FOREWORD

When prof. Sauro Gelichi and his associates started their research in Stari Bar in 2004, the world has again become aware of one of the richest archeological sites in the region. Four years later, the research has continued, and I have the honor of writing a brief introduction and thus contribute to the third publication, which will bring closer the research findings to a wider audience.

Prof. Gelichi and his team from the Ca' Foscari University of Venice, have gathered in the Old Town of Bar, besides Montenegrin archaeologists and young collaborators, world-renowned experts form other universities as Primorska University of Kopar, Cambridge University and University of Innsbruck. Their research helped us realize how immensely rich is our heritage and strengthen our intentions to revitalize the Old Town of Bar and make it a center of cultural events. Prof. Gelichi, as well as all others who will help us reach our goals, will have the support from Bar Municipality, because the question of the Old Town of Bar is a question of our own identity and culture.

Projects like this one are aimed at promoting our town and our culture throughout the world. Therefore I would like them to continue and our cooperation to expand in order to get as much as possible of nice and precious books like this one dedicated to our Bar.

ŽARKO PAVIĆEVIĆ
Mayor of Bar

UVOD

Kada je prof. dr Sauro Gelichi 2004. godine sa svojim saradnicima započeo istraživanja u Starom Baru, svijet je ponovo čuo o jednom od najbogatijih arheoloških nalazišta u ovom regionu. Četiri godine kasnije, istraživanja se nastavljaju, a meni je pripala čast da uvodom riječju dam svoj doprinos trećoj publikaciji koja će dodatno približiti rezultate istraživanja široj publici.


Projekti poput ovog imaju za cilj promovisanje našeg grada i naše kulture u cijelom svijetu. Stoga želim da se oni nastave, da se saradnja proširi i da dobijemo još mnogo ovako lijepih i dragocjenih knjiga o našem Baru.

ŽARKO PAVIĆEVIĆ
Predsjednik Opštine Bar
FOREWORD

In 2004 Ca’ Foscari University of Venice started its archaeological mission in the old abandoned city site of Bar, in Montenegro. The choice was not at random. Apart from its internationally acknowledged importance, both for the place and the amazingly well-preserved archaeological remains, Bar has been a Venetian city for over a century, alike similar Montenegro coastal centres living for a long time under the control of the Serenissima Republic. Coming back to Stari Bar was for Ca’ Foscari a way to resume a relationship with a culturally close friend of Venice, with whom it shared a relevant phase of the history of the Adriatic region. Although working on Venetian features outside Venice may not seem new research, the mission has undoubtedly discovered some novelties. First of all archaeology gives a new point of view both for the issue and the period considered. Then, the archaeological approach of this book (and of previous issues of the Venetian-Montenegro equipe) considers and analyses not only the relevant Venetian period but also other prominent historical ages of the place, from its Byzantium origins to the local feudalism domination until the Ottoman period. I am pleased that this work, stemming from the cooperation with Montenegro archaeologists, is published while our relationships are strengthened by the signature of a formal agreement. This act testifies the effort and the commitment that inspired people who have carried on the initiative until now. I am certain this will be a solid basis for future research.

Pier Francesco Ghetti
The Rector Ca’ Foscari University

PRESENTAZIONE

Dal 2004 l’Università Ca’ Foscari di Venezia ha iniziato una missione archeologica nel sito dell’antica città abbandonata di Bar, in Montenegro. La scelta non è stata casuale. Al di là dell’importanza, internazionalmente riconosciuta, al luogo, e alla spettacolare conservazione dei suoi resti architettonici, Bar è stata, per oltre un secolo, una città veneziana, seguendo in questo il destino di altri centri della costa montenegrina, a lungo sotto il controllo della Serenissima. Tornare a Stari Bar, dunque, significava per la nostra università riallacciare un filo con un territorio che ci è, culturalmente, vicino, con il quale abbiamo condiviso, nel passato, una significativa parte di storia adriatica. Lavorare sulla venezianità fuori Venezia potrebbe apparire, tuttavia, una tematica non particolarmente originale, essendo da tempo nell’agenda di molti ricercatori, italiani e non. Tuttavia questa missione si presenta, e mi piace sottolinearlo in questa occasione, con alcuni indubbi elementi di novità. Intanto il tipo di approccio, archeologico, che costituisce, per il luogo, per l’argomento e per il periodo, davvero una chiave di lettura fino ad oggi mai sperimentata. Poi, il fatto che l’archeologia, come si può vedere in questo volume (ma anche nei precedenti pubblicati dall’equipe veneziana e montenegrina), non si limiti ad analizzare e contestualizzare la pur importante fase veneziana; anzi, la sua analisi si parametra, dialetticamente, con gli altri significativi momenti storici che il luogo ha conosciuto, dalle origini bizantine alla fase di dominazione della feudalità locale fino al periodo ottomano. Sono soddisfatto di presentare questa pubblicazione, frutto della cooperazione con gli archeologi montenegrini, in un momento in cui si consolidano i nostri rapporti con la firma di una convenzione. Tale convenzione testimonia, in maniera concreta, l’abnegazione e l’impegno che fino ad oggi ha accompagnato coloro che hanno promosso tale iniziativa e sono convinti che costituirà una solida base per le ricerche future.

