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The Cult of Diomedes in the Adriatic: Complementary Contributions from Literary Sources and Archaeology

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ABSTRACTS

This contribution aims to highlight how, by studying religious events in Antiquity, the information provided by literary sources can be fully supplemented by the contribution of archaeological finds. Our chapter will consider the case of Diomedes and his worship within the Adriatic area, and will conclude with a demonstration of how the recent archaeological research in Croatia has allowed a better understanding of the importance of Diomedes, and a more precise definition of his profile as protector of navigation in the Adriatic Sea.

A central hero of Homeric epic, Diomedes emigrated to Daunia (the region corresponding to the north of Apulia) where he settled many towns, was killed by the local king Daunus and was buried on an Adriatic island called *Diomedean Island*, where he was worshipped.

The ancient writers seem to localize the cult of the hero primarily on the west Adriatic coastline. For this reason, a statement by Pliny the Elder that mentions a *promontorium Diomedis* along the Dalmatian coast has never interested experts. The testimony of Pliny seemed to be too isolated to conclude that the Homeric hero could have been the subject of worship on the east side of the Adriatic as well.

This perspective was definitively overturned more than ten years ago, thanks to the research of a group of archaeologists working in an international project, called the *Adriatic Island Project*, at Cape Ploča between Šibenik and Trogir. The research was such an immediate success that Cape Ploča is the site that has, to date, produced the most copious and meaningful sources about the cult of Diomedes in the Adriatic. The site has, in fact, revealed not only the presence of a small sized temple, but also ceramic chips, some of which bear inscriptions of the name of Diomedes. Such evidence shows, without any doubt, that the sanctuary was dedicated to Diomedes and that the hero there took the role of the protector of navigation, at least from the 4th century BC.

Further improvements in the definition of the relationship between Diomedes and Adriatic navigation were made, all by the same research project and at the same time, due to finds made on a very small island in the centre of the Adriatic, Palagruža. Ceramic chips with engravings of Diomedes' name were also found there. This evidence can be dated to the 5th century BC and we can state, therefore, that worship of Diomedes extends to the end of the archaic period. The island of Palagruža occupies a strategic place in the Adriatic. It is part of the so called "insular bridge" that has allowed passage between Dalmatia and the Gargano (the region of Dauni) since the Neolithic period. The ceramic finds of Palagruža belong mostly to Athens and Aegina. However, this does not mean that Diomedes' cult was introduced there from Attica. The mythical presence of Diomedes was, at that time, already present in Daunian, where the hero arrived, without doubt, from north-western Greece, coming along with the first users of the insular bridge. Thanks to them, the mythical presence of Diomedes spread little by little in the Adriatic, rendering him an outright lord of this sea, as stated in a verse of Lycophron (Lycophron, *Alexandra*, 630-631).

Pour l'historien de l'Antiquité, confronté à un passé lointain dont il ne subsiste que des traces documentaires et matérielles fragmentaires, le recours à plusieurs méthodes d'analyse se révèle fondamental. L'utilisation complémentaire de diverses disciplines lui permet ainsi de combler des lacunes que la lecture des documents littéraires ne peut parfaire à elle seule.

Le chapitre témoigne des résultats issus d'une approche méthodologique conjuguant étude des données textuelles et recherche sur le terrain, à travers l'exemple de la diffusion du culte du héros grec Diomède dans l'Adriatique.

Les auteurs anciens insistent surtout sur la fuite post-troyenne de Diomède en Daunie (la partie septentrionale des Pouilles), où le héros aurait fondé des villes, aurait été tué par le roi local, Daunus, pour connaître après sa mort une véritable héroïsation sur l'île (ou les îles) diomédique(s). Un culte en l'honneur de Diomède aurait été pratiqué également plus au nord le long du littoral adriatique occidental: chez les Ombriens, au delta du Po et en Vénétie. Une seule attestation littéraire, fournie par Pline l'Ancien, fait état de l'existence d'un promontorium Diomedis (promontoire de Diomède) en Dalmatie, du côté oriental de la mer Adriatique. La notice, jugée trop isolée, n'avait que rarement suscité l'intérêt des spécialistes, jusqu'aux découvertes effectuées à partir de 1996 par les archéologues de l'Adriatic Island Project. Les explorations menées sur la petite pointe du cap Ploča par cette équipe internationale ont permis en effet de mettre au jour les vestiges d'un sanctuaire diomédique d'époque hellénistique, et une importante quantité de tessons de céramique portant des dédicaces à Diomède. Ces découvertes, qui demeurent à ce jour les témoignages archéologiques les plus complets sur le culte de Diomède dans l'Adriatique, ont révélé un enracinement du culte de Diomède beaucoup plus vaste que le bilan littéraire ne le laissait entrevoir, et ont mis en évidence ses rapports étroits avec la navigation.

Le profil d'un Diomède protecteur des marins grecs aux prises avec la traversée trans-adriatique a été confirmé dans les mêmes années par les recherches conduites sur la minuscule île de Palagruža. Située au large de l'Adriatique, entre la Dalmatie et le Gargano, celle-ci faisait partie du «pont insulaire» unissant les deux côtes de la mer Adriatique, utilisé depuis l'époque préhistorique. Ici, dans un autre sanctuaire diomédique, le matériel archéologique plus ancien remonte à la fin de l'époque archaïque. Les graffiti citant Diomède sur des tessons de céramique permettent même de déterminer l'identité des dédicants, des marins provenant d'Athènes et d'Égine, ayant sans doute repris un culte diomédique déjà installé sur l'île.

Relégué autrefois aux espaces dauniens, le profil adriatique de Diomède peut être étudié aujourd'hui, à la faveur de ces contributions archéologiques, sous une lumière nouvelle, et contribuer à mieux saisir les trafics adriatiques et les échanges entre Grecs et indigènes à l'époque ancienne.

L. Canfora, in the preface to an introductory essay on the study of Greek history, compares time to a vast sea that has swallowed up much of the precious cargo that once crossed it. All that remains of the ancient civilizations and their human, material and cultural treasures are some tiny islands on the surface of that great expanse of water¹; the rest has disappeared forever, leaving no trace or memory. This rather melancholy metaphor illustrates some of the difficulties with which the historian of antiquity has to struggle. But, despite such obstacles, and motivated by a desire to piece together some of the fragments that have by chance survived, he appeals for the development of research tools that enable this goal to be pursued as thoroughly as possible.

Although the approach used in this work is not new (Thucydides was the first to supplement his knowledge of the remote Greek past with archaeology in the 5th century BC), it has only really been properly appreciated since the 17th and 18th centuries, with the development of auxiliary sciences such as archaeology, epigraphy, numismatics and papyrology. Historians of antiquity have thus become aware of the need to use material evidence to bridge the gaps in literary accounts. Indeed, today, nobody can deny the remarkable contributions that such approaches have made to our knowledge of antiquity, from the discoveries of H. Schliemann to the recent excavations in the Adriatic dock.

A particularly revealing example of the complementarity and synergies existing between literary data and archaeological research is provided by studies into the cult of Diomedes in the Adriatic. Diomedes was a prominent figure in the Homeric epic, a brave and valiant warrior who dared even to injure Aphrodite, and who, according to Homer (Homer, *Odyssey*, III, 180-184) had one of the easiest and happiest returns from the war at Troy². However, an alternative mythography, dating from at least the 7th century BC, recounts quite a different tale, claiming that, on the contrary, his return to Argos

was short-lived and troubled³: induced by Aphrodite (eager to revenge herself for the wound inflicted by the hero on the battlefield), the hero's wife Aegialea plotted to kill her husband, with the complicity of her lover Kometes. Luckier than Agamemnon, victim of a very similar plot, Diomedes managed to escape and was forced to leave the Peloponnese definitively⁴.

