higher than mortality rates. The highest rates of natural increase were recorded in the period from 1865 to 1874 and they were connected with the economic development of the eastern area of the island of Hvar, which experienced its prosperity in that period.¹⁸

The analysis of data according to the official population censuses, that had been conducted by the Austrian authorities from 1857 to 1890 shows that moderate rates of population growth were recorded in Bogomolje parish (Table 2). The census period from 1857-1869 demonstrated population growth that is related to the economic development of the parish and its main economic activities of olive growing and viticulture, which experienced their peak in the mentioned period. Although scientific investigations have shown that a significant population increase was recorded on almost all Dalmatian islands in the period from 1869-1880, this was not the case in Bogomolje parish, where stagnation occurred and the number of inhabitants slightly decreased (Table 2).

Data on the decrease in the population of Bogomolje parish are similar to other parishes on the islands of Šibenik, where a decrease in population was recorded in the amount of -0.07‰.¹⁹ Somewhat different data were recorded in Betina on the island of Murter, which experienced a large increase in the number of inhabitants in the period from the first official population census in 1857 to 1880.¹⁰ Also, an increase in the number of inhabitants was recorded throughout Croatia and Slavonia in the period from 1870-1880, only in the Slavonian town of Donji Miholjac the number of inhabitants decreased where a negative natural increase was recorded - 1.73‰¹⁰. The trend of population growth continued throughout the census period of 1880-1890 and it was connected with the economic prosperity of Bogomolje parish, which for the first time in the history of its existence in the administrative sense became a political municipality, within the structure that existed in the Austrian part of the Monarchy.²⁰

Conclusion

The population development of Bogomolje parish was related to socio-historical factors that influenced its development. The introduction of new foodstuffs into the population diet resulted in reduction of hunger, and thus in the reduction of the general mortality rate. Economic factors in the 1880s affected the economic decline of the settlement of Bogomolje when the wave of emigration of the population to overseas countries begins. In the analysed period Bogomolje parish achieved a negative migration balance, which led to a decrease in the number of inhabitants.

TABLE 2.

NUMBER OF POPULATION ACCORDING TO THE OFFICIAL CENSUSES FOR THE PERIOD 1857-1890

Census year	Population number	100%
1857	378	
1869	464	22,8
1880	455	-20,4
1890	520	37,6

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STANOVNIŠTVO ŽUPE BOGOMOLJE NA OTOKU HVARU PREMA MATIČNIM KNJIGAMA 1855.-1894.

S A Ž E T A K

U ovom radu prikazano je povijesno-demografsko kretanje i razvoj stanovništva župe Bogomolje na otoku Hvaru temeljeno na analizi podataka matičnih knjiga rođenih/krštenih i umrlih od 1855.-1894. godine. Bogomolje, brdsko naselje na istočnoj strani otoka Hvara, spominje se već u 15. stoljeću, ali je intenzivno napušćivanje doživjelo tijekom razdoblja osmanskih osvajanja kolonizacijom prebjeglog stanovništva s kopnenog dijela jadranske obale, većinom iz makarskog primorja. Analiza podataka o prirodnom kretanju poslužila je u ovom radu kao pokazatelj stopa nataliteta i mortaliteta, prirodnog prirasta te migracijskog salda na temelju kojeg je iznijet prikaz migracijskog vala koji je zahvatio župu Bogomolje krajem 19. stoljeća.

