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### ON THE FOUNDATION OF RAGUSA: THE TRADITION vs. FACTS

The beginnings of Ragusa which will develop into the major trade center of the southern Adriatic are covered with the darkness.<sup>1</sup> The earliest historical record, written by *Cosmographer of Ravenna*, most probably from the very end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century (ca. 700), mentions *Ragusium id est Epidaurum*.<sup>2</sup> This source is very important, because it makes earliest connection between the ancient Roman city of Epidaurus and Ragusa, as it is stated not only various sources of Ragusa's origins, but also preserved in the legends developed in or around Ragusa. That strong feeling about close relations with the ancient Epidaurus is remembered even by inhabitants of Ragusa at the official documents from the 14<sup>th</sup> century: *Epidaurus at the seashore was the ancient city of Ragusa*.<sup>3</sup> The similar view about the origin of Ragusa is also preserved by the Ragusan authors: Ragusan Anonymous, Ludovico Tuberon, Mauro Orbin, Jacob Luccari, Nicolo Ragnina, etc.

<sup>1</sup> The major works on the beginnings of Ragusa are: G. Novak, *Povijest Dubrovnika I, Od najstarijih vremena do početka VII stoljeća (do propasti Epidauruma)*, Supplement in: *Anali* 10 – 11 (1966) 3 – 84; J. Lučić, *Povijest Dubrovnika od VII stoljeća do godine 1205*, Zagreb 1973, Supplement in: *Anali* 13 – 14 (1976) 7 – 139 (= Lučić, *Povijest*); Idem, *O nekim problemima najstarije dubrovačke povijesti*, *HZ* 19 – 20 (1967) 537 – 547 (= Lučić, *O nekim problemima*); V. Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika I, Od osnutka do 1526.*, Zagreb 1980 (= Foretić, *Povijest*); Ž. Rapanić, *Marginalia o „postanku“ Dubrovnika*, *Arheološka istraživanja u Dubrovniku i dubrovačkom području*, Izdanja HAD 12 (1988) 39 – 50 (Rapanić, *Marginalia*).

<sup>2</sup> *Ravennatis Anonymi Cosmographia et Guidonis Geographica*, ed. M. Pinder – G. Parthey, Berolini 1860, 208.10.

<sup>3</sup> This is preserved in the cyrillic document of the year 1391; cf. *Monumenta Serbica spectantia historiam Serbiae, Bosnae, Ragusii*, ed. F. Miklosich, Viennae 1858, 217.

The earliest and most complete story on the origins of Ragusa is written by the Byzantine Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus, who relied on the local popular tradition, and gathered for him most probably by an official of the Empire. Constantine wrote that in the time of the Slavic incursions into Dalmatia, the ancient city of Epidaurus was destroyed, and that citizens who survived the catastrophe settled on the top of the cliff near by. That cliff, called in Greek *lau*, became the nucleus from which the city of Ragusa will develop.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, Constantine Porphyrogenitus adds that the first refugees were also from Salona, the metropoly of Dalmatia, at that time also destroyed by the Slavic intruders.<sup>5</sup> The mention of the Salona's refugees is odd, since the previous text does not mention them, but only the inhabitants of Epidaurus.<sup>6</sup> It is already supposed that here Constantine Porphyrogenitus compiled from two different sources – one dealing with the Epidaurus and the other with Salona.<sup>7</sup>

The most interesting information provided by Constantine Porphyrogenitus is related to the date of this migration. *From their migration from Salona to Ragusa, it is 500 years till this day, which is 7<sup>th</sup> indiction, the year 6457,*<sup>8</sup> (948/949). The calculation gives as the date of the foundation of Ragusa the year 448/449 which is not in accordance with historical knowledge about the time when the Slavs settled in Dalmatia. It is well known that the Slavs populated Illyricum and Dalmatia during the first years of Heraclius' rule (613 – 614) and that the Croats and Serbs followed them two decades later (around 630 – 634).<sup>9</sup> Rounded numbers in historical sources always provoke suspicion,

<sup>4</sup> *Constantine Porphyrogenitus De administrando imperio*, I – II, ed. Gy. Moravcsik – R. J. H. Jenkins, Washington 1967, 29.217 – 230 (= *DAI*). The term *lau* is understood by R. Katičić, *Uz početke hrvatskih početaka*, Split 1993, 134 – 136 (= Katičić, *Uz početke*) as the derivation from the Latin word *labes*. In the opposite sense, that *lau* derived from the Greek *laas*, see, I. Đurić, *Romejski govor i jezik Konstantina VII Porphyrogenita*, ZRVI 24 – 25 (1986) 120. Similar, T. Živković, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus and the Ragusan Authors Before 1611*, Istorijски časopis 53 (2006) 149 (= Živković, *Constantine*).

<sup>5</sup> *DAI I*, 29.230 – 233. Constantine listed six names: *Gregory, Arsaphius, Victorinus, Vitalius, Valentine the archdeacon, Valentine the father of Stephen the protospatharius*. Their Roman names (*Victorinus, Vitalis* and *Valentinus*, mixed with the Greek names *Gregory, Arsaphius, Stephen* and one Byzantine rank – *protospatharius* – refer to the times of the Late Antiquity.

<sup>6</sup> *Thomas Archidiaconus: Historia Salonitana*, ed. F. Rački, Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium, vol. 26, Scriptorum III, Zagrabiae 1894, 30 (= *Thomas*) does not write about the refugees of Salona which settled down in Ragusium. Actually, Thomas has the same Roman legend on the foundation of Ragusa based on the Chronicle of the Priest of Dioclea. See, *Letopis Popa Dukljanina*, ed. F. Šišić, Beograd – Zagreb 1928, 49 – 51 (= Šišić, *Letopis*). On the contrary, Katičić, *Uz početke*, 150 – 151, believed that Tomas' story is based on the same source as the Porphyrogenitus' narration.