This event launched the adventures of Diomedes in the west. The hero emigrated to Daunia (the region corresponding to the north of Apulia), where he lived in a number of different towns and introduced new cults, helping the local king, Daunus, conquer his local enemies. After marrying Daunus' daughter, he eventually inherited the realm and started a fertile lineage, becoming the object of a divine cult after his death⁵. Thus, the portrait painted by these literary sources is of a civilizing hero, who brings urban and religious progress to a non-Hellenic land.

Other versions give a more dramatic ending to the story. In these, Diomedes is presented as a victim of Daunus, who killed him after having used him for a military operation⁶. After this event, his companions were transformed into birds and spent the rest of their lives guarding their leader's grave on the "Diomedean Island in the Adriatic"⁷.

The Diomedes cult was not restricted to Southern Italy, however. He was also worshipped by the people of Veneto in the north (who made horse sacrifices at his shrine⁸); by the inhabitants of Umbria and Ancona (a colony founded by Dionysius of Syracuse in the central shore of the Adriatic), and at the Po delta, where he is represented as the founder of Adria and Spina⁹. This suggests that it might be possible to identify an Adriatic geography of the Diomedean cult.¹⁰ The ancient literary sources indicate that the cult was located first and foremost along the western Adriatic coast. However, there is an isolated claim by Pliny the Elder that there existed a *promontorium Diomedis* on the Dalmatian coast to the south of Liburnia and the river Titius (modern Krka)¹¹, a claim which has never been taken seriously by experts. In 1973, E. Lepore expressed his reservations about the reliability of Pliny's testimony, and declared it very unlikely that a site of the Diomedean cult had ever existed on the coast of Šibenik¹². His caution seemed justified at that time. Since then, though, this perspective has been definitively overturned by archaeological research undertaken by a group of Croatian, English and Canadian archaeologists as part of an international initiative called the "Adriatic Island Project".

The site mentioned by Pliny was identified in the 17th century by the Croatian historian, Iohannes Lucius,¹³ as Cape Ploča (or Punta Planka¹⁴) between Šibenik and Trogir¹⁵, a promontory that was used for centuries as a point of departure for the passage between the northern and southern sides of the Adriatic. It is very tricky to navigate along the east coast of this sea, for two opposing winds converge and ships are unprotected by the bar of islands along the Croatian coast. It would not be surprising, therefore, if this critical promontory had been considered to be under the protection of a divinity

or protective hero (and S. Bilić- Dujmušić also adds that Cape Ploča was located exactly at the border between the waters infested by Liburnian pirates, and the safer waters of Dalmatia, controlled by the Greek colony of Issa¹⁶). Thus, this area would have been an appropriate place in which to take vows in preparation for such a trip, or to thank the divinities when the sea crossing had been successfully made. Indeed, the fact that the promontory was considered a suitable place for worship is confirmed by the existence of a Christian cult, with a 14th-century church dedicated to St. John of Trogir (Sveti Ivan Trogirski), bishop and local saint, who, at the beginning of the 12th century, had saved a ship, its crew and cargo from a violent storm just off the Ploča promontory.



Map 1
 Diomedes in the Adriatic and Italy
 From: Kirigin-Čače (1998)

Archaeological confirmation of the presence of a Diomedean cult arrived in 1996 when S. Čače, from the history department of the Faculty of Philosophy in Zadar, and B. Kirigin, from the Archaeological Museum in Split, decided to undertake three short archaeological campaigns¹⁷. The results were so unexpected and encouraging that they now provide the most complete testimony to the presence of a Diomedean cult in the Adriatic. Unfortunately, excavations were constrained by the site's exposure to erosion from rain and wind over the centuries, which meant that most of the archaeological layers, particularly those nearest the seashore, had largely disappeared. For this reason, the archaeologists decided to concentrate their research in two small sectors on the southern edge of the plateau and directly below this, in a "pocket" within the first bed-rock syncline.

The first sector revealed the remains of a small sanctuary from the Hellenic age situated at the highest point of the Cape, some 10 m above sea level and 120-200 m from the present shore line. The remains of two walls are the only vestiges that remain of a small temple or sacred area bounded by a stone perimeter. Next to the ruins of the northern perimeter wall, the archaeologists also discovered a grave and the skeletal remains of a woman who had died at the age of 20-25 years and was approximately seven months pregnant. Unfortunately, the poor conditions at this side of the sector have not allowed the related chronology to be established. It is therefore impossible to know if the grave was destroyed by the wall's foundations or if, on the contrary, it postdates it. We will only know with more certainty from the results of the C-14 bone analysis; some fragments of a bird found in the same area also suggest that there may have been burial rituals related to the tomb.

The second sector, the "pocket", located directly south of the sanctuary or temple, has revealed an extraordinary quantity of pottery fragments: more than 110 kg or 250,000 shards in a trench approximately 16 m². Such a high concentration of pottery can, of course, only result from human activity; it was very probably a depot where the broken vessels that once contained offerings were kept in order to make space for other more recent oblations in the temple area.

The excavations also brought to light other kinds of gifts: rings, finely-wrought gems, fibulas, necklaces or bracelets made of glass paste, bronze nails and bronze costume accessories. Among the most important discoveries were 24 Roman and Greek coins, dating from between the beginning of the 3rd century BC and the fourth decade of the 1st century BC. Their origins are varied: alongside coins of Adriatic and Ionic production (from Issa, Ancona, Apollonia, Kerkyra and Leukas), archaeologists also discovered Peloponnesian, Cypriot, Numidian and Carthaginian coins, precious testimony to the diverse backgrounds of people visiting the sanctuary¹⁸.

The most important clues are provided by the pottery fragments, of which there are, as I have said, an extraordinary quantity. Apart from some fragments from coarse vessels

and amphorae, most consist of pieces of *skyphoi*, *kantharoi*, cups, *kylikes*, *oinochoai* and *pelikai*, i.e. containers designed to contain wine, which would very probably have been part of the offerings. The most ancient specimens, *skyphoi* fragments from the Middle Gnathian period, have been dated to the 4th century BC (340-315/310 BC) and were imported from southern Italy¹⁹. Over 200 fragments are inscribed with writing in the Greek alphabet. They mention the personal names of the devotees, and, in several cases, the name of the hero Diomedes. The clear and repeated mention of the hero's name leaves no doubt as to the identity of the recipient of the cult practised in the sanctuary. The inscription ΔΙΟΜΕΔΙ ΔΟΠΟΝ [gift to Diomedes] engraved on a grey-clay bowl from the end of the 3rd or beginning of the 2nd century BC²⁰ clearly supports Pliny's account: Cape Ploča was called the *promontorium Diomedis* because it housed a sanctuary dedicated to that hero.

These archaeological discoveries suggest that the vows taken at the Sanctuary were generally of a personal nature. The only exception is a single fragment with the inscription ΚΑΙ ΟΙ..., which refers to a group, though there is insufficient information to identify which one. As regards the ethnic identity of the devotees, it appears that the Diomedes' cult appealed to non-Greeks. A piece of a *skyphos* from the Late Gnathian period, dated to the late 4th or early 3rd century BC, bears the following text: TRITOS DIOM(ED) [Tritos'[gift] to Diomedes]; the name Tritos has been classified as a south-eastern Illyrian name, and has been only been found in the Illyrian and Epirotic areas, except for a single Sicilian example²¹. The Tritos of the inscription was probably an Illyrian traveller who wished to give thanks to the Aetolian hero for a successful sea-crossing. Unfortunately, we are unable to draw more general conclusions from this single example, although it clearly represents a case (even if an isolated one) of native reception of a Greek cult. We cannot exclude the hypothesis that the Diomedes cult at Cape Ploča may represent a case of syncretism, in which Diomedes succeeded a local divinity that had previously occupied the site (as probably also happened in Veneto)²².

