

TOMASZ KOWAL

RISAN, MONTENEGRO. EXCAVATIONS IN 2013

Location: Risan, opština (county) of Kotor, Montenegro

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Excavation timeline: 17.06–09.07.2013

Risan (Greek *Rhizon*, Latin *Risinium*), is a town on the northern branch of Kotor Bay, also called the Lagoon of Risan. Excavations in 2013 were focused on two sites, the main effort being put on Gradine Hill, which towers over the Ancient town, and the other investigated site being in Sector Carine VII.

This season's fieldwork results have contributed significantly to the knowledge of the more recent history of the town – from the 15th to the 18th c., when, from 1482 to 1684, Risan was part of the Ottoman Empire, with two short breaks in 1538–1539 and 1670–1671. From 1684 to 1797 the town ultimately became part of the Republic of Venice, when the Venetians expanded into the Kotor Bay region (DROBNJAKOVIĆ 2003: 74–102).

Gradine Hill, where one of the sites excavated in 2013 is located, lies to the north of the Ancient town. Ruins of a tower and fortifications from the Medieval and later periods can still be seen on its summit. Previous archaeological work took place in 2008 when a section of a stone pavement and a series of rooms were explored. Some artefacts attributed to Greek and Roman Antiquity were also discovered (DYCZEK ET AL. 2009: 133–135). Seven trenches excavated in 2013 on the summit of the hill were aimed at tracing possible architectural remains. Trenches 1, 2 and 3 were situated to the south of the Turkish period tower, whereas Trenches 5, 6 and 7 were grouped to the north of this tower. Trial Pit 4, which was intended as a stratigraphic cut, adjoined the tower on the west and was dug next to a trench from 2006.

The plant cover was cleared from the summit and the stone terraces below it, uncovering all of the Medieval fortifications. Once the walls could be studied, it proved possible to distinguish two major phases of construction: Turkish and Venetian, as well as a number of sub-phases, additions and extensions. Evidence of repair to the walls could also be traced (Fig. 1).



Walls from the Ottoman period traced on Gradine Hill indicate that the Turks were the first to return to the hill after its abandonment in Antiquity. The scope of their building works was impressive, extending well beyond the summit itself, which must have proved too small for their needs. Two lower terraces (Nos. II and III) on the hill were adapted for defensive purposes and extensive building activity, encompassing houses, domestic areas, stores and a few water cisterns, took place outside the fortifications. The outer ring of defenses was reinforced after some time with an inner ring, giving the wall a total width of 1.2 m. This measure was evidently meant to strengthen the fortifications and it should be kept in mind that the evolution of siege tactics and development of new siege machines during the 200 years that the Turks occupied the region must have necessitated an appropriate response on the part of fortification builders. Moreover, the region was repeatedly devastated by strong earthquakes, such as the tremor of 1667 (DROBNJAKOVIĆ 2003: 87–88). This could have also resulted in the fortress being rebuilt and reinforced on a number of occasions. The defenses on the lowest terrace took advantage of the three-meter drop of the natural cliff in this area. The walls were rather haphazard, both in plan and construction. The stones were only roughly dressed and the mortar used for bonding crumbled easily. The structure was not homogeneous and the thickness of the wall did not keep to any standards even over short



Fig. 1. Aerial photo of Gradine Hill with the uncovered stone structures and Terraces I, II and III (Photo S. Rzeźnik, M. Pisz, J. Balcerzak).
Ryc. 1. Zdjęcie lotnicze Gradine z widocznymi konstrukcjami kamiennymi i zaznaczonymi tarasami I, II i III.

distances. Fieldwork resulted in the discovery of many artefacts from the relevant period: extensive numbers of iron nails of diverse size and sherds of ornamented pottery vessels. Perhaps of greatest interest is an ornamental lid of a kettle or jug, which was glazed and covered with attached ceramic bosses (inv. No. 15/13 W, Fig. 2). The piece is a good example of wares characteristic of the Ottoman period.

