Arthur Evans in Dubrovnik and Split (1875-1882)

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Arthur Evans in Dubrovnik and Split (1875-82)¹

It is now 131 years ago that, against his will, Arthur Evans at the age of 31 left Dubrovnik on April 23rd 1882. Seven months later, at a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries of London, Evans gave a lecture titled ‘Epidaurum, Canali and Risinimu’. The Roman colony of Epidaurum is modern Cavtat, a lovely small settlement on the sea, some 16 km east of Dubrovnik. Canali is modern Konavla, a fertile area east of Cavtat, and the Illyrian and Roman settlement of Risinum is modern Risan at the northern end of the Bay of Kotor in Montenegro. This pioneer work on archaeology of the area was published next year as the first part of Evans’s book ‘Antiquarian Researches in Illiricum’. My first job as an archaeologist took me to Dubrovnik 90 years after Evans left the city (Grad as the inhabitants of Dubrovnik proudly call their city when they are away from it, and everybody understands which city it is). Getting acquainted with the local archaeology I realised that after 90 years there was nothing significantly new on the archaeology of the Dubrovnik region, and that in fact it would be worthwhile to translate into Croatian this pioneer archaeological research. I did this and the translation with comments and updated bibliography appeared in 1978², when I was by then working at the Archaeological Museum in Split.

Thanks to the biography by Joan, sister of Arthur Evans,³ the research of John J. Wilkes⁴ and the new biography by Silvia L. Horwitz⁵ we know much about Arthur Evans’s work in the Balkans prior to his discoveries on Crete. I will not repeat here the achievements Evans has made for archaeology, ethnography and cultural history of the region including his remarkable journalistic work where he showed deep knowledge of regional politics and admiration towards the Slav freedom movement ‘against Turks, Austrians, Russians, or any others - including Englishmen –who refused them their right to self-determination’.⁶ What I will try to do for this occasion is to present some details on the everyday life of Arthur Evans in Dubrovnik and Split as seen by the local people who wrote about him in newspapers, journals or books, material that is not easily available to somebody that might be interested in Evans’s pre Knossos period.

¹ This is a short version of the paper I have read on a conference organised by the Croatian Archaeological Society held in Dubrovnik in 1984 under the title ‘Archaeological research in Dubrovnik and environs’. I have inquired if anything new has be published in the last 29 years on Evans presence in Dalmatia, but found nothing of significance (see below at the end).
² It was published in the Split journal for literature, art and cultural affairs ‘Mogućnosti’ (Possibilities) vol. 8, pp 951-966, vol. 9, pp. 1080-1086, and vol. 10, pp. 1186-1207 (without Evans’s illustrations!). The intention of the publisher was to produce a book, but this did not happen because the publisher closed down. There were attempts in Dubrovnik to publish a bilingual edition, but that had failed too.
⁶ Horwitz 1983, 51
Arthur Evans first saw Dubrovnik (at the time officially called Ragusa) in September 1875 after visiting on foot Bosnia and Hercegovina with his brother Lewis. He viewed the City as a ‘combined Slavonic fire and Venetian polish in so elegant a fashion’. This travel had impressed Evans very much and this can be felt when reading his book that was published (‘at the author’s expense’) two years later under the title ‘Through Bosnia and Hercegovina on foot during the Insurrection, August and September 1875 with an historical review of Bosnia, and a glimpse at the Croats, Slavonians, and the Ancient Republic of Ragusa’, a book that made him the leading expert on the so called Eastern Question. In the same year of 1877 Evans was again in Dalmatia, now as a correspondent for ‘The Manchester Guardian’ residing in ‘the best hotel in Ragusa’ and ‘he soon became a familiar figure at Ragusa, - the mad Englishman with a walking stick -, whose activities were regarded locally with an amused tolerance, in spite of the fact that many were convinced he was Gladstone’s secret agent’. Among others in Dubrovnik he met Don Frane Bulić who was a teacher of Greek and Latin at the Gymnasium, who, at the age of 29, has published the coin collection of his school. It was probably the coins and history that made the friendship between the two. But Bulić left Dubrovnik in autumn the same year Evans came. He went to Vienna for medical reasons and to study epigraphy.

