Archaeological research on the island of Palagruža and at cape Ploča has given extensive material evidence of the cult of Diomedes in the Adriatic (fig. 1). The excavations revealed a large quantity of pottery fragments. The majority of the pottery fragments belong to fine votive pots. Some pots are bea incised graffiti with the name of Diomedes, attested about 40 times.

**Palagruža**

Palagruža is a small island group situated in the centre of the Adriatic and is the most important navigational point in the transadriatic route. Archaeological excavations at the central plateau of Salamandrija were undertaken in 1996 and again between 2002 and 2006. Traces of sanctuary architecture have not yet been found. There is a possibility that it functioned as an open type sanctuary or that it was destroyed by a later Roman fortress. Excavations on the south slope of Salamandrija have covered an area of 32 m². Most of the pottery fragments were found in Deposit 4050, which lies on bedrock. Deposits above this could be dated according to the pottery fragments to the Late Roman period. In Deposit 4050 38.4 % of the pottery fragments belong to Greek Classical and Hellenistic vessels, while 12.2 % are fragments of Early Roman vessels. The rest are mostly prehistoric and belong to the Cetina culture. The fragments are quite small and difficult to distinguish according to typology. Since Deposit 4050 yielded material from different archaeological periods it is not suitable for absolute dating and our chronological considerations are restricted to cross-dating based upon technical and stylistic criteria, form and decoration and comparison with similar material found at other Mediterranean sites.

Late Hellenistic pottery from Palagruža is represented by black-gloss pottery, grey-gloss pottery and relief pottery. All the fragments of the black-gloss pottery were fired differently, so their gloss varies from very good black lustrous to chocolate brown or grey, and sometimes red. The clay also varies in colour and texture from reddish-yellow to pale and grey, and from granular to very fine, with or without impurities. Among the diagnostic fragments is a fish-plate that has a framed rosette stamp with two incised grooves around it and wide band of rouletting on the inner surface of the vessel (fig. 2,4). A similar fragment of a bowl with a rosette stamp has been found at Stobi, where has been dated to the 1st century BC. They both have chocolate brown gloss. Fish-plates with hooked rim (Morel 1300 series, dated in the middle of the 2nd century BC) are very common at Palagruža. A fragment of a ring foot and lower part of the body of a plate has a badly preserved gloss, and may be dated according to analogies in Valesio to the late 3rd and early 2nd centuries BC (fig. 2,1). Small bowls with slightly in-turned rim, horizontal or out-turned rim are also present, and these are very common around the Hellenistic Mediterranean.

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3. The Gnathia pottery, whose production continues in this period, will be studied separately. This kind of pottery has very distinctive decoration which can easily wash off. On small pottery fragments from Palagruža it is difficult to determine to which group of Gnathia they belong and that requires special attention.
Ten fragments of mould-made relief pottery have been found at Palagruža. The most interesting is a fragment of a hemispherical bowl with grey clay and dark grey slip (fig. 2,5). The decoration is very neatly executed, showing palm and acanthus leaves. At the bottom there is a mask with open mouth. Similar masks have been found in Resnik near Split on the east Adriatic coast. Fragments with arrow-head decoration and shell feet are common in the eastern Adriatic (fig. 2,6). Moulds with arrow-head decoration were found in Issa and in Resnik, and we can presume that the fragment came to Palagruža from local eastern Adriatic production centres.

One fragment with out-turned rim, almost vertical walls with grey clay and dark grey gloss may belong to a deep bowl. It has an incised inscription beneath the rim of the vessel (fig. 2,3). A rim fragment of pale clay, dark brown slip and with an ovolo band belongs to an “Ionian” cup (fig. 2,2). Parallels have been found on the eastern Adriatic coast, at Resnik, in Sicily at Monte Iato where they are dated at the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 1st century BC.

Among Early Roman pottery at Palagruža we found Eastern Sigillata, North-Italian Sigillata, Italian (Arretine) Sigillata, thin-walled pottery and lead-glazed pottery.

Rim-fragments of the same vessel may belong to Hayes Form 47 in Eastern Sigillata A, dated at the beginning of the 1st century AD (fig. 3,3–4). There is an incised graffito in Greek letters on the upper part of the vessel. Rim-fragments of a deep bowl are made of a granular, micaceous orange clay and have a red gloss (fig. 3,1). These fragments belong to Eastern Sigillata but it was very difficult to distinguish whether these are Eastern Sigillata A and/or B. This type of sigillata is not very common on the central Adriatic coast. Fragments of a Sarius cup without decoration shows parallels in form with Sarius-cups from Adria and Magdalensberg, dated between the last quarter of the 1st century BC and the Flavian period (fig. 3,5). According to the very poorly preserved gloss and the variations in colour (from dark red to pale yellow) with no decoration on the outer surface, the closest parallels are to be found at Mrdakovica in Liburnia (north Dalmatia), also dated to the end of the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD. Italian Sigillata is not very common at Palagruža. Among the diagnostic fragments are two fragments with potters’ stamps (fig. 3,6). One has a rectangular stamp which is very badly preserved and not recognizable, but the other is showing the letter A in the first line and probably TV in the second. Rectangular potters’ stamps are common on early Italian Sigillata vessels, dated at the end of the 1st century BC and the beginning of 1st AD. Thin-walled pottery forms the major part of the Early Roman pottery at Palagruža. Numerous fragments of bodies indicate that they are mostly cups (like the Aco beaker in fig. 3,2). Large numbers of fragments belong to grey thin-walled pottery with hard fired grey clay and a darker smooth surface (fig. 3,7). They are generally dated from the 2nd century BC till beginning of the 2nd century AD. Fragments of lead-glazed pottery have a hard-fired reddish to yellow clay (fig. 3,8). The glaze is yellow to