The second architectural phase recorded in the excavations refers to Venetian construction. The town was known during this period as *Forto castello di Risano* (DROBNJAKOVIĆ 2003: 74). The layout and building technique from this period show considerable care and clarity of design. The ring of defenses incorporated the summit and upper terrace. The walls crossed at right angle, hence interiors were with very few exceptions truly rectangular in plan. The structural parameters of the walls, both outer and inner, followed set standards. They stood on solid foundations, most often set directly on bedrock, and were constructed of several rows of stones which made them more stable. Outer and inner faces were well dressed and smoothed. The limestone blocks used in construction were well dressed and their dimensions are regular. The bonding mortar was compact, durable dark beige cement. It is possible that Venetian stonecutters cut and dressed the stone blocks on

the spot. We have found a good analogy in the town of Stari Bar, which lies in the southern part of Montenegro. Stone structures built similarly as in our case (technique No. 4) are dated to the Venetian period (GELICHI, GUŠTIN 2005: 31–33). On Gradine Hill, several Venetian coins were found, one of them is particularly interesting (Fig. 3; inv. No. 29/13 W).

Obverse: facing Lion of St. Mark holding the open Book of the Gospels

Obverse legend: *S•MARC•VEN* *II*

Reverse: 3-line inscription, rosette above and below

Reverse Inscription: * / DALM• / •E•T• / ALB• / *

Gardiakos called this coin a *gazetta* which equals 2 *soldi*. It was issued by decree of February 20, 1710 (GARDIAKOS 1980: 21, cat. no. 74).

The explorations yielded evidence of occupation in Antiquity, but no standing architectural remains. The only record of those buildings are profiled cuts in bedrock to be used as foundation trenches. There is also a short section of a wall, built of big blocks of stones from a Cyclopean wall, secondarily incorporated (reused) into the Turkish fortifications. The Ancient stone blocks were presumably reused in the later constructions, hence the total absence of any architectural structures. It is entirely possible that later builders used the Ancient stone blocks as ready building material,

