
ARTICLES

*Settlement and Population during Venetian Rule, (1420-1797): Hvar Island, Croatia**

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Introduction

One of the main themes posed as part of the Hvar Survey Project¹ was to discover more about the settlement system of this central Dalmatian island and its population in relation to their distribution. From the outset, and irrespective of historical period, it should be remembered that to those who inhabit them, places always matter. They are not merely a symbol on a map; they are real, with sounds and smells, associations and fears, opportunities and limitations. Their buildings frame human life; earning a living, raising a family, survival or death, success or failure. As Derwent Whittlesey wrote in 1929, "Human occupance of area, like other biotic

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¹ N. Vujnović, "Projekt Hvar", *Periodični Izveštaj*, (Centra za zaštitu kulturne baštine komune Hvarske), Vol. 24, No. 161, Hvar, 1990, p. 19-22.; J. Bintliff et al, *The Hvar Project: Procedure and Documentation Manual*, Ljubljana, 1989, 20 pp.

phenomena, carries within itself the seed of its own transformation”². Given these human aspects, it is proposed here to trace the development of both place and people on the island during a period of Venetian rule, which lasted from 1420 to the fall of the republic in 1797. Use will be made of extant archival documentary material and secondary published sources, in order to reconstruct part of the island’s geographical past through the use of historical data.

After six decades under Hungarian control with little associated economic development, Hvar (Italian = ‘Lesina’) and other central Dalmatian islands came under Venetian rule when the Hungarian king (Sigismund), increasingly short of money, decided to sell them along with the rest of Dalmatia to the highest bidder.³ This was a significant change for the island, for it was now one of the dominions of a stable European power, and as such advanced rapidly in prosperity. The Adriatic (with the exception of Dubrovnik), was the sea of a single power, the geography of its hinterlands providing few opportunities for political interplay.⁴ For the Venetians, Dalmatia now provided a series of strategic points, calling stations, merchants’ quarters in urban centres, small areas of hinterland and numerous islands, like Hvar, all linked as part of a significant medieval trade route. The ensuing affluence was to be mirrored in the rising number of settlements and growth of population on the island compared with the former era of Hungarian domination. The survival of various documentary material from numerous archives in Venice, Dalmatia and Hvar itself from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, gives some indication of how this change came about.

The Role of Settlement

Just over two decades after obtaining Hvar, the Venetians made

² D. Whittlesey, “Sequent occupance”, *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* Vol. 19, 1929, p. 162-165.

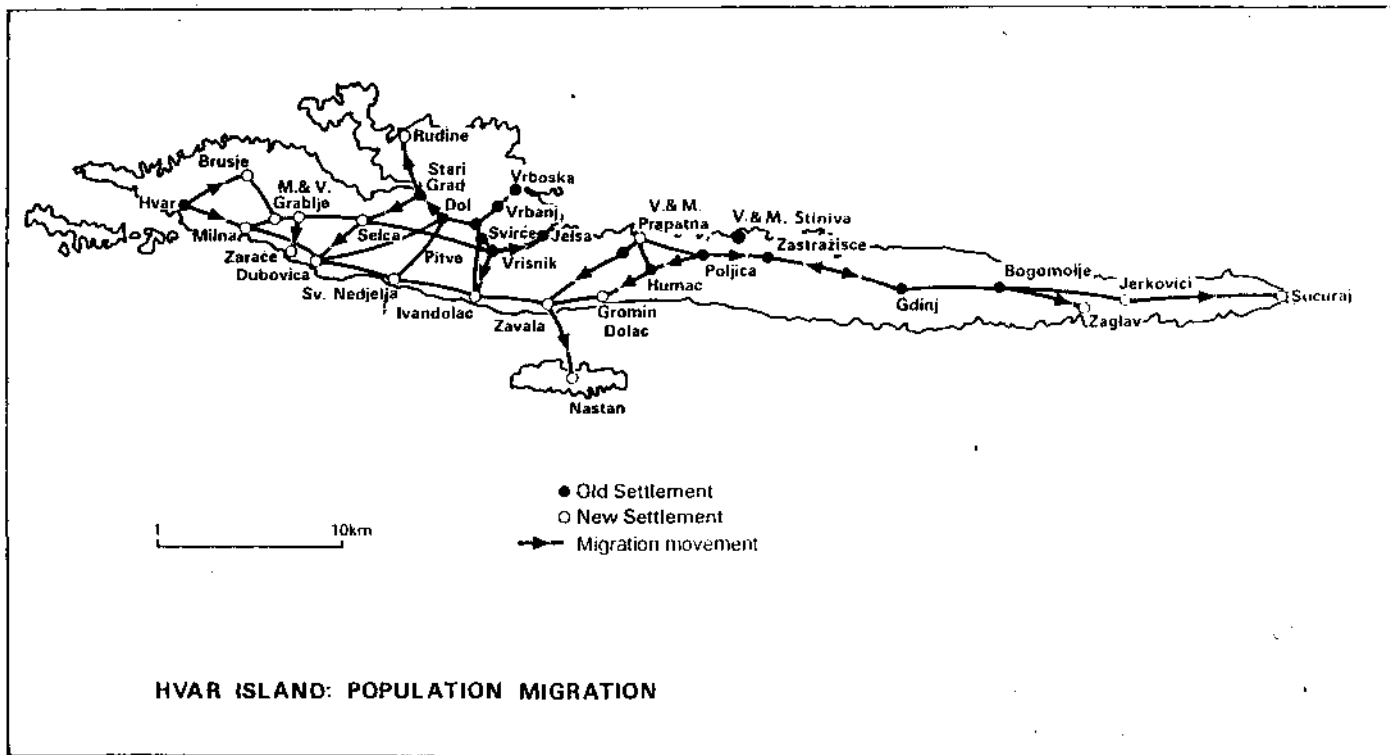
³ T.G. Jackson, *Dalmatia, the Quarnero and Istria with Cettigne in Montenegro and the Island of Grado*, Vol. II (Clarendon Press), Oxford, 1887, p. 209; J. Tadić, “Venecija i Dalmacija u srednem veku”, *Jugoslovenski Istoriski Časopis*, Vol 3-4, 1968, p. 14.

⁴ H.C. Darby, “The Medieval Sea-State”, *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, Vol. 48, No. 3, 1932, p. 145.

a significant break-through in central Dalmatia. In 1444, they finally conquered the mainland town of Omiš, the main corsair centre, and freed the whole area of further piratical incursions. Prior to this date, most settlements on Hvar were located inland, away from attack and were dependent largely on cattle-breeding and goat-rearing for their existence. After 1444 many inland settlements were abandoned and coastal centres were established. This provided a much better situation for the local populace. Previously the inland villages had occupied convenient sites in a karst landscape where water was limited, (i.e. no cisterns), and the population was largely self-sufficing, procuring from outside only luxuries and some utensils and implements, purchased with the small available surplus of wool, hides and meat. Now the fear of marauding attacks by Turkish and other buccaneers was passed, and the coastal areas provided improved conditions for the raising of vines, the cattle could be brought nearer to the sea, fishing could be developed and it was also possible to encourage sea communications and trade. Some of the inland villages remained, but the new coastal settlements were to form the embryo of the present-day pattern along the northern coast, and around Hvar town in the south. (Fig. 1).

The geographical site of Hvar town was regarded as an advantageous landing place for shipping as it was sheltered from the dangerous southerly (Sirocco) winds by the Pakleni Islands. The fact did not escape the Venetian planners who developed the harbour as an important maritime link half way down the east Adriatic coast and resulted in the island becoming one of the richest communes in Dalmatia. The prosperity of the Venetian period is exhibited in the growth of the modern town of Hvar with its many attractive buildings, castle and cathedral. The construction of an arsenal in the XVIth century emphasised the site's importance as a station for ships en route between Venice and the Levant.

All this suggests that Hvar town developed into a significant settlement during Venetian rule. In 1425, only five years after acquiring the island, the Venetians constructed a well at Dolac on the eastern margins of the town, largely for cattle and agricultural use. By



the mid-fifteenth century plans existed for the rejuvenation of the town centre, including the main square, extending the twelfth century cathedral and bishop's palace (1249), and constructing a stone pedestal (šandarac) the focal point for announcing state decisions and containing a flagpole, symbol of authority.⁵ In 1455 the town's main mole was built, together with an enclosed anchorage for small boats called "Mandrač ('Mandra' = Greek for 'stable'). Continual improvements were made to the main walls around the settlement; the town loggia was restored towards the end of the century, only to be enlarged early in the next. Several patrician noble family houses, with their elaborately ornate Gothic style, date from the second half of the fifteenth century.

Continued economic prosperity during the sixteenth century led to further urban development and architectural refinement in Hvar town. Between 1515-1517 the town loggia was further embellished by the Hvar prince Viktor Diedo, and became known locally as "Diedo's loggia". In 1520, to the north of the main square a large town cistern was completed holding 300 tons of water, one of the largest in Dalmatia at that time. Such wonders perhaps inspired the writer Vičenco Pribojević to first describe the essential characteristics of his native town and other parts of the island in 1525.⁶ Amongst his flowing attributes, mention is made of the 700 luxurious houses located below the fortress, built of carved four-cornered stone, and the various architectural monuments including the cathedral, bishop's palace, town wells and orderly gardens, together with numerous churches.

Further evidence of Hvar town's progress as the main settlement on the island comes in 1553 from the report of Giovanni Batista Giustiniano, Venetian syndic for Dalmatia. Besides praising the overall position of the site, quality of the harbour, and unfinished fortress (castello), he mentioned that the town contained 38 patrician noble houses.⁷ Unfortunately, less than two decades later in 1571, the

⁵ I. Štambuk, "Razvoj Hvarske pjace" *Hvarski Zbornik*, Vol. 4, 1976, pp. 264-265.

⁶ V. Pribojević, *De Origine Successibusque Slavorum*, Venice, 1532, 55 pp.; *Ibid*, *Oporijetlu i zgodama Slavena*, (J.A.Z.U.), Zagreb, 1951; V. Gortan, "Hvar u djelu Vinka Pribojevića", *Hvarski Zbornik*, Vol. 4, 1976, pp. 183-188.

town and much of the island was sacked by the Turkish fleet; Hvar town suffered much physical damage and pillage. Although many inhabitants fled, about 50 people died amongst the ruins of their burnt-out houses.⁸ The citadel on top of the hill above the town was built in the mid-XVIth century (1557), on the site of the old medieval castle; fortunately it was able to provide some refuge for Hvar citizens during the Turkish attack, led by the Algerian Uluj Al-Pasha, not long before the famous Battle of Lepanto. (1571). The town loggia was less favoured and had to be reconstructed, this time in the High Renaissance style. The cathedral also needed some reconstruction, but sadly the whole of Hvar's communal archives were lost during the attack.

Early in the XVIIth century, a new hospital was built (1608) along with Hvar's theatre, completed in 1612. The latter symbolized the recently acquired right (1610) of all citizens to participate in the administration of the town, irrespective of class background. The theatre claims to be the first communal one in Europe; it was managed both by the people's assembly and the oligarchic town council, for use not only by the nobility but the whole island's population. The town arsenal below the theatre was repaired between 1611-1613; each Venetian commune was compelled to provide safe shelter for a war galleon, which was always on stand-by for the needs of the state naval fleet. The town granary ("fontik" or "fondaco" meaning 'storehouse') was built on the northern side of the arsenal at this time, to stock-pile food reserves for times of danger, drought, plague etc.