At the beginning of July 1877 Evans started to excavate a ‘large Bronze Age barrow at Canali, near Ragusa’, but after three days war between the Turks and Montenegro broke out and he immediately left for Cetinje (the capital of Montenegro) to be an eyewitness of current events and to inform the readers of the Guardian. After two weeks he came back to Dubrovnik and continued to excavate the mound. In the sixth number of the literary journal ‘Slovinac’ which was published in Dubrovnik in the column titled Sitnice (Sundries) on page 55 the following was published: ‘Mr. Evans, about whom we have spoken in the previous number (the reviews of his two books mentioned here, authors note) – Slovinac 5, 1877, 42-43, has lately travelled through Hercegovina, Monte Negro, Albania and around the Dubrovnik region looking for Slavinian antiquities. He has gathered a great deal of this and especially dresses, arms, armour and vessels, that everybody could have seen here in Dubrovnik at his place. During excavations of burial mounds he has found silver bracelets twisted like snakes that were carried around their hands probably by women. The tireless explorer will be of great use to our history and antiquity, and it is right that foreigners, at least on occasions, express how much the Slavinians had done for others.’

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7 Horwitz 1981, 35.
8 This book (the second revised and enlarged edition from 1877) was translated into our language first in 1965 and then in 1973 by Milutin Dracun with notes by dr Vlajko Palavestra: Pješke kroz Bosnu i Hercegovinu tokom ustanka avgusta i septembra 1875: sa istorijskim pregledom Bosne i osvrtom na Hrvate, Slavonice i staru Dubrovačku republiku, Sarajevo 1965, 1973.
9 Horwitz 1983, 39.
10 Wilkes, 1976, 32.
11 B. Poparić, Glavni podaci za životopis don Frane Bulića od najmlađih njegovih dana do njegova umirovljenja kao ravnatelja velike Državne gimnazije u Splitu, Hrvatska revija 10, Zagreb 1934, 523; E. Marin (ed.), Don Frane Bulić (exhibition catalogue), Split 1984, 73.
The first map of Roman Dalmatia to be Published
For the sake of the story, I have to summarise here some of what John Wilkes and Silvia Horwitz have already written about Evans in the following years.

A turning point in Evans’s life took place when, during his excavations of the barrow, in Dubrovnik arrived Edward A. Freeman, the well-known historian who had admired Evans’s reports.13 Freeman came with his two daughters, Margaret and Helen. Margaret strongly attracted Evans and after this visit the excavations of the mound were never continued, and we do not know which mound among the numerous mounds in Konavla he began to excavate (some very impressive, ‘colossal’ as Evans noted).14 The Freemans soon left Dubrovnik, another war broke out and the Austrian forces entered Bosnia and Hercegovina. In November Evans returned to Nash Mills to prepare his reports which were published in 1878 under the title ‘Illyrian letters’.15 In February, Arthur and Margaret announced their marriage. In March Evans was back to Dubrovnik where he decided to settle for good and has rented a lovely house by the sea, overlooking the City walls - Casa San Lazzaro.16 His father ‘John Evans was horrified to learn that the lease Arthur signed was for twenty year’.17 Again he left England and shuttled around Dalmatia, Bosnia and Albania. In September he was back, the wedding was celebrated and by the end of October they were in Dubrovnik again.

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13 Horwitz 1981, 36.
14 See Google Earth, especially north of the Dubrovnik airport at Čilipi in Konavla.
15 This book was translated in our language in Sarajevo in 1967 by Milutin Deacun, ‘Ilirska pisma’.
16 When hotel Exlersior was in our hands the house was turned into a lovely Tavern. Now it is a luxury Villa Agave Dubrovnik, owned (not rented) by an English company, as far as I know.
17 Horwitz 1981, 47.
Dubrovnik, late 19th century postcard. Yellow circle: Casa San Lazzaro

