
**KASNOANTIČKA UTVRDA NA POLOŽAJU
CRKVICE SV. JURJA IZNAD PAGA.
PRINOS ARHEOLOŠKOM ISTRAŽIVANJU
GENEZE GRADA PAGA**

U prilogu posvećenom visokoj obljetnici osnivanja srednjovjekovnoga grada Paga autor iznosi rezultate osobnih terenskih istraživanja na otoku Pagu u neposrednom zaleđu slavljenika. Markantni položaj na kojem se ističe ruševina predromaničke crkvice sv. Jurja, neposredno iznad grada Paga, nakon detaljnoga rekognosciranja 1989. godine prepoznat je kao jedinstveni primjer kasnoantičke utvrde. Autor se osvrće na ostatke očuvane fortifikacije, odnosno na tragove bedema i kula te pripadajućih nastambi. Nalazi istočnomediteranske keramike i ostatci otkrivene arhitekture uvjerili su autora u postojanje kastrona nastaloga tijekom epohe cara Justinijana I. (527. – 565.) u doba ratova s Istočnogotskim Kraljevstvom na istočnojadranskom priobalju i arhipelagu. Otkriće kasnoantičke utvrde predstavlja donedavna nedostajuću kariku koju autor nastoji uklopiti u lanac poznatih činjenica o postanku grada Paga.

Ključne riječi: kasna antika, otok Pag, crkva sv. Jurja, kastron, Justinijanova epoha, kule, zidine, pomorski limes.

**THE LATE ANTIQUITY FORTIFICATION ON
THE LOCATION OF ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH
ABOVE PAG.
AN INSIGHT INTO ARCHAEOLOGICAL
INVESTIGATION OF THE BEGINNINGS OF THE
TOWN OF PAG**

In this paper, marking the impressive anniversary of the founding of the medieval town of Pag, the author presents the results of his own field research on the island of Pag, in the immediate vicinity of the town. After a detailed survey carried out in 1989, the dominant location with the ruins of the small pre-Romanesque St. George's Church, just above the town of Pag, has been recognized as a unique example of a Late Antiquity fortification. The author takes a look at the remains of the preserved fortification, including traces of defense walls and towers and appertaining premises. Based on the finds of the East Mediterranean ceramics and remains of the architecture discovered there, the author is convinced that a castron was founded there in the epoch of Emperor Justinian I (527 – 565 AD), during the wars with the Ostrogothic Kingdom in the coastal region and on the islands of the Eastern Adriatic. The discovery of a Late Antiquity fortification can be seen as a link – missing until recently – that the author is trying to fit in the chain of the established facts about the beginnings of the town of Pag.

Keywords: Late Antiquity, island of Pag, St. George's Church, castron, Justinian epoch, towers, walls, maritime limes.

Pri upoznavanju geneze nekoga grada, točnije rečeno u prepoznavanju njegove kulturno-povijesne uslojenosti važan je prinos istraživanja humanističkih i drugih znanstvenih područja i polja koja interdisciplinarnim pristupima upotpunjuju moguću sliku kronologije razvoja i temeljnih uvjeta koji doprinose oblikovanju njegove urbane jezgre. Ponekad su, zbog materijalnih dokaza života na jednom položaju, zaslugom arheologije moguće potvrde o kontinuitetu naseljavanja uvijek istoga položaja, koji je zbog topografskih i inih danosti pružao temeljne vrijednosti za stalno oblikovanje aglomeracije. To, međutim, nije slučaj kada je riječ o užem arealu grada Paga, unutar kojega arheološkom metodom do sada nisu dokazani stariji prapovijesni i antički slojevi.

Ipak, ima i zanimljivih primjera kada primjećujemo promjene položaja te sukladno tome i oblikovanja raznih uzastopnih oblika naselja, koji su rezultat ponajprije određenih prirodnih, ali i povijesnih zakonitosti. Na dislociranje aglomeracija utjecale su, primjerice, potreba zaštićenosti od vjetrova (bura) ili opasnosti uvjetovane ratnim ugrozama. Vrlo je važan položaj mogla uvjetovati blizina nekih prirodnih resursa, primjerice soli. Bitna su bila i križišta važnih kopnenih prometnica, odnosno blizina zaštićenoga sidrišta, pa sukladno tome i mogućnosti pomorske plovidbe. Navedene raspršene aglomeracije, nastale u različitim razdobljima, ali na određeni način okupljene oko trajnoga fokusa interesa, mogle su iz takve svojevrstne policentričnosti u pogodnom povijesnom trenutku evoluirati u snažno središnje naselje koje je štitilo zajednički interes.

U nastavku našega priloga nastojat ćemo vrjednovati upravo netom navedenu inačicu policentričnoga nastanka aglomeracije koja je u konačnici dovela i do oblikovanja zanimljivoga otočnog središta – srednjovjekovnoga grada Paga. U tom će pristupu rješavanju slike policentričnosti spoznaje pribavljene arheološkom metodom, tj. našim terenskim obilaskom okolice grada Paga, postati svakako važnom i nezaobilaznom i donedavna neprepoznatom karikom u nizu vremenskih postaja na dugotrajnom putu prema konačnoj gradogradnji i razvoju središnje aglomeracije otoka.

Sljedeća nezaobilazna važna činjenica koju svakako treba imati u vidu prigodom razmatranja oblikovanja policentričnoga modela jest stalan, izdašan i vrlo dragocjen izvor moći, bogatstva, trajnijega naseljavanja, trgovine na veće udaljenosti, ali i oružanih sukoba – sol. Prema utemeljenom mišljenju Faričića,¹ najvažniji prostor proizvodnje soli na sjevernodalmatinskim otocima područje je uvale Solina u plitkom i duboko uvučenom dijelu Paškoga zaljeva.

Držimo da je naš podulji uvodni prikaz bio nužan radi shvaćanja daljnega dijela teksta, u kojem iznosimo arheološke spoznaje koje smo iznijeli pred javnost 1993. godine, prigodom obilježavanja visoke obljetnice utemeljenja grada Paga 1443.

The contribution of humanistic and other sciences is important for understanding the origin of a town – more precisely, for recognizing its cultural and historical layers – because their interdisciplinary approach completes the possible chronology of the development and basic conditions of the forming of the urban core of the town. In search of material evidence of the continuity of life on a location, archaeology can sometimes confirm the continuity of settlement of such location which, due to its topography and other characteristics, has provided basic values required for establishing a permanent agglomeration. However, this is not the case with the immediate surroundings of Pag: so far, archaeological methods have not come up with evidence of older prehistoric and antiquity layers in it.

Still, there are interesting examples of changing of locations and – consequently – of various successive forms of settlements, primarily as a result of certain natural and historical patterns. Dislocation of agglomerations would, for instance, be a result of the need for shelter from winds (primarily *bura* – northeastern wind) or dangers brought by wars. Vicinity of certain natural resources is also a very important element for choosing a location for a settlement. Salt, for example. Crossroads of important roads and the vicinity of a sheltered anchorage that enables seafaring were also important. In favorable historical moments, such dispersed agglomerations, formed in various periods and clustered around a permanent focus of interest, could evolve from such polycentricity into a strong central settlement that would protect the common interest.

Further in the text we will try to evaluate the abovementioned variant of the polycentric inception of the agglomeration that ultimately led to forming of an interesting island center – the medieval town of Pag. In this approach, the pictures of the polycentricity of the insight acquired by an archaeological method – our field research in the Pag surroundings – will certainly become an important, unavoidable and – until recently – unrecognized link in the chain of chronological stations on the lengthy road to the eventual town-building and development of the central agglomeration of the island.

The next unavoidable and very important fact that one should keep in mind when considering the forming of the polycentric model is salt – as a permanent, abundant and precious source of power, fortune, permanent settlement and long-distance-trade, but also of armed conflicts. According to evidence-based opinion of Faričić,¹ the most important salt-producing area on North Dalmatian islands is Solina Cove in the shallow and retracted part of the Bay of Pag.