By the XVIIIth century much of the settlement's basic plan was completed, and Hvar town mainly experienced refinements to its

⁷ Fondache Cini Library, Venice, *Relatio Itinerario di Giovanni Batista Giustiniano*, (B1M Misc. 8,8) p. 63: "danno alla città di Lesina 38 casati nobili, mentre essi ascrivono tale numero a tutta giurisdizione ... v'abitano ancora in quell'isola (cioè Lissa) alcuni gentiluomini li quali sono del consiglio della città di Lesina"; Š. Ljubić, *Faria Città Vecchia e non Lesina Pietro Hektorović Cittavecchiano a non Lesignano*, (Stamparia di Carlo Albrecht), Zagabria, 1873, p. 68.

⁸ G. Novak, *Hvar kroz stoljeća*, Hvar, 1960, p. 106; a decade earlier in 1560, Hvar and its suburbs had a total of 819 houses: Arhiv Ivanić-Boglič-Božić, *Fasc. IX Popolazione*, Hvar, (dated 10 Nov. 1560).

central design; for example, between 1713-1721 there was a new western mole, some town wall extensions, a deepening of the inner harbour (Mandrač), and improvements to the town loggia. By 1735, the town flag pole (šandarac) had been relocated in front of this loggia, and around 1740 several new family houses were completed.⁹ A document, together with a sketch map, recently found by the author in Venice and dated 1745, gives a more mundane description of Hvar town; it refers to "the old castle with a gallery for bombarding out to sea", whilst "the town contains artisans and other plebeians, whose families are involved in the production of rosemary essence and 'aqua della rezina'." It continues "the surrounding countryside has no commerce or industry and the sea is a vital necessity".¹⁰ Anyway, by the second half of the XVIIIth century Venice had worries of her own much nearer home; by now Hvar's arsenal only served as a warehouse. However, between 1750-1780 several family houses were completed, including those of Gjina Novak, Machiedo-Marchi, Kovačević, and Zaninović.¹¹

According to G. Novak, a document dated 1420 gave a list of the towns on Hvar island: Hvar town, Stari Grad, Sv. Petar, Sv. Barbara, Vrbanj, Svirće, Pitve and Vrisnik.¹² Apart from the first two, the other settlements were some distance from the sea, whilst all of them were in the western half of the island. Novak further maintains that by 1510 there was also mention of Jelsa and Vrboska,¹³ coastal towns which arose once the fear of piracy had declined. Of course this only provides testimony for urban centres, but there were also villages and hamlets lower down the settlement hierarchy.

It should be appreciated that the larger nuclei often had their own satellite settlements; for example, Hvar town had the villages of Brusje

⁹ I. Štambuk, "Razvoj Hvarske pjace", op. cit., p. 272.

¹⁰ Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venezia, *Faustino Brascuglia. Atlante della Dalmazia*, p. 68, "Descrizione del Sito, Stato, e Forza Ponte della Città di Lesina", M.S. sign. IT. VI 195 (10054) Cl.VII. MMCCC VII. 8107.

¹¹ I. Štambuk, op. cit., p. 273.

¹² G. Novak, *Hvar*, Beograd, 1924, p. 63.

¹³ G. Novak, *Hvar kroz stoljeća*, op. cit., p. 104.

and Grablje under its sphere of influence. In turn, these places had their pastoral hamlet settlements called "trabante"; for example, Grablje nad Selca: Brusje nad Za Prismen, Marinčeva, etc. Some settlements originated as pastoral colonies, not linked to land ownership but to pasture and livestock; other places owed their origin to a monastery (e.g. Sv. Nedelja [Augustinian, later Dominican]), or on church lands e.g. Zračće. There is also proof of so-called "deserted" settlements such as the Humac hamlet of Vrisnik, which in the past always had some inhabitants except at Christmas and Easter), and even today is a source of firewood, herbs, and branch trimmings ("kiče") for feeding goats.

Some testimony on the physical size of the larger settlements is forthcoming in Pribojević's eulogy of the island in 1525. He declares that there were 16 other places on the island besides Hvar town, of which 11 surrounded the flat, fertile Central Plain in the northern part, and the remaining 5 were situated on the higher plain in the eastern part of Hvar Island. Further, he estimates that the smallest settlement had 40 houses, the average 120, sometimes 230, and the largest 500 dwellings.¹⁴ A report from 1553 states that Hvar had 13 villages¹⁵ and this total was confirmed six years later.¹⁶ To put this figure in perspective, it is nearly half the number of settlements on the island today (28). Most of them, like their contemporary counterparts, were in the western half of the island.

During the Middle Ages, Stari Grad (literally 'Old Town') the second largest settlement, was probably only a shadow of its former size and importance during Greek and Roman times. Very few monuments exist from this period and therefore it is difficult to reconstruct the town's appearance at that time. Piratical raids had left much of the

¹⁴ V. Gortan, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

¹⁵ *Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum meridionalium Commissiones et relationes Venetae*. Tomus III, Vol. XI, Zagreb, 1880, pp. 11-12. "Relatione del sindaco di Dalmatia et Albania nell' eccellentissimo Senato per il magnifico messer Antonio Diedo".

¹⁶ *Monumenta...*, *op. cit.* Tomus III, Vol. XI "Relatione di noi Michiel Bon et Gasparo Erizzo già sindici in Dalmatia, 1559," p. 121.

place in ruins. Thus by the Middle Ages, Ager Pharensis and Stari Grad Plain were known as "campus S. Stephani", after the main church (Sv. Stjepan), and contained a network of church lands.¹⁷ The present-day area of Vrba was a salt-pan (soline) in the XIVth century.¹⁸ There was little incentive for the more ambitious inhabitants of the island to reside here because, since a decree of 1331, all members of the commune's council had to live in Hvar town with their families.

During the XVth century the town was extended towards the west and north (i.e. present-day Šiberija), and the small valley between the old town centre (Grad) and Šiberija (Ploča) was infilled. In 1448, one Hektor (first of the Hektorović dynasty) received land from Hvar's prince at Tvrđalj (loco vocato Tverdagl) for building a house¹⁹. The name «Tvrđalj» probably came from the remains of antique walls, or perhaps from some medieval fortification²⁰. Thirty four years later a Dominican monastery was founded in 1482²¹, later to be fortified in the sixteenth century against possible Turkish attack. At the end of the fifteenth century, the church of Sv. Jerolim was built on the north side of the bay²², part of a hospice erected by Glagolitic monks.

The XVth century saw changes: in 1525, Pribojević noted that Stari Grad had about 500 houses²³, which was seen as large by his reckoning. There was also an influx of the nobility, the rule on residential qualification in Hvar town for public office having presumably lapsed. In 1553, Giustiniano states that «In Città Vecchia abitano molti gentiluomini li quali sono admessi nel consiglio di

¹⁷ N. Duboković Nadalini, "Ager Pharensis, arheološke bilješke", *Vjesnik za arheologiju i historiju dalmatinski*, Vol. LXIII-LXIV, 1961-62, p. 16.

¹⁸ J. Barbir, *Prilog istraživanju urbanizma Starog Grada na Hvaru*, Apsolventski Rad Arhitektonski Fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Zagreb, 1979/80, p. 38.

¹⁹ P. Kuničić, *Petar Hektorović, njegov rod i Tvrđalj, Starogradske i Hvarske Uspomene*, Dubrovnik, p. 10.

²⁰ N. Račić, "Lokalitet Tvrđalj i Hektorovićeve misaone preokupacije na uklesanim natpisima", *Analitički Historijski Institut JAZU u Dubrovniku*, Vol. XII, 1970, p. 205.

²¹ Đ. Berić, N. Duboković Nadalini, & M. Nikolanci, "Popis spomenika otoka Hvara" (Historijskog arhiva-Hvar, Broj 7), Split 1958, p. 70.

²² N. Duboković Nadalini, "Dodatak i ispravak popisa otoka Hvara", *Bilten historijskog arhiva komune hvarske*, No.1, Hvar, 1959, p. 14.

²³ V. Pribojević, *op. cit.* p. 29.

Lesina»²⁴. The mid-century saw the building of Sv. Rok church, but more importantly one of the most famous edifices on the island was built between 1520-1569. This was the fortified summer residence of the Croatian poet Petar Hektorović (1487-1572), constructed at Tvrđalj with its courtyard and fishpond, on the site of his ancestor's house (Cassamenti Hettoreo). The insecurity of the time forced emphasis to be placed as much on defence considerations as those of leisure. Such foreboding was borne out in 1571 when the Turks attacked the town destroying much of the settlement including the Dominican monastery²⁵.

Stari Grad, like other urban settlements on Hvar island, began to decline in importance from the XVIIth to XIXth centuries. The nobility began to increasingly reside in villages where living costs were cheaper, but in December 1611 a Venetian senate decree stated that all the island's nobility must live in Hvar town for six months each year. This stirred up so much opposition amongst the nobility that in March 1616 the decree was rescinded, residence only being obligatory during times of war and plague²⁶. The demise of the nobility in the XVIIth century was accompanied by the formation and rise of the first *urban* families. By 1673 there were 194 such families in Stari Grad²⁷. This century was also a time of refugee influx to Hvar island from the Turkish-held mainland; the arrival of refugees in Stari Grad probably initiated the construction of dwellings in the suburb of Malo Selo, its boundaries based on lines from the Roman centuriation pattern. It is also probable that during the XVIIth century the area of the old salt-pan at Vrba was infilled. Of the town's religious monuments, the parish church of Sv. Stjepan was rebuilt in 1605 on its earlier site²⁸, whilst in 1682, the Dominican monastery was renovated as a result of the Turkish assault over a century before²⁹.

²⁴ Š. Ljubić, *Faria Città Vecchia*, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

²⁵ D. Berić, N. Duboković Nadalini & M. Nikolanci, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

²⁶ G. Novak, *Hvar kroz stoljeća*, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

²⁷ P. Kuničić, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

²⁸ K. Prijatelj, "Bilješke o graditeljima župske crkve u Starom Gradu na Hvaru", *Hvarski Zbornik*, Vol. 1, 1973, p. 315.

The XVIIIth century witnessed fewer changes to Stari Grad's settlement form. The first buildings were to appear to the west of Tvrdalj, and there was some extension to Malo Selo (Villetta). Towards the end of the century, some infilling took place at the front of the area occupied today by the shipyard and Škor market place; the old centre of Stari Grad was beginning to resemble its present form.

Jelsa was another significant town blessed with an advantageous situation in a sheltered bay with abundant fresh water springs. Its medieval site developed as a subsidiary settlement for the old Illyrian village of Pitve, acting as its port and fresh spring water source. In a decree of 1331 there is already mention of «Fons vocata Ielsa» and «Portus de Pitue»³⁰. It is probable that Jelsa emerged as a single unified settlement early in the XVIth century, due to the merger of four separate nuclei each with their own houses and church located around the bay. By 1525, Pribojević referred to Jelsa as a settlement with 500 houses³¹, which suggests it was, along with Hvar town, Stari Grad and Vrbanj, amongst the largest inhabited places on the island. Unlike some of these places however, the local inhabitants fortified their parish church (Sv. Fabijan and Sv. Sebastijan) in 1535, which helped to successfully defend the settlement against Turkish raids in 1539, and again in August 1571.