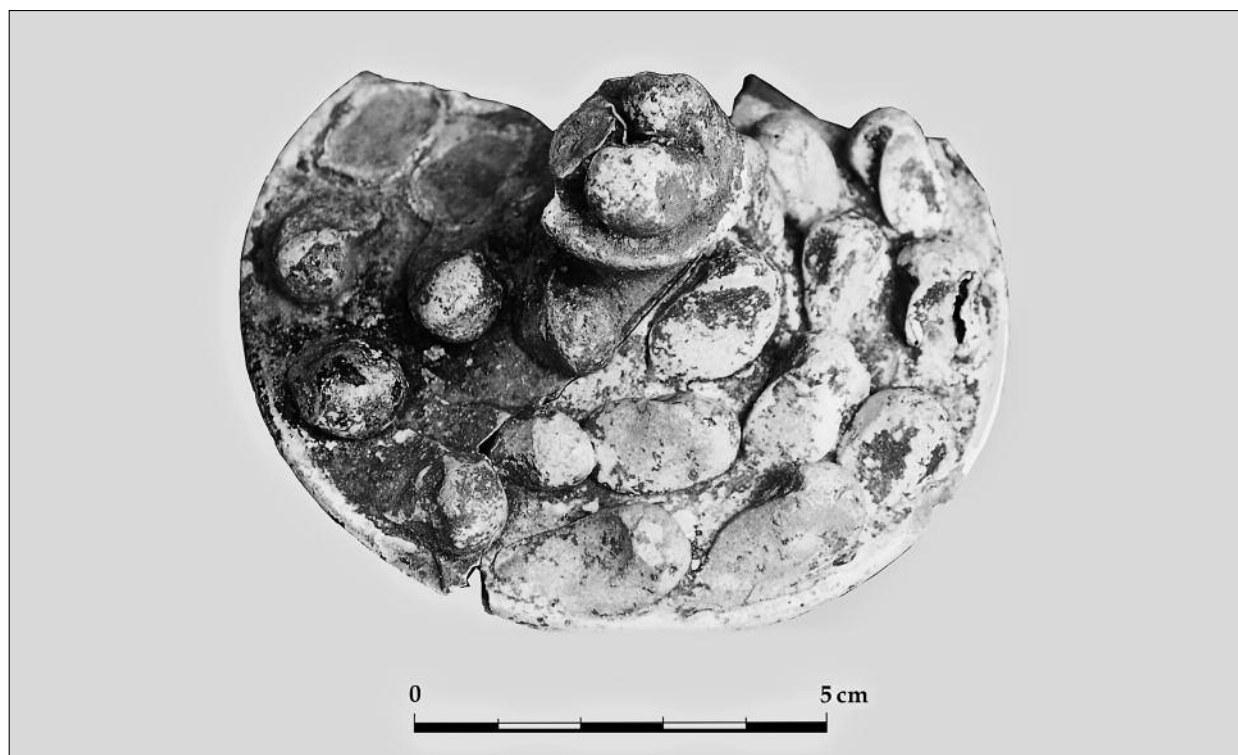


Fig. 2. Ornamental glazed lid from the Turkish period found on Gradine Hill (Photo J. Reclaw).

Ryc. 2. Ozdobna glazurowana pokrywka turecka ze wzgórza Gradine.



Fig. 3. Venetian gazetta coin from 1710 (inv. No. 29/13 W), obverse and reverse, after conservation (Photo M. Bogacki).

Ryc. 3. Moneta wenecka gazetta z roku 1710 (nr inw. 29/13 W); awers i rewers – stan po konserwacji.

dress the blocks to required size on the spot. This hypothesis, however, still needs to be confirmed.

One of the trenches in the eastern part of the hill yielded, among other finds, a Type Rhizon bronze coin of

King Ballaios. Ancient coins are not a frequent find on Gradine Hill, hence it is important to note the context of this find. It was recovered from under a lime floor covered by layers that were sealed by a Medieval pavement. The