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7 Similar acanthus decoration Williams 1980 Pl. 25,23.
8 Brusic 1999 Fig. 22–33; id. 2004 Fig. 18.
9 Arrow-head decoration: In 1999 Fig. 10;13; shell feet: In 1999 Fig. 27–28; similar shell feet: Rotroff 1982 Pl. 1,2.
11 Ibid. Fig. 39,A238.
12 Puppo 1995, 113 S11g.
13 Hayes 1985 Tav. VI,17–18; id. 2001 Fig.2,4.
14 Mazzeo Saracino 1985 Tav. LXXV,1,4.
16 Hayes 1997 Pl. 18.
Fig. 3.
Fig. 4.

Fig. 5.
THE LATE HELLENISTIC AND EARLY ROMAN FINE POTTERY FROM THE SANCTUARIES OF DIOMEDES IN DALMATIA

Fig. 6.

Fig. 7.
brown with traces of green colour and mould-made relief decoration. They appear from the later 1st century BC.\textsuperscript{18}

Some fragments of Roman lamps were also found on Palagruža.

Cape Ploča

Cape Ploča is situated at the end of a small peninsula that represents the border between the north and south Adriatic. Here different weather systems meet, with conflicting currents and winds, which is all very dangerous for sailing boats.\textsuperscript{19}

At the plateau behind the small medieval church dedicated to St John of Trogir, excavations have revealed a large quantity of archaeological material. Also traces of walls, which could belong to an enclosure, were found.\textsuperscript{20}

The majority of the archaeological finds consists of Hellenistic pottery: there are some 130 000 fragments. It consists mainly of fine ware, but there is also some plain ware, kitchenware and few fragments of amphorae.\textsuperscript{21}

Drinking vessels are dominant here – kantharoi, skyphoi, bowls and cups – but there are some jugs and plates. A high percentage of the pottery is made of buff clay. There is some black gloss ware, but a brownish or reddish slip is more common. Grey clay is somewhat less common but there is black gloss ware, but a brownish or reddish slip is more common. There is some buff clay (\textsuperscript{fig. 4,1–6}). These forms come in a buff and grey clay. The texture varies from very fine to granular, with or without impurities. The slip is very good and shiny or very badly preserved in all different shades of grey, red, brown and black on the outside or inside of the pot. The colour of slip varies due to the unequal temperature of firing. These forms are very common at Dalmatian Hellenistic sites and they are possibly produced at local workshops but more studies and analyses must be done.

Mould-made relief ware is found in numerous fragments. These are mainly made of grey clay and the hemispherical bowl with more or less everted rim is the dominant shape here but there are also some fragments of kraters. The quality of clay varies, from very hard to soft, but it is usually well-refined. The colour of slip comes in different shapes of red, brown or black. The fragments of rims indicate a good quality of fabric of an orange colour and red slip polished. The decoration is applied like barbotine beads, drops, ribs, or incised ribs, triangles; or it is impressed by means of different instruments and there are some fragments with visible impurities. The fragments of one cup are hard-fired, in section is visible red clay, and inside and outside grey-fired clay with net decoration. Another is made of pale yellow clay with incised triangles in a horizontal band. Other fragments are mainly reddish, but there are some with different fired parts, which are brown or grey. Some fragments have traces of red slip and some are polished. The decoration is applied like barbotine beads, drops, ribs, or incised ribs, triangles; or it is impressed by means of different instruments and there are some fragments with floral motives.\textsuperscript{22}

The fragments of North Italian Sigillata (\textsuperscript{fig. 7,3–4}) are of a good quality of fabric of an orange colour and red slip with nice floral decoration. The fragments of rims indicate about 5 smaller pots. Some fragments could be ascribed to Sarius cup. It is decorated with concentric circles in a row, and below it there are palm leaves and a fragment of some floral decoration.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{18}~HAYES 1997, 64–66.
\textsuperscript{21}~KROGIN 2004, 141–142.
\textsuperscript{22}~KIRIGIN/HAYES/LEACH 2002, 250. – BARIN 2004, 16.
\textsuperscript{23}~MOREL 1981, 2150; 2200; 2680.
\textsuperscript{24}~BRUSIC 1999, 11.
\textsuperscript{25}~Ibid. 15. – ŠESSELJ 2005a, 51–55.
\textsuperscript{26}~ŠESSELJ 2005, 381–400.
\textsuperscript{27}~RECÍ 1985 TAV. CILII,2–4;14; CIV,9; CEŠARI 2002, 98–99.
\textsuperscript{28}~Similar MAZZEO SARACINO 1985 TAV. LXXV,6; BRUSIC 1999 Fig. 44,265.
The pottery finds from Palagruža which can be connected with the cult of Diomedes could be dated from the Late Archaic and Classical periods until the early Roman Imperial period. According to the preliminary pottery analyses most of the fragments are from the Hellenistic period. At cape Ploča the oldest finds can be dated to the beginning of the 3rd century BC, but the majority of the pottery belongs to the 2nd and 1st centuries BC. The coins found at both sites correspond to the period from the second half of the 4th century BC to the time of Augustus.

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