<sup>7</sup> It is proposed by, Katičić, *Uz početke*, 133.

<sup>8</sup> *DAI I*, 29.233 – 235.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. T. Živković, *Južni Sloveni pod vizantijskom vlašću (600 – 1025)*, Beograd 2002, 274 – 291.

especially at the authors who used them often. But in this case the mistake seems quite serious, since the historical frame is pushed backward for some 200 years. Therefore, either Constantine Porphyrogenitus mixed two independent sources which were speaking of the fall of Salona and Epidaurus, or he made an abbreviated chapter on Ragusa from the abundance of material which was gathered from several sources. If the Slavs were responsible for the destruction of Epidaurus, then it should happen at the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. In that case either the year 448/449 is related to some other destruction of Epidaurus and Salona, which cannot be ascribed to the Slavs, or 500 years have some other meaning.

There is some new archaeological evidence which can provide a clue about the origin of Ragusa. Namely, after the excavations carried out in 1981 below the Cathedral of Ragusa,<sup>10</sup> it is established that an earlier basilica existed at the same place which could be most probably dated to the time of Justinian I (527 – 565).<sup>11</sup> This new evidence suggests that Ragusa existed at least some 60 years before Slavs settled in Dalmatia. The finds of coins which are washed off from the higher ground are extremely interesting: around 15 coins of Illyrian and Greek origin from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries B.C.; over 80 Roman coins dated from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D; more than 170 Byzantine coins from 4<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>12</sup> The finds of coins are unambiguous evidence that the earlier settlement existed on the top of the cliff long time before Constantine Porphyrogenitus claims. This fact is quite sufficient to challenge the reliability of the Emperor's statement on the origin of Ragusa. Finely, there is a funerary inscription of the Roman soldier which is found in Pusterna (*Pustierna, Pustjerna*), the southern part of medieval Ragusa.<sup>13</sup>

The archaeological evidence at Spilan and Gradac in the vicinity of Ragusa show that these sites were populated and enclosed (Spilan) by the walls already in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century and lasted until the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>14</sup> This is very

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<sup>10</sup> T. Macan, *U povodu istraživanja u dubrovačkoj katedrali*, *Dubrovački horizonti* 15 (1983) 3 – 11; J. Stošić, *Prikaz nalaza ispod katedrale i Bunićeve poljane u Dubrovniku*, *Arheološka istraživanja u Dubrovniku i dubrovačkom području*, Izdanja HAD 12 (1988) 15 – 38 (= Stošić, *Prikaz nalaza*).

<sup>11</sup> Rapanić, *Marginalia*, 47; I. Stevović, „*Prospetto della città di Ragusa*“, *Novi izvor za najraniju istoriju vizantijskog Dubrovnika*, *ZRVI* 29/30 (1991) 141.

<sup>12</sup> J. Stošić, *Slijed oblikovanja sakralnog središta u Dubrovniku*, *Dubrovački horizonti* 29 (1989) 58. The same author thinks that this basilica could be dated most probably in the first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>13</sup> *CIL III*, 1743. For the archaeological evidences that Ragusa existed a centuries before the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, see, Lučić, *Povijest*, 17.

<sup>14</sup> I. Marović, *Arheološka istraživanja u okolini Dubrovnika*, *Anali* 4 – 5 (1956) 9 – 30 (= Marović, *Arheološka istraživanja*).

important since the later Ragusan authors claimed that the survivors from Epidaurus escaped to Spilan and Gradac, from where they finally settled in Ragusa.<sup>15</sup> The Ragusan Anonymous, who wrote at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, based on some earlier texts of various origins, says that the inhabitants of Gradaz and Spilan came to Ragusa in 691 and settled in the part of the city called Pusterna, being all of them the descendants of the citizens of Epidaurus which was destroyed by the Saracens.<sup>16</sup> Ragnina, who wrote his Annals around 1550, writes almost the same story in slightly different chronological frame (601). In addition, Ragnina mentions that the inhabitants of Ragusa already lived there for 160 years. It means that he based his chronology on Constantine Porphyrogenitus, since 160 years lead us back to the absolute date of 441 for the foundation of Ragusa. Indeed, Ragnina had at his disposal some excerpts from the *DAI*, which he dated in 940 and 944, most probably achieved from the legacy of Ludovico Tuberon.<sup>17</sup> The Ragnina's predecessor Ludovico Tuberon, who wrote in the first two decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, also mentions the inhabitants of Spilan and Gradac which settled in Ragusa. He also had at his disposal some excerpts from the *DAI*.<sup>18</sup> The learned Ragusan author Giugno Resti (died in 1735) thought that *Epidauresi cominciaron abitare Spilan e Gradaz, castelletti piccoli nella contrada di Burno* in 550.<sup>19</sup>

The Saracens, appearing in the works of the Ragusan authors of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, are interpolated in the story of the foundation of Ragusa, because they used the *DAI* or *Vita Basilii*, in which Porphyrogenitus speaks about the siege of Ragusa in 866. The learned humanists compiled traditional narratives, the *DAI* and other written sources found elsewhere, to create a picture about the origin of Ragusa. It is up to the modern scholars to find a way to extract the historical core of these legends preserved in Ragusa in the Late Middle Ages, and discover the ways of their transmission and reception.