In our opinion, this somewhat lengthy introduction was necessary for better understanding of the archaeological findings that we published in 1993, at the occasion of the impressive anniversary of the founding of the town of Pag in 1443.

1 J. Faričić, 2012, 153, sl. 59.

1 J. Faričić, 2012: 153, fig. 59.



Slika 1. Pogled s juga na položaj crkve sv. Jurja i kasnoantičkoga kastrona iznad grada Paga

Figure 1. Southern view of the location of St. George's Church and Late Antiquity castron above town of Pag

foto / photo: Z. Brusić

Naslovnikom sv. Jurja, kapadocijsko-sirijskoga sveca, mučenika u Dioklecijanovim progonima, zaštitnika brodarstva, zemljoradnika i stočara, a iznad svega ratničkoga sveca, čiji se kult na istoku širi od 4. stoljeća, osobito omiljenoga u Justinijanovu razdoblju,² obilježen je položaj s uočljivim ruševnim ostacima predromaničkoga sakralnog objekta na koti 205, nedaleko sjevernoga oboda grada Paga (Sl. 1),³ koji je još 1952. godine podrobno objelodanio Petricioli.⁴ Na crkvicu sv. Jurja ili, bolje rečeno, njezine ostatke osvrnuo se i akademik Mate Suić,⁵ svakako jedan od najboljih poznavalaca povijesne i arheološke baštine otoka Paga. Prema suvremenom stavu povijesti umjetnosti, sagrađeno je na otoku Pagu nekoliko crkava već u ranokršćansko doba i u

This location on Hill 205 near the northern rim of the town of Pag, containing visible ruins of a pre-Romanesque sacral building (Fig. 1)² and disclosed in detail by Petricioli,³ was named after St. George, the Cappadocian-Syrian saint, a martyr of Diocletian's persecutions, the patron-saint of shipbuilders, farmers and cattle breeders and – above all – the warriors' saint, whose cult started spreading in the East in the 4th century, particularly popular in the Justinian's period.⁴ As one of the best experts on the historical and archaeological heritage of the island of Pag, Academician Mate Suić also dwelled on St. George's Church, or what had left of it.⁵ The general opinion of modern art historians is that a few churches were built on the island of Pag as early as in the early Christian era and in early Middle Ages and that they were still used in the Middle Ages. St. George's Church above the town of Pag⁶ has been included among these few. The remains of a massive buttress along the southern front of the church and barely visible contours

2 B. Migotti, 1996, 189-247; (Juraj: 221). Sv. Juraj nije u srednjem vijeku bio isključivo naslovnik, već uistinu jedan od najomiljenijih svetaca toga razdoblja.

3 Zahvalni smo poštovanom kolegi Zdenku Brusiću na odličnom panoramskom snimku položaja kasnoantičke utvrde i ostataka crkve sv. Jurja ponad grada Paga.

4 I. Petricioli, 1952, 106.

5 M. Suić, 1953, T. 1.

2 We are indebted to our esteemed colleague Zdenko Brusić for his excellent scenic photograph of the location of the late-antiquity fortification and the ruins of St. George's Church above the town of Pag.

3 I. Petricioli, 1952, 106.

4 B. Migotti, 1996, 189-247; (Juraj: 221). In Middle Ages, St. George was not just a popular patron saint, but indeed one of the most popular saints of the time in general.

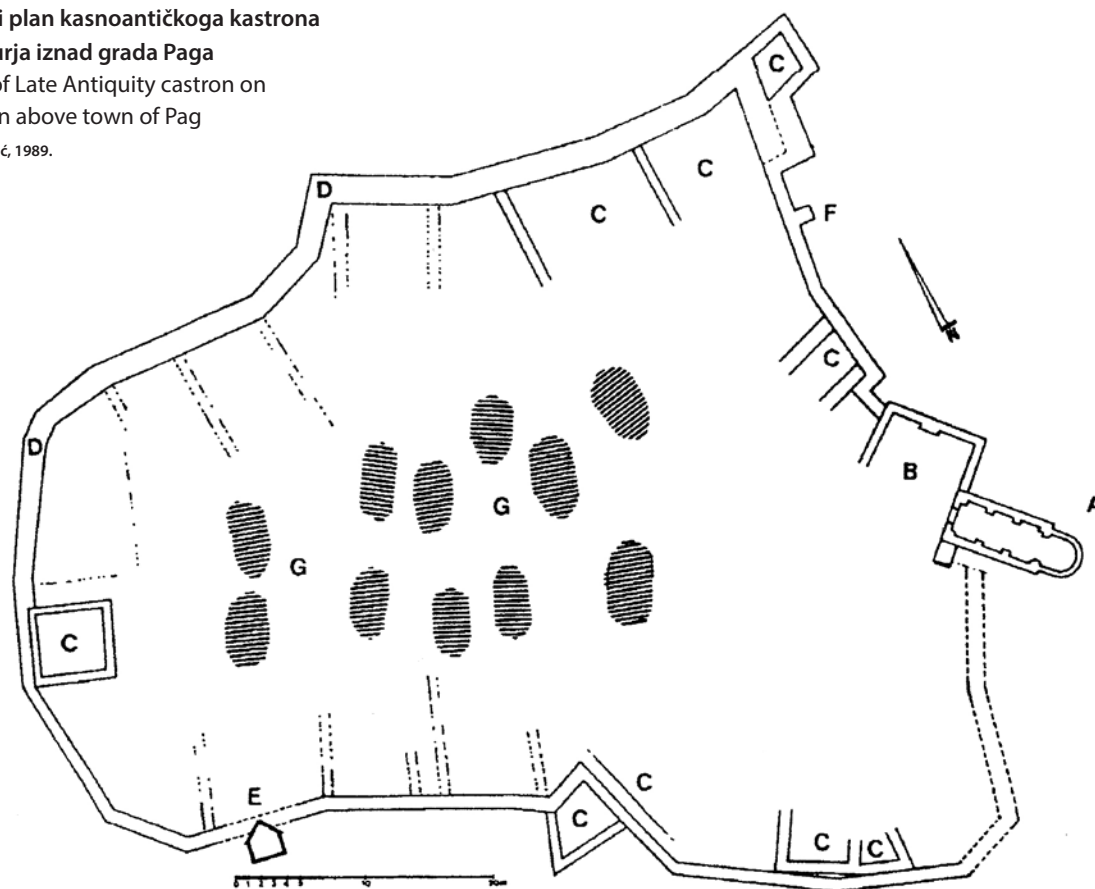
5 M. Suić, 1953, Pl. 1.

6 E. Hilje, 1999.

Slika 2. Situacijski plan kasnoantičkoga kastrona na položaju Sv. Jurja iznad grada Paga

Figure 2. Layout of Late Antiquity castron on St. George location above town of Pag

crtež / drawing: K. Rončević, 1989.



ranome srednjem vijeku, koje su i u srednjovjekovlju bile u funkciji. U nekolicinu takvih uvršten je i Sv. Juraj poviše Paga.⁶ Do naših dana od toga sakralnog objekta preostali su samo ostatci velikoga potpornjaka uz južno pročelje crkve i skromne naznake obrisa tlocrta.⁷

Potaknuti ponajprije izuzetno pogodnim položajem strmoga brijega i ostacima crkvice sv. Jurja smještene na litici, proveli smo u srpnju 1989. godine vrlo detaljno terensko arheološko rekognosciranje nalazišta. Na rezultate tih preliminarnih istraživanja osvrnuli smo se iste godine.⁸ Podrobnom analizom kote 205, smještene zapadno od trigonometra 263 na Kršini ili Velom brigu, dokazano je tom prigodom postojanje rudimentarnih obrisa tlorisa velikoga građevinskog kompleksa u kojem smo naslutili kasnoantičku utvrdu (Sl. 2).⁹

Posebno valja naglasiti da je postojanje kasnoantičkoga utvrđenog sklopa bilo mještanima, ali i arheološkoj znanosti potpuno nepoznato. U usmenoj predaji nisu o tom položaju, osim naslovnika sv. Jurja, kod građana Paga bili uočuvani

of the layout are the only things that have remained from that sacral building to the present day.⁷

Induced primarily by the very favorable position of the steep hill and the remains of St. George's Church on the cliff, we conducted a very detailed archaeological survey of the site in 1989. We reviewed this preliminary survey the same year.⁸ A detailed analysis of Hill 205, located on Kršina or Veli brig west of Triangulation Point 263, proved the existence of rudimentary contours of the layout of a massive complex in which we suspected a Late Antiquity fortification (Fig. 2).⁹

We must underline here that both locals and archaeologists were fully unaware of the Late Antiquity fortification complex. With the exception of St. George as the patron saint, no information that would suggest an archaeological site of such an importance had been preserved in the oral tradition of the townspeople of Pag. True, our acclaimed expert for the prehistory of Adriatic Croatia (and of the Liburni in particular) assumed there could

6 E. Hilje, 1999.

7 Ž. Tomičić, 1988/1989, 30, T. 4, 1.