Pier Francesco Ghetti
Il Rettore dell’Università Ca’ Foscari
PREFACE

This volume, the third in a series, is a collection of several archaeological papers, relating to the activities carried out by the Italian-Montenegrin archaeological mission in Stari Bar during the 2006 and 2007 seasons. This mission began in 2004 with the participation of the University of Koper, with the principal objective being to systematically undertake archaeological research on one of the most significant historical sites of Montenegro, after the pioneering research of Bošković during the 50s and 60s and after the demanding reconstruction activities following the earthquake of the 70s.

The scientific work of Bošković remains fundamental to this excavation and still innovative in many of its methodological approaches. Bošković aimed to bring to light the history of this forgotten Montenegrin town, and in the process produced an analytical and complete study of its material structures, a rare endeavour during that period. The only work missing from this analysis was a proper study of the archaeology which was not possible at that time. To restart the archaeological project at Stari Bar began with a study of Bošković’s work and the plan of the settlement, which was already partially completed (in the meantime new clearances and excavations had brought to light districts that were buried in Bošković’s time and had not therefore been documented, such as buildings 143-146), plus an assessment of the buried and standing archaeological features. Research campaigns then began, on standing buildings as well as buried features, with the two-fold aim of better understanding the long durée of the settlement sequence and the social changes as seen through the material culture of the site. In fact Stari Bar was (and is) very well suited to such analysis on the impact of political and social change over time and space and variations in the behaviours of the various communities who lived in the town and how they expressed their identities. Nonetheless there were some difficulties, due largely to the preservation of the buried layers and standing buildings, which had been heavily altered over time through natural and human activities, including the recent restoration works.

This volume essentially reports on research carried out in a very specific area of the settlement, within the medieval town, but possibly outside the Byzantine settlement (a series of buildings in the southern area near the curtain walls: rooms 8-9 and the church of St. Catherine). The aim was to analyze the evolution of an urban area from its birth through the Ottoman phases (previously unpublished). During 2006 a preliminary report was published with regards to this group of buildings and the report here completes that task with a study of the materials from those rooms (including the pottery), faunal remains, the architectural complex (including the church), some fibulae, a preliminary analysis of written documentation about Stari Bar, an evaluation of the archaeological resources of the surrounding territory and finally a report on olive oil production during the Ottoman period.

The team of 2006, under my direction, included Michela Babbini, Corinna Bagato, Silva Cadamuro, Diego Calaon, Erica D’Amico, Annamaria Delmonte, Cristina Falla, Margherita Ferri, Alessandra Forti, Speranza Fresia, Elena Grandi, Ester Zanichelli, of the University of Ca’ Foscari in Venice; Miguel Bru Castro of The University Autonoma of Madrid; Mladen Zagarčanin of the Museum of Bar; Alexander Pluskowki and Krish Seetah of the University of Cambridge; Dejan Drašković, Miloš Živanović and Petra Zdražković of Bar.

The team of 2007, under my direction, included Michela Babbini, Annamaria Delmonte and Claudio Negrelli of the University of Ca’ Foscari in Venice; Mladen Zagarčanin and Goran Pajović of the Museum of Bar.