The earliest Ragusan poet, Miletius, who wrote most probably in the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and who had at his disposal some historical sources which could be traced back to the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>20</sup> also left several verses related to the foundation of Ragusa:

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<sup>15</sup> *Annales ragusini Anonymi item Nicolai de Ragnina*, ed. Sp. Nodilo, Monumenta spectantia historiam slavorum meridionalium 14, Scriptorum I, Zagrabiae 1883, 7, 179 (= *Anonymi, Ragnina*).

<sup>16</sup> *Anonymi*, 7 – 8.

<sup>17</sup> Živković, *Constantine*, 151 – 153.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* 154 – 160.

<sup>19</sup> *Croniche di Ragusa, opera di Giugno Resti senatore di Ragusa*, ed. S. Nodilo, Monumenta spectantia Slavorum Meridionalium vol. 25, Zagrabia 1893, 16 (= *Resti*).

<sup>20</sup> Šišić, *Letopis*, 51, believed that Miletius was the author who wrote around the year of 1340; M. Medini, *Starine dubrovačke*, Dubrovnik 1935, 25, *not before the beginning of the XIII<sup>th</sup> century*; Foretić, *Povijest*, 11, *Miletius is from the XI<sup>th</sup> century*.

*Quidam Romani, destructa sic Epidauro,  
Bellum civile fugientes forte subintrant  
Portum Dalmatiae, qui Gravosius vocatur.  
Hic pariter inopis, fugientes ex Epidauro  
In magnis ripis, ubi nunc est urbs Rhagusina,  
Castellum statuunt monitis actuque Joannis,  
Qui jam predictae fuit Archiepiscopus urbis.  
Quamque arcem, vivi tutam munimine saxi,  
Aspectu horrendo, praeaelso in vertice montis,*

*Hoc castrum vocitat Epidaurica lingua Labusa,  
Namque ripa sonat hoc idiomate labes.  
A magnis ripis nomen traxere priores:  
Nunc, L in R, G pro P mutando, moderni  
Rhagusam dicunt, quae Sclavonice Dubrovnik  
Dicitur a silva, quia silva fuit locus ille,  
In quo nunc urbs est, et dubrava silva vocatur.  
Ad decus et laudem Stephani Protomartyris extat  
Castellum: templum fundant, et corpora credunt  
Sanctorum, quorum sunt nomina scripta, subaudis:  
Nerei, Achillei, Domitillae, Petronillaeque,  
Quae secum furtim tulerant Roma fugientes.<sup>21</sup>*

These verses also indicate that Miletius had the same ancient source which was the basis of the Porphyrogenitus' narration on the beginnings of Ragusa.<sup>22</sup> He also used the Chronicle of the Priest of Dioclea and very probably some ecclesiastical records on the beginnings of the Ragusan Archbishopric. It is very interesting that the Priest of Dioclea wrote about the origin of Ragusa in the similar manner as Porphyrogenitus did. He repeats the story about the origin of the name of Ragusa and mutation L to R (*Rausa* = *Lausa*), but in different context. Namely, in his introduction to these events the Priest of Dioclea mentions Saracens, who destroyed all of the (southern) Dalmatian towns and that their inhabitants escaped to the mountains where they have been captured by the Slavs. Later on, these Romans came back to the seashore taking an obligation to pay the tribute to the Slavs, after they were allowed to rebuild the cities again.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> *Ragnina*, 174.

<sup>22</sup> Katičić, *Uz početke*, 153 – 154.

<sup>23</sup> *Ljetopis Popa Dukljanina*, ed. V. Mošin, Zagreb 1950, 70 – 71. Also, in the year of 1441 Philippe de Diversis wrote: *Sed ad rem iam veniamus et dicamus, quod cum urbs Ragusina,*

The whole story is a mixture of legends about the mythical king of the Slavs, Radoslav Belo, and reliable historical data, such as the mention of the Arabs' incursion in the southern Adriatic in 866, already described by Constantine Porphyrogenitus.<sup>24</sup> Even though it is impossible to detect all the sources of the Priest of Diocela, it is a fact that here is preserved the oldest Slavic version (ca. 1150) of the story from which will develop the later humanist narration of the origin of Ragusa, enriched by some specific elements. One can be certain that the Ragusan authors used the Chronicle of the Priest of Dioclea as it is explicitly stated by Tuberon – which he describes as very old manuscript, but not so damaged that it could not be deciphered.<sup>25</sup>

It is very important to mention the oldest Papal charter issued to the Church of Ragusa in 743 by the Pope Zacharias. This charter is not an original but rather a much amended transcription of the late 12<sup>th</sup> century, which could be very important for the explanation of the appearance of the cult of St Pancratius in Ragusa.<sup>26</sup> The relics of this saint are mentioned by Constantine Porphyrogenitus as they laid at the Church of St Stephen the Protomartyr in the middle of Ragusa. The origin of this cult in Ragusa could be traced back to 742 – 743, when the usurper Artabazd relied on Papal support giving back, most probably, some rights to the Pope over Dalmatia.<sup>27</sup> It would mean that the story of Constantine Porphyrogenitus was based on the original records preserved in Ragusa and dated back to the middle of the 8<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore, it is quite possible that the whole narration related to its origins existed in Ragusa at least from the middle of the 8<sup>th</sup> century. But, in that record there was no mention of Spilan and Gradaz, or the Saracens who destroyed Epidaurus. The pieces of the puzzle on the origin of Ragusa are coming in place.

The story of the origin of Ragusa is stratified in layers which should be recognized and put in correct chronological frames. In addition to the main story, there is also a mention of the Goths, to whom Mauro Orbin ascribed the destruction of Epidaurus in 265. Some of the citizens of Epidaurus withdrew

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*quae Epidaurum seu Lavusium antiquitus dicebatur...; Philippi de Diversis de Quartigianis*, ed. V. Brunelli, Programma dell' I.R. Ginnasio superiore in Zara , Zara 1880, 13.