8 Ž. Tomičić, 1988/1989, 28-31.

9 Na temelju naših terenskih arhitektonskih snimaka i mjerenja tadašnji djelatnik Instituta za arheologiju, naš osobni prijatelj, sjajni umjetnik i crtač arheološke građe Krešimir Rončević načinio je 1989. godine situacijski plan utvrde na položaju Sv. Juraj.

7 Ž. Tomičić 1988/1989, 30, Pl. 4, 1.

8 Ž. Tomičić, 1988/1989, 28-31.

9 In 1989, our personal friend, a great artist and archaeological drawer Krešimir Rončević, then a member of the Institute of Archaeology, drew a layout of the fortification on St. George location on the basis of our field survey, architectural photos and measurements.

nikakvi podatci koji bi sugerirali postojanje toliko važnoga arheološkog nalazišta. Naš vrsni poznavatelj prapovijesti jadranske Hrvatske, a posebno Liburna, pretpostavio je, do- duše, postojanje moguće gradine.¹⁰ Prigodom odabira polo- žaja utvrde svakako je presudnu ulogu odigrala markantna krševita glavica s koje se ostvaruje prema zapadu idealan pregled nad čitavim Paškim zaljevom, a većim dijelom i nad Podvelebitskim kanalom. Izvrstan je pregled moguć i prema sjeverozapadu, tj. otoku Rabu (kastron sv. Kuzme i Damjana),¹¹ ali i prema jugu, tj. otocima Viru i Ugljanu. Bitno je naglasiti da se položaj utvrde vrlo teško primjećuje s obal- noga ruba u podnožju Velebita. Od sjevernoga ruba Paško- ga zaljeva, u njegovu podnožju, utvrda na položaju Sv. Jurja udaljena je tek oko 800 metara, a od središta grada Paga, koji se inače projicira u njezinu podnožju, oko 1,5 km.

Realno je pretpostaviti da je položaj utvrde svjesno odabran radi kontrole i zaštite Paških vrata i svekolikoga zaljeva do uvale Zrće na zapadu Paškoga zaljeva. Na taj je način utvrda imala i ulogu nadzora dijela pomorskoga prometa Podvelebitskim kanalom. S druge pak strane ve- lika blizina današnjega grada Paga daje utvrdi na položaju crkve sv. Jurja posebno važnu ulogu jedne od mogućih ka- rika u njegovoj poleogenezi ili, preciznije rečeno, u konti- nuitetu života i policentričnom modelu razvoja kasnijega središnjeg naselja otoka Paga. Konačno, zbog izvrsnoga položaja, s kojega se osigurava vizualni nadzor nad važnim dijelom akvatorija, ali i kontakt sa sličnim utvrđenim uda- ljenijim položajima, dopušta se mogućnost pretpostavke o posebno važnoj ulozi utvrde na Kršini ponad grada Paga u organizaciji života na otoku Pagu, svakako tijekom kasne antike. Ta je utvrda bila zaštitnikom i velike i izdašne solane u istočnome dijelu uvale Solina, koja je svakako bila čini- teljem opstanka kontinuiranoga života od prapovijesti do naših dana.

Osvrnimo se u našem prinosu na opis arheološkoga nalazišta koje je u fokusu zanimanja. Sv. Juraj nad gradom Pagom naziv je utvrde koja obuhvaća relativno prostrani krševiti areal površine oko 1,4 ha, koja se od istočne zarav- ni, na kojoj je crkva zanimljiva naslovnika, postupno, ste- penasto spušta prema zapadu (Sl. 3).

Na istočnome vrhu arheološkoga nalazišta dominira markantna i najviša točka, tj. stijena visine 25 m, na kojoj su vidljivi ruševni ostatci crkve sv. Jurja (Sl. 2, položaj "A"). Spomenuta zaravan na kojoj je crkva prema zapadu za- vršava strmim stijenama, pa je na taj način, kao i sa sjeve- rozapadne strane, prirodno zaštićena. Perimetar utvrde ostavlja dojam nepravilnoga trapeza (Sl. 2). U smjeru od istoka prema zapadu unutrašnjost utvrde dugačka je 83 m, dok u najširem dijelu iznosi oko 74 m. Vidljivo je da se od najviše istočne točke teren prema zapadu relativno

have been a hill-fort there.¹⁰ The dominant craggy hilltop commanding an ideal western view of the whole Bay of Pag and of most of the Velebit Channel must have had the crucial role in choosing the location for the fortifica- tion. It also commands a great northwestern view of the island of Rab (the castron of St. Cosmas and Damian)¹¹ and southern view of the islands of Vir and Ugljan. Importantly, the fortification is very hard to spot from the coast- line under Mountain Velebit. It is only around 800 meters away from the northern rim of the Bay of Pag and some 1.5 kilometers away from downtown Pag, which can be seen at the foot of Velebit.

We can realistically assume that the location of the for- tification was chosen with the intention of controlling and protecting the Pag Gateway and the entire bay, all the way to Zrće Cove in the western part of the bay. The fortifica- tion would thus control part of the traffic in Velebit Chan- nel. On the other hand, the close proximity of the present- day town of Pag makes the fortification on the location of St. George's Church very important as one of possible links in its poleogenesis or, more precisely, in the continuity of life and polycentric model of development of the later central settlement on the island of Pag. Finally, due to the excellent position enabling excellent visual control over an important part of the local waters and communication with similar distant fortified positions, it is possible to as- sume that the fortification on Kršina above the town of Pag was of a special importance for the organization of life on the island, at least in Late Antiquity. The fortification also protected the large and productive salt works in the east- ern part of Solina Cove, which certainly was an important factor for the continuity of life there, from prehistory to the present day.

Let us now describe the archaeological site in the fo- cus of our interest. St. George above Pag is the name of the fortification occupying a relatively spacious karst area of approx. 1.4 hectares that gradually cascades down from the eastern plateau with the church with an interesting pa- tron saint to the west (Fig. 3).

The eastern top of the archaeological site is domi- nated by the highest point (a 25m-high rock) where the ruins of St. George's Church can be seen (Fig. 2, location A). To the west, the said plateau with the church ends with steep cliffs that provide natural protection, same as in northwest. The fortification's perimeter has a shape of an asymmetrical trapezoid (Fig. 2). The fortification's interior is 83 meters long, stretching from east to west, its width never exceeding 74 meters. Coming down from the high- est eastern point, the terrain relatively suddenly becomes narrower towards west. The castron's layout is polygonal,

10 Š. Batović, 1973, 5-139.
11 M. Domijan, 1992, 325-344.

10 Š. Batović, 1973, 5-139.
11 M. Domijan 1992, 325-344.



