

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF AN ABANDONED TOWN

The 2005 Project in Stari Bar

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with contributions of

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Abbreviations:

US: Unità stratigrafica: Stratigraphic Unit, layer, context

USM: Unità Stratigrafica Muraria, Architectural Stratigraphic Unit, rchitectural layer, architectural context

EA: Elemento Architettonico, Architectural Element (doors, windows, columns, etc.)

UTS: Unità Topografica di Scavo: Topographic Unit of Excavation, area, trench

UTCF: Unità Topografica Corpo di Fabbrica: Topographic Unit of Building, number of building



To our friend Milan Pravić

PREFACE

In autumn 2005 a second campaign of archaeological research on the site of Stari Bar has been carried out. In agreement with the Montenegrin authorities (Museum of Bar – Town of Bar) the archaeological project involved the collaboration of the University of Ca' Foscari in Venice and Primorska University in Koper (Slovenia). While the team directed by prof. Mitja Guštin studied Ottoman pottery from the Museum and the storage area of the site of Bar, the team under my direction worked together with Mladen Zagarčanin of the Museum of Bar on the implementation of the archaeological research at the site. In this volume, a part of the results of that campaign are published.

This book, like the first one on Stari Bar, remains a collection of papers. A group of articles focus on topics connected with the areas excavated in 2005 (UTS 45, UTS 112 and UTS 8b), a paper presents the archaeozoological analysis of context from the trench of 2004 (UTS 161) and another one gives a wide overview of stoneworking in Bar through the centuries. An article then aims to give a preliminary interpretation of the settlement sequence of the area, through the collation of new data and pre-existing archaeological knowledge.

The team of 2005, under my direction, was constituted by Corinna Bagato, Fulvio Baudo, Diego Calaon, Erica D'Amico, Cristina Falla, Speranza Fresia, Alessandro Gasparin and Elena Grandi of the University of Ca' Foscari in Venice; by Mladen Zagarčanin of the Museum of Bar; by Aleksander Pluskowski and Krish Seetah of the University of Cambridge; by Milos Petrivečić of the University of Beograd.

The project was funded by the European Union (Culture 2000. The Heritage of Serenissima), the Ministero degli Esteri Italiano (MAE) and by Region Veneto. In this occasion we want to express our gratitude to those that have helped and supported this mission also in 2005. For the Montenegrin side the Minister of Culture Mrs Vesna Kilibarda, the Chief of Cultural Heritage Mr Slobodan Mitrović, the Mayor of the Municipality of Bar in 2005 Mrs Anka Vojvodić, the director of the Center for Culture of Bar Mr Milun Lutovac, the curator of the Museum of Bar Mr Vladislav Kasalika and the conservator of the archaeological area of Bar Mr Omer Peročević. For the Italian side the Consul for Montenegro in 2005, Mrs Valentina Setta, the dean of the University Ca' Foscari Mr Pierfrancesco Ghetti, the functionaries of Regione Veneto, our colleague Gilberto Calderoni of the Laboratory of Earth Science of University "La Sapienza" of Rome for the C14 analysis and our colleague Paolo Biagi of University of Ca' Foscari in Venice for his help with the micro-lithics of the site.

This project enjoys the support of the Archaeological Society of Montenegro and was officially presented to the 4th Meeting on Montenegrin Archaeology (IV Skup. Društvo Arheologja Crne Gore) held in Danilougrad from the 18th to the 20th of October 2005. During the excavation we were visited by our friend Mr Mile Baković (Centra za arheološka istraživanja Crne Gore and now President of the Archaeological Society of Montenegro) and by Mr Djurje Jancović (Faculty of Philosophy, Beograd).

While finishing the preparation of this book we received the sad news of the sudden passing of our friend Milan Pravičević, former President of the Archaeological Society of Montenegro and eminent scholar of Montenegrin archaeology. Milan repeatedly visited us on the excavation in Bar in 2004 and 2005, giving us many valuable suggestions and opinions. We are sure he would have supported us in the same way in the future. With affection and fondness we dedicate this volume to his memory.

SAURO GELICHI
Venice, August 2006

1. INTRODUCTION. THE PROJECT AND THE STRATEGY

1.1 *Stari Bar: a short introduction*

Stari Bar is an abandoned town in Montenegro, lying on a rocky hill 5 km away from modern Bar (the most important harbour of Montenegro) (Plate 1.1), along that part of the coast between the mouths of Cattaro (Kotor) and the estuary of the Bojana, on which important Roman-Hellenistic centres were founded, like Budva (*Butua*) and Ulcinj (*Dulcinium*) (for a preliminary introduction to the site see GELICHI 2005, 2006 and ZAGARČANIN 2005).

The site of Stari Bar appears at first glance as a reasonably homogeneous settlement (Plate 1.2-1.3). Surrounded by the last of a series of curtain walls built in the Venetian period, the town extends over an area of about 4 hectares with a loosely lozenge-shaped plan, to which a final district commonly called *suburbium* was added at a date which has not been determined precisely (between the 12th and the 15th century), outside the walls but in turn surrounded by another curtain wall.

It is well known that conflicts (the Montenegro Liberation War) first and natural events later (an earthquake in 1979) have seriously damaged what was left of the town. However even in these conditions Stari Bar immediately stands out as a site with great potential both for the degree of preservation of its historical masonry and for the quality and depth of archaeological levels. It represents an important opportunity for the analysis of the development of a medieval and postmedieval settlement; one that avoided the heavy urban transformation that almost always have totally destroyed the phisionomy of Montenegrin historical towns in the last century.

A first surface analysis shows how evidently the architectural heritage of this abandoned town is somehow made homogeneous by its last phase of occupation, corresponding to the Ottoman domination (Plate 1.4). Not only are some public spaces typical of Islamic towns still visible, like the hammam (recently restored) and the mosques, but also common buildings, in particular if emptied of debris and thus showing the internal divi-



Plate 1.1 – Location of Stari Bar.