The inscription is of interest not only because it confirms Pliny's account, but also because it allows us to establish the chronological limits of the sanctuary's activity. This corresponds more or less to the information yielded by numismatic sources: the most ancient fragments are from the end of the 4th century BC, while the most recent ones date from the beginning of the 1st century AD. The Diomedes cult was therefore essentially a phenomenon of the Hellenistic age, the period when the Greeks, who established themselves on the central Dalmatian islands, effectively controlled the trade of the area, assuring safe shipping. Even though the Dalmatian coast was frequented by Greeks during the Archaic age, as testified by the presence of Greek objects (Attic and Corinthian ceramics, fragments of statues, *aryballoi*, etc.) from that period on the islands and on the Dalmatian coast²³, and although the first Greek colony in this area, Korkyra Melaina (on the present island of Korčula) was founded at the beginning of the 6th century, Greek interest in the area only really increased after the beginning of

4th century, with the establishment of two new colonial centres. Diodorus of Sicily (whose source was probably Theopompus²⁴) mentions the colony of Issa (modern Vis), probably founded upon the initiative of Dionysius of Syracuse, and, later, the colony of Pharos (modern Stari Grad on the isle of Hvar), the result of the cooperation between the inhabitants of Paros, sent by Delphic oracle, and the Sicilian tyrant in 385/4 BC (συμπράξαντος αὐτοῖς Διονυσίου τοῦ τυράννου)²⁵. Diodorus of Sicily suggests that Dionysius' contribution to the foundation of Pharos would have been justified and facilitated by the prior colonization of Issa²⁶.

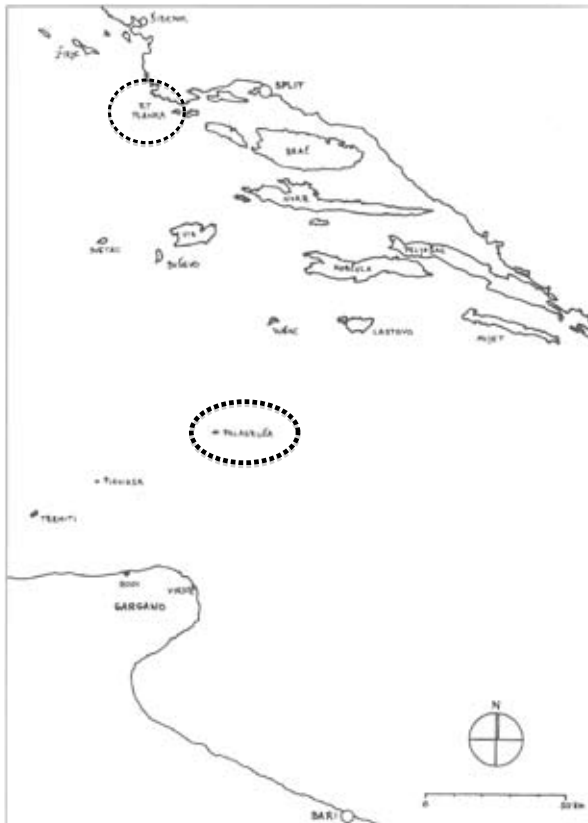
Nevertheless, the tyrant of Syracuse allowed the governor he sent to Issa to intervene in Pharos in order to help the Pharian colonists, who were threatened, a year after their arrival, by the island's Illyrian natives, supported by barbarians from the opposite coast, who had crossed the sea in a multitude of little boats. The hostilities ended in favour of the Greeks: five thousand Illyrians were killed and two thousand taken prisoner, according to the Sicilian source, though Diodorus may have been a little biased²⁷. In any case, Greek arrowheads and traces of fires, found in the archaeological stratum corresponding to the period immediately preceding Greek colonization, confirm that the Greek occupation did not happen with the natives' consent²⁸. Indeed, the relationship between the colonisers and indigenous population continued to be belligerent for some time: an inscription found at Pharos celebrates a military victory by the colonists over the inhabitants of Iader (modern Zara) and their allies,²⁹ and although this is impossible to date precisely, it probably took place in the 4th century BC³⁰. A metric epitaph from the beginning of the 3rd century, found at Issa, honours a certain Callias, slain while fighting against the continent's Illyrians³¹. This evidence reveals a strained relationship with some of the coastline's natives, such as the Liburnians in the area of Iader, who would have perceived the Greek presence as an obstacle to their piracy (particularly in the vicinity of Issa and Pharos, two ideal refuge points, which only Dionysius' forces could have secured and colonized).

The help that Dionysius gave to the Greeks of Pharos and his acts of colonization in the Adriatic are clearly an expression of the power and authority of the Syracusan tyrant, who was able effectively to supplant Athens, the main protagonist of Adriatic traffic in the 5th century, and conduct a good diplomatic and military policy in South Illyria and Epirus. It would not, therefore, be surprising if he used propaganda to support his projects in this part of the Adriatic, as he did in Ancona, Adria and Spina on the other side³². He may have made the figure of Diomedes into the mythic fulcrum of his Adriatic conquests, renaming the Hyllos promontory after the Greek hero. Pliny reveals that this promontory was also known by the name of *peninsula Hyllis*, a toponym that probably preceded the *promontorium Diomedis*³³. The first name likely derived from a Corcyrean tradition concerning the myth of Herakles, whose son was called Hyllos, and may have been connected with the early, and still occasional, visits to the Dalmatian coast during the Archaic period (when the colony of Korkyra Melaina was founded).

The substitution of Hyllos (the eponym of the local Hylleis people) with Diomedes probably resulted from the activities of the Syracuse tyrant and was designed to emphasise Syracuse's control over the Adriatic Sea.

It is possible that the Syracusan centre of Issa controlled the sanctuary alone, through its secondary colony of Tragurion, founded around 300 BC or a little later³⁴, and, more generally, through the dominion exercised along the Illyrian coast by Salona (*ager Salonitanus*)³⁵. The unfortunate alliances contracted by Issa at the time of the civil wars led it to lose its favoured position, which may have resulted in the progressive abandonment of the Diomedes cult. This was probably a deliberate result of the religious policy of Augustus.

The relationship between the Diomedes cult and Adriatic shipping has been further clarified by finds made on a very small island in the centre of the Adriatic, Palagraža



Map 2
Cape Ploča, the island of Palagraža and the "island bridge"
From: Kirigin-Čaće (1998).

(44 km from the Croatian island of Sušac and 53 km from Gargano), again during the Adriatic Island Project³⁶.

Literary sources, in fact, report the existence of one or more islands in the Adriatic where Diomedes was honoured as a god or, in other versions, where he was buried and protected by his companions, who had changed into birds. The most ancient source is Ibycus of Rhegium, followed by a host of more recent authors³⁷. None of these authors position the island(s) correctly, although they almost unanimously place it/them in the Adriatic, not far from Gargano. The only exception is the geographer Pseudo-Scymnos, who locates Diomedes' island in a completely different geographic context, on Lake Lychnidus (modern Lake Ohrid on the border between Macedonia and Albania). The author is probably referring to one of the tiny islands on the Little Prespa Lake, close to Lake Ohrid, near the Albanian, Greek and Macedonian borders. Although archaeological finds show the presence of material from Greece on this island³⁸, this evidence is not sufficient to prove that the legend and cult of Diomedes had spread to such an outlying area. Moreover, the literary passage in question is too obscure and isolated to be seriously considered.