Slika 3. Unutrašnjost zapadne padine kasnoantičke utvrde s položajem ostataka nastambi registriranih na temelju tlorisa prekrivenih krševitim nakupinama

Figure 3. Inside view of western slope of the Late Antiquity fortification and its surroundings, with remains of the premises identified on the basis of layouts covered with rocks

foto / photo: Ž. Tomičić, 1989.

naglo sužava. Kastron je u tlorisu poligonalan, sa stranicama koje su ostatci bedema koji se, uz određene prekide, mogu pratiti u dužini od oko 260 m. Izlomljena linija bedema prati obod zaravni u jasno vidljivim ili ponekad jedva zamjetljivim sekcijama. Najslabije su ušćuvani dijelovi južnoga bedema koji se naslanjaju na južni podzid sakralnoga objekta sv. Jurja. Međutim, i ta se u potpunosti urušena sekcija može na terenu, doduše vrlo teško, slijediti na temelju ostataka veziva koje se zadržalo na kamenu živcu. Osim tih slabo ušćuvanih dijelova fortifikacije, postoje i relativno dobro vidljivi segmenti, poput onoga na krajnjem zapadnom dijelu utvrde, u kojem se nalazi dobro ušćuvana kula pravilnoga tlorisa dimenzija 5 x 5 m. Ta se kula kvadratnoga tlorisa, što je izuzetno dragocjen podatak, odnosno pouzdan orijentir u krajoliku, nalazi ucrtana i na osnovnoj državnoj karti toga dijela otoka Paga, dakle u mjerilu 1 : 5000.¹² Pojedini se dijelovi utvrde jasno primjećuju u izrazito krševitom krajoliku zaravni. Tako, primjerice, posebno impresivno djeluje izlomljena linija perimetra bedema na sjevernom dijelu utvrde, gdje je izmjerena širina gradskoga bedema od 2 m (Sl. 4). Na toj sjevernoj strani, izloženoj silovitim naletima bure s Velebita, kao i zbog slabije prirodne zaštite reljefom, utvrdu je trebalo posebno ojačati (Sl. 2, položaj "D"). Debljina bedema u prosjeku je varirala od 0,7 do 2 m.

U tlorisu utvrde prepoznaju se kvadratna, poligonalna i trokutno koncipirana kula (Sl. 2, položaji "C"). Valja posebno napomenuti da u koncepciji obrane utvrde trokutni tloris kule na južnoj sekciji gradskoga bedema predstavlja izuzetno važan argument koji nas vodi prema mogućem preciznijem vremenskom opredjeljenju toga obrambenog objekta. Ne samo na temelju tog detalja, već i drugih činitelja, kojih ćemo se kasnije dotaknuti, pretpostavljamo da utvrda o kojoj je riječ pripada kasnoj antici ili, preciznije, epohi vladavine cara Justinijana I. (527. – 565.). Naime, novinu u takvim utverdama predstavljaju trokutne kule, koje

with remains of the walls as its sides. With occasional interruptions, they can be traced for about 260 meters. The broken line of the walls follows the rim of the plateau in sometimes clearly and sometimes barely visible sections. The parts of the southern wall leaning against the southern underpinning masonry of the St. George sacral structure are the least preserved. However, even this totally destroyed section can be traced on the terrain – albeit with difficulties – owing to the remains of the mortar preserved on the bedrock. Besides these relatively poorly preserved parts of the fortification, there are also clearly visible segments, such as the one on the westernmost part, containing a well-preserved tower with a symmetrical 5x5m layer. This tower with a square layout can be found on the state base map of that part of the island of Pag with the scale 1:5000,¹² which is very precious information and a reliable landmark in the landscape. Some parts of the fortification are easily detectable in the plateau's strikingly craggy landscape. Particularly impressive, for example, is the broken line of the wall perimeter on its northern part, where the defense wall is 2 meters wide (Fig. 4). On the northern side, exposed to strong squalls of northeaster wind from Velebit and with less natural protection provided by the relief, the fortification required additional strengthening (Fig. 2, location D). The average thickness of the walls varied from 0.7 to 2 meters.

Towers with square, polygonal and triangular cross-sections, one of each, can be seen in the fortification's layout (Fig. 2, locations C). We should note here that the triangular layout of the tower in the southern section of the wall is very important for the fortification defense concept. It can help us date this defensive structure more precisely. Based not only on this detail, but also on other factors that we will tackle later, we suppose that the fortification belongs to Late Antiquity or, more precisely, the reign of Emperor Justinian I (527 – 565 AD). Triangular towers, particularly widespread and known in Justinian's epoch, were an innovation in such fortifications.¹³ It was a new type of fortifications, the *castrons* (Greek: *τόν καστρόν*), which tended to adapt to the configuration of the terrain and deftly followed the contour lines. Most often, on particularly

12 Ž. Tomičić, 1988-1989, 31, T. 4, 2.

12 Ž. Tomičić, 1988-1989, 31, Pl. 4, 2.
13 I. Mikulčić, 1986, 107.

Slika 4. Pogled na dio široke temeljne stope sjevernoga bedema utvrde

Figure 4. View of part of the footing of fortification's northern wall

foto / photo: Ž. Tomićić, 1989.

su posebno poznate i učestale u Justinijanovoj epohi.¹³ Riječ je o novom obliku utvrda, tj. kastra (grč. *τόν καστρόν*), koje se prilagođavaju konfiguraciji terena i prate vrlo vješto slojnice te najčešće, posebno na ugroženijim dijelovima zidnoga plašta, postavljaju kvadratne, trokutne, poligonalne (Sl. 2, položaji "C") ili čak potkovičaste kule. Unutar većih kastrona organizira se život izgradnjom određenih kamenom zidanih nastambi s unutrašnje strane gradskoga bedema, kao i u našem slučaju (Sl. 2, položaji "C"), potom osiguranjem cisterni za vodu, ali i gradnjom sakralnih objekata na posebno istaknutim mjestima. Takve crkve posvećene su naslovnicima (grč. *hagionimima*) koji na poseban način ocrtavaju duhovni krajolik Sredozemlja. Jedna od posebno važnih karakteristika gradnje kastra Justinijanove epohe, posebno potkraj njegove vladavine, jesu građevine obrambenoga, dakle profanoga ili duhovnoga karaktera na posebno izraženom dominantnom kamenom vrhu, visoko iznad okolnoga zemljišta. Bilo je to iskustvo iz ratovanja u Kapadociji. Takav je i naš primjer crkve sv. Jurja podignute na latici, nalik nekakvom kamenom kljunu koji strši iz perimetra utvrđenja čak 25 m iznad istočnoga dijela terena (Sl. 2, položaj "A"). To je izrazito dominantna i markantna točka iznad grada Paga, koja je i autora ovih redaka navela na odluku da uporno višekratno posjeti položaj crkvice sv. Jurja i pribavljenim spoznajama dopuni prebogat kasnoantički krajolik istočnojadranskoga arhipelaga, priobalja i zaobalja.

Naš vrtni povjesničar umjetnosti Ivo Petricioli odredio je svojedobno opravdano predromanički karakter sakralnoga objekta sv. Jurja iznad grada Paga, koji je ušćuvan u ruševini.¹⁴ Naslovnik sv. Jurja svakako je izrazito zanimljiv i posebno omiljen u *hagionimiji* Justinijanove epohe. Sveti Juraj (lat. *Georgius* < grč. *Geórgios*) mogao je biti i *hagionim* crkve koja je predstavljala prvotnu bogomolju na Kršini.