Before the XIXth century the bay ran much deeper inland; several houses from the XVIth century onwards were located near the contemporary shoreline, which in 1605 reached as far up the inlet as Sv. Rok church and Kutac³². (Fig.2). A few Renaissance buildings

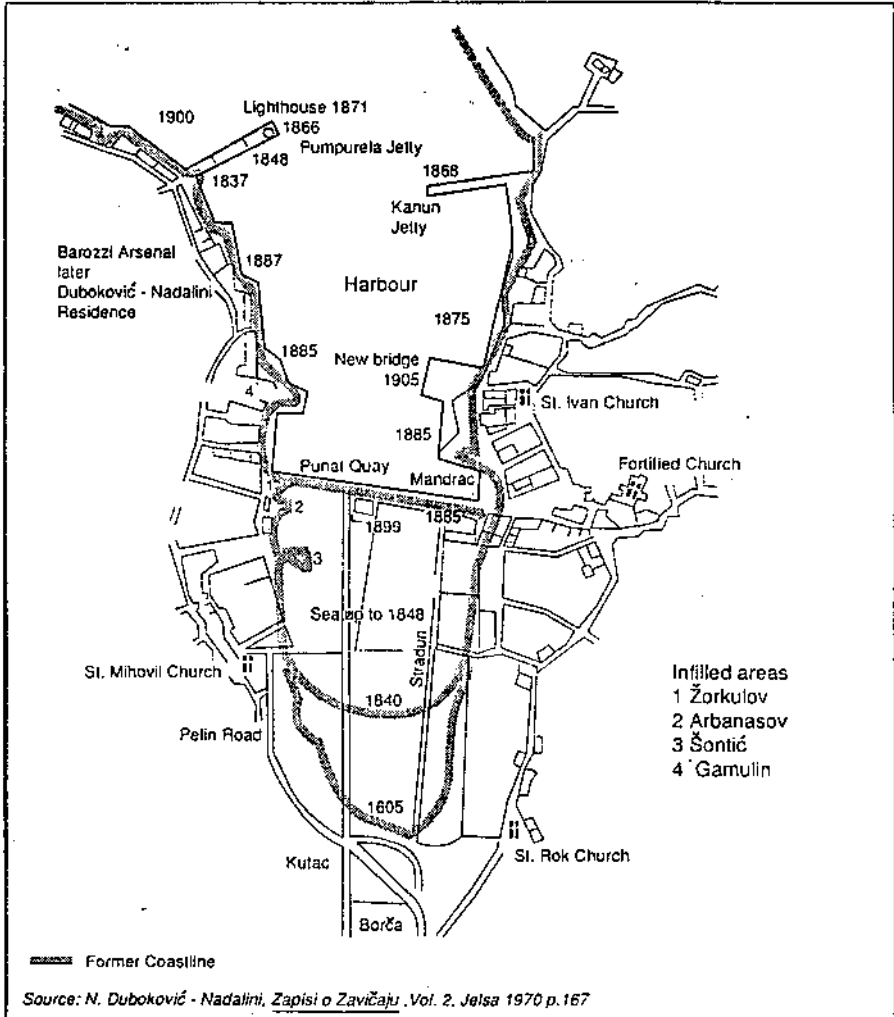
²⁹ D. Berić, N. Duboković Nadalini & M. Nikolanci, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

³⁰ B. Gamulin, *Jelsa*, Zagreb, 1969, p. 8; This may however have referred to a site near Vir. N. Duboković-Nadalini, "Jelsa u XV vijeku", *Čovjek i prostor*, No. 39, Zagreb, 1955, footnote 5. Reference to "Civitas Vetus Jelsae" mentioned in the same decree was also thought not to refer to the present site. Ibid, "Gdje je bila Civitas Vetus Jelsae na otoku Hvaru?", *Zadarska revija*, No. 4, Zadar, 1954, pp. 324-326.

³¹ V. Pribojević, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

³² N. Duboković Nadalini, "Razvoj jelšanske luke", *Pomorstvo*, No. 2, Rijeka, 1952, p. 47-48; Ibid, "Još o Jelšanskoj luci", *Bilten historijskog arhiva komune hvarske*, No. 5-6, Hvar, 1963, pp. 83-87.

Jelsa: Phases in Harbour Development, 1605-1905



have survived, including the portal to Skrivanelli mansion dated 1561; of the several churches many were first recorded long after their foundation; for example Sv. Rok only in 1601, but the Augustinian monastery (built on Gradina hill in 1605), fell into disrepair in the XIXth century and little remains of its former glory. Several family houses from the XVIth to XVIIIth century may still be seen including those of Count Kacic Dimitri; Obradic (at present Machiedo); Dubokovic Nadalini; Selem; Milošević and Dobronič. Towards the end of Venetian rule, the Italian traveller Alberto Fortis described Jelsa in 1774 as, «a large village, beautifully located in a rich harbour with permanent streams that give good water»³³.

Vrbanj was already mentioned as a village in the early XIVth century, — «Fons Varba»³⁴, and occurs again in a document of 1419³⁵. It was strategically located on the southern edge of the Central Plain with a dominating view over the whole area. It was the first place to have a local priest on the island, dating from 1475,³⁶ and was also a centre of popular local uprisings (e.g. 1510). Besides the main square, houses have survived from the XVIth and XVIIth centuries. These are characterized by thick defensive walls and loop-holes, suggesting the constant fear of Turkish raids. The only contemporary evidence of earlier dwellings is the medieval «Kraljevi dvor» (Kings Palace), thought to date from the XIIIth century³⁷. Fortis only noted that Vrbanj in 1774 was «a village far from the sea»³⁸.

Vrboska became the harbour for Vrbanj («vallis Varbagni») in the XVth century. People from surrounding inland villages (Vrbanj, Svirće, Vrisnik, Pitve), came here for fishing (anchovies, pilchards, sardines) and houses were built in the channel of the well-protected bay, the

³³ A. Fortis, *Viaggio in Dalmazia dell'abate Alberto Fortis*, Venezia, 1774, p. 249.

³⁴ Ž. Vekarić, "Pokušaj tumačenja nekih hvarskih toponima s posebnim osvrtom na nazive "Hvar" i "Liesna", *Zapisi o Zavičaju*, Sv. IV, Jelsa 1973, p. 90.

³⁵ G. Novak, *Hvar kroz stoljeća*, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

³⁶ D. Berić, N. Duboković Nadalini & M. Nikolanci, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

³⁸ A. Fortis, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

oldest known dating from 1468, following the original development of the harbour in 1465³⁹. Surviving houses from this period display signs of Gothic influence in form and adornment, as well as fire damage resulting from the effects of a local uprising (1510-1514) and Turkish incursions in 1571. One positive result of the latter is the enormous fortified church of Sv. Marije built in 1575. The Renaissance style architecture covers a considerable area and is a singular example of its type in the Adriatic, now containing many of the island's cultural treasures⁴⁰. In 1774, Fortis mentioned that Vrboska was two miles from Vrbanj, «a village populated two centuries ago, as evidenced by well-built houses that are now visibly falling into decay»⁴¹.

During the Venetian period, three-quarters of Hvar's settlements were located in the western half of the island. Most of them arose in the the XVth century, although some existed already in the XIVth century, and two, Pitve and Dol, are thought to have endured since Illyrian/Greek times. A further two, Brusje and the hamlet of Dubovica, date from the XVIth to XVIIIth century.

The division of settlement on the island into two parts (east and west) may be interpreted in different ways. The geographical distribution lies east and west of Jelsa, where the area between this town and the eastern end of the island is known locally as «Plame» (tableland, plateau). Alternatively, if one applies a linguistic criterion, then Bogomolje, where the two basic island dialects meet, would act as a watershed. This in turn is linked with the demographic partition of the population which resulted from the arrival of refugees from the mainland, fleeing from Turkish occupation in the XVth/XVIth centuries, and later during the XVIIth century wars (Candian War 1645-1669, and Morean War 1684-1699). Although the new

³⁹ D. Berić et al. *op. cit.*, p. 75; N. Duboković Nadalini, Crkva-Crkva-Tvrđava u Vrboskoj" *Prilozima povijesti umjetnosti Dalmacije*, No. 15, 1963, p. 15.

⁴⁰ N. Duboković Nadalini, Crkva-Tvrđava u Vrboskoj, *op. cit.*; F. Radić, "Natpisi iz mletačkog doba u Vrboski na otoku Hvaru, (u utvrđenoj crkvi Male Gospe)", *Vjesnik za arheologiju i historiju dalmatinsku*, Vol. 12, Split, 1889, p. 84; A. Bacotich, "Verbosca, la sua chiesa — fortezza e i dipinti di Tiziano", *Archivio storico per la Dalmazia*, Vo. 14, No. 84, Roma, 1933, pp. 577-592.

⁴¹ A. Fortis, *op. cit.*, p. 250.

inhabitants were assimilated into the old settlements, they kept their differing language characteristics.

Of the eastern settlement sites Zastrazišće is probably the oldest inhabited due to its fine strategic position and military sentinel function, («straža», watch, guard). This must have been appreciated by the Illyrians who built a fort here on a small hillock 316 m. above sea level, and much later when the Turks dominated the coastal mainland. By the XVth century the site was already recorded as part of the island's defence system with a watch-tower and reconnoitering station. The settlement was chronicled in the mid-XVth century as containing lands belonging to several patrician families (e.g. Zečić, Zorančić, Klesar) ⁴², whilst the main church (Sv. Barbara) probably dates from the XIIIth-XIVth century, and was renovated in 1621.

Sučuraj at the very eastern tip of Hvar Island, like Zastrazišće, has a long history. It is sited in a valley at the end of a deep bay facing the mainland which is only 6 km. away. Its strategic location has proved attractive since Illyrian times as a bridgehead and the surrounding area was probably used for pasturing livestock ⁴³. The name is derived from Sv. Juraj, the patron saint of livestock rearing, as was common amongst people from the cattle breeding regions of the mainland ⁴⁴.

By the mid-XVth century the Sućuraj area was known as «Campus S. Georgii in Piame» and patrician families like the Bertuzzi held lands here ⁴⁵. Permanent settlement on this site probably dates from this time, further enhanced by the arrival of Augustinian monks; by 1573 they were already administrating parochial functions. Throughout much of the XVIIth century new settlers arrived in Sućuraj from the coastal mainland, as a result of

⁴² D. Berić et al, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

⁴³ N. Vujnović, «Arheološke bilješke — Sućuraj», *Periodični Izvještaj*, Vol. 24, No. 161. (Centra za Zaštitu Kulturne Baštine Komune Hvarske), Hvar, 1990, p. 46. Archaeological evidence of Illyrian tumuli and later Roman artifacts, as well as an early Christian baptismal font have been found.

⁴⁴ N. Duboković Nadalini, *Sučuraj, Geofizički položaj, prilastet, pejzaz i statistički podaci*, Sućuraj, 1970, p. 10.