According to the other authors, the island of Diomedes was traditionally located amongst the Tremiti islands, an archipelago 22 km north of Gargano, which includes the islands of San Domenico, San Nicola, Caprara and the rocks of Cretaccio and La Vecchia³⁹. The hero's grave is generally considered to be on the largest of these islands, San Domenico. However, there are no archaeological traces to support this claim, while excavations recently carried out on Palagruža (which is nearby, though not belonging to the Tremiti) shows clear evidence of a Diomedean cult.

Situated at the very centre of the Adriatic, the small archipelago of Palagruža consists of two islands: Vela (Great) and Mala (Little) Palagruža, separated by a 250m wide channel surrounded by small reefs and rocks. Vela Palagruža is 1390m long, between 60 and 270m wide and has an area of some 290 hectares. The highest natural point is 87m above sea level (though, following the construction of a lighthouse in 1875 by the Austrian government, its maximum height is now 109m). The southern side is rocky and bleak, while the northern coast has arable land. However, it is mostly desert, due to lack of natural freshwater sources. There are only two landing-points on the island, Zolo in the south and Stora Vloka in the northwest. From the first of these ports, a path leads up to the central plateau of the island. In the 18th century, fishermen from Vis, who frequented the island while sardine-fishing, built a chapel to St Michael there (today falling into ruin), and a cistern to collect rainwater (at a site named Salamandrjia)⁴⁰. Mala Palagruža is even smaller: 450 m long, 200 m wide and 39 m high, and is totally desert, though rich in layers of flint, which were exploited in prehistoric times.

The archipelago has belonged to the state of Croatia since 1992, which has promoted methodical archaeological campaigns within the ambit of the Adriatic Island Project.

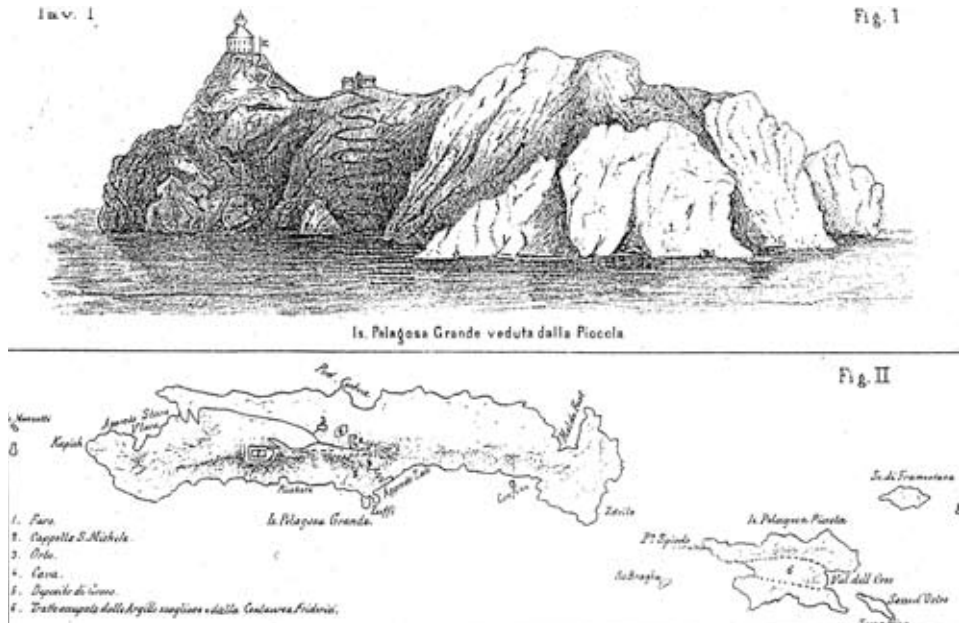


Fig. 1
Vela and Mala Palagruža
From: Marchesetti (1876)

Research has been concentrated on the central plateau of Vela Palagruža at Salamandrija, near the northern edge of the cistern, where a considerable quantity of ceramics have been found from the Geometric, Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic, Roman and Medieval periods. In particular, since the summer of 1994, over 2000 fragments of late Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic ceramics have been found, of which 186 date from the 6th and 5th centuries BC. Eight of these shards have inscriptions⁴¹. The most readable is a fragment of a mid-5th century black-stemmed *kylix*, the outer base of which shows the name ΔΙΟΜΕΔ[...]. It is probably part of a dedication, and there are no doubts as to the identity of the dedicatee. The name of the Greek hero is also recognizable on inscriptions from seven other fragments. The genitive *θεο* inscribed on one vase indicates that Diomedes would have received divine honours in this sanctuary.

Such a quantity of fine Greek ceramic shards concentrated in such a small place leave no doubt as to the function of the site. Palagruža clearly played host to a Diomedean cult, and was active from the Archaic period (no other archaeological trace of the cult of Diomedes has been registered for this period, either in northern Adriatic, Cape Ploča or in Daunia). Unfortunately, the construction of the cistern partly destroyed the older strata and no architectural traces have been found. It is therefore impossible to know if

there was also a temple, or the remains of a grave, at the place where the offerings were made.

Can we then identify Palagruža as the Diomedean island to which the literary sources refer? Unfortunately, the evidence in our possession is still insufficient to give a final answer. However, unlike the island of Palagruža, the Tremiti islands have yielded no traces of cult activity, even though some Greek objects have been found on the two largest islands, San Domenico and San Nicola⁴².

G. Colonna remarks that the distance between Palagruža and the promontory of Gargano does not raise any obstacle as regards the identification of this island with the Diomedean island. Despite being in Croatian waters, the archipelago of Palagruža is closer to the Apulian Cape than to the Dalmatian coast. In fact, its position seems to correspond to the indications given by the literary sources, due to the fact that its position is more frontal in relation to Gargano than the Tremiti islands, which are situated to the north of the promontory⁴³.

Furthermore, the sources describe the Diomedean island, explicitly or implicitly, as an uninhabited place, only occasionally reached by humans during the irregular calls of Greek and barbarian ships⁴⁴. Lacking freshwater springs or wells, and with little arable land, Palagruža did not offer ideal conditions to support human life. The same cannot be said of the Tremiti islands, particularly San Domenico and San Nicola.

The ancient authors sometimes mention an archipelago rather than a single island⁴⁵, and this is also true of Palagruža, notwithstanding its very small dimensions. Additionally, a passage from Ptolemy, which counts five Diomedean islands, does not undermine this identification, if we consider all the islands to the east of the Italian coast, particularly the largest among them (San Domenico, San Nicola, Capraia, Pianosa and Vela Palagruža)⁴⁶.

In addition to these considerations based upon the literary sources, there is also a more compelling argument in favour of Palagruža, namely its geographic position, at the centre of trans-Adriatic navigation. Palagruža is the sole place from where it is possible to see both Adriatic coasts, and would therefore have been perceived as the *omphalos*, or navel, of the region – the sole land reference for any sailor facing the Adriatic crossing. With its favourable winds and currents, the route via Palagruža would have been the safest passage from prehistory until the Middle Ages, as is also testified by the systematic presence of the island on mediaeval nautical charts⁴⁷.