Naime, prigodom detaljnijega pregleda predromaničke crkve sv. Jurja uočena su, osim osebujnoga tlorisa apside koja vidno strši iz korpusa lađe, i dva para pojasnica koje su nosile svod objekta. Jasno je vidljivo da su pojasnice naknadno naslonjene na zidni plašt, što dokazuje sekundarno oblikovanje ili neku kasniju redakciju i opremanje crkvice. Tom predromaničkom objektu pripadala je svakako i kame-nica od koje je ostao otisak u podnici desno od ulaza u crkvu. Prigodom pregleda podnožja na istočnoj padini stijene



threatened places of the wall, square, triangular, polygonal (Fig. 2, locations C) or even horseshoe-shaped towers were built. When organizing the life in larger castrons, particular stone houses were built inside the defense walls, as in our case (Fig. 2, locations C), water cisterns were provided and sacral buildings were erected on prominent places. Such churches wore the names (*hagionyms*) of the patron saints they were dedicated to, thus portraying the spiritual landscape of the Mediterranean in a special way. One particularly important characteristic of the Justinian epoch castrons, especially at the end of his reign, were profane structures (e.g. defense-related ones) and spiritual structures, built on a dominant rocky hilltop, far above the surrounding terrain. This approach was based on the Cappadocian warfare experience. One such example is St. George's Church, built on a cliff, like some stone beak sticking out from the perimeter for as much as 25 meters above the eastern part of the terrain (Fig. 2, location A). It is a very dominant, impressive position above the town of Pag that made this author repeatedly visit the location of St. George's Church and add his insight to the already rich Late Antiquity landscape of the Eastern Adriatic archipelago, coastline and hinterland.

Our acclaimed art historian Ivo Petricioli correctly established that the ruins of St. George's Church above Pag

13 I. Mikulčić, 1986, 107.

14 I. Petricioli, 1952, 105-112.



na kojoj je sagrađena crkvice uočen je njezin kameni prag te dovratnik i položaj kamenice, koja je naknadno iskorištena kao dio gromače.¹⁵ Kamenica je, uvjereni smo, i danas na njezinu sekundarnom položaju u gromači u kojoj smo je zatekli i snimili (Sl. 5).

Kao što je ranije već istaknuto, na najvišoj točki kastrona primjećuju se ruševni ostatci longitudinalnoga objekta raščlanjene unutrašnjosti i potkovičasto artikulirane apsida (Sl. 2, položaj "A"), koji predstavljaju dominantu fortifikacijskoga kompleksa. Je li usporedno s nastankom vojnoga kompleksa, tj. pojasa bedema i pripadajućih fortifikacijskih objekata, unutar njegova perimetra na istočnom obodu nastao i jedan sinkroni sakralni sklop? Na to vrlo složeno pitanje dat će odgovor isključivo podrobna pokusna interdisciplinarna istraživanja unutar tlorisa Sv. Jurja. Možda, jer je osnovna prepreka očitovanju eventualne slojevitosti toga zanimljivog objekta, kojem je inače pripisano predromaničko obilježje,¹⁶ u njegovoj izuzetno slaboj ušćuvanosti. U prilog postojanju mogućega ranijeg sakralnog objekta, nastala u doba podizanja ranobizantskoga kastrona, dakle tijekom 6. stoljeća, možemo za sada iznijeti samo pretpostavke. Kao

Slika 5. Gromača u podnožju istočno od stijene na kojoj je crkvice sv. Jurja nad gradom Pagom. Uočljiva je masivna kamenica u sekundarnoj uporabi

Figure 5. Drywall underneath the eastern slope of the cliff above Pag on which St. George's Church is located. A massive stone in secondary use was seen there

foto / photo: Ž. Tomičić, 1989.

belonged to pre-Romanesque period.¹⁴ The choice of St. George as a patron saint is certainly very interesting. His name was particularly popular among the saints' names of Justinian's epoch. St. George (Croatian: Juraj < Latin: *Georgius* < Greek: *Geórgios*) could have also been the patron saint of the church that had been the original place of worship in Kršina.

The above is indicated by the find made during a detailed examination of the pre-Romanesque St. George's Church: two pairs of transverse ribs supporting the church's vault were spotted next to the peculiar layout of the apse visibly protruding from the corpus of the nave. The transverse ribs were clearly leant against the wall subsequently – the evidence of a secondary fashioning or some later rearrangements and equipping of the church. The stone the imprint of which can be seen in the floor on the right-hand side of the church entrance certainly also belonged to this pre-Romanesque building. When the area underneath the eastern slope of the cliff on which the church was built was examined, the church's stone threshold and side jamb were found, as well as the original location of the stone, which was later used as part of a drywall.¹⁵ We believe that the stone still lies on its secondary location in the drywall where we saw it and photographed it (Fig. 5).

As we said before, ruins of a longitudinal structure with the compartmented interior and a horseshoe-shaped apse (Fig. 2, location A) can be seen on the highest point of the castron. They constitute the dominant part of the fortification. Was a synchronous sacral complex built together with the military complex (defense walls and appertaining fortification structures), within its perimeter on its eastern rim? Only detailed interdisciplinary trial excavations within St. George's layout will be able to answer such a complicated question. Only maybe, because the very poor condition of this interesting structure – classified as pre-Romanesque¹⁶ – is what hinders establishing of its possible complexity. At the moment, only assumptions can be made as regards possible earlier sacral structure, built simultaneously with the Early Byzantine castron in the 6th century. First of all, most of the sacral structures in Dalmatia were built during and after Justinian's successful reconquest, mostly within

15 Ž. Tomičić, 1988-1989, 44, T. 4, 3 i T. 4, 4.

16 I. Petricioli, 1952, 106.

14 I. Petricioli, 1952, 105-112.

15 Ž. Tomičić, 1988-1989, 44, Pl. 4, 3 and Pl. 4, 4.

16 I. Petricioli, 1952, 106.

prvo, u tijeku i nakon uspješne Justinijanove rekonkviste nastaje na prostoru Dalmacije najveći broj sakralnih objekata uglavnom unutar utvrda, posebno unutar onih s većim površinama.¹⁷ S druge je strane naša pozornost usmjerena i prema mogućem kontinuitetu zanimljivoga titulara sv. Jurja, još od doba prve bizantske vladavine u nas,¹⁸ kao i postojanje crkve toga naslovnika i iznad Caske u zapadnom dijelu uvale Zrće. Posebno je zanimljivo insistiranje toga naslovnika i unutar bedema kasnosrednjovjekovnoga grada Paga.

Na temelju detalja s pojasnicama koje su naknadna graditeljska intervencija u doba predromanike pretpostavljamo, s dužnim oprezom, da je prvi tlocrt crkve oblikovan na istaknutoj litici u doba izgradnje kastrona. Izgradnja takvih obrambenih kljunova na utvrdama Justinijanove epohe, koja je karakteristika pojave pristigle u Sredozemlje na temelju iskustava iz Kapadocije, prepoznata je ne samo na našem primjeru, već i na kastronu Korintija na otoku Krku i na uništenom kljunu kastrona na otočiću Sv. Marko (Almis) iznad mosta koji povezuje kopno i otok Krk.

Pregledom unutar areala kastrona, koji se od istoka, tj. položaja crkve, spušta postupno prema zapadu, registrirano je 11 pravokutnih, ali ponekad i kvadratnih zidanih objekata, od kojih je ostao u razu krševite podloge jasno vidljiv tloris. Svi su ti objekti ispunjeni makijom, pa na prvi pogled možda nisu uočljivi (Sl. 2, položaji "G"). Međutim, u njima se naišlo na ulomke posuda, vrčeva ili dijelova od amfora te tzv. žute istočnomediterranske ili istočnolevantske robe, vodoravno izbrazdanih snopova linija, koje su korištene poglavito za nošenje vode (Sl. 6).¹⁹ Riječ je o ulomcima ručki i stijenki amfora i lonaca koje je inače susrećemo u ranobizantskom miljeu brojnih utvrda, ali i u materijalu iz sinkronih brodoloma.²⁰

Pored navedenih objekata na padini kastrona, uz unutrašnje lice bedema, registriran je veći broj zacijelo stambenih objekata, od kojih su teško prepoznatljivi dijelovi tlorisa na priloženom planu označeni također slovom C (Sl. 2). To su također kule koje se naslanjaju na obrambeni zid i prilagođavaju se, sukladno reljefu, funkciji kastrona. Te promjene dolaze kao novina iz Sirije i Mezopotamije, odnosno sjeverne Afrike.²¹ Objekti su prilagođeni terasastoj padini glavice i tvore arhitektonski niz, koji zajedno s desetak slobodnostojećih objekata u središtu kastrona sugerira maksimalno iskorištenu površinu za urbanu strukturu kastrona i njegovu relativno gustu napučenost. Između uvjetno nazvanih slobodnostojećih objekata i objekata uz bedeme naziru se dosta uski prolazi. Karakter tih objekata sugeriraju, uz tlorisnu dispoziciju prepoznatljivu na temelju amorfnog gomila urušena kamena lomljenca, ulomci crjepova, kao i spomenuti nalazi keramičkih ulomaka.

fortifications, particularly the larger ones.¹⁷ On the other hand, our attention is also focused on the possible continuity of St. George as an interesting saint's name ever since the first Byzantine rule in these parts,¹⁸ as well as on the existence of a church with that name above Caska in the western part of Zrće Cove. Persistent presence of this patron saint within the walls of the late medieval town of Pag is particularly interesting.