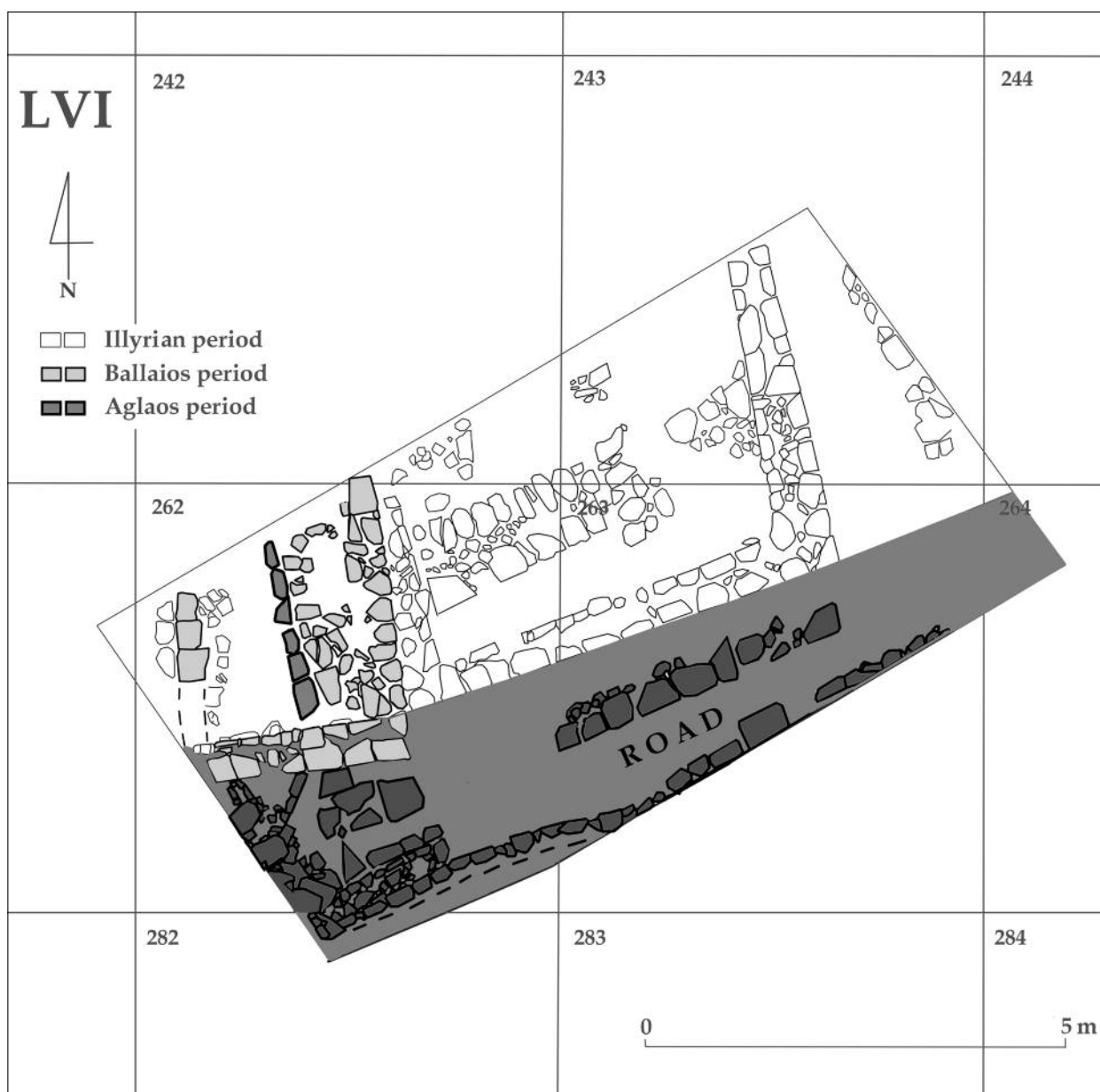


Fig. 4. Plan of uncovered stone structures in Sector Carine VII (Drawing O. Buczacka, S. Grzebalski).

Ryc. 4. Plan odsłoniętych struktur kamiennych na odcinku Carine VII.

deposit which contained the coin was a layer of burnt soil with charcoal and oyster shells. It may be evidence for a fire that consumed the Ancient *arx Rhizon*, the first archaeological confirmation of this conflagration on the hill. A similar layer, also containing coins of King Ballaios, was recorded in the lower town, which is some 30 minutes walk away from the hill (CIOLEK 2010: 8; DYCZEK 2011: 80–81). The fire could have been the result of a raid on the town, internal strife or random misfortune. If it is indeed the same event, then we now know that the cataclysm consumed both the lower town and the fortress on the hill probably in the 3rd/2nd c. BC.

The extensive excavation project could not have been completed this year due to time restrictions and poor weather. Bedrock was reached in a few trenches, in others work was interrupted at Ancient or Medieval levels. Excavations will be continued in the next season.

At Site Carine VII a single trench was excavated between a modern asphalt road and the fence of a private house. The trench, which measured 10×5 m, was opened to check the orientation of Hellenistic streets and insulae in this area. Excavations revealed the remains of walls dating to the three principal architectural phases of Ancient Risan (Fig. 4) and permitted early occupation levels to be reached

thanks to the low karstic water table. The building from the earliest phase, which is dated to the verge of the 4th and 3rd c. BC, was raised of broken stone with one dressed face, bonded in earth and river or marine pebbles. Two rooms were cleared, one unit being 4.4 m wide and the other one, parallel to the first one, being smaller, just 2 m in width. The length of the largest room exceeds the uncovered 3.5 m, and the length of smaller room exceeded the uncovered 1 m. The walls were oriented N-S and E-W. The fill of this building yielded Greek coins from the Adriatic coast and coins of King Ballaios. Also from this level was a meter-wide structural wall that appears to have been dismantled already in Antiquity. The building technique and bonding were similar to that of the walls dating from the earliest phase.

The foundations of walls from the second phase which falls into the reign of King Ballaios, that is the mid-3rd c. BC, were based for the most part on the earlier structures. The present excavations once again confirmed this fact, showing how the builders of the town took advantage of standing ruins as the base for their new projects. Therefore, the orientation of the new buildings largely followed that of the ruins found underneath. But this time the building material was different: well-dressed limestone blocks and slabs of smaller size, measuring 30×20×15 cm. The floors

were made of fitted stone plates from 2 cm to 4 cm thick, set in a layer of water-resistant clay and alluvia.