There is no doubt that the easiest route across the Adriatic was the Otranto channel, at least in the Mycenaean Age⁴⁸, but this was not very convenient if the destination included the northern ports of Daunia, Picenum, the Po delta or Veneto, mainly because it was particularly difficult to sail close to the coast on the Italian side. For navigators coming from Greece, the fastest route would have been to follow the Illyrian coast from

Korkyra as far as the Neretva estuary or up to the *promontorium Diomedis*: from there, the crossing would have been facilitated by favourable winds.

One of the oldest routes between the Dalmatian coast and Gargano (in use from the Neolithic age) was via an “island bridge” formed by Korčula, Sušac and Palagruža, which were a regular distance apart, therefore providing safe reference points for mariners⁴⁹. The 50 km that separate Palagruža from the Gargano were easily covered with the help of a favourable surface current. According to the *Itinerarium Maritimum* of Antoninus (5th century AD), the journey from Salona to Siponto could be made in a day and two nights sailing⁵⁰. It was, after all, thanks to this ‘via maestra’ that Daunian ceramics, taken in the opposite direction, were able to arrive in Dalmatia in such great quantities and be distributed as far north as Istria, Slovenia and Veneto⁵¹.

Palagruža also occupied a strategic position for sailors who wanted to travel from Greece to the Po delta and the *Caput Adriae*: setting off from Corfu or the Albanian coast, the vessels could easily reach Palagruža via the island bridge and, from there, take advantage of a powerful current that would propel them northwards to the Po valley’s ports of Adria and Spina, thereby avoiding the *importuosa Italiae litora* and without being obliged to follow the eastern coast⁵².

Palagruža was therefore the navel of the Adriatic, which supports its claims to being the Diomedean Island. Here the sailors would have stopped to pay homage to the hero that Strabo and Lycophron define as the lord of this sea⁵³, invested with the role of protector of shipping⁵⁴. Palagruža is also directly related to other places involved in the Diomedean cult; indeed, the more recent sanctuaries of Timavus, Ancona and the *promontorium Diomedis*, were probably modelled upon it, the latter two as a result of Dionysius’ propaganda.

Archaeological evidence therefore suggests that the sanctuaries of Diomedes may be assimilated to the numerous *euploia* (shrines to successful seafaring). As A. Fenet points out, these were located at sites frequented by crews, who left signs of their devotion there, indicating their hopes and fears with regards to the perils of the sea. These took the form of inscriptions addressed to the divinity to whom the sanctuary was consecrated, and contained vows to ensure a safe crossing, or expressions of thanks at the end of one⁵⁵. These cults logically appeared at strategic navigation points, such as Cape Ploča or Palagruža.

The latter was, without a doubt, one of the first Diomedean sanctuaries, as is witnessed by the strong presence of Archaic and Classical material, which is absent from Cape Ploča. It is very likely that, between the end of the 6th century BC and the beginning of the 4th, it became an obligatory stopping point on the transversal passage that linked the southeast and northwest extremes of the Adriatic, then the privileged route of the Greeks to the Po Delta. The affinities between the black- and red-figure ceramics discovered in Palagruža, Spina and Adria can confirm this⁵⁶.

Based on the archaeological evidence, we can furthermore assert that the cult of Diomedes only became properly established from this time, probably upon the initiative of the principal users of this route. The handwriting on the most ancient inscriptions at Palagruža offers an important insight into the origin of the first believers, as it belongs to the alphabets of Athens and Aegina⁵⁷. There is, then, no doubt that the sanctuary of Palagruža was a key stopping place for Attic and Aeginetan merchants heading towards the Po valley centres, where they had held a trade monopoly from the 6th century BC⁵⁸. They would certainly have been responsible for the establishment, or at least enhancement, of the Diomedean cult on Palagruža, and so it is likely that they brought this cult to the Venetian people, too.

The Diomedean myth existed before this in Daunia, not far from the Adriatic island of Palagruža. In Daunia, the hero was said to have arrived without difficulty from north-western Greece, becoming one of the first users of the island bridge. It is possible that the myth preceded the rite, and that the Athenians developed a site for the Diomedean cult because the island was already linked to the mythic figure of Diomedes in the context of a 'Diomedean route' that led from the Balkans (Diomedes was a hero from Aetolia) to Gargano.

Without the discovery of the sanctuaries of Cape Ploča and Palagruža, the seafaring dimension of the cult of Diomedes would have remained unknown, and our knowledge of the spread of the Diomedes myth would have been confined to the west coast of the Adriatic, from Daunia to Veneto. It is therefore only thanks to archaeological research that the Adriatic profile of Diomedes can be entirely understood. Diomedes was not only a civilizing hero, he was also, more importantly, a protector of trans-Adriatic shipping.

NOTES

- ¹ L. Canfora, *Prima lezione di storia greca*, Bari 2000, pp. VII-VIII.
- ² On Diomedes in Troy, Homer, *Iliad*, VI, 119-236 (Glaucus and Diomedes), X, 150-579 (the capture of Rhesus' horses); V, 1-114 (Diomedes and Aphrodite). For a general introduction to Diomedes, see *Enciclopedia Virgiliana*, s.v. *Diomede*, pp. 77-82, Pauli-Wissowa, s.v. *Diomedes* and Roscher, s.v. *Diomedes*.
- ³ On the origin of this tradition, see U. Fantasia, *Le leggende di fondazione di Brindisi e alcuni aspetti della presenza greca nell'Adriatico*, in "Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa", 1972, 3, 2 (1), p. 127; L. Pearson, *Greek Historians of the West: Timaeus and his Predecessors*, Atlanta 1987, p. 73 and I. Malkin, *The Returns of Odysseus: Colonisation and Ethnicity*, Berkeley 1998, p. 234.
- ⁴ *Scholium* to Lycophron, *Alexandra*, 610, fr. 17 Gentili-Prati.
- ⁵ There are numerous literary sources. We refer mainly to Lycophron, *Alexandra*, 592-632 with his *scholia*; Antoninus Liberalis, *Metamorphosis*, XXXVII; Appian, *Civil Wars*, VII, 31; Stephanus Byzantinus, s.v. Ἀργυρίππος; Horace, *Satires*, I, 5, 91-93; Justin, *Epitome*, XX, 1; Pindar, *Nemean Odes*, X, 12-13; Pliny, *Natural History*, III, 104; Strabo, VI, 3, 9.
- ⁶ Lycophron, *Alexandra*, 619-624; *scholium* to Lycophron, *Alexandra*, 601; Pseudo-Aristotle, *De mirabilibus auscultationibus*, 79.