Based on the transverse ribs – installed subsequently in the pre-Romanesque period – we can suppose, albeit not unreservedly, that the first layout of the church was shaped on a dominant cliff at the same time when the castron was built. Such rostrums, typical for the fortifications of the Justinian period, were introduced to the Mediterranean based on the experience in Cappadocia. Besides above the town of Pag, they are also found on castron Corinthia on the island of Krk and on the now destroyed rostrum of the castron on the islet of Sv. Marko (Almis) just above the bridge connecting mainland with the island of Krk.

The survey of the castron's area, gradually descending from its easternmost position (where the church is) to the west, resulted in the discovery of clearly visible bedrock-level layouts of 11 mostly rectangular and occasionally square stone structures. The structures may not be visible at first sight because they are all covered with underbrush (Fig. 2, locations G). The artifacts found in them included fragments of vessels, beakers and amphorae and so-called yellow East Mediterranean or East Levantine goods decorated with bundles of horizontally carved lines, used primarily for carrying water (Fig. 6).¹⁹ These are mostly fragments of handles and walls of amphorae and pots often found in Early Byzantine fortifications, but also in the material found in the shipwrecks of the period.²⁰

Besides the abovementioned structures on the castron's slope, a number of other structures – most likely dwellings – were found along the inside face of the wall. The hardly recognizable parts of layouts in Fig. 2 are also designated with C. These are also the towers leaning against the defense wall and adapted to fit the relief and function of the castron. These changes were newly introduced from Syria and Mesopotamia and North Africa.²¹ The structures are adapted to the terrace-shaped slope of the peak, making up an architectural sequence that, together with a dozen detached structures in the castron's center, indicates that the area was used to maximum advantage for the urban structure of the densely populated castron. Rather narrow passages can be discerned between the

17 I. Mikulčić, 1986, 109.

18 B. Fučić, 1979, 308.

19 C. Scorpan, 1976, 155-185; J. W. Hayes, 1972; 1997.

20 Z. Brusić, 1980, 77.

21 I. Mikulčić, 1986, 106.

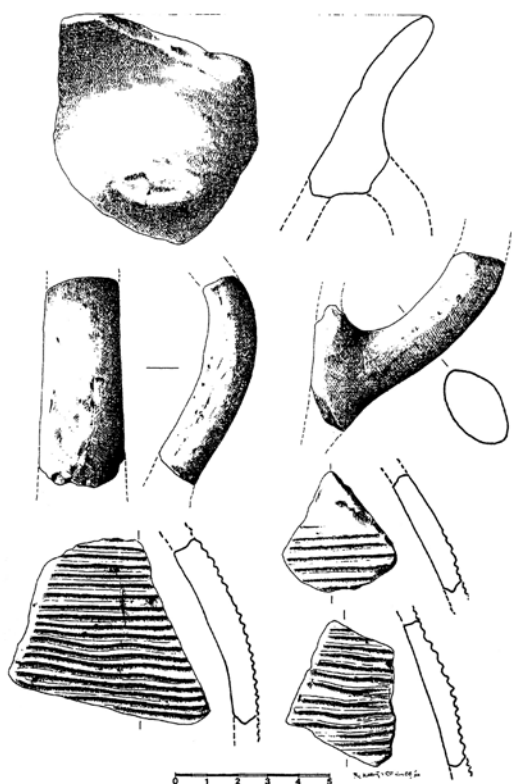
17 I. Mikulčić, 1986, 109.

18 B. Fučić, 1979, 308.

19 C. Scorpan, 1976, 155-185; J. W. Hayes, 1972; 1997.

20 Z. Brusić, 1980, 77.

21 I. Mikulčić, 1986, 106.



Slika 6. Ulomci ranobizantske keramike prikupljene godine unutar kastrona sv. Jurja iznad grada Paga

Figure 6. Fragments of Early Byzantine ceramics found in 1989 in the castron of St. George above the town of Pag

crtež / drawing: K. Rončević, 1989.

detached (to use the word tentatively) structures and the structures located along the walls. The nature of these structures can be identified by the disposition of an amorphous pile of crushed stones from a caved-in structure, by roof tile fragments, and by the abovementioned fragments of ceramics.

The supposed entrance to this relatively complicated fortification complex could have been on the lowest elevation point of the castron, in its southwestern part facing the Bay of Pag.

Buttresses (Fig. 2, locations F) can be seen in two places on the disposition of the castron and the broken sections of its walls. This is a common feature in the Late Antiquity military construction of the Justinian epoch.

No water cistern locations have been identified in the castron area yet, although we can assume they did exist within some of the earlier discovered layouts of dwelling structures. The assumption will certainly be confirmed by future archaeological excavations and interdisciplinary research of the St. George castron above Pag.

Due to lack of archaeological excavations, the purpose and nature of the major square-layout structure (Fig. 2, location B) directly leaning against the northwestern side of St. George's Church, have not been established yet.

The articulation of the castron's dwelling area, the execution of the defense zone and its towers built using a hard mortar (*emplekton*) that turns the wall into an elastic mass resistant to stones thrown by ballistas,²² and the fragments of distinctive Byzantine East Mediterranean ceramics found on the site leave enough room for a substantiated assumption on the nature of the entire complex and the period it was built in.

The Late Antiquity fortification on the location of St. George's Church above the town of Pag that we identified and, to an extent, document during our August 1989 visits (immediately before the beginning of the Homeland War), has given us a number of essential insights. First of all, we are convinced that a very important point in the Late Antiquity of the Eastern Adriatic archipelago has been located. It was a period of maximum efforts and expansion of the Eastern Roman Empire during the reconquest of Emperor Justinian I (527 – 565), particularly after the successful termination of the war between Ostrogoths and Byzantium in

Pretpostavljeni ulaz u taj relativno složeni fortifikacijski sklop mogao je biti na najnižoj koti kastrona u njegovu jugozapadnom dijelu, okrenutom prema Paškom zaljevu.

U tlorisnoj dispoziciji paškoga kastrona i njegovih izlomljenih sekcija zidnoga plašta uočljivi su na dva mjesta potpornjaci (Sl. 2, položaji "F"). To je inače opća pojava kasnoantičkoga vojnog graditeljstva justinijanske epohe.

Unutar areala kastrona za sada nisu dokazani položaji cisterni za vodu, premda ih valja pretpostavljati u nekom od ranije navedenih otkrivenih tlorisa stambenih objekata. Pretpostavke će svakako potvrditi buduća arheološka i interdisciplinarna istraživanja na položaju kastrona sv. Jurja nad Pagom.

Za sada zbog izostanka arheoloških istraživanja nije prepoznata namjena i karakter većega objekta kvadratnoga tlorisa (Sl. 2, položaj "B"), naslonjenoga neposredno na crkvicu sv. Jurja s njezine sjeverozapadne strane.

Artikulacija naseobinskog prostora kastrona, izvedba obrambenoga pojasa i pripadajućih kula, građenih od kamena lomljenca, povezanih jakim vezivom (*emplekton*), koja pretvara zidni plašt u elastičnu masu otpornu na djelovanje kamenih projektila opsadnih balističkih sprava,²² kao i pojava ulomaka karakteristične bizantske

istočnomediterranske keramike, ostavlja dovoljno prostora za iznošenje potkrijepljene pretpostavke o karakteru graditeljskoga kompleksa i razdoblju njegova mogućeg postanka.