<sup>24</sup> On this legend see, T. Živković, *Legenda o Pavlimiru Belu*, *Istorijski časopis* 50 (2004) 9 – 32.

<sup>25</sup> *Lvdovici Tyberonis Dalmatae abbatis Commentarii de temporibvs svjs*, ed. V. Rezar, I – II, Zagreb 2001, I, 87 (= *Tubero*).

<sup>26</sup> On this charter, see, T. Živković, *Crkvena organizacija u srpskim zemljama (rani srednji vek)*, Beograd 2004, 143 – 149 (= Živković, *Crkvena organizacija*).

<sup>27</sup> Cf. T. Živković, *When were the relics of SS Pancratius, Petronilla, Domitilla, Nereus and Achilleus transferred to Ragusa*, *ZRVI* 44/2 (2007) in print (= Živković, *Pancratius*).

to the cliff nearby, where they built a small fortress, and enlarged it again in 283, when the Sarmatians made havoc in the vicinity of Epidaurus.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, there is one single find of the ceramic from the vicinity of Epidaurus which could be of the Germanic type.<sup>29</sup> It should be pointed out that Orbin drew his information on the earliest history of Ragusa, the Goths and the Sarmatians, from *Michel Salonitano* and his *Trattato della Dalmatia*. This source is unknown to the modern historiography but most probably was composed in 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>30</sup> Orbin believed that *Michel Salonitano* was an older author, at least a century before *Filippo da Bergamo* and *Sabellico*, the authors which he also quotes in his discussion on the origin of Ragusa (*autore vie più antico di tutti loro*).<sup>31</sup> Still, the historical sources do not provide any testimony which could lead up to the conclusion that Epidaurus was razed to the ground by barbarians between the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. The only source which states that the Goths were attacking as far as to the sea (Adriatic) is Zosime.<sup>32</sup> Orbin's main sources are *Filippo da Bergamo*, *Sabellico* and *Michel Salonitano*, who were composing their works towards the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century (*Sabellico* and *Filippo da Bergamo*), and eventually at the very beginning of the same century (*Michel Salonitano*). Therefore, the Goths should be safely excluded from the story of the foundation of Ragusa, since these learned humanists created this story based on their free interpretation of Zosime.

The previous narrative could lead to the conclusion that the story of the foundation of Ragusa as written down by Constantine Porphyrogenitus had its roots in the tradition of the city itself. It was believed in the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century that the Ragusans were descendants of the citizens of Epidaurus, and that destruction of this city was connected to the Slavs and their arrival in Dalmatia. This is the oldest layer in all the later traditions on the foundation of Ragusa. On the top of this layer come the variations written by the later Ragusan authors, who based themselves on the Slavonic versions of the origin of Ragusa (in Slavonic language called *Dubrovnik*) and their mythical king Radoslav Belo.

The Illyrian settlement on the top of the cliff called Ragusa was inhabited already from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. and it was developing slowly during the following centuries. It was probably enlarged and fortified during the 6<sup>th</sup> century, as the new archaeological evidence points out, most probably as one

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<sup>28</sup> *Il regno de gli Slavi hoggi corrottamente detti Schiavoni Historia di don Mavro Orbini Ravseo abbate melitense*, Pesaro 1601, 180 – 181 (= *Orbin*).

<sup>29</sup> Marović, *Arheološka istraživanja*, 18.

<sup>30</sup> *Mavro Orbini Kraljevstvo Slovena*, ed. F. Šanjek, Zagreb 1999, 555. Cf. Šišić, *Letopis*, 19 – 23.

<sup>31</sup> *Orbin*, 182.

<sup>32</sup> *Zosimi comitis et ex advocati fisci Historia nova*, ed. Mendelssohn, 1887, I, cap. 26, 31 and 37.



of the Byzantine fortresses which kept watch on this important Adriatic route. The chronological frame must be during Justinian's war with Goths and their expulsion from Dalmatia at the beginning of this conflict, i. e. 536 – 537. This period marked the crucial point in the history of the settlement on the cliff called Ragusa. From that time should be dated the earliest defense walls which enclosed the fortress of Lave, as it is mentioned at the later Ragusan authors.<sup>33</sup> The archaeological finds in modern Dubrovnik which revealed the basement of the Byzantine basilica deserve profound research and plausible explanation, since such a large church (31 meters long and 15.80 meters wide)<sup>34</sup> cannot be built *ex nihilo* by the refugees which were gathered on the top of the cliff.<sup>35</sup> It means that such large basilica should be interpreted as the seat of the bishop.<sup>36</sup>

From the letters of the Pope Gregory the Great, in which is mentioned Florentius the bishop of Epidaurus, dated in 592 and 597, historiography takes as granted that Epidaurus existed as the bishopric towards the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. In the light of the new archaeological evidence from Ragusa, this statement should be re-examined. It is true that the coins of the Byzantine emperor Phocas (602 – 610) are found in Epidaurus,<sup>37</sup> what can be taken as a testimony of the existence of city at the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, but these finds do not give an answer whether Epidaurus was bishopric or not at that time. The letters of Gregory the Great from 592 and 597 actually should be examined much more carefully. In the first letter to Antoninus, subdiaconus (in Constantinopolis ?), Florentius, the bishop of Epidaurus, is just mentioned as deposed bishop.<sup>38</sup> In the second letter from 597 to the bishop of Jadera, Sabinianus, Florentius is also just mentioned as the former bishop of Epidaurus.<sup>39</sup> So far the papal letters prove that Epidaurus was the bishopric at the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, but on the other side point out that the Church of Epidaurus was at that time in some kind of turmoil. In the first letter it is stated that Florentius was deprived of all

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<sup>33</sup> *Anonymi*, 4; *Ragnina*, 173; *Tubero*, 89 – 90. Only *Resti*, 17, had the different opinion that the foundation of Ragusa is not related to the mythical Slavic king Radoslav Belo. In addition, *Resti* somehow also calculated the year of the foundation of Ragusa as 568.