Casa San Lazzaro (right). Postcard from late 19th century
It was assumed that, as Wilkes notes, he was to become the British consul in Dubrovnik, ‘but, even though Gladstone was back again as prime minister, it would be impossible to appoint a journalist whose views had already antagonised Vienna’.18 As The Manchester Guardian did not show interest in regularly publishing reports from the Balkans, from mid 1880 Evans had more time to do research and to write. His intention was to write the history of Dubrovnik from the prehistoric period to the restless days that he was witnessing, and also to write the history of the Illyrian lands.19 He visited areas at Thessaloniki, Niš, Albania and Sandak collecting topographical data about Roman roads and settlements. From a refugee camp he brought an orphan, Simo, to Dubrovnik and educated him, and for Christmas they organised ‘one of the liveliest social events in Ragusa’.20 Margaret and Arthur did not have children. She was of frail health and decided that year to go back to England on her own for medical treatment. Evans again journeyed the Balkans to gather information on current political affairs. Back home his first academic paper on unknown Illyrian coins was published in 1880,21 and in 1881 a paper on ancient gems from Dalmatia also appeared.22 In Dubrovnik he became friends with Felix von Lusca, an Austrian army

20 Horwitz 1981, 51.
21 A. Evans, ‘On some recent discoveries of Illyrian coins’, Numismatic Chronicle 2, new Series, vol. XX, 1880, 269-302. This paper was translated into our language as early 1881 by Šime Ljubić with the help of Antun Zarmalek. Ljubić calls Evans ‘a citizen of Dubrovnik’ and that he received Evans permission to translate the article into Croatian. Ljubić also made some critical comments: O nje kojih nedavno nadjenih ilirskih penezih. – Po Arturu I. Evansu, preveo S. L. sa dvije table, Viestnik Hrvatskoga arkeologičkoga družtva, godina III, Zagreb 1881, 65-68; 99-108; godina IV, Zagreb 1882, 23-25, 38-48. Also a small booklet with the same title was published in 1881 at the C. Albechta press in Zagreb, pp. 2-24 + two plates.
surgeon who was then the secretary of the Anthropological Society in Vienna and later director of the Museum für Volkunde in Berlin. They analysed the skeletons from the medieval cemetery of STEČCI at Mrčine (today’s Dubravka) in Konavla, an analysis that is even today rare in Croatia.23

The political situation made Evans isolated and his position became very complicated, but as he was obviously very stubborn, he continued to help the Slav movement. The Serbian prince Milan has awarded Evans with the Takovo cross medal.24 Warnings came from all sides. His friend von Luscan has sent him a warning in a text written as a Greek inscription found in Olympia in which the English words were written in Greek the alphabet. Von Luscan warned him that he should not publish anything political. Even Margaret came back to Dubrovnik and brought new warnings, but nothing of this changed his mind. The Austrians eventually accused him of being a spy and on March 2nd 1882 issued a deportation notice, but five days later while he was in the port preparing to leave Dubrovnik, he was arrested in front of the British consul, charged as being hostile to Austria’s interests, and taken to the prison known as ‘Contannati’ (Sentenced), and put into a solitary confinement cell, without the facilities to write or to have a candle.

While reading the book ‘Dubrovačke slike i prilike’ by Josip Bersa, a poet and an archaeologist from Zadar (1862-1932) who spent his childhood in Dubrovnik, I found this interesting peace about Evans: ‘Through all this time Arthur Evans was in Dubrovnik. His adventures in Bosnia and Hercegovina during the rebellion he described in a book that was published in 1877. Those lands he has travelled as an historian, archaeologist, naturalist... and a uncompromising critic of Russians. In the book he writes in a very flattering way about the Republic of Dubrovnik and about great things that it left in those lands. His wife, a dear and tiny creature, has made of her small house at Ploče, that sticks on a bare cliff next to the sea, an elegant place, full of rare art antiquities that her husband has collected in Bosnia, Monte Negro, Albania and the environs. When she would take a tour to Graž riding a high horse, her husband would run next to them holding some thick club in his hand and at the same time was greeting the passers by who were already accustomed to this pastime of the English couple. To the Government Evans behaviour was always suspicious, especially later when Bosnia was occupied, and he had to leave our land.’