⁴⁵ D. Berić et al, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

a Venetian privilege granting asylum to «abitanti nuovi», of whom families like Kačić are direct descendants. Defensive houses were built containing towers, or were interlinked in groups («insula») enclosed by gates at street corners (e.g. Modrići) for fear of external attacks from the mainland. A Venetian fortress was constructed here in 1631 for the defence of «S . Zorzo», as it was named on old topographical maps. Also at this time the settlement became divided, the northern side of the harbour (Gornja Banda) containing the indigenous population, and the southern (Donja Banda) the new mainland inhabitants . Fortis visited Sućuraj in 1774 and noted that «by itself it is an insignificant and moderately populated place», and the only interest for him was «the large number of Roman urns lying on the seabed not far from the coast, which have lain there for fourteen centuries and are a sign of better times» ⁴⁶.

These new immigrants also helped to colonise two other settlements which are located in the eastern half of the island, namely Gdinj, and Bogomolje. Gdinj ⁴⁷ may have been a pastoral centre for shepherds in the XIVth century, but evidence suggests it only became a permanent settlement early in the XVIth century. Some controversy also surrounds its original name —, «cap, dinj,» or Gdinj ⁴⁸. The former is thought to derive from slavonic «bditi» or «bdjeti» meaning to watch or keep vigil and would explain the site's strategic qualities already appreciated in prehistoric times. The alternative latter form may have come from another old slavonic word «grm» meaning wood, forest, bush, shrub, as with Gdynia in Poland, or Godinj in Biokovo and near Lake Skadar on the Balkan mainland, and supports the view of Hvar's forested landscape in its Venetian name «Lesina». The puzzle may never be solved, but it is certain that Gdinj was the

⁴⁶ A. Fortis, *op. cit.*, p. 250.

⁴⁷ R. Radovanović, "Iz prošlosti Gdinja", *Hvarski Zbornik*, Vol. 4, 1976, pp. 287-293; Archaeological evidence suggests that the site was inhabited during the Bronze Age and the nearby Illyrian tumuli at Vela gomila represents one of the largest of its kind in southern Europe.

⁴⁸ D. Prohaska, "Bdinj i Gdinj", *Bilten historijskog arhiva komune hvarske*, No. 5-6, Hvar, 1963, pp. 108-112.

site of several churches by the beginning of the XVIIth century, the oldest founded two centuries earlier. Patrician houses (e.g. Angelini, Visković, Radovanović) were built here in the 17th century, often fortified against piratical attacks from the sea.

Bogomolje, like Gdinj, is a village spread out along the main island ridge, and also originated as a pastoral centre in the XVIth century. Most intensive development came in the XVIIth century when new settlers from the mainland arrived here, encouraged by Venetian privileges (less tax payments, freedom from customs duties, own autonomy) offered to these «abitanti nuovi». The settlement's name certainly has religious connotations meaning «pray to God» perhaps for deliverance from Turkish oppression, or maybe derived from the «Bogomil» Christian sect founded earlier in Bosnia. The patrician house of the Turnić family dates from the XVIIIth century but is now in ruins, whilst the parish church's facade was built in 1750.

Two other small settlements, Vela Stinava (northern coast) and Gromindolac (southern coast) already existed during the Venetian period. The former contains a summer residence in local Baroque style which belonged to the Angelini patrician family in XVIIIth century; the latter settlement contains a fortress built in 1600 to safeguard commune lands from Turkish incursions, together with a fortified Renaissance farmstead from the mid-XVIth century.⁴⁹

The Development of Population.

Throughout Europe there had been a steady population decline in the later Middle Ages.⁵⁰ The ravages of the Black Death had spread from Italy in the mid-XIVth century across much of Western Europe, but mortality seems in general to have been less in rural areas

⁴⁹ D. Berić et al, *op. cit.* p. 82.

⁵⁰ M.M. Postan, "Some economic evidence of declining population in the Later Middle Ages", *Economic History Review*, Vol. 3, (2nd Series), 1950, p. 27.

than in towns. It is futile trying to estimate what proportion of Europe's population surrendered to the plague in its divers forms; one can say however, that in some areas fatalities were very high and others escaped it with little or no mortality. Hvar seems to have been in the latter category, for each region and locality had its own individual pattern of population development and frequency of epidemic and plague.

Perhaps also significant for Dalmatia was the physical character of the area, its rugged mountains, offshore islands and the sea — all providing ready places of refuge for self-selective populations whose concern for personal and group independence was pre-eminent. In later centuries the permanence of a network of towns and villages in Dalmatia, which was already sufficiently firmly established to receive newcomers and integrate them into established populations, was particularly noticeable on Hvar Island as a result of Turkish occupation over large parts of the Balkan interior. It is worth noting that Hvar Island, like Dalmatia in general, had no outward migration from the region up to the XIXth century.

With the coming of the Venetians to Hvar in 1420 efforts were made in their own interest, to prevent the island's decline. In 1444 the Venetians finally conquered the mainland town of Omis, the main corsair centre, and freed the whole area of further piratical incursions. After this date fear of external threat by Hvar's inhabitants abated and several inland settlements lost population to the newly established coastal centres, such as Milna, Zračće, Sv. Nedjelja, Ivandolac, Zavala and Sućuraj, as well as new centres inland such as Grablje. Extant data on population statistics for Hvar Island during the XIVth century are sparse (probably due to the destruction of the island's archives in the Turkish raid of 1571), but alternative evidence on the settlement pattern previously discussed here proves that some form of population movement was taking place.

Whilst inland villages remained, some inhabitants moved to new coastal settlements, (Fig.1) which were to form the embryo of the present-day pattern along the northern coast (e.g. from Svirće, Pitve, Vrisnik and Vrbanj to Jelsa and Vrboska; Stari Grad to Rudine), and

to a much lesser extent the predominantly weakly populated southern coast (e.g. from Hvar town to Milna; Grablje to Zračice; Dol to Sv. Nedjelja; Vrisnik to Ivandolac; etc). After the fall of Omiš, many people probably gave up cattle-raising for fishing, boat-building, coastal agriculture etc., whilst places such as Jelsa and Vrboska developed as harbours for the inland villages of Pitve and Vrbanj. Thus greater safety at sea, the establishment of new shore settlements and emphasis on diversified agricultural production all led to changes in the human occupation of the island, which entered upon a new stage of development.

Population increase in Europe grew briskly throughout most of the XVIth century. This development began in most areas before the end of the previous century and in some places continued into the following one. However, European population displayed similar attributes to those of the Middle Ages, namely high birth and death rates and a short life expectancy. Population was always pressing against limited accessible resources, and any cutback in the customary food supply, even on a small or local scale, was likely to be followed by suffering, even by starvation. Disease was endemic, exploding on occasions to rampant dimensions, and causing high death rates in a populace already weakened by undernourishment.

Given this general European background it remains to see how Hvar Island fared throughout this century. Estimates of population size on the island are difficult to obtain, but an early piece of evidence dates from 1510, when a Venetian official, Marino Sanuto, noted that during a local uprising on Hvar, 2,000 people were under arms.⁵¹ However, in 1512, Sanuto noted that «Hvar was suffering from a great plague»,⁵² which in 1513 prevented a Venetian official (Santo Barbarigo) from landing on Hvar en route to become ambassador in Constantinople.⁵³ Continued civil disturbances on the island the

⁵¹ A. Gabelić, *Ustanak Hvarskih Pučana (1510-1514): Izvori-Tokovi-Dometi*, (Književni Krug), Split, 1988, p. 59; *I Diarii di Marino Sanuto*, Vol. X, Venice, 1883, pp. 527-528, (dated 7 June 1510).

⁵² *Ibid.* Vol. XV, Venice, 1886, p. 239, (dated 19 Oct. 1512).

⁵³ *Ibid.* Vol. XVI, Venice 1886, p. 434 (dated 17 June 1513).

following year meant that by 1514 the number under arms had reached about 6,000.⁵⁴ Further estimates of population size during this early part of the century remain hard to find, but in 1525, two Venetian officials, Leonardo Venerio and Gironimo Contareno, recorded that 1,000 men on Hvar Island were fit for military service.⁵⁵ If one accepts Jutronić's estimate that for every 100 inhabitants, 20 were fit for military service (i.e. 1:5), then on this basis the island's population in 1525 would have been 5,000 people.⁵⁶ The following year, 1526, the plague visited the island once more.⁵⁷

The continuing advance of the Ottoman empire across the Balkan interior acted as a push factor for the local population. The sultan's power depended on the effectiveness with which the Ottomans could make their will obeyed. This was done by building up an army and a civil administration from the sultan's personal slaves. These slaves were recruited not only from inside the ranks of the old-established Turkish families but from outside the Muslim population altogether, from Christians. Prisoners of war, slaves bought from dealers, or even volunteers, i.e. Christian renegades, could serve; but the most important method of recruiting slaves was the system known as "devshirme". This was a regular levy of boys from Christian families, mostly in the Balkans.⁵⁸

It was fear of such a system that provided the incentive for people to escape and find shelter in Venetian-held territory; in 1463, when the danger of Ottoman invasion of Dalmatia appeared imminent, the Venetian Republic issued a decree allowing all people not fit for military service to emigrate to the islands. By 1500, about 150 refugees from inland had settled in Poljica,⁵⁹ the mainland area

⁵⁴ Ibid. Vol. XIX, Venice, 1887, p. 49 (dated 4 Sept. 1514).

⁵⁵ Monumenta... *op. cit.*, Tomus I, Vol. VIII, "Relatio nobilium Leonardi Vinerio et Hieronymi Contareno syndicorum ad partes Dalmatiae", (presentata 27 Octob. 1527), pp. 18-19.

⁵⁶ A. Jutronić, "O stanovništvu i naseljima srednjedalmatinskih ostrva od početka XV do sredine XIX vijeka" *Glasnik Srpskog Geografskog Društva*, Vol. 32, No. 2, Belgrade, 1952, p. 131.

⁵⁷ V. Lago, *Memorie sulla Dalmazia*, Vol. I, (Stab. Naz. di G. Grimaldo), Venezia, 1869, p. 291.

⁵⁸ G. de Busbecq. *The Turkish Letters*, (Trans. E.S. Forster), Oxford, 1927, Letter III, pp. 101, 112.

opposite Brač island. As increasing Turkish danger loomed, the sight of Sućuraj just 6 km across the water must have proved attractive, and from about 1520 there was a steady inflow of immigrants.⁶⁰ It is perhaps true that the Venetians did not feel the full onslaught of the Turks until after the defeat of Hungary at Mohács in 1526. The arrival of people from the mainland further increased the Slav character of the coastal cities, as refugees from the interior entered Christian territory. (e.g. Hvar). In 1537 the Venetian Republic captured Poljica from the Turks and people unfit for military service were allowed to move to Hvar and the other islands.

Further immigration from here and other coastal areas must have added to the island's population, for in 1553 the Venetian syndic for Dalmatia (Giovanni Batista Giustiniano) recorded that population on Hvar Island totalled 7,100 inhabitants.⁶¹ Six years later in 1559, two Venetian officials (Michiel Bon and Gasparo Erizzo) stated that the island had 7,440 inhabitants, of which 1,300 lived in Hvar town (i.e. nearly a fifth), and the other 6,140 were scattered in fifteen other settlements.⁶² Therefore comparison with Hvar's population over the six year period shows nearly a 5% increase, (i.e. growth of 57 inhab./yr). probably aided by immigration from the mainland. If one compares the 1559 total with the 1525 estimate there was nearly a 50% expansion, (i.e. 72 inhab./yr increase) in spite of the plague in 1526.