<sup>34</sup> Stošić, *Prikaz nalaza*, 16.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Rapanić, *Marginalia*, 47.

<sup>36</sup> It also interesting to mention that the Ragusan authors writes about John, the first bishop/archbishop of Epidaurus, who escaped from Epidaurus to Ragusa. It is probably the traditional explanation on which way Ragusa legally became bishoprics. Cf. *Anonymi*, 23; *Ragnina*, 173; *Tubero*, 90. Only *Resti*, 18, believed that the Pope Gregory the Great transferred the seat of the bishopric from Epidaurus to Ragusa.

<sup>37</sup> Lučić, *O nekim problemima*, 543.

<sup>38</sup> *Sacrorum conciliorum, nova et amplissima collectio*, ed. J. D. Mansi, Graz 1960, IX, col. 1119 (= *Mansi*).

<sup>39</sup> *Mansi X*, col. 93.



property and exiled, and in the second letter the pope asked the bishop of Jadera whether he knows something about *the case of Florentius* since the citizens of Epidaurus are ready to receive him again as their shepherd. They admit that Florentius was exiled according to the wish of the late archbishop of Salona, Natalis. It is also worth to mention that the bishop of Epidaurus already was not present at the Second Council of Salona in 533.<sup>40</sup> All this confusion around the bishopric of Epidaurus points to the conclusion that inside the ecclesiastical organization of the southern Dalmatia something unusual was happening during the 6<sup>th</sup> century.

After the conquest of Africa and the parts of Italy, Justinian I reshaped the ecclesiastical organization which was incorporated into new provincial organization, i.e. archbishoprics of Ravenna and Carthage.<sup>41</sup> Among these measures undertaken just before the outbreak of the war with the Goths, was the creation of the archbishopric of Justiniana Prima,<sup>42</sup> by which were actually determined the zones of ecclesiastical organization between the Byzantine Church and the parts of Illyricum ruled by the Goths.<sup>43</sup> In 536, Justinian sent Constantian, *sacri stabuli comitem*, to Dalmatia which harbored the fleet at Epidaurus *which is on the right hand side when entering in Adriatic*.<sup>44</sup> It could be expected that after the conquest of Dalmatia and expulsion of the Goths,<sup>45</sup> Justinian had some new ideas about the organization of the Church in southern Dalmatia. Among these new ideas should be the creation of the new bishopric at Ragusa. The exact chronological frame in which we could safely put this change, must be after 548 when a large group of Slavs penetrated as far as to Dyrrachium. The intruders devastated wide areas of the southern Illyricum shadowed in vain by the 15,000 strong Byzantine army and safely went back across Danube.<sup>46</sup> As the immediate consequence of this attack, Justinian could start to repair and build up fortresses elsewhere in the regions during the 550s, which have not been included in the plan of the rebuilding during the period of the 530s – 550s.

This kind of enormous building activities mark the turning point in the urban design of Illyricum, which gradually changed toward the smaller but

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<sup>40</sup> *Diplomatički zbornik kraljevine Hrvatske s Dalmacijom i Slavonijom I*, ed. I. Kukuljević Sakcinski, Zagreb 1874, N° 240.

<sup>41</sup> R. A. Markus, *Carthage – Prima Justiniana – Ravenna: An Aspect of Justinian's Kirchenpolitik*, Byzantion 49 (1979) 278.

<sup>42</sup> *Corpus iuris civilis, Novellae*, ed. R. Schoell, Berolini 192, Nov. XI, 94.

<sup>43</sup> Živković, *Crkvena organizacija*, 36.

<sup>44</sup> *Procopii Caesariensis Opera omnia, Bella I – VIII*, vol. I – II, ed. J. Haury – G. Wirth, Lipsiae 1962, *Procopii II, BG I*, 7, 37.6 – 10.

<sup>45</sup> *Procopii II, BG I*, 16, 85.1 – 25.

<sup>46</sup> *Procopii II, BG III*, 29, 423.3 – 13.

well fortified towns and settlements reduced in population. It was truly the end of the Late Antiquity and the beginning of a new era usually called Early Middle Ages. Procopius left the testimony about the construction's activities in Illyricum, which occurred until 559/560, and that is why we do not have any such information on the building activities in Dalmatia at *De aedificiis*. In addition, it is worth to mention an opinion of G. Downey, who proved successfully that Procopius' *De aedificiis* is in fact an unfinished work.<sup>47</sup>