- ⁷ *Scholium* to Pindar, *Nemean Odes*, X, 12; Lycos, *FGrHist* 570 F6; Pseudo-Aristotle, *De mirabilibus auscultationibus*, 79; Virgil, *Aeneid*, XI, 271-274; Ovid, *Metamorphosis*, XIV, 484; Strabo, II, 5, 20; V, 1,8-9; VI, 3, 9; Pliny, *Natural History*, III, 151; X, 126-127 and XII, 6; Aelianus, *De natura animalium*, I, 1; Theophrastus, *History of Plants*, IV, 5, 6; Stephanus Byzantinus, s.v. *Diombédeia*; Solinus, II, 45; St. Augustine, *City of God*, XVIII, 16; Avien, *Orbis descriptio*, 646-649; Eustathius, *scholium* to Dionysius Periegetes, 481-486; Isidore of Seville, *Etymologies*, XII, 7, 28-29; Solinus, II, 45-51; Pomponius Mela, *Chorography*, II, 7, 114.
- ⁸ Strabo, V, 1, 8-9.
- ⁹ Pliny, *Natural History*, III, 120; Stephanus Byzantinus, s.v. *Ἀτρία*.
- ¹⁰ See Map 1.
- ¹¹ Pliny, *Natural History*, III, 141.
- ¹² E. Lepore, *Problemi storici dell'area adriatica nell'età della colonizzazione greca*, L'Adriatico tra mediterraneo e penisola balcanica nell'Antichità, Lecce-Matera, 21-27 ottobre 1973, Taranto 1983, p. 131.
- ¹³ I. Lucius, *Vita B. Ioannis confessoris episcopi Traguriensis et eius miracula*, Rome 1657, and Id., *De regno Dalmatiae et Croatiae*, Amsterdam 1666.
- ¹⁴ The Croatian and Italian toponyms refer to the orographic aspect of the promontory head, whose rocks have been so deeply eroded by wind and sea that they have become like "plates, slates, boards". This is in fact what the term "ploča" and the Venetian word "planca" both mean.
- ¹⁵ See Map 2.
- ¹⁶ S. Bilić Dujmušić, *The Archaeological Excavations on Cape Ploča (Promontorium Diomedis)*, in *Greek Influence along the East Adriatic coast*. Proceedings of the International Conference held in Split from September 24 to 26 1998, Split 2002, p. 486, and Id., *Excavations at Cape Ploča near Šibenik, Croatia*, in "Hesperia", 2004, 18, p. 128.
- ¹⁷ See B. Kirigin, S. Čače, *Archaeological Evidence for the Cult of Diomedes in the Adriatic*, in "Hesperia", 1998, 9, p. 72.
- ¹⁸ See the catalogue of coins found at Cape Ploča, edited by M. Bonačić-Mandinić, *The Coins Found at Ploča Promontory*, in "I Greci in Adriatico 2", Rome 2004 = "Hesperia", 2004, 18, pp. 151- 161.
- ¹⁹ B. Kirigin, *The Beginning of Promontorium Diomedis*, in "I Greci in Adriatico 2", Rome 2004 = "Hesperia", 2004, 18, p. 143.
- ²⁰ See Kirigin, *The Beginning* cit., p. 148.
- ²¹ V. Toçi, *Données récentes sur l'onomastique illyrienne à Durrachium* (résumé), in «Iliria», 1986, 1, pp. 133-134; D. Rendić-Miočević, *Epidamnos-Dyrrhachion, Rider-Municipium Riditanum (Dalmatie) et leurs fonds épigraphiques comme sources de l'onomastique illyrienne (Un essai de rapprochement)*, in *Grecs et Illyriens dans les inscriptions en langue grecque d'Epidamne-Dyrrhachion et d'Apollonia d'Illyrie*, Actes de la Table ronde internationale (Clermont-Ferrand, 19-21 octobre 1989), Paris 1993, p. 123; C. De Simone, *L'elemento non greco nelle iscrizioni di Durazzo e Apollonia*, in *Grecs et Illyriens dans les inscriptions en langue grecque d'Epidamne-Dyrrhachion et Apollonia d'Illyrie*, Actes de la table ronde internationale (Clermont-Ferrand, 19-21 octobre 1989), Paris 1993, p.66.
- ²² It should be pointed out that there are important differences between the Venetian and Illyrian cults in honour of Diomedes: the Venetian ritual of horse sacrifice was very probably exclusively practised by native populations with a ceremony from their own culture. Tritos, on the other hand, was an Illyrian who dedicated an offering to Diomedes in the manner of a Greek visitor to the sanctuary.
- ²³ N. Cambi, *La civiltà dei Greci nell'Adriatico orientale*, in "Hesperia", 2003, 17, p. 12ff.
- ²⁴ T. Alfieri Tonini, *Diodoro e la colonizzazione adriatica di Siracusa*, in "Hesperia", 2002, 15, p. 215.

- ²⁵ Diodorus of Sicily, XV, 13, 14. See also Pseudo-Scylax, 23 and Pseudo-Scymnos, 413-414, who refer to the existence of a Syracusan colony on the isle. About Pharos: Stephanus Byzantinus, *s.v. Παέρον*; Pseudo-Scymnos, 425-427; Pseudo-Scylax, 23; Stephanus Byzantinus, *s.v. Faéρον*; *scholium* to Apollonios of Rhodes, IV, 1215; Strabo, VII, 5, 5. Regarding Issa, see B. Kirigin, *The Greeks in Central Dalmatia: Some New Evidence*, in J.-P. Descoedres (ed.), *Greek Colonists and Native Populations*. Proceedings of the First Australian Congress of Classical Archaeology held in honour of Emeritus Professor A.D. Trendall (Sidney 9-14 July 1985), Oxford 1990, pp. 303-311. Issa's site was also inhabited before Syracusan colonization, but there is no archaeological evidence of Greek occupation of the island before the age of the Parian colonization. On the pre-Greek occupation of Pharos, see M. Katić, *Agglomération illyrienne pré-grecque à Stari Grad sur l'île de Hvar*, in P. Cabanes (ed.), *L'Illyrie Méridionale et l'Épire dans l'Antiquité-III*, Actes du III^e colloque internationale de Chantilly (16-19 octobre 1996), Paris, 1999, pp. 61-65. Pottery fragments, with the red and black figures of the early 5th century BC, have been found on the island, testifying to the existence of contact with the Greek world in the pre-colonial age. See also D. Rendić-Miočević, *I Greci in Adriatico*, in "Studi romagnoli", 1962, 13, pp. 50-51.
- ²⁶ It should be pointed out that Diodorus' text uses the toponym Lissos. However, it seems more logical to assume that Diodorus was referring to the colony of Issa, much nearer to Pharos than to Lissos (modern Lesh, in Northern Albania) which was 300km away. Unfortunately the subsequent lines of his text have been destroyed, leaving an embarrassing gap. Archaeological research directed by F. Prendi in the 1970s at Lissos, at the mouth of the Drin, shows that there are no trace of 4th century occupation; evidence appears only at the beginning of the 3rd century. Moreover, no objects of Sicilian origin have been found. The hypothesis that the site was a Syracusan colony is therefore very weak, although this does not exclude the possibility that, given its strategic position, it may have been used as a Syracusan naval base. Diodorus' text does, however, allude to a real established colony, so it would seem legitimate to correct the text. P. Anello is in favour of the Syracusan presence in Lissos (*La colonizzazione siracusana in Adriatico*, in L. Braccisi, S. Graciotti (ed.) *La Dalmazia e l'altra sponda. Problemi di archaeologia adriatica*, Florence 1999, p. 125). On the other hand, F. Prendi and K. Zheku (*La ville illyrienne de Lissos, son origine et son système de fortification*, in "Studia Albanica", 1971, pp. 35-51) disagree. On this controversy, see A. Coppola, *Demetrio di Faro. Un protagonista dimenticato*, Rome 1993, p. 16, with bibliography, note 10. On Dionysius' projected thalassocracy, see P. Anello, *Dionisio il Vecchio I: Politica adriatica e tirrenica*, Palermo 1980, pp. 25-36.
- ²⁷ Diodorus of Sicily, XV, 14. Part of the manuscript once again uses the toponym Lissos. F. Vial, *Diodore de Sicile. Bibliothèque historique. Livre XV*, Paris 1977, p. 127, prefers the *lectio* 'Iss+'. An intervention from Issa would have been easier: a squadron arriving from Lissos, 300 km away, would hardly have arrived in time to save the Parian colonists on Pharos.
- ²⁸ See Katić, *Agglomération* cit., p. 64.
- ²⁹ J. Brunšmid, *Die Inschriften und Münzen der griechischen Städte Dalmatiens*, Vienna 1898, p. 16, 3n.; V. Gaffney, B. Kirigin, M. Petrić, *The Adriatic Islands Project. Contact, Commerce and Colonialism (6000 BC- AD 600)*, Volume I, *The Archaeological Heritage of Hvar, Croatia*, Oxford 1997, p. 236 and C. Cobiانchi, *Le iscrizioni greche dalle colonie adriatiche di Dionisio I*, in "Anemos", 2005, 3, n° 3, p. 10: Φάριοι ἀπὸ Ἰαδασινῶν καὶ τῶν συμμάχων τὰ ὄπλα... "The Pharians [offered] these weapons confiscated from the Iadasinoi and their allies...".
- ³⁰ See also Gaffney, Kirigin, Petrić, *The Adriatic* cit., pp. 236-237. The attack may also be placed after the downfall of the Syracuse tyranny in 357 BC.
- ³¹ L. Moretti, *Iscrizioni storiche ellenistiche*. vol. 2, Florence 1976, 121n. and Cobiانchi, *Le iscrizioni* cit., pp. 45-47, 56n.
- ³² On the use of the figure of Diomedes by Dionysius in Ancona, Adria and Spina, see A. Coppola, *Adria e la tradizione siracusana*, in "Padusa", 1990-1991, 26-27, pp. 287-289, and L. Braccisi, *Diomedes cum Gallis*, in "Hesperia", 1991, 2, p. 89ff.