The third architectural phase corresponded with the buildings of Aristion and Aglaos previously explored by the team in Carine (KOWAL 2012: 201–203; 2013: 163–164). This phase is preliminarily dated to the 2nd and 1st c. BC. The main E-W street, framing the insula with the House of Aristion from the north, was traced within the limits of the present trench. The street, visible in the section, was 1.5 m wide and was furnished with a sewage channel. Its hypothetical intersection with a channel discovered in 2011 falls under the modern asphalt road, thus permitting an estimate of the size of the insula in this architectural phase, i.e., about 25×30 meters. These buildings were constructed already after the huge fire.

Finds from archaeological layers belonging to the second and third phases included many coins of Ballaios, as well as a rich pottery assemblage consisting of tableware, among which there were black-slipped plates, bowls, beakers, *skyphoi*, *unguentaria* and others. The rubble yielded remains of amphorae, mainly of the Greek-Italic Vandermersch's Types: MGS (*Magna Graecia* [and] *Sicilia*) IV, V and VI (VANDERMERSCH 1994: 73–76, 78, 81–87) and Toniolo's Types: 4, 4A, 6C, 8A, 14B and 15B (TONIOLO 2000:



Fig. 5. Bronze figurine of Sylenos (inv. No. 81/13 W) after conservation (Photo J. Reclaw).

Ryc. 5. Statuetka Sylena z brązu (nr inw. 81/13 W). Stan po konserwacji.

38–48, 103–104, 127–128, 133–136) as well as Roman amphorae mainly of Type Dressel 6 (DRESSEL 1899).

Of greatest interest among this year's finds was a bronze figurine (inv. No. 81/13 W). It was found in a layer of burning, above the rubble, in association with a coin of Ballaios and a black gloss bowl. It depicts Sylenos, Dionysus's mentor and companion (Fig. 5). The bearded and obese figure is shown naked, but wearing shoes with pointed toes and a wreath of grapevine leaves on his head. He is clearly partaking of wine, a drinking cup in his right hand and hugging a *cornucopia* in his left. His intoxicated state has been rendered with utmost realism by the ancient sculptor. The statuette was preserved in excellent condition and is virtually untouched. With a height of 5.7 cm and dimensions at the base 4.9×3.7 cm, it weighs 211 g.

During a short stay with the mission Assoc. Prof. Renata Ciolek (Institute of Archaeology, University of Warsaw) identified part of the conserved coins from the "Great Hoard" discovered in 2010 and studied the conserved coins from the 2012 season.

The last task of the season was a comprehensive photographic portfolio of the sites at Carine VII and on Gradine Hill. This was accomplished by a team comprising Stanisław Rzeźnik, Michał Pisz and Jacek Balcerzak. Aerial photos were taken with a gimbal-suspended Canon 5d Mark II camera with a Canon EF-17-40 mm L lens mounted on a UAV hexacopter DJI S800. This configuration allows for vertical take-off and landing, and precise positioning above the object to be photographed, making right-angle photography possible. Near to a hundred markers were measured with a laser total station on location within a geodetic site grid. Low-altitude photos were merged using the markers to produce a true orthophoto plan of the sites, undistorted and having metric properties.

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TOMASZ KOWAL

RISAN, CZARNOGÓRA. WYKOPALISKA W 2013 R.