While in the cell he managed to write on a small piece of paper with his own blood using a tooth of his comb a note to Margaret informing her that he was comfortable, that she should not worry and that they should get a lawyer. The jailer was a Slav who delivered the note to Margaret. In the meantime, seven policeman turned over his house in search for incriminating evidence. They were frustrated reading his notes written in minute handwriting in our language where he noted peasant stories about dragons and vampires, fairies, notes on coins and inscriptions, maps with strange signs. The British public was alarmed and Evans’s family made approaches towards the Government. His

I did not have a chance to read.

23 Only in 1978 a similar analysis was made at a similar cemetery at Ričice. Ž. Mikić, Antropološki prikaz srednjovjekovnih stanovnika Ričica, Ričice – nekropola stečaka, Split 1983.
24 Slovinac 3, Dubrovnik 1881, 46. This medal was inaugurated in 1878 as merit to those who fought against the Turks.
The former Austrian jail, renewed after the earthquake in 1979
The former Austrian jail (left) was to be the house of the Archaeological Museum with the excavated remains of the pre earthquake in 1667.

brother Norman and sister Alice went to Dubrovnik. Margaret made it possible for her to visit him and bring him food and books. In the meantime Austria succeeded in controlling the rebellion and, partly due to the pressure from England and for other reasons, they decided that it would be best for them to get rid of the reluctant Englishman. ‘On April 23, 1882 a decree of release from prison and expulsion from Ragusa was signed. After six weeks in prison, Arthur was a free man again. As his wife and sister had emptied the Casa San Lazzaro, had packed the household goods, and made all the arrangements, he had nothing left to do but board the ship with Margaret and Alice to Venice. From there, they returned to England.’25 The local journal for books, art and crafts ‘Slovinac’ has put it this way: ‘A GREAT YACHT OF ENGLAND has recently sailed into our city with another smaller one, and within a few hours several gents of both sexes have boarded and have immediately sailed towards Venice. The known Mr. Arthur Evans, who was recently released from jail together with the learned Mr. Gopčević, where they were imprisoned for political reasons, went to Venice aboard the mentioned Yacht and sailed towards England because he was expelled from all the lands represented in the Representative house in Vienna.’26

26 Slovinac 13, Dubrovnik 1882, 207.
It sounds unbelievable that Evans, after the seven hard and dangerous years that he spent on the Balkans filled with political fermentations, wars, uprisings, and permanently reporting from hardly accessible lands, and after six weeks in jail, was able, only two months after he left Dubrovnik, in front of the Society of Antiquaries of London, to give a lecture on ancient gems which he had collected in Dalmatia, following with the four lectures later published under combined title *Antiquarian researches in Illyricum*, the first one being on *Epidarum, Canali and Risinium*, as mentioned at the beginning of my talk.\(^{27}\)

The future life of Arthur Evans is well know and I will here only mention that in 1893 when Margaret died, the weekly paper *Crvena Hrvatska* (Red Croatia) from Dubrovnik in no. 33 for 1893 noted: ‘*We have received the sad news from the shores of Genoa about the death of Mrs. Evans, the daughter of the famous historian Freeman and the wife of the son of Sir John Evans, the president of the Geographic-Archaeological Society in London. The best days of their lives they spent in Dubrovnik, where many will remember her, if for nothing else, for the great generosity with which this educated lady has helped the poor.*’

50 years later, in June 1932, Evans, being 81, and honoured with many tributes, with the sister of his beloved late wife, Helen Freeman, came to visit what was by then the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. By car they visited Zagreb, Jajce, Sarajevo, Dubrovnik, Split, Šibenik and Zadar from where they returned to England. On this visit there are interesting details written in daily papers and few I have found in the archive of the Archaeological Museum at Split.