- ³³ Pliny, *Natural History*, III, 141.
- ³⁴ Strabo, VII, 5, 5 and Polybius, XXXII, 9, 2, and XXXII, 18. See J. Wilkes, *Dalmatia*, London 1969, pp. 13-28; L. Braccesi, *Grecità adriatica*, Bologna 1977, pp. 310-317 and D. Rendić-Miočević, *I Greci in Adriatico*, in "Studi romagnoli", 1962, 13, p. 48.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 54, where the autor speaks of an Issean empire on the Illyrian coast.
- ³⁶ See Map 2.
- ³⁷ *Scholium* to Pindar, *Nemean Odes*, X, 12-13 and, for the later sources, see n. 7.
- ³⁸ See P. Cabanes, *Les Illyriens de Bardylis à Genthios (IVe-IIe siècles avant J.-C.)*, Paris 1988, p. 203 and G. Daux, *Chronique des fouilles et découvertes archéologiques en Grèce en 1959*, in "Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique", 1960, 84, p. 765. See also V. Bitrakova Grozdanova, *L'agglomération antique et médiévale de Golem Grad sur le lac de Prespa*, in "Macedoniae Acta Archaeologica", 1985-86, 10, pp. 131-133.
- ³⁹ See R. L. Beaumont, *Greek Influence in the Adriatic Sea before the Fourth Century B.C.*, in "Journal of Hellenic Studies", 1936, 56, pp. 159-204, pp. 194-195; V. Bérard, *La colonisation grecque de l'Italie méridionale et de la Sicile dans l'Antiquité: l'Histoire et la légende*, Rome 1957, pp. 368-376, p. 387; Braccesi, *Grecità* cit., p. 15, 12n.; B. D'Agostino, *La Daunia arcaica e i suoi rapporti con la Campania*, in "Profili della Daunia antica", 1991, 7, pp. 35-48; J. Gagé, *Les traditions "diomédiques" dans l'Italie ancienne, de l'Apulie à l'Etrurie Méridionale et quelques-unes des origines de la légende de Mézence*, in "Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome-Antiquité", 1972, 84 (2), pp. 735-788; A. Coppola, *Siracusa e il Diomede adriatico*, in "Prometheus", 1988, 14, 3, p. 222.
- ⁴⁰ See Fig. 1.
- ⁴¹ Kirigin, Čače, *Archaeological Evidence* cit., p. 64.
- ⁴² A. Fornaro, *Carta archeologica di S. Nicola, Tremiti*, Bari 1993, pp. 91-114.
- ⁴³ G. Colonna, *Pelagosa, Diomede e le rotte dell'Adriatico*, in "Archeologia classica", 1998, 50, p. 370. See also S. Forenbaher, V. Gaffney, J.W. Hayes, T. Kaiser, B. Kirigin, P. Leach, N. Vujnović, *Hvar – Vis – Palagruža 1992-1993. A preliminary report of the Adriatic Island Project (Contact, commerce and colonisation 6000 B.C. – 600 A.D.)*, in "Vjesnik za arheologiju i historiju dalmatinsku", 1994, 86, p. 45.
- ⁴⁴ *Scholium* to Lycophron, *Alexandra*, 601; Pseudo-Aristotle, *De mirabilibus auscultationibus*, 79; Antoninus Liberalis, *Metamorphosis*, 37, 5.
- ⁴⁵ See Strabo, II, 5, 20 and VI, 3, 9; Pliny, *Natural History*, III, 151 and Eustathius, *scholium* to Dionysius the Perieget, 481-486.
- ⁴⁶ Ptolemy, *Geography* III, 1, 80.
- ⁴⁷ The hypothesis that the island was frequently visited during prehistory is supported by the discovery of Tyrrhenian obsidian and by some remains of Illyrian culture from Cetina. See D. Radić, *Le rôle de la vallée de la Neretva et du «pont insulaire» dans les liaisons entre les côtes opposées de l'Adriatique (résumé)*, in "Arheološka Istraživanja u Naroni i Dolini Neretve", Zagreb-Metković-Split 2003, p. 316 and Forenbaher *et al.*, *Hvar – Vis – Palagruža* cit., pp. 38-41.
- ⁴⁸ See Pliny, *Natural History*, III, 100. On the Otranto channel, see E. Deniaux, *Introduction. Le canal d'Otrante et la Méditerranée antique et médiévale*, in E. Deniaux (ed.), *Le Canal d'Otrante et la Méditerranée antique et médiévale*, Colloque organisé à l'Université de Paris X - Nanterre (20-21 novembre 2000), Bari 2005, pp. 7-14, with bibliography.
- ⁴⁹ See Map 2 and Radić, *Le rôle* cit., p. 316: The author emphasises the importance of evidence pointing to exchanges taking place between the two seas since the Neolithic, before the two landmasses were separated by the formation of the sea in the Mesolithic. Research has shown that, during the Middle Neolithic, there was intense exchange of painted ceramics, flint and obsidian objects thanks to the use of the "island bridge". The contacts became rarer in the Late Neolithic and Eneolithic, when the civilisa-

tions on either side of the Adriatic fell under the influence of their respective hinterlands, but started again in the Bronze Age, with the powerful Cetina culture.