Several institutions and individuals support and sustain this project. For the Italian part, in addition to my University and its rector, Pier Francesco Ghetti, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAE; Direzione Generale per la Promozione e la Cooperazione Culturale, Ufficio V, Settore Archeologia) which annually finances our excavation campaigns and the Italian Ambassador in Montenegro, Dr. Gabriele Meucci. For the Montenegrin part the community of Bar and its Mayor, Žarko Pavlčević and the Director of the Cultural Center, Cazim Nikezić. This project enjoys the support of the
Archaeological Society of Montenegro and its President, Mile Baković. In 2006 this project was made possible by the cooperation of Dr Lenka Bulatović, director of the Centre for Archaeological Research of Montenegro. I would like also to personally thank all my collaborators engaged in working in Bar since 2004, who have worked with competence and professionalism the publication of these preliminary reports, particularly Diego Calaon, Erica D’Amico, Margherita Ferri and Speranza Fresia. Finally I would like also to thank Omer Perоčević, for years the strict yet dedicated custodian of the riches of Bar, Mladen Zagarcanin, friend without peers but also worthy archaeologist of the young Montenegrin archaeology and finally Mitja Gustin, to whom I owe the knowledge of this extraordinary site and the encouragement to begin this project.

Sauro Gelichi
Venice, August 2008
1. THE 2006-07 ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT IN STARI BAR: A PRELIMINARY REPORT

The general outline of the Stari Bar project has already been presented in the previous two volumes (Gelichi, Guštin 2005; Gelichi 2006a) (Plate 1.1). It has therefore been established that the site is particularly complex and the degree of preservation of its buildings (and different conditions of accessibility: Calaon 2005; Baudo 2005) have conditioned and directed the research. The stratigraphic thickness of the buried deposits turned out to be very different to what we were anticipating, even after an initial superficial assessment (again Calaon 2005). Natural and human factors have also greatly limited preservation, for example, of Middle and Late Byzantine material, that does not seem to be present in areas where we were expecting it (such as area 45, see Baudo, Calaon, D'Amico 2006). Contexts dating to that period were found: such as a secondary deposit that came shortly after the formation of the context, near gate 112, where structures leaning onto the two access towers represented a boundary containing and preserving the said deposits and their materials (Baudo, Grandi, Bagato, Fresia 2006). Human presence during Late Antiquity in the area where Bar is located is only hinted at by the appearance of residual materials (Gelichi 2006b, 19-21, Pl. 2.1), however abundant quantities of Iron Age ceramics were found in secondary deposits during work in the complex 143-146, demonstrating that already in that period the site was settled permanently (Plate 1.2). It is evident that these archaeological materials are important for reconstructing the history of Stari Bar and should therefore be analyzed carefully. However, it is also evident that the conditions of the area and the dense urbanization of the Late and Post-Medieval periods (as well as its orographic position) have had a limiting effect on the information we can obtain about earlier periods.

The principal elements of the Middle Byzantine settlement have already been highlighted and consist of a fortified area with an extant access gate (restructured in the High Middle Ages) as well as a semicircular tower, embedded within the Renaissance period Fortress (Plate 1.3). The limits of this enclosure, constructed, according to excavation data from gate 112, before the 11th century (perhaps between the 8th and 9th century, but certainly during the Middle Byzantine period: Gelichi 2006b, 24) cannot be clearly defined on the western side (the southern and eastern sides are presumed to have used the natural cliffs as boundaries). The hypotheses which have so far been proposed are all plausible, but no new archaeological data emerged during the campaigns of 2006 and 2007.

The High and Late Medieval levels have been identified to date only in the area of rooms 8 to 11, a group of rooms stretching along the southern side of the curtain wall, near a vaulted passageway connected with the church of St. Catherine. In this case the town walls helped preserve the stratigraphic deposits, from the time of their reconstruction in stone (Calaon 2006). However, in the same area the construction within room 8a of an underground cellar during the Ottoman age probably caused the erosion of similar deposits: as we noted during the 2006 season, the sequence of 8a does not begin before the end of the 16th century. A similar event seems to have taken place in the nearby building 15, cleared in the 1990s, where materials dating mainly to the 16th century were found (Zagarčanin 2004, 26).

These cases demonstrate the difficulties inherent in any attempt to reconstruct long, convincing, sequences for extensive areas of the town. This does not mean we
should completely abandon our efforts to improve our knowledge of these older phases, but it highlights the need for a very well targeted sampling strategy.