Kasnoantička utvrda iznad grada Paga na položaju crkvice sv. Jurja, koju smo uspjeli prepoznati te u određenoj mjeri i dokumentirati tijekom naših obilazaka u kolovozu 1989. godine, dakle neposredno prije početka Domovinskoga rata, podarila nam je niz bitnih spoznaja. Prije svega, uvjerenja smo da je ubicirana izuzetno važna točka u kasnoantičkom prostoru istočnojadranskoga arhipelaga. Riječ je o razdoblju maksimalnoga napora i ekspanzije Istočnorimskoga Carstva tijekom uspješne rekonkviste cara Justinijana I (527. – 565.), a posebno nakon uspješnoga okončanja istočnogotsko-bizantskoga ratovanja na području sjeverne Dalmacije i osvajanja toga dijela Tarsatičke Liburnije.²³ Dio tih napora bio je usmjeren i na izgradnju obrambene infrastrukture otoka Paga, s kojega se ostvarivala dobra kontrola pomorskoga prometa Podvelebitskim kanalom, Ljubačkim vratima i južnim dijelom Kvarnerića te Maunskim kanalom.

Obrambeni ustroj otoka Paga tijekom 6. stoljeća zasvjedočen je postojanjem kastrona Sutojanj na njegovu sjevernom obalnom rubu,²⁴ potom utvrde na položaju Sv. Jurja iznad uvale Zrće u zapadnome dijelu Paškoga zaljeva, velikoga kastrona na položaju Sv. Jurja iznad grada Paga²⁵ te u najnovije doba daljinskim istraživanjem ubiciranoga i reambuliranoga velikog kastrona na otočiću Veli Sikavac u Ljubačkim vratima.²⁶ Navedene kasnoantičke utvrde koje su mogle imati i raniji početak (prapovijest, rimska antika), zbog prirodnih prednosti navedenih položaja u 6. stoljeću, tj. u epohi cara Justinijana I., dobivaju posebno važnu ulogu. Njihov je zadatak osiguranje dvaju plovnih putova uz izduženi trup otoka Paga i na njegovim važnim točkama koje se mogu nadzirati s tih odličnih prirodnih položaja. Na sjevernoj strani kastron Svetojanj-Sutojanj nadzirao u paru s Gradinom Prizna prolaz zapadnim dijelom Podvelebitskoga kanala, u kojem su na obalnom rubu postojale važne utvrde Sv. Trojstvo – Tribunj Šibuljine kraj Starigrada (*lat. Argyruntum*) i utvrda u Modrič-Drugi blizu Masliničkoga ždrila. Prema zapadu promatranoga akvatorija plovni putovi dosežali su poznate ranobizantske utvrde na sjevernojadranskim otocima Rabu i Krku.²⁷ Utvrda na otočiću Velom Sikavcu, smještena uz krajnji istočni izdanak otoka Paga, nadzirala je važna Ljubačka vrata i područje solana uz istočnu obalu Ljubačkoga zaljeva.²⁸ Veliki kastron na mjestu crkvice sv. Jurja ponad današnjega Paga nadzirao je s izuzetno pogodnoga

northern Dalmatia and conquering of that part of Liburnia Tarsaticensis.²³ These efforts included construction of the defense infrastructure on the island of Pag which enabled good control over the maritime traffic in Velebit Channel, Ljubač Strait, south part of Kvarnerić and Maun Channel.

Evidence of the island's defense system in the 6th century can be found in castron Sutojanj on its northern coast,²⁴ the fortification on the St. George location above Zrće Cove in western Bay of Pag, the large castron on St. George location above the town of Pag,²⁵ and, by means of the recent remote sensing, the located and reambulated large castron on Veli Sikavac islet in Ljubač Strait.²⁶ Due to numerous natural advantages of their locations, the said Late Antiquity fortifications – which could perhaps be dated even to earlier periods (prehistory, Roman Antiquity) – became particularly important during the reign of Emperor Justinian in the 6th century. Their task was to secure the two waterways along the elongated island of Pag and on its important points that can be controlled from these excellent natural positions. On the northern side, castron Svetojanj (Sutojanj) and hill fort Prizna jointly controlled the traffic in the western part of Velebit Channel, on the coast of which the important fortifications St. Trinity – Tribunj Šibuljine near Starigrad (*Latin: Argyruntum*) and the one in Modrič Draga near Maslinica Strait were situated. In the west of the local waters, waterways reached the well known Early Byzantine fortifications on North Dalmatian islands of Rab and Krk.²⁷ The fortification on the islet of Veli Sikavac, off the easternmost tip of the island of Pag, controlled the important Ljubač Strait and the salt works area along the eastern coast of Ljubač Bay.²⁸ Being located on a very favorable central position on the island, the large castron situated on the site of St. George Church above the present-day town of Pag controlled the entire sea traffic in Pag Strait. The spacious Solina salt works to the southeast was the reason why Liburnian hill forts that controlled it had been built even earlier, in prehistoric times. In the western part of Bay of Pag, ships sailed to the important destination in Zrće Cove and to Caska, as recent very interesting and insightful research of that part of the offshore zone has confirmed.²⁹ While the deep and wind-protected Stara Novalja Cove, suitable for anchoring, was situated on the southeastern part of the island of Pag,³⁰ an agglomeration in the Novalja and Caska zone had been developing

23 J. Medini, 1980.

24 Ž. Tomičić, 1996, 291-305.

25 Ž. Tomičić, 1989, 28-31.

26 S. Gluščević, 2013.

27 Ž. Tomičić, 1988-1989, 29-53; M. Domijan, 1992, 325-344.

28 S. Gluščević, 2013.

23 J. Medini, 1980.

24 Ž. Tomičić, 1996, 291-305.

25 Ž. Tomičić, 1989, 28-31.

26 S. Gluščević, 2013.

27 Ž. Tomičić, 1988-1989, 29-53; M. Domijan, 1992, 325-344.

28 S. Gluščević, 2013.

29 I. Radić Rossi, 2004.

30 Ž. Tomičić, 1996, 293, fig. 2.

središnjeg položaja na otoku ulaz svekolikoga morskog prometovanja kroz Paška vrata. Prema jugoistoku tu je velika Solina bila razlogom postojanja već i ranijih, prapovijesnih liburnskih gradina koje su je nadzirale. Prema zapadu Paškoga zaljeva plovila su dosegala važno odredište u uvali Zrće i do Caske, kako to potvrđuju u novije doba vrlo zanimljiva i spoznajama bogata istraživanja toga dijela podmorja.²⁹ Na jugoistočnome dijelu otoka Paga bila je za sidrenje plovila pogodna duboka i od bure zaštićena uvala Stara Novalja,³⁰ dok je s južne strane u dugom kontinuitetu tijekom antike nastajala aglomeracija u zoni Novalje i Caske.³¹ Pored logično pretpostavljenih sveza paških središta s kasnoantičkim središtima, posebno sa Zadrom i Ninom, sva je prigoda da je ustroj obrane otoka Paga bio samo segmentom velikoga sofisticiranog pothvata tijekom i nakon Justinijanove rekonkviste. Bila je to ponajprije sveobuhvatna profana i sakralna izgradnja vidljiva i prepoznata diljem prostranoga ponovno uspostavljenoga sredoziemnog carstva koju je osiguravala talasokracija. Ta je politika zamjetna i na ovdje promatranom dijelu Jonijeva zaljeva.³² Državna je uprava s Justinijanovom rekonkvistom i umjetnički objedinila podneblje Jadrana, kako to pokazuju sakralna zdanja pobjedonosne Crkve Justinijanova carstva.³³

Niz utvrda raspoređenih duž istočnojadranskoga arhipelaga, odnosno u većim urbanim aglomeracijama na priobalju te podlozi starijih fortifikacijskih sklopova iz rimske antike razasutih diljem zaobalja, odnosno po dubini kroz Dinaride i riječne doline prema prostoru Panonije, tvorio je uzastopne obrambene pojase. Ti su nizovi utvrda Justinijanove epohe zajedno s talasokracijom osiguravali promatrani istočnojadranski prostor, koji je zbog sve snažnijega pritiska sa sjevera, uvjetovanoga priljevom izbjeglica iz Panonije, odnosno poglavito prodorima masa Avara i Slavena, prije i nakon careve smrti (565.) bio od posebne važnosti. Jonijev zaljev s nizovima kasta bio je presudno važna posljednja obrambena crta u prvo doba Bizantskoga Carstva, koja je pokazala veliku važnost u osiguranju trgovačkih sveza istočnoga i zapadnoga dijela Sredozemlja, ali i u prijevozu vojničkih postrojbi. Bio je to često u znanstvenoj literaturi spominjani *pomorski limes*.