Having said all this, I would follow the authors which already pointed out that Ragusa was refortified and enlarged as one of the important fortresses on the southern Adriatic route during the rule of Justinian I.<sup>48</sup> But, what is more important, the task was in a way quite similar, even though on the lesser scale, to the one conducted in the interior of the Illyricum where the new archbishopric was created at Justiniana Prima (545). In other words, we could conclude that Justinian I created the bishopric in Ragusa following the clear plan after which this city should be a new and important center. From the point of view of the local Church officials, those of Epidaurus, it was probably not a welcomed solution and could open a kind of dispute between Ragusa and Epidaurus. That way we have a perfect explanation of the archaeological evidence discovered at Ragusa in 1981 – the large cathedral church which was the seat of the new bishopric. Furthermore, this conclusion helps to better understand the Ragusan tradition which stubbornly repeats that the Ragusan Church inherited its bishopric status from Epidaurus. It was possible only after Epidaurus ceased to exist, and what could have happened in the first decades of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The other possible explanation is that two bishoprics existed at the same time – the older one at Epidaurus and new one at Ragusa (ca. 550 – 560) – and that the new circumstances which emerged after the Slavs populated the areas in the vicinity of Epidaurus and Ragusa, created the situation which led up to the disappearance of the bishopric of Epidaurus, as well as the town itself. The later claims of the Ragusan authors that the Church of Ragusa is legally successor of the Church of Epidaurus could be the consequence of their need to prove that the land as far as to former Epidaurus belong to Ragusa. This explanation could be supported by the writings of Thomas Archdeacon of Spalato from the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century: *Erat autem Epitauros episcopalis ciuitas, salonitane ecclesie suffraganea*. Then, after he wrote the Roman legend on the foundation of Ragusa and the destruction of Epidaurus, Thomas continues:

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<sup>47</sup> G. Downey, *The Composition of Procopius De aedificiis*, Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association 78 (1947) 171 – 183.

<sup>48</sup> Rapanić, *Marginalia*, 46. I. Goldstein, *Bizant na Jadranu*, Zagreb 1992, 36 – 37.

*Homines autem cum eis permixti sunt, et facti sunt populus unus. Edificauerunt Ragusium et habitauerunt in eo. Ex eo tempore conari ceperunt pallium suo episcopo optinere.*<sup>49</sup>

If the archaeological evidence and various sources are put together, there is still lack of explanation for the Porphyrogenitus' statement that Ragusa was founded *500 years ago*, i.e. 448/449.<sup>50</sup> Was it an information provided to the Emperor's official who gathered the material from Ragusa itself or just the Emperor's calculation based on his own impression about the events which he described? He could have not heard from the citizens of Ragusa that the first founders of the city came from Salona. Such a story does not exist at the later works of the Ragusan authors. It must be the consequence of the Emperor's usage of at least two independent sources (excerpts) originated in Dalmatia. But 500 years could also be an impression of Ragusan themselves. It seems that the Chronicle of Salerno provides a very good clue.

The Chronicle of Salerno was written ca. 974 by the anonymous monk from southern Italy. But the core of the Chronicle was compiled already in 897/898 by the monks of Montecassino, in exile at Teano.<sup>51</sup> To this part of the Chronicle should belong a passage dealing with the origin of the city of Amalfi, which could be very useful for the modern historians to understand a way of thinking of the Early Medieval man of Europe on the questions of the origin and foundation of towns. The author says that he made an inquiry to find out something about the beginnings of Amalfi and Amalfitians themselves, since it was not known to his time *from which province they originated, to which clan they belonged, under which kings they fought*, etc. His investigation, mostly based on the stories of the elders, provided a material which he arranged in some kind of order and chronological frame. The story runs as follows: during the time of the Emperor Constantine (the Great) the decision was made that the Emperor himself and his most important dignitaries and their families leave Rome and resettle in Constantinopolis. During the trip, when they reached *Sclavorum fines*, a storm came and two ships wrecked on the shores. Nobody was hurt, but all their property has been lost. There they found some local inhabitants, who allowed shipwreck victims to settle among them. Their city was called Ragusa (*Vocaturque nomen loci illius nimirum Ragusi*). They

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<sup>49</sup> Thomas, 30.

<sup>50</sup> DAI I, 29.233 – 235.

<sup>51</sup> W. Pohl, *History in Fragments: Montecassino's Politics of Memory*, Early Medieval Europe 10/3 (2001) 354 – 355.

lived among them for a long time, but since the Ragusans oppressed them a lot, they decided to run away. When they reached Italy, they came to the vicinity of the place called Melfis and, by the flow of time, they were called, upon the name of that place, Amalfitians.<sup>52</sup>

It is obviously that story runs in the form of popular tradition mixing the historical persons (Constantine) and political conditions (the Slavs of Dalmatia) which cannot be put in the same chronological frame. That information about the *Sclavorum fines* leads to the conclusion that tradition of Amalfitian's origin was developed after the beginnings of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. But that what is most important is the perception of the inhabitants of Amalfi towards the end of 9<sup>th</sup> century, who believed that their origin should be traced back for some 500 years – the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. In a similar manner writes Constantine Porphyrogenitus in the chapter 45 of the *DAI* speaking of the origin of Iberians of Caucasus. The Emperor gathered a popular tradition told by the Iberians themselves, according to which they were descendants of the Biblical king David. After considerable time passed they decided, being warned by the oracle, to come out of Jerusalem and settle down in Persia. *And from their migration from Jerusalem to the country now inhabited by them it is 400 years, or rather 500 up to the present day, which is the 10<sup>th</sup> indiction, the year from the creation of the world 6460, in the reign of Constantine and Romanus, Christ-loving emperors of the Romans, born in the purple.*<sup>53</sup>

This passage shows that Porphyrogenitus used some earlier records on the origin of Iberians, for which he thought to have been written in 9<sup>th</sup> century, and because of that he added another 100 years to correct the date, according to his own time. It is interesting to underline this passage of time (500 years) as almost a pattern by which is explained deep past unknown from the written sources. It was the impression that 500 years is a period of time which marks the earliest history for which they have not any kind of records at all. We meet this pattern in Italy and in the eastern borders of Asia Minor. It means that this kind of thinking was widely present in the regions which could not be whatsoever linked or able to communicate with each other.<sup>54</sup> When Porphyrogenitus was much more certain about the time when something is happened, he used smaller numbers. For instance, he said that from the foundation of New Capua

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<sup>52</sup> *Chronicon Salernitanum, A Critical Edition with Studies on Literary and Historical Sources on Language*, ed. V. Westerbergh, Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, Studia Latina Stockholmiensia 3, Stockholm – Lund 1956, 88 – 89.