It seems that Evans was in Dubrovnik on the 18th and 19th of June when he visited all of the places where he once was as well as the jail where he spent six weeks: ‘*To the bewildering jailer who showed him around Evans remarked, “I come back here every fifty years”*.\(^{28}\) He visited the city library and offered as a present the incunabula by Juraj Dragišić ‘*De natura angelica*’ which he had acquired in Florence. He wrote the following dedication: ‘*This book is presented as a historic relic of the city of Ragusa and its civic library by Sir Arthur Evans, who here, like its author, first arriving through Bosnia, found a hospitable retreat (1875–1882). On the occasion of his revisiting Dubrovnik – after an interval of fifty years – June 18th 1932*.’ Today still this book is one of the most precious incunabula the Naučna biblioteka u Dubrovniku.\(^{29}\)

From Dubrovnik Evans and Helen came to Split on the 20th of June where Evans met his old friend Don Frane Bulić from 55 years earlier in Dubrovnik. They visited Diocletian’s Palace (fig. ), Marjan hill and in the evening had a meal at the Archaeological Museum together with Bulić’s niece Vinka Bulić, the keepers Ljubo Karaman and Ante Grgin, and Vinko Brajević, the editor of ‘Novo Doba’, the daily paper published in Split. Brajević

\(^{27}\) Wilkes has noted (1976, 51) that: ‘In 1884 he delivered at Oxford four of his six lectures on the Slavonic conquest of Illyricum, which reminded unpublished’, and I wonder if they still are.

\(^{28}\) Horwitz 1981, 231.

\(^{29}\) Juraj Dragišić (Gregorisu Benignus de Salviatis), *De natura angelica*, ed. Ubertinus Risalitus. Florentae:-Bartolomeo de libris, Kalendas Augusti 1499 (20th June 1499). Ink. 45.
on Wednesday 22nd on page two published an interesting article ‘With Sir A. Evans at Mons. Bulić’. Two old friends, both in their 80s, renewed their memories of Dubrovnik, and Don Frane has during the dinner held a toast to Evans: ‘We will find each other in the Elisse fields, but while we are here let God give us more joy for life and will for work’. Evans responded in a witty way: ‘I come, as you see, to Dalmatia every fifty years. I will come again in fifty years [and that was supposed to be when I (B.K.) was the director of the Museum] and I hope I will again meet my friend fresh and healthy’. Evans then hailed the road from Zagreb to Sarajevo and to Dubrovnik and added: ‘Dubrovnik was once a famous Republic but later lived long quietly, from its memories. That was how I came to know it. Today Dubrovnik is full of life given by many cheerful foreign tourists. It is good that Dubrovnik took care for the development of tourism. That brings enrichment to the city. It gives it a lovely contemporary picture. But I like more the quiet and poor Dubrovnik of my days…’. Then he spoke of Split, Marjan and about the discovery of a grave on Crete and wished that Don Frane would find the grave of Diocletian or Iulius Nepos. The next day they visited Solin (ancient Salona), and then Evans continued to visit Trogir and Šibenik, seeing also the waterfalls of the river Krka. From there he went to Benkovac where they visited ancient Asseria, and then to Zadar from where he left for England on the 24th of June.30

This is basically the paper which I read in 1984 in Dubrovnik during the conference organized by the Croatian Archaeological Society entitled ‘Archaeological Research in Dubrovnik and the environs’. I concluded my talk with a suggestion that we should, as a sign of respect to Arthur Evans, erect a modest mark, an inscription that will commemorate his being in Dubrovnik that could be put on the Casa san Lazzaro where Arthur and Margaret lived. ‘The Assembly (of the Croatian Archaeological Society) has agreed to send a proposal to the Council of Dubrovnik with a suggestion to mark the long sojourn (1875–1882) of the archaeologist Sir Arthur Evans in Dubrovnik who was then the correspondent of the “Manchester Guardian”, and who later became famous for the discoveries of Knossos and the interpretation of the Cretan culture.’31 On the meeting of the Executive Committee held on February 26th 1985 the following was written down: ‘The initiative of the Society to mark the sojourn of Sir Arthur Evans in Dubrovnik, the renowned and world famous archaeologist, has found understanding, response and support of the institutions in Dubrovnik that have promptly reacted to our proposal. In