- ⁵⁰ See P. Arnaud, *Les routes de la navigation antique, Itinéraire en Méditerranée*, Paris 2005, p. 205.
- ⁵¹ E. de Iulii, *La ceramica geometrica della Daunia*, Florence 1977, pp. 83-87 and N. Petrić, *Finds of Apulian Geometric Pottery in Central Dalmatia*, in "Taras", 1994, 13, 1-2, pp. 217-222.
- ⁵² Colonna, *Pelagosa* cit., p. 376.
- ⁵³ Strabo, V, 1, 9 and Lycophron, *Alexandra*, 630.
- ⁵⁴ See *scholium* to Pindar, *Nemean Odes*, X, 12.
- ⁵⁵ A. Fenet, *Sanctuaires marins du Canal d'Otrante*, in E. Deniaux (ed.), *Le Canal d'Otrante et la Méditerranée antique et médiévale*, Colloque organisé à l'Université de Paris X - Nanterre (20-21 novembre 2000), Bari 2005, p. 47.
- ⁵⁶ Kirigin, Čače, *Archaeological Evidence* cit., p. 65, 78; Colonna, *Pelagosa* cit., pp. 372-373.
- ⁵⁷ Colonna, *Pelagosa* cit., p. 374. The Doricism of some graffiti could simply refer to Aegina.
- ⁵⁸ On the Athenian and Aeginetan presence in Adria, see F. Raviola, *Atene in Occidente e Atene in Adriatico*, in L. Braccisi, S. Graciotti (ed.), *La Dalmazia e l'altra sponda. Problemi di archaiologia adriatica*, Florence 1999, p. 51ff, and C. Antonetti, *I Greci ad Adria tra il VI e il V secolo a.C.*, in M.G. Angeli, A. Donati (ed.), *Serta antiqua et mediaevalia, VII. Il cittadino, lo straniero, il barbaro, fra integrazione ed emarginazione nell'Antichità*. Atti del I Incontro Internazionale di Storia Antica (Genova, 22-24 maggio 2003), Rome 2005, pp. 115-141.

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SOURCES

1) Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, III, 141:

Liburniae finis et initium Delmatiae Scardona in amne eo XII (millia) passum a mari. Dein Tariotarum antiqua regio et castellum Tariona, promontorium Diomedis uel, ut alii, paeninsula Hyllis circuitu C (millia), Tragurium ciuium Romanorum, marmore notum, Siculi, in quem locum Diuus Claudios ueteranos misit, Salona colonia ab Iader CXII (millia).

The end of Liburnia and beginning of Dalmatia is Scardona, which is on the same river, 12 miles from the sea. Thenceforward are: the old region of Tariotes and fortress Tariona, the cape of Diomedes, or, according to the others, peninsula Hyllis, which is 100 miles in diameter, Tragurium of Roman citizens famous for its marble, Siculi, where divine Claudius sent his veterans, colonia Salona 112 miles distant from Jader.

2) Lycophron, *Alexandra*, 592-632

Ὅ δ' Ἀργυρίπταν Δαυνίων παγκληρίαν
παρ' Αὔσονίτης Φυλαμὸν δομήσεται,
πικρὰν ἑταίρων ἑπτερωμένην ἰδὼν
οἰωνόμικτον μοῖραν, οἱ θαλασσίαν
δίαιταν αἰνήσουσι, πορκέων δίκην,
κύκνοισιν ἰνδαλθέντες εὐγλήνοισι δομήν.
Ῥάμφεσσι δ' ἀγρώσσοντες ἑλλόπων θοροῦς
φερώνυμον νησίδα νάσσονται πρόμου,
θεατρομόρφῳ πρὸς κλίτει γεωλόφῳ
ἀγιοπλαστήσαντες ἑμπέδοις τομαῖς
πυκνὰς καλιὰς, Ζῆθον ἐκμιμούμενοι.
Ὅμοῦ δ' ἔς ἅ γρ' ἀνὰ κοῖταιάν νάπην
νύκτωρ στελοῦνται, πάντα φεύγοντες βροτῶν
κάρβανον ὄχλον, ἐν δὲ γραικίταις πέπλοις
κόλπων ἰανθμοῦς ἠθάδας διζήμενοι,
καὶ κρίμνα χειρῶν κάπιδὸρπιον τρύφος
μάζης σπάσσονται, προσφιλες κνυζοῦμενοι,
τῆς πρὶν διαίτης τλήμονες μεμνημένοι.
Τροϊζηνίας δὲ τραῦμα φοιτάδος πλάνης
ἔσται κακῶν τε πημάτων παραίτιον,
ὅταν θρασεῖα θυοῦρας οἰστρήσῃ κύων
πρὸς λέκτρα. Τύμβος δ' αὐτὸν ἐκσῶσει μόρου
Ὀπλοσμίας, σφαγαῖσιν ἠὲ τρεπισμένον.
Κολοσσοβάμων δ' ἐν πτυχαῖσιν Αὔσόνων
σταθεῖς ἐρείσει κῶλα χερμάδων ἔπι
τοῦ τειχοποιοῦ γαπέδων Ἀμοιβέως,
τὸν ἔρματίτην νηὸς ἐκβαλὼν πέτρον.
Κρίσει δ' Ἀλαίνου τοῦ κασιγνήτου σφαλεῖς

εὐχὰς ἀρούραις ἀμφ' ἔτητύμους βαλεῖ,
 Δημοῦς ἀνεῖναι μήποτ' ὄμπνιον στάχυν
 Γύας τιθαβῶσσοντος ἀρδηθμῶ Διός,
 ἦν μή τις αὐτοῦ ρίζαν Αἰτωλῶν σπάσας
 χέρσον λαχίην, βουσὶν αὐτ' ἑλακας τεμών.
 Στήλαις δ' ἀκινήτοισιν ὀχμάσει πέδον,
 ἃς οὐ τις ἀνδρῶν ἐκ βίας καυχῆσεται
 μετοχλίσσας ὀλίζον. Ἡ γὰρ ἀπτέρως
 αὐτὰ παλιμπόρευτον ἴζονται βάσιν,
 ἀνδρῶν ἀπέζοις ἵχνεσιν δατούμενα.
 Θεὸς δὲ πολλοῖς αἰπὺς αὐδηθήσεται,
 ὅσοι παρ' Ἴοῦς γρῶνον οἰκοῦνται πέδον,
 δράκοντα τὸν φθειραντα Φαίακας κτανῶν.

Another shall found Argyrippa, a Daunian estate beside Ausonian Phylamus, seeing the bitter fate of his comrades turned to winged birds, who shall accept a sea life, after the manner of fishermen, like in form to bright-eyed swans. Seizing in their bills the spawn of fishes they shall dwell in an island which bears their leader's name, on a theatre-shaped rising ground, building in rows their close-set nests with firm bits of wood, after the manner of Zethus. And together they shall betake them to the chase and by night to rest in the dell, avoiding all the alien crowd of men, but in folds of Grecian robes seeking their accustomed resting-place they shall eat crumbs from the hand and fragments of cake from the table, murmuring pleasantly, remembering, hapless ones, their former way of life. His wounding of the Lady of Troezen shall be part cause of his wild lustful bitch being frenzied for adulterous bed. But the altar-tomb of Hoplosmia shall save him from doom, when already prepared for slaughter. And in the glen of Ausonia he shall stand like a colossus resting his feet on boulders, the foundations of Amoebeus, the builder of the walls, when he has cast out of his ship the ballast stones. And, disappointed by the judgement of his brother Alaenus, he shall cast an effectual curse upon the fields, that they may never send up the opulent corn-ear of Deo, when Zeus with his rain nurtures the soil, save only if one who draws his blood from his own Aetolian stock shall till the land, cleaving the furrows with team of oxen. And with pillars which no man shall boast to have moved even a little by his might. For as on wings they shall come back again, traversing with trackless steps the terraces. And a high god shall he be called by many, even by those who dwell by the cavernous plain of Io, when he shall have slain the dragon that harried the Phaeacians.

3) Strabo, VI, 9

Τῆς δὲ τοῦ Διομήδους δυναστείας περὶ τὴν θάλατταν ταύτην αἶ τε Διομήδειοι νῆσοι μαρτύρια καὶ τὰ περὶ Δαυνίου καὶ τὸ Ἴργος τὸ Ἴππιον ἱστορούμενα.

That Diomedes did hold sovereignty over the country around this sea is proved both by the Diomedean islands, and the traditions concerning the Daunii and Argos-Hippium.