<sup>53</sup> *DAI*, 45.38 – 42.

<sup>54</sup> It is interesting to mention the popular thinking in Serbia about the duration of the Turkish rule over Serbia, which is still preserved in modern times – that the Turks ruled Serbia for 500 years. In fact, the Turks ruled Serbia less than 400 years (1459 – 1833).

it is 73 years and from the division of Lombardy until to-day (948/949) it is 200 years.<sup>55</sup> In fact the division of Lombardy was in 849, exactly 100 years from the time of Constantine.<sup>56</sup> Here he had some sources of the Latin origin which were inaccurate, but still he preserved at his story that it did not happen long time ago. It seems that he had some critical feeling for the flow of time describing the various events which occurred in distant times.

Regarding the origin of Ragusa and Constantine's statement that Ragusa was founded 500 years before his own time, it seems that modern historians should completely neglect this number. It just marks that citizens of Ragusa could not say to the Emperor's informer when exactly their town came into existence. Therefore, one who would investigate the earliest history of Ragusa should be aware that this figure represents just a firm proof that something happened in the deep past, which is not written down, and which is just a product of popular tradition.

The passage from the Chronicle of Salerno gives excellent ground for some other important conclusions. Namely, since the earliest Ragusan tradition does not know anything about the refugees from Rome and their settling in Ragusa, it is possible to give plausible explanation in which way this later tradition is found in the works of Ragusan Anonymous, Ragnina and others. In one section the text of the Chronicle of Salerno, related to the origin of Amalfitians, is unclear and probably a line is missing. There is a mention in which way the Emperor Constantine and his dignitaries and their families sailed to Constantinople and than a part of the sentence which cannot be explained - *Romam quippe beatorum Petri et Pauli iuris reliquia*. Is it possible that in the first part of that sentence something was said about the relics taken by Constantine from Rome intended to be placed in Constantinople? It is very probable, because the later Ragusan authors, already from Miletius onwards, mention that the refugees from Rome brought with them relics of SS Achilleus, Nerreus, Petronilla and Domitilla.<sup>57</sup> Miletius does not mention St Pancratius, the saint which relics were in the Church of St Stephen the Firstmartyr already in the time of Constantine Porphyrogenitus. It is also to be expected, since we know that the relics of St Pancratius have been sent from Rome to Ragusa in 742/743.<sup>58</sup>

The whole story about the origin of Amalfitians is reflected in Ragusa at least from the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Miletius) if not a century or two before (the Priest

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<sup>55</sup> *DAI I*, 27.53 – 55; 27. 66.

<sup>56</sup> See, *DAI II*, 88 (Commentary).

<sup>57</sup> *Anonymus*, 3; *Ragnina*, 173; *Resti*, 26.

<sup>58</sup> Živković, *Pancratius*.

of Dioclea). Therefore, it should be taken as almost certain that the later story on the origin of Ragusa did not originate in Ragusa itself, but in Amalfi, and that from there it was taken by the Ragusan sailors which had contacts with Amalfi.<sup>59</sup> That way the Ragusans enriched the knowledge of their earliest past through the contacts with Amalfi.

The Ragusan ships were sailing to Italy at least from the 9<sup>th</sup> century, if not earlier.<sup>60</sup> They should have had various contacts with the Italian towns among which was Amalfi.<sup>61</sup> It is important to point out that Amalfi reached its heights in the 11<sup>th</sup> century and already in 1135 its fleet was destroyed by the Pisans. It was the end of the maritime power of Amalfi.<sup>62</sup> Sometime between 11<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century the Ragusans almost certainly received the story about the origin of Amalfi, which was connecting Amalfitians' origin with Ragusa. In the trade contract between Pisa and Ragusa (together with Spalato), it is said that Ragusans can keep trade connections with other Italian towns which are subordinated to Pisa.<sup>63</sup> Therefore, these connections could be kept with Amalfi too. The writer of the Chronicle of Salerno was a Benedictine monk, so was the Priest of Dioclea, the author who was the first to mention Roman legend on the origin of Ragusa, mixed with the elements of the Slavic tradition. It could be taken as a sign that the exchange of the ideas related to the history or tradition, could flow from western shores of Adriatic to the eastern and vice versa. The Benedictine monks certainly played a major role in these transmissions and receptions.

The story on the origin of Ragusa should be interpreted in the following manner: the earliest Illyrian settlement on the top of the cliff could be traced

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<sup>59</sup> The earliest history of Amalfi, up to 1100, is given by U. Schwarz, *Amalfi im frühen Mittelalter (9 – 11. Jahrhundert). Untersuchungen zur Amalfitaner Überlieferung*, Tübingen 1978; Also, A. O. Citarella, *The Relations of Amalfi and the Arab World Before the Crusades*, *Speculum* 42/2 (1967) 299 – 312. On the beginnings of Amalfi, see, M. Berza, *Amalfi Preducale*, *Ephemeris Dacoromana* 8 (1938) 349 – 444.

<sup>60</sup> Already in 867 the Ragusans' vessels transported the Slavic auxiliaries to Italy; cf. *DAI I*, 29.113 – 115. Their ships of war were assembled at Dyrrachion in 949; cf. *Constantini Porphyrogenitus imperatoris De cerimoniis aulae byzantinae*, ed. I. Reiske, Bonnae 1829, 664.9 – 10; cf. T. Živković, *Da li su dubrovački ratni brodovi učestvovali u kritskoj ekspediciji 949. godine?*, *Zbornik za istoriju BiH* 3 (2002) 9 – 15.