Plague visited the island again in 1572;⁶³ this was only a year after the disastrous Turkish raid on the island, in which an estimated 2,500 inhabitants perished in 1571.⁶⁴ In 1579, August Valier, Bishop of Verona, sent his delegates Ascanio Randolo and Lorenzo Albertino

⁵⁹ A. Pivčević, *Povijest Poljica*, Split, 1921, p. 61.

⁶⁰ N. Duboković, Nadalini, "*Sućuraj: Geofizički položaj, prilaz, pejzaž i statistički po. cit.*", p. 12.

⁶¹ Fondache Cini Library, Venice, *Relatio Itinerario ... op. cit.*, p. 68: "Sono in questa isola anime sette mille et cento"; *Monumenta ... op. cit.*, Tomus II, (ed. Š. Ljubić), Zagreb, 1887, p. 222.

⁶² *Monumenta ... op. cit.*, Tomus III, Vol. XI., "Relatione di noi..." p. 122.

⁶³ V. Lago, *op. cit.*, p. 291.

⁶⁴ *Monumenta... op. cit.*, Tomus III, p. 273-275; G. Novak, *Hvar kroz stoljeća, op. cit.*, p. 107.

to visit Hvar Island and collect the names and population of individual settlements. Of the coastal settlements, they noted that Hvar town had 1,000 citizens, (i.e. fewer than 1559). If a recently discovered document dated 1560 is to be believed, this figure was dramatically less than two decades before.⁶⁵ The manuscript, written by the Hvar prince, Andrea Diedo, declared that Hvar town had 472 males, 818 females, 59 old people and 774 children, whilst the suburbs contained 330 males, 503 females, 29 old people and 514 children, giving a grand total of 3,499. These statistics show that women and children formed three quarters of the inhabitants, men a fifth, and old people a fortieth. It also hints that the settlement held nearly three times as many people in 1579 than it did twenty years earlier.

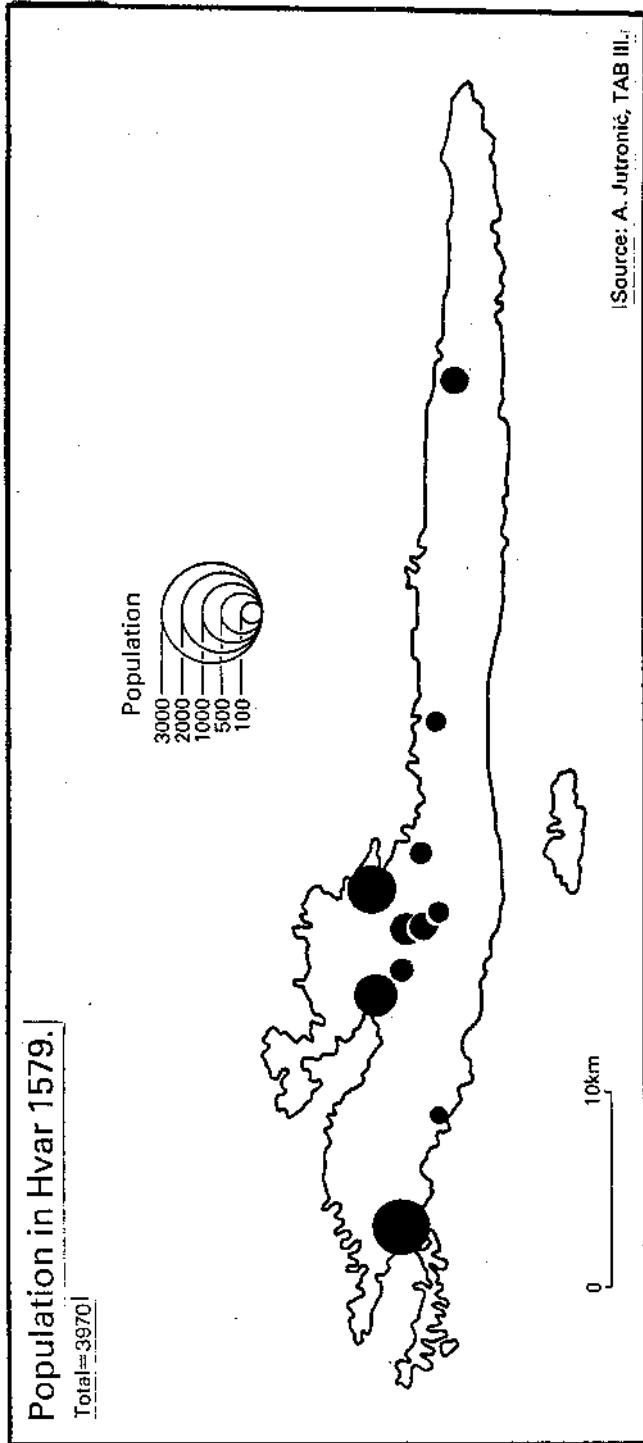
Stari Grad had 400 inhabitants. If Pribojović's estimate of the settlement possessing 500 houses in 1525, and Valier's delegates figure for 1579 are correct, (Fig. 3) it suggests that the population of Stari Grad had declined. The new shoreline villages of Vrboska and Jelsa portrayed considerable growth with 500 and 1,000 inhabitants respectively. Of the inland communities, Dol's two settlements had 400 people between them, Vrbanj and Svirće together had 350, Vrisnik 70, Zatražišće jointly with Poljica 80, and Gdinj along with Bogomolje, 170.⁶⁶ This gives a total of nearly 4,000, and suggests that over half the island's population was now living at sea level. Valier's delegates' data, however, did exclude children up to ten years old; Novak has suggested therefore that a total figure of 5,000 inhabitants for the island would have been more realistic,⁶⁷ whilst Gabelić believes it was nearer 6,000.⁶⁸ Whatever interpretation is accepted, it should be remembered that the XVIth century witnessed the blossoming of the island's golden period of cultural architectural maturity, as the richest and most

⁶⁵ Arhiv Ivanić-Boglič-Božić, Hvar, Fasc. IX *Popolazione*, (dated 10/XI/1560); A. Gabelić, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

⁶⁶ A. Jutronić, "Vizitacije u arhivu biskupske kurije u Hvaru", *Starine JAZU*, Vol. 51, Zagreb, 1962, tables III and IV.; D. Domančić, "Valierova vizitacija na otoku Hvaru i Visu", *Arhivska građa otoka Hvara*, Vol. 1, Hvar, 1961, p. 35; J. Kovačić, *Iz Hvarske Kulturne Bastine*, Hvar, 1987, pp. 79-111.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 60, footnote 8.



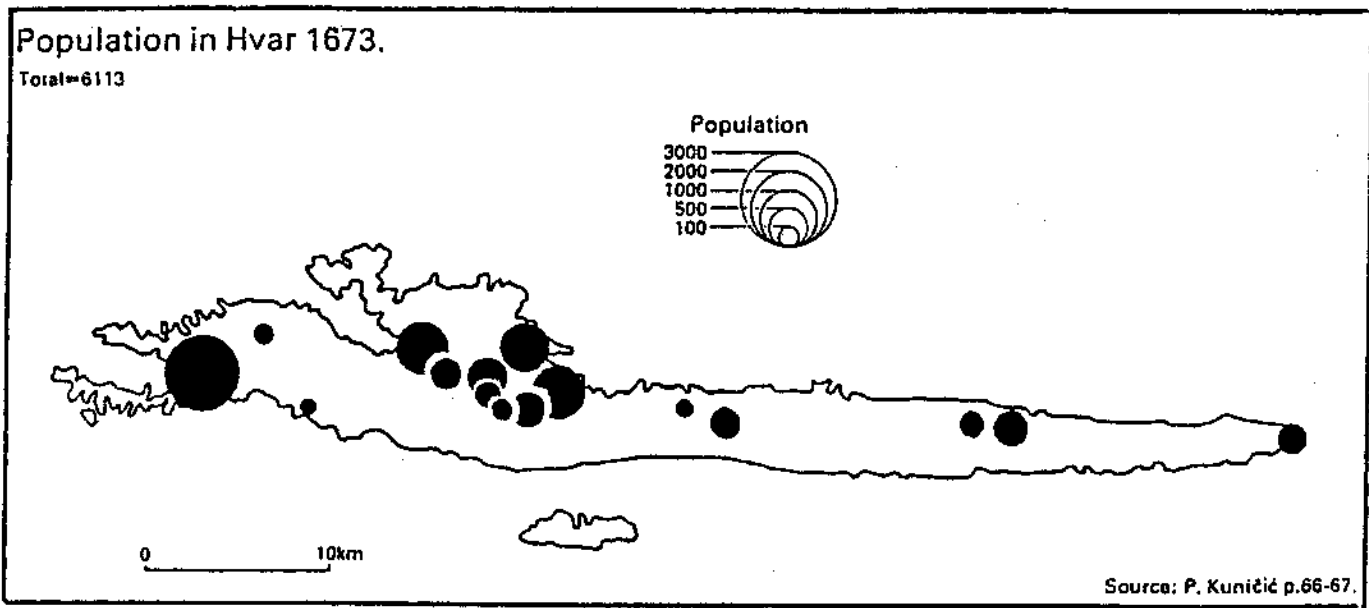
developed Venetian possession in Dalmatia. Hvar town also possessed a good harbour on a major route from the northern Adriatic to the south and beyond: the settlement was continually on a war footing and billeted many Venetian sailors. All these factors would have had an influence on population growth throughout the island.

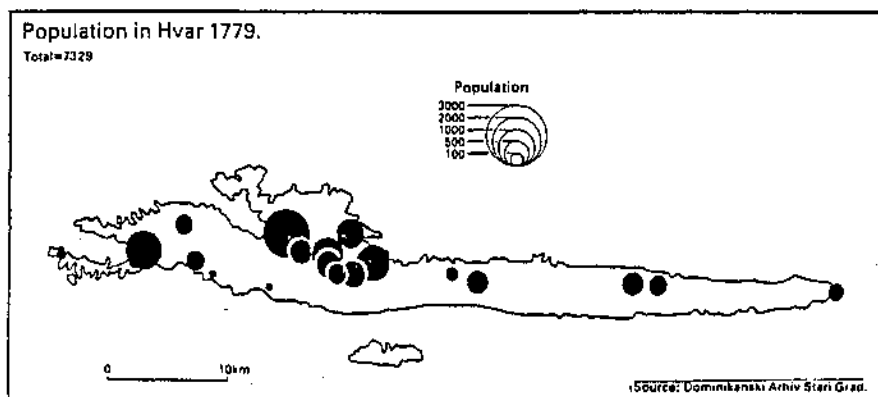
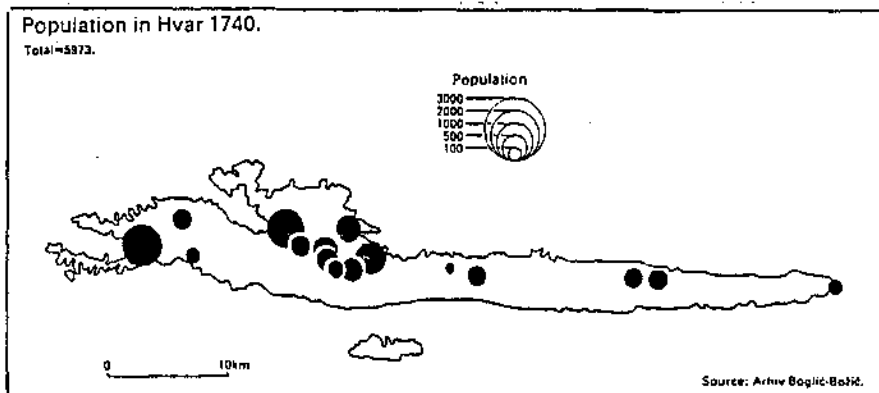
Generally population growth in Europe continued in the early part of the XVIIth century, but then the rate lessened and late in the century it seemed to have halted. Locally, the total may even have declined, so that in modern times the lowest point of European population was reached in the early 1700s and then slowly began to expand.⁶⁹ For Hvar Island the early XVIIth century was a time of continued development both culturally and economically, as it coincided with a period of relative peace between the Ottoman Empire and Venice: there was no clash between the hinterland and shore of Dalmatia from 1573 to 1644. Dalmatia and within it the islands enjoyed the benefits of being under a settled government of a great commercial power, Venice, which was advancing rapidly in wealth and prosperity. There the arts flourished, noble buildings sprang up, and the treasuries were enriched with beautiful works from the hands of gold and silver smiths. However, the period from 1640 to 1760 appears to have been less fortunate and continued warfare between the Ottomans and Venice slowed down Hvar's overall development, and increased its number of refugees.

