



MAPPING OF THE LOCAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Piran, Slovenia

1. Introduction

Piran (Slovene pronunciation: [pi'rá:n]; Italian: Pirano [pi'ra:no]) is a town in southwestern Slovenia on the Gulf of Piran on the Adriatic Sea. It is one of the three major towns of Slovenian Istria. The town is known for its medieval architecture, with narrow streets and compact houses. Piran is the administrative seat of the Municipality of Piran and one of Slovenia's major tourist attractions. Until the mid-20th century, Italian was the dominant language, but it was replaced by Slovene following the Istrian exodus.

In the pre-Roman era, the hills in the Piran area were inhabited by Illyrian Histri tribes who were farmers, hunters, and fishermen. They were also pirates who disrupted Roman trade in the northern Adriatic.

The Piran peninsula was incorporated into the Roman Empire in 178 and 177 BC and settled in the following years with rural homes (*villae rusticae*).

The decline of the Roman Empire, from the 5th century AD onward, and incursions by the Avars and Slavs at the end of the 6th century, prompted the Roman population to withdraw into easily defensible locations such as islands or peninsulas. This started local urbanization and by the 7th century, under Byzantine rule, Piran had become heavily fortified. Despite the defenses, the Franks conquered Istria in 788 and Slavs settled in the region. By 952, Piran had become a part of the Holy Roman Empire.

The earliest reliable records of the area are in the 7th century work *Cosmographia* by an anonymous cleric of Ravenna. The name of the town most probably originates from the Greek "pyrrhos", which means "red", because of the reddish flysch stones commonly found in the town's area. [citation needed] Some historians also refer it to "pyros", meaning fire, due to ancient lighthouses which were supposed to be on the edge of the marina.

From 1283 to 1797, the town became part of the Republic of Venice, where it was governed in a semi-autonomous way, with a council of local noblemen assisting the Venetian delegate. Several enemies (e.g. from the Republic of Genoa) and pirate assaults were repelled during the late Middle Ages; a great pestilence hit the town in 1558, killing about two-thirds of the population. The last decades of Venetian rule were marked by decadence, due to the competition with the nearby Austrian port town of Trieste.

The town was annexed to the Austrian Empire in 1797; but during the years from 1806 to 1814, it was ceded to the Napoleonic Empire. On 22 February 1812, the Battle of Pirano was fought

between a British and a French ship of the line in the vicinity of Piran. This was a minor battle of the Adriatic campaign of the Napoleonic Wars.

At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, Piran was an Austro-Hungarian town with over 15,000 inhabitants, roughly the same size as nearby Koper. Around 80% of the population was ethnically and culturally Italian, with a Slovene minority of around 15%.^[5] It was a flourishing market and spa town with good transport connections. The first trolleybus line in the Balkans was introduced to public service on 24 October 1909 in Piran. In 1912, it was replaced by a tramway that operated on the same route till 1953.

After the First World War, together with Trieste and all Istria, the town was ceded to Italy. There were no events in those years until Italy entered the Second World War in 1940. With the defeat of the Axis powers and the rise of Tito's rule, Piran was assigned to the Free Territory of Trieste, Zone B, under Yugoslavian administration. The town was annexed to Yugoslavia in 1954, according to the London Memorandum signed together with Italy. A significant part of Piran's population chose to emigrate to Italy or abroad in the final phase of the Istrian–Dalmatian exodus, rather than stay in socialist Yugoslavia. The annexation to Yugoslavia was finally ratified with the Osimo Treaty in 1975, signed by Italy as well. Since 1991, Piran has been part of independent Slovenia.

On 24 October 2010, Slovenia became the first country of former communist Europe to elect a black mayor. The physician Peter Bossman, who came from Ghana in the late 1970s, was elected the Mayor of Piran.

The territorial claims of Croatia and Slovenia in the Gulf of Piran remain an important matter of debate in the Croatia–Slovenia border disputes that began after the dissolution of Yugoslavia.