W 2013 roku w Risan badania wykopaliskowe przeprowadzono na dwóch stanowiskach, przy czym główne prace ulokowano na wzgórzu Gradine. Jest to miejsce górujące nad antycznym miastem. Drugim obszarem eksploracji był odcinek Carine VII. W czasie tegorocznej kampanii poczyniono ważne ustalenia chronologiczne dotyczące użytkowania wzgórza w czasach nowożytnych. Na szczycie Gradine odsłonięto wszystkie znajdujące się tu mury. Po ich oczyszczeniu okazało się, że można wyróżnić dwie podstawowe fazy aktywności budowlanej. Pierwszą fazę zabudowy stanowiły konstrukcje tureckie, datowane na lata 1482–1684 (**Ryc. 1**), drugą – konstrukcje weneckie, datowane na lata 1684–1797. Weneccjanie przebudowali szczyt wzgórza (I) oraz jeden taras (II). Podczas prac pozyskano wiele zabytków związanych z okresem osmańskim, w tym dekoracyjną przykrywkę czajnika bądź dzbana – nr inw. 15/13 W (**Ryc. 2**). Odkryto także kilka monet weneckich. Na szczególną uwagę zasługuje moneta opatrzona herbem Republiki Weneckiej na awersie i legendą * / DALM• / •E•T• / ALB• / * na rewersie – nr inw. 29/13 W (**Ryc. 3**).

Podczas eksploracji wzgórza znaleziono starożytne artefakty, lecz nie odkryto antycznej zabudowy *in situ*. Jediną pozostałością po niej są wyprofilowane w skale macierzystej łóża pod mury oraz krótki odcinek muru z kamieni cyklopowych, wtórnie wmontowany w tureckie konstrukcje. Brak antycznych murów należy tłumaczyć tym, że gotowe bloki skalne wykorzystali późniejsi budowniczowie podczas wznoszenia nowożytnych konstrukcji.

Na Carine wytyczono jeden wykop na odcinku VII. Był on zlokalizowany pomiędzy współczesną asfaltową drogą do szkoły a ogrodzeniem domu mieszkalnego. Uchwycono i odsłonięto mury z trzech podstawowych faz architektonicznych antycznego Risan (**Ryc. 4**). Odkryto dom z najwcześniejszej fazy budowlanej, wstępnie datowanej na przełom IV i III w. p.n.e. Obiekt ten wzniesiono z łamanych kamieni wapiennych o jednym licu, łączonych

ziemią. Odkryto dwa pomieszczenia. Jedna izba miała szerokość 4,4 m, a długość jej odsłoniętego odcinka wynosiła 3,5 m. Druga izba, równoległa do pierwszej, była mniejsza, miała 2 m szerokości, a długość jej odsłoniętego odcinka wynosiła 1 m. Fundamenty murów z drugiej fazy architektonicznej miasta, datowanej na panowanie króla Ballaiososa, tj. na połowę III w. p.n.e., zostały w wielu przypadkach osadzone na murach iliryskich. W związku z tym wnętrza nowo budowanych domów miały najczęściej taką samą orientację, jak stare mury. Niekiedy jednak wznoszono budowle na nowych fundamentach. Do budowy nowego miasta użyto także innego materiału. Łamane kamienie wapienne zostały zastąpione starannie obrobionymi blokami wapiennymi i łupkami o mniejszych rozmiarach. Podłogi zostały wykonane ze starannie dociętych płytek kamiennych. Trzecia faza przebudowy architektonicznej miasta jest z tego samego okresu co zabudowy tzw. domów Aristiona i Aglaososa, tj. z II i I w. p.n.e. Uchwycono główną drogę o orientacji E-W, obramowującą insulę Aristiona od północy. Przedłużenie tej drogi oraz znajdującego się pod nią kanału ściekowego tworzyło skrzyżowanie z kanałem odkrytym w roku 2011. Obie insule zabudowano już po tym, jak pożar strawił całe miasto.

W trakcie wykopalisk odkryto wiele monet, w tym głównie z przedstawieniem króla Ballaiososa. Odnaleziono także bogaty materiał ceramiczny, jak choćby zestawy naczyń stołowych, w tym czarnofirnisowanych: misy, talerze, pucharki, skyfosi, unguentaria itp. Z warstw rumowiskowych wydobyto także pozostałości amfor, głównie grecko-italskich i rzymskich.

Najciekawszym znaleziskiem tegorocznej kampanii wykopaliskowej jest odlana z brązu figurka przedstawiająca Sylena, towarzysza i mentora Dionizosa (nr inw. 81/13 W; **Ryc. 5**). Znaleziono ją w warstwie spalenizny, ponad poziomem rumowiska, wraz z monetą Ballaiososa i czarnofirnisowaną miską.