Even so there is evidence of fugitives from the mainland coming to Hvar Island throughout the century. In 1602, the Venetian general overseer for Dalmatia, Pasqualigo, persuaded families to leave Makarska on the coastal mainland for Hvar; twenty families also arrived from the inland region of Krajina.⁷⁰ The Venetian Republic in 1606 reconfirmed the privilege of 1423 regarding the special fiscal and political concessions given to «abitanti nuovi» arriving from the mainland. Many people from Montenegro (e.g. the Paštrović family)

⁶⁹ N.J.G. Pounds, *An Historical Geography of Europe 1500-1840*, (Cambridge University Press), Cambridge/London/New York/New Rochelle/Melbourne/Sydney, 1979, p. 67.

⁷⁰ G. Novak, "Naseljavanje otoka srednje Dalmacije u novom vijeku", *Jadranska straža*, No. 3, Split, 1938, p. 98.





accepted the invitation leading to a mass emigration of refugees to places like Sućuraj; from here some moved on to other places on Hvar or to the other islands. They built new homes for themselves, but some kept their former dwellings on the coastal mainland, ready to return when the military situation improved.⁷¹ Some places like Sućuraj, Dol, Jelsa, Poljica, Stari Grad, and Vrboška experienced considerable population growth during the first half of the century, settlements like Sućuraj doubling the number of total inhabitants.

In 1645, the Turkish pasha of Bosnia entered Dalmatia at the head of a large army at the onset of the Candian (Cretan) War. The

⁷¹ N. Duboković Nadalini, Sućuraj ... *op. cit.*, p. 15.

Venetian Republic immediately responded by issuing a decree that women and children from the Makarska coastal region could be transferred to the islands of Brač, Hvar, Vis, and Korčula; a Venetian official, Giorgio Mladineo, noted that Brač and Hvar received 500 immigrants.⁷² The Venetian army was able to repulse the Ottoman forces and, after intermittent warfare in Dalmatia and elsewhere, peace was declared in 1669. For Hvar Island this was a time of growing in-migration from the Balkan mainland, people seeing this and the other islands as havens of refuge from the marauding Ottoman armies. Certainly the large increase in some Hvar settlements, (e.g. Dol,) in the early 1670s may have coincided with such an immigration wave. In 1671, the so-called «Nani Line», named after the Venetian delegate, delimited Dalmatia between the Turks and Venetians with Hvar Island well within the latter's territory.

A Venetian official, Morozini, stated in 1672 that 80 families had found places of refuge on Hvar Island,⁷³ Unfortunately, even on Hvar other dangers were lurking as a result of poor ecological conservation. The uncontrolled felling of trees (possibly for use by Venetian ship builders) caused landslides and considerable soil erosion. Lack of any binding tree roots at higher levels, meant rainfall was no longer absorbed into the ground, creating fast flowing streams which washed the soil cover down the slopes. For example, at Jelsa the shallower part of its bay began to be infilled with eroded material creating a marshy, swampy field. The brackish water proved an ideal breeding ground for the malaria-carrying anopheline mosquito and created a considerable health hazard for the local Jelsa and hill village populations of Svirce, Pitve and Vrisnik,⁷⁴ Little was done by the local and municipal procurators to alleviate this predicament until the first half of the 18th century. Another problem was the constant fear of piratical attack between 1667 and 1731, when the Turkish frontline

⁷² G. Mladineo, *Libro primo di diverse ducali e Terminazioni intorno l'armamento della Gallea, della Brazza*, Manuscript book, Archaeological Museum, Split, letters 91-94.

⁷³ F. Madirazza, *Storia e costituzione dei comuni dalmati*, Split, 1911, p. 64; namely at Sućuraj, Jelsa, Vrboska, Stari Grad, Pitve and Vrbanj.

⁷⁴ B. Gamulin, Jelsa, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

lay between Hvar and the mainland coast, particularly in the island's strategically vulnerable and populated central plain and its rim.⁷⁵

In 1673 the Venetian authorities carried out a population census of Hvar Island.⁷⁶ (Fig.4) This collected the names and numbers of each family: for example, Brusje was included as a settlement for the first time,⁷⁷ as was Sućuraj. (Table 1).

Several points emerge. Spatially, the settlement pattern reveals that the four largest places, containing over three fifths of the total

Table 1
HVAR: SETTLEMENT ACCORDING TO POPULATION
SIZE, 1673

Settlement	Rank	No. of Families	No. of Members	Av.No.Members per Family
Hvar Town	1	366	1,630	4.4
Jelsa	2	168	789	4.6
Stari Grad	3	194	775	4.0
Vrboska	4	145	592	4.0
Vrbanj	5	87	387	4.4
Pitve	6	60	316	5.2
Zastražišće	7	40	287	7.1
Dol	8	56	247	4.4
Sućuraj	9	56	219	3.9
Svirće	10	43	198	4.6
Bogomolje	11	28	177	6.3
Gdinj	12	25	151	6.0
Brusje	13	18	108	6.0
Vrisnik	14	27	104	3.8
Poljica	15	12	83	6.9
Grablje	16	9	50	5.5
Total Hvar	—	1,334	6,113	4.6

Source: P. Kuničić, *Petar Hektorović, njegov rod i Tvrđalj, Starogradske i Hvarske Uspomene*. Dubrovnik, 1924, p.66-67.

⁷⁵ N. Duboković Nadalini, "Mjere proti opasnosti od gusara na središnjem dijelu otoka Hvara u XVII stoljeća", *Zapisi o Zavičajju*, Vol. II, Jelsa, 1970, pp.95-97.

⁷⁶ P. Kuničić, *Petar Hektorović, njegov rod ... op. cit.*, pp.66-67.

⁷⁷ Arhiv Posinkovića, Dol; V. Hraste, *Brusje: Povijesni Prilog*, Brusje, 1985, pp.7, 24.

population (3,786 = 61.9%), had a coastal location; overall, coastal centres accommodated two-thirds of Hvar's inhabitants (4,005 = 65.5). The significance of the Central Plain is clearly shown for nearly three-fifths of the island's occupants (3,491 = 57.1%) lived in it, or around its rim. According to size, the eight largest settlements contained over four-fifths of the inhabitants (5,023 = 82.1%). Finally, family size was higher inland than on the coast; eleven interior settlements had an average of 5.4, compared with 4.1 for the five coastal centres.

More general information on Hvar Island's population in the wider context of central Dalmatia comes from 1682 as recorded by the Venetian official, Gironimo Cornero. (Table 2)

Table 2.
POPULATION OF CENTRAL DALMATIA IN 1682

Place	Males	Females	Boys	Girls	Total
Split	460	440	290	410	1,600
Split	466	581	375	328	1,750
suburbs					
Split	202	423	307	280	1,212
District					
Klis	160	115	110	130	515
District					
Brač	1,688	2,040	891	605	5,224
Hvar	302	366	243	248	1,159
Town					
Hvar	1,789	1,837	1,395	1,063	6,084
District					
Korčula	333	342	219	337	1,231
Town					
Korčula	418	365	212	224	1,219
District					
Venetian	23,530	25,686	14,649	14,423	78,288
Dalmatias					

Source: Archivio di Stato, Venezia, «Descriptione dell'anime della Provintia di Dalmatia et Isole de Quarner, fatta l'anno 1682 per ordine del Ill.mo et Ecc.mo Sign. Gir.mo Cornaro. Poved. Gen. in Dalm. et Alb.», *Relazione. Coll. V. Secreta Fasc. 72.*

From this table three main points emerge regarding Hvar Island; first, it seems to confirm that the estimates of the Hvar Prince, Andrea Diedo, in 1560 were exaggerated. He declared that Hvar town totalled 2,123 inhabitants, but the figures for 1553 (1,300) and 1559 (1,000) appear to have been much nearer reality. Also it shows that the town's population had declined by over a quarter (i.e. $471 = 28.9\%$) between 1673-1682. Secondly, that together Hvar town and Hvar District (which probably included the small island of Vis), had a total population of 7,243 inhabitants. Finally, while central Dalmatia's population numbered a third of the total for the whole of the Venetian province, (i.e. $27,237 : 78,288 = 34.8\%$), Hvar Island formed a quarter of central Dalmatia's, (i.e. $7,243 : 27,237 = 26.6\%$), and nearly a tenth of Venetian Dalmatia's total population, (i.e. $7,243 : 78,288 = 9.25\%$).

Two years after Cornero's census, hostilities again broke out between Venetian and Turk in 1684, with the War of Morea. The Lion of St. Mark captured the Morea and its armies were able to drive the Turks back from the Dalmatian seaboard into the interior, leading to the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, — one of the most disastrous treaties suffered by the Turks. In Dalmatia the so-called «nuovo acquisto» delimited in 1700, brought Dalmatia's frontiers up to the «Grimani Line» (again named after the Venetian negotiator), and extended Venice's frontier well into the Balkan hinterland.

Finally, during the XVIIth century there were signs of increased migrational movement, both within Hvar Island and from other regions. Analysis of registered births, marriages and deaths from extant parish records for some of the settlements have helped record this movement. Bezić-Božanić has clearly demonstrated that two of the larger island settlements, Vrbanj and Jelsa, were developing into centres of local in-migration, as well as augmentation from the coastal mainland.⁷⁸ Contacts were also strengthening between Hvar and

⁷⁸ N. Bezić-Božanić, *Doprinos poznavanju stanovništva Vrbanja od XV do XVIII stoljeća*, *Hvarski Zbornik*, Vol. 4, 1976, pp. 228-230; *Ibid*, "Stanovništvo Jelsa", *Zapisi o Zavičaju*, Vol. VI, Jelsa, 1982, p. 19.

other islands, especially nearby Vis, and its largest settlement Komiža.⁷⁹

During the XVIIIth century population recovery from the ravages of war, disease, epidemics and food supply began earlier in western than eastern Europe. The Balkans had always been distinguished by the extreme mobility of its peoples, not only from long-distance transhumance, but, also movement of settlements. With the decline of Ottoman power this activity was largely from the Dinaric mountains toward the gentle region of hills and forests bounding the Sava and Danube rivers. While the Turkish invasions had resulted in a meagre population distribution in earlier times, the XVIIIth and XIXth centuries experienced rapid growth from an average of about 3/km² in 1718 to 10 by 1800, and 18 by 1834.⁸⁰

After 1699, it was becoming increasingly apparent that the Ottoman Empire was entering a period of decline, at first slow and intermittent eventually catastrophic. In general, the Balkan peoples were becoming ever more hostile to their Ottoman rulers during the XVIIIth century, partly through a deterioration of the peasants' lot, and a growing anti-Turkish commercial middle class. Venice also was clearly becoming a dissolute state living on her past. A certain prestige for efficiency and stability enjoyed by its political structure continued during the early decades of the century; unfortunately, increasing weaknesses appeared within its nobility and there was a growing discontent from others of her possessions on the Italian mainland and Dalmatian coast. In 1718 the Treaty of Passarowitz, after a four-year war with Turkey, was her last important act on the European stage. From it the republic gained further territory inland with the delimitation of the «Mocenigo Line». From Hvar's viewpoint, in future the Turkish threat to Dalmatia had ceased to be critical and the province was secure under Venetian control until 1797.