<sup>61</sup> On the Amalfi's earliest trade, see, E. Ashtor, *Gli ebrei nel commercio mediterraneo nell'alto medioevo (secc. X – XI)*, in: *Gli orizzonti aperti. Profili del mercante medievale*, ed. G. Airaldi, Torino 1997, 61.

<sup>62</sup> J. Lučić, *Dubrovačani na jadranskom prostoru od VII stoljeća do godine 1205*, *Rad JAZU* 369 (1975) 36.

<sup>63</sup> *Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae II*, ed. T. Smičiklas, Zagreb 1904, 124 – 125.

back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries B.C. During the Roman times it existed in approximately same size and was not of any major significance. During the 550s, the place was rebuilt, enclosed by the walls and became a seat of bishop. After the destruction of Epidaurus, either by the Slavs or just because of its slow disappearance as the urban center, a part of the citizens of Epidaurus resettled in Ragusa what became the main cause of the renewed building activities and probably growth of the city's size. The major tradition on the origin of Ragusa is preserved at the *DAI* and can be taken as a widespread belief of the Ragusans themselves about the origin of their town contemporary to Constantine Porphyrogenitus. The later tradition is a mixture of the various stories, some of them from Amalfi (the story of Roman refugees), and partly coming from the Slavs (the legend of Radoslav Belo) which at the 12<sup>th</sup> century lived in the vicinity of Ragusa or in town itself. The passage of time of the 500 years which is written down by Constantine Porphyrogenitus is just a manner of the writer to fill up the chronological gap in the cases when it was impossible to say when something happened. It seems that this style was widespread in the Early Middle Ages all around the Latin and Eastern world. Therefore, any discussion about the year 448/449 as the exact date of the foundation of Ragusa is in vain. The Emperor just wanted to say – *it happened long time ago*. Exactly in the same manner, learned Giugno Resti understood the Emperor's words: *E l'imperatore avrà posto il numero d'anni 500, per dimostrare un lungo corso di tempi, non perchè infatti avesse voluto dire cinquecento anni determinati, she saria l'anno 449.*<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Resti, 17.



Тибор ЖИВКОВИЋ

**О ПОЧЕЦИМА ДУБРОВНИКА**  
ТРАДИЦИЈА И ЧИЊЕНИЦЕ



О почецима Дубровника најраније сведочанство пружио је византијски цар Константин Порфирогенит у поглављу 29 свога дела *De administrando imperio*, 948/949. године. Основа цареве приче је да су становници Епидаура, који је пострадао од Словена, уточиште нашли на оближњој литици на којој су саградили град Лаусиј, односно Рагусиј. У истом одељку цар бележи да се тај догађај одиграо пре 500 година, односно 448/449. године. Доцније дубровачко предање, при-бележено већ код песника Милеција, затим код Лудовика Туберона, дубровачког Анонима, Николе Рањине. Мавра Орбина, Јакоба Лукаревића и Јунија Растића, спаја најстарији слој легенде који је прибележен код Константина Порфирогенита, са тзв. Римском легендом која говори о доласку избеглица из Рима и њиховом насељавању међу Дубровчане, као и словенску легенду о Радославу Белу. Сви ови слојеви легенде о настанку Дубровника први пут су забележени у Летопису Попа Дукљанина средином 12. века.

Насупрот легенди, чији слојеви су препознатљиви иако недовољно објашњени у јужнословенској историографији, стоје недавна археолошка открића (1981) која недвосмислено указују на то да је насеље на месту данашњег Дубровника постојало већ од III века п. н. е. које је средином VI века било утврђено. Из тог времена датира и пространа базилика која је најпре могла да буде епископско седиште. У светлости нових података и њиховим сучељавањем са легендама о настанку Дубровника, дошло се до закључка да је Дубровник претворен у значајније византијско упориште у време владавине цара Јустинијана I (527 – 565), највероватније после 550. године, односно упада Словена 548. године у Илирик који је окончан под бедемима Драча. Тако може да се закључи да је Порфирогенитов исказ о почецима Дубровника у основи тачан, јер повезује Словене, становнике Епидаура и насељавање Дубровника у кохерентан след узајамно повезаних догађаја.

Други закључак до којег се дошло јесте да је Дубровник средином VI века постао епископско седиште и да је вероватно у то

време већ долазило до сукоба са црквеним властима оближњег Епидаура. На тај начин постаје јаснија познија дубровачка истрајност у доказивању старине дубровачке епископије и повезивање њених почетака са Епидауром. Ово је остало забележено већ код Томе Архиђакона као опште раширено мишљење у оновременој Далмацији.

Истраживањем података из Хронике Салерна дошло се до поузданог закључка да је Римска легенда, која се већ код Попа Дукљанина појављује у јужнодалматинским списима, а затим и код свих познијих дубровачких писаца, заправо пренета у Дубровник из јужне Италије у X или XI веку. Наиме, у питању је легенда о пореклу Амалфићана, који су своју традицију о пореклу пренели анонимном монаху из Монте Касина који је и прибележио 897/898. године.

Показано је такође да податак о 500 година који наводи Константин Порфирогенит, а који се односи на време оснивања Дубровника, не треба узимати дословце, већ разумети као опште место које означава време одигравања догађаја за које не постоје поуздани писани подаци. Другим речима, израз да је нешто било пре 500 године, требало би схватити као да је то било *веома давно*.