Piran is the birthplace of the composer and violinist Giuseppe Tartini, who played an important role in shaping its cultural heritage. The town's main square, Tartini Square (Slovene: Tartinijev trg, Italian: Piazza Tartini), is named after him. In 1892, the 200th anniversary of his birth, a monument to Tartini was erected in Piran. Venetian artist Antonio Dal Zotto was commissioned to create a larger-than-life bronze statue, which was mounted on its pedestal in 1896. The statue dominates the square, overlooked by the Cathedral of Saint George. The painter Cesare Dell'Acqua was also born in Piran.

Piran is the seat of the Euro-Mediterranean University of Slovenia (EMUNI), founded in 2008 as one of the cultural projects of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean. The Piran Coastal Galleries, a public institution encompassing a group of six public contemporary art galleries, is based in Piran.

2. General map of Piran Municipality



3. Urban and historic center map of Piran



4. Tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Piran

1.) JEWISH SQUARE



Piran is a former possession of the City of Doges, which explains its Venetian atmosphere. It contains some beautiful architecture, including a replica of the Campanile in the Piazza San Marco.

This charming little coastal town has preserved its medieval ghetto square, Zidovski Trg, which can be entered through an arcade. The square is surrounded by several multistory houses that undeniably resemble those of the Venetian ghetto.

In the 1980s, the town of Piran was largely renovated. A Jewish Square Quarter has been named in the Old Town, in remembrance of the former Jewish presence. Some historical sources indicate that Saint Stephen's Church was built on the site of a medieval synagogue.

2.) LIGHTHOUSE



The lighthouse is located at the very tip of the Piran Peninsula, at Cape Madona. The Piran lighthouse consists of connected structures, which, in addition to the rest of the lighthouse and the fort with the lighthousekeeper's apartment, consist of the Our Lady of Health Church and the tower. The famous stone fortress was built in 1617 and was part of the former city walls. The fort became a lighthouse between 1871 and 1872, when a red light was placed on it and a small stone building next to it for the needs of the engine room.

About the layout of the the lighthouse a stone plaque dating from 1872 has been preserved. The apartment for the lighthouse keeper was made at the fort in 1874. The apartment has three smaller rooms, one larger and a bathroom.

3.) ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH



St. George's Parish Church in Piran (Slovene: župnijska cerkev sv. Jurija v Piranu) is a Roman Catholic church located on the hill above Piran, a port town on the coast of the Adriatic Sea in southwestern Slovenia. It was built in the Venetian Renaissance architectural style and has been dedicated to Saint George.[1] It was the life work of the stonemason Bonfante Torre from Venice.

Renaissance building:

In 1592 a construction of a new church began on the same location, replacing the old one. The construction of the new one was finished in 1614. The new free-standing bell tower, which was a separate building and was a faithful replica of St. Mark's Campanile in Venice, was finished a year later. The interior was equipped and decorated until 1637, when the church was consecrated. The Renaissance front facade of the church was built in 1608,[2] based on the early 16th-century church facades by Andrea Palladio. It features a pediment, four pilasters and a later-added Baroque pedestal, which was intended to host a statue of St. George. As the last and separate building built on the site was a baptistery, completed as an octagonal Baroque structure in 1650. Because of unstable foundations and the whole hill, enhancement walls were built in the 17th

century. Additional barriers were made from the 17th to the 19th centuries on north and south sides of the hill to prevent any damage to the building. Several restorations were made afterwards.

Present:

A general restoration has been launched in 1990 because of overall bad condition of the structures. Between 2002 and 2005, the main building was closed because of restorations of the frescos and statues inside. The hill was further enhanced and stabilised to prevent the structures to deform or even fall off the cliff.