⁷⁹ N. Bezić-Božanic, "Veze stanovnika otoka Hvara i Visa", *Hvarski Zbornik*, Vol. 3, 1975, pp. 269-276; Ibid, "Veze stanovnika otoka Hvara i Visa: Komiža", *Hvarski Zbornik*, Vol. 2, 1974, pp. 285-287.

⁸⁰ O.L. Barkan, "Essai sur les données statistiques des registres de recensement dans l'Empire Ottoman aux XV^e et XVI^e siècles", *Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient*, Vol. 1, Leiden, 1958, pp. 9-36.

A Venetian document on Hvar town carried out for military purposes around 1700 stated that there were 500 people living within the half mile urban perimeter.⁸¹ This was probably a guesstimate, but fairly accurate if one assumes another 500-600 were living in the surrounding suburbs. The Venetian census of 14 May 1740 gives a more detailed picture for the whole island. (Table 3). (Fig. 5a)

Table 3
HVAR: SETTLEMENT ACCORDING TO POPULATION
SIZE, 1740

Settlement	Rank	No. of Families	No. of Members	Av.No.Members per Family
Hvar Town	1	224	1,136	5.0
Stari Grad	2	201	1,012	5.0
Jelsa	3	131	583	4.4
Vrbanj	4	77	442	5.7
Vrboska	5	80	401	5.0
Svirće	6	63	342	5.4
Pitve	7	62	314	5.0
Gđinj	8	35	278	7.9
Bogomolje	9	37	266	7.1
Poljica & Zastražišće	10	47	259	5.5
Brusje	11	51	246	4.8
Dol	12	37	241	6.5
Vrisnik	13	33	195	5.9
Grablje	14	22	133	6.0
Sučuraj	15	18	125	6.9
Total Hvar	—	1,118	5,973	5.3

Source: Arhiv Boglič-Božić, (Ivanić-Boglić-Božić), *Popolazione*, Vol.IX.

⁸¹ Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana Venezia, *Fortezze della Repubblica di Venezia*, M.S.IT 2453 (10493).

Comparison with the 1673 data (Table 2) reveals that some subtle changes had taken place on the island over the intervening 67 - year period. First, there was an overall population decline of 2.3%; the four largest places now only contained just over half the total population (3,173 = 53.1%), with Hvar and Jelsa recording declines of 30.3% and 26.1% respectively. In contrast, Stari Grad and Vrbanj had increases of 30.5% and 14.2%. Secondly, there was also a 10% drop in the population share of coastal centres over the period (3,257 = 54.5%). Thirdly, the Central Plain slightly increased its proportion of the island's occupants with three-fifths now living in or around its rim (3,530 = 59.1%).

Fourthly, there was also a decrease in the predominance of the eight largest settlements from over four-fifths to only three-quarters (4,508 = 75.5%). Fifthly, the highest and lowest average family sizes were found in Gdinj (7.9) and Jelsa (4.4), whilst there was now less of a differential in average family size between the five coastal (5.2) and ten inland (5.9) settlements. Finally, some settlements appear to have experienced some distinct changes; for example, Gdinj and Bogomolje reflected the impact of mainland immigration. Gdinj's population rose by four-fifths (84.1%), and had the largest family size; Bogomolje increased by a half (50.2%), and was second largest in family size (7.1).

Other inland centres displayed marked growth (e.g. Grablje = 166%; Brusje = 127%; Vrisnik = 88%; Svirće = 73%). In contrast, three coastal centres showed marked decline, namely Jelsa, Vrboska and Sućuraj. Jelsa declined by over a quarter (26.1%) and had the lowest family size, suggesting the impact of disease (malaria); Vrboska dropped by a similar amount (25.3%) probably from outmigration. Most dramatically, Sućuraj nearly halved its population (down 43%) possibly because many of the earlier mainland migrants had moved on to other places, or because it is not clear from the census returns whether the «abitanti nuovi» were recorded.⁸²

⁸² J. Kovačić, *op. cit.*, p. 92, footnote 10.

Even so, a Venetian document of 1745,⁸³ states that Hvar District's 28 communes had a well-dispersed population of 6,480 inhabitants, of whom 1,650 were capable of military service (i.e. 1:4). This implies that the island's population increased by nearly a tenth (8.5%) between 1740-1745 but the accuracy of this figure is drawn into question when compared with longer term trends.⁸⁴

Figures imply that the 1745 total for Hvar District was overestimated. They also suggest that on average, each family would have had at least one person fit for military service.⁸⁵ Data does confirm an overall population growth of a fifth (20.2%) on Hvar Island during the 1740-1769 period.⁸⁶ By the 1779 census, however, there were further signs of growth (Table 4; Fig. 5b).

The four decades after 1740 again showed some delicate changes in Hvar Island's population structure. Firstly, although population grew by a fifth (22.7%) over the period, the four largest settlements still accommodated only just over half the population (53%) as in 1740. More significant was the decline of Hvar town by 14%, and now no longer the island's largest settlement. This may have been related to its strategic decline with the retreat of the Turkish frontier from Dalmatia, and the decision by the Venetian naval commander in the mid-XVIIIth century, to move his winter quarters south to Kotor. This meant the removal of a large number of sailors, and less demand for victuals, naval stores etc. In future Hvar town was peripheral to Venetian needs. The town's population loss led to gains elsewhere, particularly Stari Grad. It was now the largest urban settlement on the

⁸³ Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venezia, Faustino Brascuglia... *op. cit.*

⁸⁴ *Descrizione dell'Anime dell'Anno 1741*, Arhiv Machiedo u Hvaru, C VII, Statistica; *Famiglie nobili*, V, (6 May 1742), Arhiv Boglić-Božić; (Ivanić-Boglić-Božić); *Agricoltura, Sale*, VII, (21 Apr. 1750), Arhiv Boglić-Božanić (Ivanić-Boglić-Božanić); *Descrizione dell'Anime dell'Anno 1751*, Arhiv Boglić-Božanić (Ivanić-Boglić-Božanić), IX, Popolazione, (19 Apr. 1751); *Ibid.*, (1763); *Ibid.*, (13 May 1767).

⁸⁵ J. Kovačić, *Iz Hvarske Kulturne ... op. cit.*, p. 91; From 1740-1820, Vis Island was included in Hvar's District but, with a population of about 3,000 in 1745, could not have been included in this total.

⁸⁶ J. Kovačić, *op. cit.* p. 90.

Table 4
HVAR: SETTLEMENT ACCORDING TO POPULATION
SIZE, 1779

Settlement	Rank	No. of Families	No. of Members	Av.No.Memb ers per Family
Starigrad	1	284	1,479	5.2
Hvar Town	2	219	980	4.5
Vrbanj	3	130	718	5.5
Jelsa	4	139	707	5.0
Vrboska	5	106	531	5.0
Svirće	6	77	396	5.1
Poljica & Zastrazišće.	7	60	382	6.3
Pitve	8	54	368	6.8
Vrisnik	9	43	277	6.4
Gdinj	10	41	267	6.5
Dol	11	45	256	5.7
Brusje	12	71	251	3.5
Bogomolje	13	50	246	4.9
Grablje	14	34	231	6.8
Sučuraj	15	32	163	5.0
Zaraće	16	3	27	9.0
Sveti	17	4	26	6.5
Nedjelja				
Sveti	18	12	16	1.3
Klement				
Total Hvar	—	1,509	7,329	4.8

Source: Dominikanski Arhiv u Starom Gradu, *Kodeks Botteri I*, 1. 153v. (Dell'anno 1779).

island, with a population increment of two-fifths (41%) between 1740-1779; other increases were recorded at Vrbanj, by two-thirds (63%), and Jelsa a fifth (21%).

Secondly, habitation in and around the Central Plain expanded; by 1779 it contained nearly two-thirds of the island's population (4,732 inhab. = 64.6%) However, there was no change in the dominance of the eight largest settlements, holding, as in 1740, three-quarters of Hvar's inhabitants (5,561 = 75.9%). Fourthly, highest and lowest family sizes were found inland; Pitve and Grablje both with 6.8, [Zaraće 9.0 was statistically not significant] were pre-eminent, while Brusje (3.5) followed surprisingly by Hvar town (4.5) had the least. These figures for both latter places may have resulted from Venetian repercussions to replacing Hvar town in 1776 with Korčula as the principal naval station for these waters. The latter had a more spacious, secure harbour, and its island was better located for guarding southern Dalmatia.⁸⁷ [Sv. Klement (Pakleni Islands) was not statistically meaningful]

Fifthly, some settlement size changes were apparent. Largest growth was recorded inland; here places like Grablje (73.7%), Poljica with Zastraišće (47.5%), and Vrisnik (42%), compared favourably with places like Bogomolje (7.5% decrease) and Gdinj (4% decrease) perhaps suggesting that mainland immigrants had moved elsewhere from these latter, previously popular centres. Two coastal centres exhibited population increase of around a third, namely Vrboska and Sućuraj with 32.4% and 30.4% respectively. Finally, in a wider context, it was noted in 1780 that Venetian Dalmatia (including Kotor Bay) reached 259,966 inhabitants;⁸⁸ on this reckoning, Hvar Island would have held only 2.8% of that total.

Apart from these hard statistics and in spite of political/military changes, some old problems persisted. For example, documentary evidence has been found, from 1777, of piracy along the northern coast of Hvar (e.g. Stiniva Bay), probably by corsairs from the mainland.⁸⁹ Ecological problems persisted resulting from soil creep

⁸⁷ T.G. Jackson, *Dalmatia, The Quarnero... op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 211.

⁸⁸ J. Beloch, *Bevölkerungsgeschichte der Republik Venedig*, Jena, 1899, p. 44; Unfortunately, population data on the Dalmatian islands were omitted from the work of D. Beltrami, *Forza di lavoro e proprietà fondiaria nelle campagne venete dei secoli XVII e XVIII*, Venezia-Roma, 1961, p. 77.

and consequent coastal sites flooding, e.g. Jelsa, because insufficient attention had been paid to its prevention.⁹⁰ Conflicts between the «abitanti nuovi» and local occupants lingered on through jealousy of the former's Venetian privileges and, in the case of Sućuraj, antagonism over plans for demolition of the Augustinian monastery in 1787.⁹¹

Immigration continued through the outsider's belief that Hvar Island was a haven of refuge. This was well-illustrated when plague once more returned to central Dalmatia in the early 1780s; it reached Split and Brač in 1784, but Hvar escaped the pestilence.⁹² A Venetian document dated 7 August, in that year,⁹³ records how between 12 July and 6 August five families, totalling 33 individuals (Simunich:7; Banuldi:8; Mapoli:9; Politeo:6; and Chievico:3), left Split for plague-free Hvar. In all 288 people fled from Split over that 26-day period, more than a tenth (11.4%) of them coming to Hvar.