Položaj justinijanskoga kastrona iznad grada Paga, poznatoga po crkvi sv. Jurja, bio je važan radi osiguranja pomorskoga prometa, potom koordinacije zaštite koja je prvu obrambenu crtu prema rastućim ugrozama sa sjevera imala u utverdama u podvelebitskom primorju. Ipak, posebna je vrijednost te kasnoantičke utvrde bila u zaštiti položaja u uvali Soline, koja je bila izvor velikih količina visokokvalitetne soli. Na taj se način kastron na Sv. Jurju

in a long continuity in Antiquity on the southern side.³¹ Besides the logically assumed contacts between the centers on Pag and Late Antiquity centers, particularly Zadar and Nin, chances are that the Pag defense system was but a segment of a large-scale, sophisticated project during and after Justinian's reconquest. First of all, it involved comprehensive construction of profane and sacral structures, visible and recognized throughout the vast, reestablished Mediterranean empire enabled by thalassocracy. This policy was also in place in the part of Ionios Bay observed here.³² With Justinian's reconquest, the state administration consolidated the Adriatic region even artistically. Evidence of it can be found in the sacral buildings of the victorious Church of Justinian's Empire.³³

A series of fortifications along the Eastern Adriatic archipelago, in major urban agglomerations on the coast and on top of older fortification complexes from Roman Antiquity, scattered in the hinterland, all the way across the Dinaric Alps and in the river valleys towards Panonian Valley, were built as successive defense zones. Together with thalassocracy, these Justinian period fortifications secured the Eastern Adriatic area observed here – the area that was of a particular importance due to the growing pressure from the north, caused by the influx of refugees from Panonia and, especially, by the raids of the Avars and Slavs before and after the Emperor's death in 565 AD. Ionios Bay with its series of castrons was the crucial last defense line in the early period of Byzantine Empire that turned out to be very important for the security of trade connections between eastern and western parts of the Mediterranean and also of transports of military units. It was what literature often calls *maritime limes*.

The position of the Justinian period castron above the town of Pag, known by its St. George's Church, was important for the security of maritime traffic and for the coordination of the protection against the growing threats from the north that the fortifications in coastal region under Velebit Mountain provided to the first defense line. However, the most important function of that Late Antiquity fortification was to protect the Soline Cove as the source of large quantities of high-quality salt. The castron on St. George location thus turns out to be an important – and until recently unknown – link in the polycentric model of Pag's poleogenesis. Was there a suburbium (Greek: *as-tipolis*) underneath, on top of an older, Roman Antiquity structures? This Late Antiquity link is a connection with other locations in the vicinity of Soline Cove, such as the interesting medieval urban complex of Stari grad, the complexity of which has been recognized and studied on

29 I. Radić Rossi, 2004.

30 Ž. Tomičić, 1996, 293, sl. 2.

31 Ž. Tomičić, 1996, 293, sl. 2.

32 J. Medini, 1980.

33 I. Fisković, 1996, 117-140.

31 Ž. Tomičić, 1996, 293, fig. 2.

32 J. Medini, 1980.

33 I. Fisković, 1996, 117-140.

logično nameće kao važna, donedavna neprepoznata karika u policentričnom modelu poleogeneze Paga. Je li u njegovu podnožju postojalo podgrađe (grč. *astipolis*) na starijoj podlozi još iz rimske antike? Ta nas kasnoantička karika povezuje s daljnjim položajima u okolici uvale Soline, poput zanimljivoga srednjovjekovnog urbanog kompleksa Staroga grada, koji je razumijevanjem i potporom matične sredine te marom arheologa iz Arheološkoga muzeja u Zadru, u temeljnim naznakama prepoznala i upoznala njegovu kompleksnost.³⁴ S tog nepogodnog položaja izloženog udarima velebitske bure, ali i zbog povijesne zbilje, tj. 1394. godine, u kojoj su Stari grad opustošili Zadranjci, ta se starija aglomeracija preseljava na novi pogodni položaj, na rubu prisojne krške padine prema močvarama sa solanama, koje su stoljećima gospodarska okosnica razvoja suvremenoga Paga, a u neposrednoj blizini uvale Solina posebno početkom 15. stoljeća.

Kada je Mletačka Republika početkom 15. stoljeća ovladala Zadrom i prostorom velikoga dijela Primorske Hrvatske, započela je gradnja novoga jedinstvenog središta otoka na današnjoj lokaciji grada Paga. Stoga je, uvažavajući postignuća renesanse u gradogradnji, planski sagradila novi grad Pag, naselila ga i osposobila za funkciju središta otoka.³⁵ Grad je utemeljen 1443. godine premda se njegov postupan rast može pratiti u dubinama prošlosti sve do prapovijesti. Jednu od važnih postaja te zanimljive poleogeneze Paga otkrili smo tijekom naših arheoloških obilazaka položaja i prepoznavanja ranobizantske utvrde poznate po crkvi sv. Jurja, neposredno uoči obilježavanja obljetnice osnutka kasnosrednjovjekovnoga i renesansnoga grada nastaloga pod budnim okom, zamisli i nadziranjem slavnoga Jurja Dalmatinca.³⁶

Čini nam se, pokušamo li smionu iznijeti našu misao, da je već od kasne antike postojala neka duhovna sveza naslovnika crkvice sv. Jurja u sklopu kastrona justinijanskoga doba i Jurja Dalmatinca, začetnika gradogradnje Paga u njegovu neposrednom podnožju.

the basis of its layout owing to the efforts of archaeologists from Archaeological Museum Zadar and the understanding and support of the local people.³⁴ As the position was unfavorable due to the strong gusts of Velebit winds and the historical conditions (Stari grad was pillaged by Zadar's inhabitants in 1394), that older agglomeration moved to a more favorable position in the immediate vicinity of Solina Cove, on the edge of a craggy slope exposed to sun, at the foot of which extend a marshland with the salt works that have been the backbone of the development of the modern Pag for centuries (particularly in the early 15th century).

The beginning of Venetian Republic's reign over Zadar and a large portion of Croatian Littoral in the early 15th century also marked the beginning of the construction of a new center of the island on the location of the present-day town of Pag. Drawing on the Renaissance experience in urban development, Venice planned, built and populated the new town of Pag as the island's center.³⁵ The town was founded in 1443, although its gradual development can be traced way back in prehistory. One of important phases of this interesting poleogenesis of Pag was discovered during our archaeological surveys of the position and Early Byzantine fortification known by St. George's Church immediately before the anniversary of the founding of the Late Medieval and renaissance town designed by and built under supervision of the famous George the Dalmatian.³⁶

Daring thought as it may be, it is our impression that, ever since Late Antiquity, there had been certain spiritual connection between the patron saint of St. George's Church in the Justinian period castron and George the Dalmatian – the initiator of the building of the town of Pag at its foot.

34 R. Jurić – Š. Batović, 2003.

35 D. Magaš, 2013, 186.

36 M. Pelc, 2010, 201.

34 R. Jurić – Š. Batović, 2003.

35 D. Magaš, 2013, 186.

36 M. Pelc, 2010, 201.

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