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30 On Evans visit to our country there are several articles in ‘Novo Doba’ 21st. June 1932, p. 6: Sir Artur Evans u Splitu, where it is mentioned that Evans was a ‘great friend of our people’; 22nd June 1932, p. 2: Sa Sir A. Evansom kod mons Bulića; 25th June 1932, p. 1 (Saturdays insert), Iz zapamćenja Mons. Bulića; 24th June 1932; Sir Arthur Evans u Šibeniku (Vinka Bulić); in ‘Obzor’ (Zagreb) 4th July 1933: Evans i don Frane Bulić; 7th July 1932: Sir Arthur Evans u Zagrebu where it is mentioned that he was an old friend of Ivan Meštrović, the sculptor; 12th July 1932, Ivan Esih, A. J. Evans I Hrvati. From Bulić’s correspondence (Archive of the Archaeological Museum no. 93/1932) there are several information’s: Professor Roko Mišetić, a doctor from Dubrovnik, writes to Bulić on July 13th 1932 that he heard that Evans is coming to Split and then to Dubrovnik and asks Bulić if he can hand to Evans his visit card and the following note: Dear Sir Arthur, I read in the papers you are coming to Split to see don Frane. My mother and Count Gozze were too glad to know you were coming down and might eventually revisit Dubrovnik after a long… (illegible word). I am glad you paid a visit to Zagreb and Split at this time would rejoice if you came to Dubrovnik too. Wishing you best luck. Yours most respectfully professor R. Mišetić. Bulić has added to that note that on 20th July 1932: ‘at 6 h. at evening Sir Arthur Evans has arrived from Dubrovnik who told me that he has meet Roko Mišetić’. Some N. Omčikus has in a short letter written to don Frane on 14th July 1932 asking him if Bulić can find out if Evans has received his letter that Omčikus has sent to Split on Bulić’s address. Don Frane has replied that he gave the letter to Evans. Also, don Frane has sent on 1st July 1932 to Evans a package of books addressed to Jouboury Beiks.

31 Obavješt Hrvatskog arheološkog društva 16/3, Zagreb 1984, 18.
collaboration with the Museum in Dubrovnik the Society will suggest the text for the inscription which will be mounted on the house where A. Evans stayed from 1875 to 1882.\textsuperscript{32}

Well, unfortunately, this did not happen although the text for the inscription was written. I think that this is a good occasion to renew this initiative from 29 years ago. Thank you.

\textbf{Endnote}

Up today there is no synthesis on the archaeology of Dubrovnik and environs. There are many articles and rather fewer excavations, exclusively of rescue character. For new articles up to 1978 see: B. Kirigin, Bibliografija novijih radova o antičkim spomenicima Cavtata, Konavla i Risan, Mogućnosti 10, Split 1978, 1206-1207. For Konavle (Canali) we have a synthesis for the prehistoric period (with some note on the classical period): Š. Batović, \textit{Konavle u prapovijesti}, Konavoski zbornik 2, Dubrovnik 1988, 13-147 (with a summary in French).

Two volumes on the archaeology of the region were published in the series of the Croatian Archaeological Society in 1988 (vol. 12) and in 2010 (vol.24): Ž. Rapanić (ed.), \textit{Arheološka istraživanja u Dubrovniku i dubrovačkom primorju}, Zagreb 1988, and D. Perkić (ed.), \textit{Arheološka istraživanja u Dubrovačko-neretvanskoj županiji}, Zagreb 2010.

The journal for literature and science ‘\textit{Dubrovnik}’ (new series, vol VIII, no. 4, 1997) has, under the editorship of the late Ivica Žile, published eleven papers by distinguished scholars from Croatia on the genesis of Dubrovnik: ‘\textit{Novije znanstvene spoznaje o genezi grada Dubrovnika}’, pp. 5-275.

\textsuperscript{32} Obavjesti Hrvatskog arheološkog društva 17/1, Zagreb 1985, 8.
Don Frane Bulić and Sir Arthur Evans in front of the so-called Temple of Jupiter within Diocletian's Palace (now the baptistery of the Cathedral in Split). June 1932.