Another important strand in our analysis is to study the social structure of the town and how the population organized their space over time and how they are represented in the material culture (Gelichi 2006b, 15-17). A settlement like Stari Bar is very well suited to this kind of analysis, especially in the Late Medieval, Venetian and Ottoman periods. Much of the town is in fact still standing (although in ruins) and so the architectural archaeology of the houses can be examined. An in-depth analysis of the written documents, scattered in various archives, and the epigraphic and heraldic evidence can also provide good information on the characteristics of the local aristocracy – although this research is still in its infancy (see Mlacović in this volume).

In spite of the fact that the preservation of the site gives a false impression of the town as having a predominantly Medieval background, careful reading of the standing buildings shows many changes in the organization of space over time (from a single room, to more complex groups of buildings, to the entire town). The archaeological campaigns of 2006 and 2007 were therefore focused on two separate areas to gain a better understanding of the evolution of the buildings and the social groups within them: the research included buildings 8 to 11 (and the church of St. Catherine) already mentioned, and the town block coded 143-146. One of the rooms of complex 8 to 11 had already been excavated in 2000 (8b: Zagarcanin 2004, 24-25) and then again in 2005 (Calaon 2006); then in 2006 the adjoining room 8a was excavated, though its sequence was not published. The reason for delaying publication of 8a was that the ground floor was essentially a basement constructed during the Ottoman age and the 2006 publication discussed the Late Medieval sequence (and it seemed too early to study the Turkish phases without first analysing the surrounding buildings). The opportunity to investigate room 8a in more depth came the following year, when the adjoining rooms 8c, 9 and 10 were also excavated and the standing walls analyzed in more detail. Whilst the Late Medieval phase did not show any particularly new elements the research on the entire building complex was fundamental to the overall study of the Ottoman age occupation.
Plate 1.3 – Location of the fortifications of Byzantine period.

Plate 1.4 – Rooms 8-9.
The complex 8 to 9 (with the addition of the nearby buildings 14 and 15, not excavated but studied through their extant walls) is located in an important position in Stari Bar (Plate 1.4): at the limits of the Byzantine settlement (though admittedly these limits remain hypothetical) but certainly within the new medieval town. This area was urbanized before the Venetian conquest and can be compared with other town blocks constructed under the domination of the Serenissima. The group of rooms 143-146 (Plate 1.5), were ideal for such a comparison, having been cleared and excavated in the 1990s (though the map by Bošković lacks some of the rooms: Bošković 1962) and published only as a preliminary report (mainly for the ceramics) in the volume by Zagarčanin (Zagarčanin 2004, 20-23, Slika 3). For this reason in 2006 we initiated research on the entire block, beginning by excavating the residual deposits within the buildings (mainly in room 146, which was of great use for the chronology of the complex), analyzing the standing walls (so that we could construct a relative sequence for the buildings) and re-studying (by context and not by typology) the materials found within a series of dumping pits. These holes (see the preliminary overview in ibid. Slika 6-7), some with walls, others directly dug into the soil, provided a notable quantity of materials, mainly ceramics, glass and metal objects. These contexts, with the exception of the biological remains which are no longer preserved, could be newly studied from a social and cultural perspective rather than within the framework of pottery studies (already carried out with good results by Zagarčanin: Zagarčanin 2004). The campaign of 2006 was then directed at the study of this town block, with the analysis of extant buildings completed in 2007. However the full analysis of this significant archaeological context has not yet been completed and will follow in a future publication.

The 2007 mission used a select team with very specific targets: to complete the study of some parts of the extant buildings in complex 143-146 and 8-9 and to initiate a survey of the surrounding territory. The aim was to lay out a map of the archaeological finds (published here, though some gaps remain) and above all to verify if the geographical space surrounding the town would be suitable for future study. This latter survey study was not
simply a processual-type analysis but a targeted analysis of the spaces that could be identified as belonging to the historical territory of Bar (which does not necessarily imply continuity of judicial and administrative dependence on the town over the entire chronological span of its history). Within this geographical area we verified the potential for soil studies to answer questions about the types of cultivation and the degree of urbanization appearing in this area.

The ongoing research in Bar and its territory aims predominantly to increase the international profile of this site, which has extraordinary value and significance in historical and archaeological terms. In addition this research will help to enrich the cultural life of the current community of Bar through the recognition of this territory as a historically important site. Part of this cultural agenda includes the well-executed restoration of the monuments in Bar, the organization of exhibitions and the creation of specific historical tour routes within and outside the town. All these plans require painstakingly well-researched historical and archaeological data to be presented to politicians and town planners if they are to succeed, and so the production of this data is one of the most important objectives of the research presented here.