

SVETI PAVAO SHIPWRECK

A 16th Century Venetian Merchantman from Mljet, Croatia

WITH ITALIAN AND CROATIAN ABSTRACTS

by

Carlo Beltrame, Sauro Gelichi and Igor Miholjek

*with contributions by Cristiano Alfonso, Jurica Bezak, Elisa Costa,
Martina Ćurković, Margherita Ferri, Anita Jelić, Antonija Jozić,
Garo Kürkman, Igor Mihajlović, Robert Mosković, Mladen Mustaćek,
Domagoj Perkić, Tajana Trbojević Vukičević and Vesna Zmaić Kralj*



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Front cover: Galleon on the Contarini monument in the Saint Anthony's church in Padua (middle of the XVI century AD). Chart "Golfo di Venezia, olim Adriaticum" (1688) by Vincenzo Coronelli; courtesy of the Yale University Map Department, Sterling Memorial Library

Croatian Conservation Institute
Department for Underwater Archaeology
Zagreb



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List of contributors

CRISTIANO ALFONSO

Dipartimento di Beni Culturali,
Università del Salento
e-mail: cristianoalfonso@libero.it

CARLO BELTRAME

Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici,
Università Ca' Foscari Venezia
e-mail: beltrame@unive.it

JURICA BEZAK

Croatian Conservation Institute, Zagreb
Department for Underwater Archaeology
e-mail: jbezak@h-r-z.hr

ELISA COSTA

Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici,
Università Ca' Foscari Venezia
e-mail: elisacostas@libero.it

MARTINA ČURKOVIĆ

Conservator restorer
e-mail: crnacokolada@gmail.com

MARGHERITA FERRI

Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici,
Università Ca' Foscari Venezia
e-mail: ferri@unive.it

SAURO GELICHI

Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici,
Università Ca' Foscari Venezia
e-mail: gelichi@unive.it

ANITA JELIĆ

Conservator restorer
e-mail: jelic101@gmail.com

ANTONIJA JOZIĆ

International Centre for Underwater Archaeology in
Zadar
Restoration and conservation department
e-mail: ajozic@icua.hr

GARO KÜRKMAN

Independent scholar, Istanbul
e-mail: garokurkman@gmail.com

IGOR MIHAJLOVIĆ

Croatian Conservation Institute, Zagreb
Department for Underwater Archaeology
e-mail: imihajlovic@h-r-z.hr

IGOR MIHOLJEK

Croatian Conservation Institute, Zagreb
Department for Underwater Archaeology
e-mail: imiholjek@h-r-z.hr

ROBERT MOSKOVIĆ

Underwater photographer
e-mail: fotoroberto@gmail.com

MLADEN MUSTAČEK

International Centre for Underwater Archaeology in
Zadar
Restoration and conservation department
e-mail: mmustacek@icua.hr

DOMAGOJ PERKIĆ

Dubrovnik Museums
Archaeological Museum
e-mail: domagoj.perkic@dumus.hr

TAJANA TRBOJEVIĆ VUKIČEVIĆ

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine,
University of Zagreb
Department of Anatomy, Histology and Embriology
e-mail: tajana@vef.hr

VESNA ZMAIĆ KRALJ

Croatian Conservation Institute, Zagreb
Department for Underwater Archaeology
e-mail: vzmaic@h-r-z.hr

Preface

We present a large joint project which the Croatian Conservation Institute started in 2007 with the help of the Ministry of Culture. Although the research is not yet completely finished, the importance of the site and finds induced a cooperation with the Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici of Ca' Foscari University of Venice, as well as a sponsorship from Regione del Veneto. This publication is a result of a three-year joint cooperation and research on uncovering the secrets of the Mljet seabed, but also the way of life, trade and events in the 16th century. Such research creates new connections and friendships, and the recovered finds allow a deeper and a more systematic insight into the way of life at that period of time. Although a majority of organic material from the shipwreck perished, we are still left with many items of more durable material which give us enough important information. We hope that these amazing results will intensify and encourage further excellent cooperation between our institutions and countries, not only in the field of research, but also in fields of restoration and conservation of the cultural, historical and artistic heritage of the Adriatic Sea and coastline, which is also another important function of the Croatian Conservation Institute.

We kindly thank all participants on their efforts, energy and assets which they invested into this extraordinary publication, and we hope that the readers will enjoy the book and enrich their knowledge about the topic.

Mario Braun
Director of Croatian Conservation Institute, Zagreb

This volume, financed by the Regione del Veneto, presents the results of a three years scientific collaboration between the Croatian Conservation Institute of Zagreb and the Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici of the Università Ca' Foscari of Venice for the excavation and the study of a Venetian shipwreck of the 16th century found near the island of Mljet. The importance of this excavation, sponsored in part by the Regione del Veneto, is mainly in the fact that it is one of the very few shipwrecks of this period in the Mediterranean and that it is one of the rare underwater sites of the Adriatic which has been systematically studied. It is also precious evidence of the traffics in the 16th century and a document, almost unique, about the transportation of Iznik pottery from Costantinople to the Adriatic, probably toward Venice. Although there is still no identification of the ship's name, the study has allowed to date it very precisely and to attribute it to a Venetian merchant. The fruitful collaboration between the Croatian Conservation Institut and the team of Venice has continued with the excavation, begun together in the 2012, on the interesting Byzantine shipwreck of Cap Stoba, dated to the 10–11th century, found in the same island.

These enduring common scientific interests open the way to new collaborations between the two institutions which could continue also with the diffusion of the scientific results during exhibitions and other events, which could value the cultural heritage between the two sides of the Adriatic, often belonging to a common cultural origin.

Paolo Eleuteri
Director of Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici,
Università Ca' Foscari, Venezia

Foreword

In this book we publish the results of the archaeological researches carried out between 2007 and 2012 in the context of a collaboration between the Department for Underwater Archaeology of the Croatian Conservation Institute from Zagreb and the Department of Humanistic Studies of the Ca' Foscari University of Venice. These researches have concerned a shipwreck of the 16th century which revealed, for the variety and the quality of the cargo and of the other items, one of the most important underwater sites discovered in the last years in the Adriatic Sea. Although the excavation is not completed, aim of this publication is to valorize what has been recovered till now, to offer scholars and the public a useful preview and to represent a stimulus because these investigations have the earn visibility. This is also concrete evidence of how it is possible to build opportunities for cooperation between researchers, who work in opposite coasts of the Adriatic, when you share methods and goals based on reciprocity.

The volume is composed, apart from an introduction and the conclusion chapter, of three main chapters. The

second one is dedicated to the methodological and technical aspects of the underwater investigation of the site, such as the method of documentation by photogrammetry. The third chapter is devoted to the historical and archaeological context of the navigation in the late Medieval period in the Eastern Mediterranean. The fourth focuses on the study of the typology of finds, from the cargo to the personal items of the crew, from the artillery recovered from the site to the remains of the ship and its equipment that, because of the depth and of the problems of conservation, have been left *in situ*. In addition, some contributions about the conservation and restoration of the finds are available in a special appendix.

The editors want to thank everyone who has collaborated to the good success of this volume, producing the text in a very short time. Our gratitude goes to the Regione del Veneto which, also this time, has not lack for its help for the publication of this volume. Finally, a sincere thanks goes to Dr Monica Tonussi and Pavle Dugonjić for their precious work of editing.

Carlo Beltrame, Sauro Gelichi and Igor Miholjek
Venice, 8th December 2013