Other immigration flows to the island were also taking place for different reasons. Analysis of birth, marriage and death church registers for Vrbanj and Jelsa have uncovered a wide spatial range of

⁸⁹ V. Dulčić, "Listajući Stare Arhive: I. Gusarski napad u Bruškoj Stinivi" *Hvarski Zbornik*, Vol. 5, 1977, pp. 307-310.

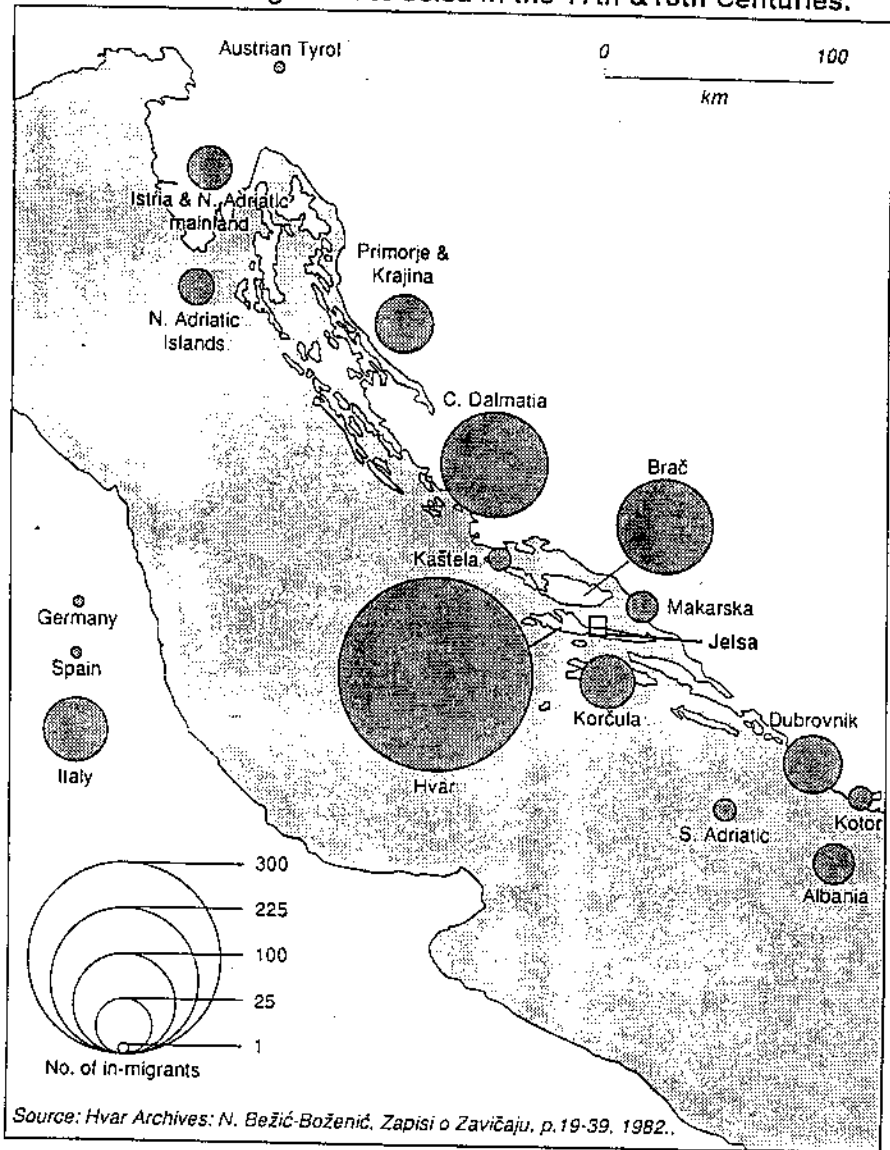
⁹⁰ B. Gamulin, *Jelsa... op. cit.*, p. 12.

⁹¹ N. Duboković Nadalini, *Sucuraj... op. cit.*, p. 17.

⁹² G. Bajamonti, *Storia della peste che regnò in Dalmazia negli anni 1783-1784 del dottore Giulio Baamonti*, Venezia 1786, p. (iv), 208; See also *Relazione della peste di Spalato dell'Anno 1784 esposta in lettera dall'uffiziale N.N. ad un sue concittadine in Venezia Venezia*, (Presso D. Pompeati), 1784, p. 37 "Intanto il Collegetto di Lesina, provvide con attente guardie e Deputazioni alla custodia dell'Isola".

⁹³ Archivio di Stato, Venezia, *Dispacci Proveditor alla Sanità in Dalmazia et Albania*, *Angelo Diedo*, Serie Senato, Busta 694. For example, "25 Luglio - Famiglia Mapoli, partita per Zara, ritornata a Spalato, e partita per Lesina, con individui No. 9."; "3 Agosto - Famiglia Politeo, partita per Lesina, con individui No. 6".

Hvar Island: In-migration to Jelsa in the 17th & 18th Centuries.



immigrants; not only did people arrive from other Dalmatian Islands, but also from different parts of Venetian Dalmatia, and the inland western Balkans. Some came from Italy, whilst occasionally they arrived from France, Spain, Austria (Tyrol) and Germany⁹⁴ (Fig 6). Evidence also exists for emigration from Hvar to other nearby islands like Vis, and the mainland (e.g. Pelješac peninsula).⁹⁵

Meanwhile the era of Venetian rule on Hvar island was rapidly coming to a close. In spite of a decline in the quality of Dalmatian civilization as a whole during the period of Venice's fall from commercial greatness,⁹⁶ and its subsequent effect on her dependencies like Hvar, the period up to the turn of the century suggests some population growth. A census of 1796 gave 288,320 as the population of Venetian Dalmatia.⁹⁷ In the same census the islands of Hvar and Vis were recorded together, with a total of 12,416 inhabitants; if one assumes that Vis had about 3,750 inhabitants, then Hvar would have totalled about 8,600. The census also stated that together the islands contained 4 fortifications, 16 villages, 2,771 families (i.e. av. = 4.5 members/family), and 2,518 houses (i.e. av. = 5 members/house). With reference to religion, all the inhabitants were Roman Catholic except for four of Greek Orthodox faith.

Thus at the end of Venetian rule, Hvar Island held 3% of the total Dalmatian population. Perhaps on a more speculative note, one may hazard a guess that the island just about doubled in population size during the 377 years of Venetian domination.

⁹⁴ N. Bezić-Božanić, *Doprinos poznavanju... op. cit.*, pp. 227-257; *Ibid*, *Stanovništva Jelsa... op. cit.*, pp. 19-139.

⁹⁵ N. Bezić-Božanić, *Veze stanovnika... op. cit.*, pp. 269-297; N. Vekarić, "Hvarani na jugozapadnom dijelu Pelješca u 18 i 19 stoljeća", *Hvarski Zbornik*, Vol. 5, 1977, pp. 271-281.

⁹⁶ T.G. Jackson, *Dalmatia, The Quarnero... op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 81; Š. Peričić, *Dalmacija uoči pada Mletačke Republike* (Institut za hrvatske povijest), Zagreb, 1980, pp. 13-23.

⁹⁷ V. Lago, *Memorie sulla Dalmazia... op. cit.*, Table VII, p. XXVI-XXVIII; See also G.L. Garagnin, *Reflessioni economico-politiche sulla Dalmazia*, Vol. I, Zadar, 1806, p. 24.

Conclusion.

This study of Hvar Island has aimed to discover how both settlement and population evolved under Venetian rule and the agents behind them that generated change. Two main forces appear to have prevailed in this process. One was the physical character of the island, its ruggedness and fertile Central Plain affording places of refuge for self-selective populations whose concern for personal and group independence were paramount. The other was the existence since early times, of a network of towns and villages already sufficiently firmly established to receive these newcomers and integrate them into the local population; moreover, until the Venetians arrived the small inland settlements had little contact with the outside world creating even more dependence on themselves for development.

Certain historical factors may be recognized in this whole process of development. First, the role of an urban tradition came early through the colonizing Greeks, and was continued and extended by the Romans. The Slavs strengthened the island's settlement pattern with their settled agriculture and organized life style, particularly important when the island was under distant rule e.g. Byzantium and Hungary, who viewed this area as peripheral to their interests.

Secondly, the stimulus of being a colony in a strong empire, like that of Venice, was to revive the island's fortunes both economically and culturally. Thanks to its strategic (naval) relevance for Venice in the latter's long drawn-out struggles with the Ottoman Turk, Hvar Island was to experience its «golden age» not only through greater economic development but also a flowering of its cultural development in literature, music, theatre (1612) and architecture. The Venetian presence also helped to create and preserve greater security by curtailing the threat of piracy, and led to the growth of coastal sites like Jelsa and Vrboska. Thirdly, Hvar Island was also the victim of outside interference and influence. War made its mark through the ravages of Ottoman raids; plague visited the island on several occasions with disastrous consequences to the local populace.

Fourthly, geographical factors were also to play a part in this whole

scenario. Spatially the role of the Central Plain and its surrounding rim cannot be over-emphasised in the growth and development of the island's settlement pattern and population. Its significance was already apparent even in the early period of Venetian occupation when it contained four-fifths of the island's total population. Admittedly over time this share decreased but even then most of Hvar's inhabitants lived in the western half of the island. The island also reflected patterns of migration. Early Venetian rule experienced movement in from the Balkan mainland, boosting the size of settlements, especially in the eastern half, by people who perceived the island as a haven of refuge from mainland problems. Places like Zastrazišće and Bogomolje became refugee centres for immigrants escaping the turmoil of Ottoman domination, and supported by a beneficial Venetian open-door policy to encourage settlers to come to Hvar and other Dalmatian islands under their control.

Finally, the article has traced the development of the island's population over time, linked to the basic factors of production, land and manpower. The latter was constantly ravaged by plague, wars, shipping disasters or compulsory military service, whilst certain areas of coastal land were uncultivable for physical reasons or the threat of piratical attacks. Although transport facilities were limited on the island for much of Venetian rule, social organization, some autonomy and a workable legal system played their part in the vagaries of population development. The stark statistical data portrays a doubling of the population during Venetian times. A more subtle appreciation of its settlement pattern may be had when one recognizes that «Human landscapes neither grow in an organic sense nor do they die. They are made and are worn out and the human groups that occupy them may abandon their work for a variety of reasons, at their own volition or under pressure from outside forces»⁹⁸ This study of Hvar Island has traced that evolution utilizing diverse archival sources and marshalling numerous facts to present a rational account of both its settlement pattern and population fluctuations between 1420 and the fall of the Lion of St. Mark in 1797.

⁹⁸ H.C. Prince, "Real, Imagined and Abstract Worlds of the Past", *Progress in Geography*, Vol. 3, (E. Arnold, London), 1971, pp. 12-13.