The church is now a major tourist attraction and one of the most important town landmarks, as it is seen from Tartini Square as well as from many other parts of town. The bell tower is accessible for €2 - 2023 via stairwell, and the church interior is accessible anytime from 7:00 to 22:00, although the inner hall can be entered only during mass. In front of the church portal is a large lawn which used to be a graveyard, and is now a spot for tourists to see the whole Bay of Trieste, as well as the town and nearby coastal settlements.

3.) MINORITE MONASTERY



The Piran Minorite Monastery (Slovene: Minoritski samostan sv. Frančiška v Piranu) is a Roman Catholic monastery located on the hill above Piran, a port town on the coast of the Adriatic Sea in southwestern Slovenia. It is operated by the Conventual Franciscans.

The first church on top of the hill was already built in 1301, when a nearby church began to be built by Greyfriars. Historiographers of the monastery (Trani, Granić in Frasson) wrote that Giuseppe Tartini received his first musical education in the monastery where his parents hired a room for him after 1700 A.D. From 1954 to

1990, it was nationalized and with denationalization, it was given back to the church in 1996. At the 300th anniversary of Giuseppe Tartini's birth, blueprints of old gravestones including the one belonging to Tartini's family were found in the monastery's archives. Leading to the cloister there is a half-arched portal adorned with richly carved columns, bearing an architrave with an inscription and coats of arms.

4.) TOWN WALL

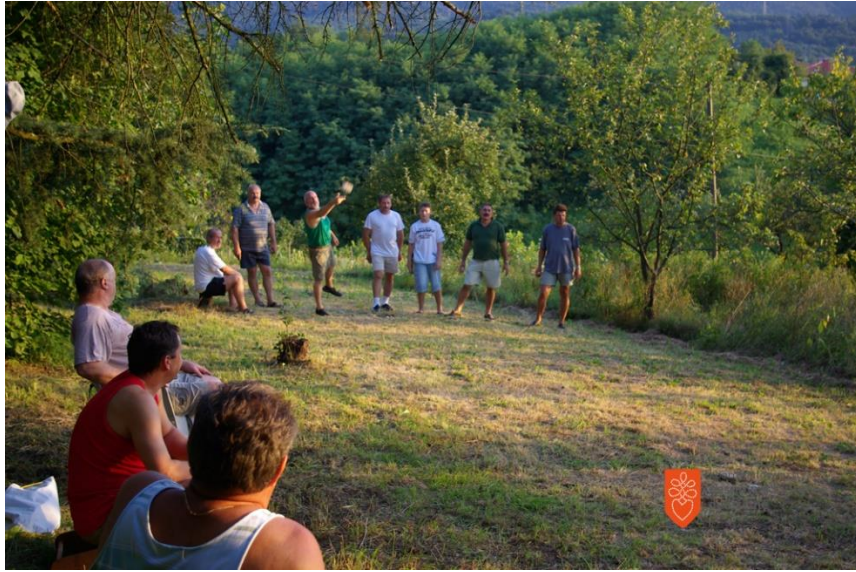


To this day, the town of Piran has preserved its medieval character as a clustered town fabric, surrounded by a town wall. The oldest part of the town is Punta, and on the slope behind it there is a fort dating back to the 10th century where townspeople could retreat in times of danger.

In the period of Venetian ruling, which lasted almost half a millennium, the state also took care of the maintenance of the town wall and town gate. The newest part of the wall with fortified towers in the southeast part of the town dates back to the period from 1470 to 1533 and is positioned on the slope of the hill. It was built in the period when there was a large threat of Turkish invasions. With this wall the area by the sea called Marciana became part of the town. The wall encloses the whole part of the town, facing dry land between the northern and southern seacoast. Maintenance and restoration of the walls were always the responsibility of the town and the state. The part of the wall facing inland, with fortification towers and double town gates, needed many thorough restoration and presentation works (1950's, 1960's, 1970's and from 2002 to 2008) to enable suitable access and safe sightseeing for visitors.

In the following centuries, the town was able to gradually expand only in the direction of dry land as the whole peninsula was already built up. The town consisted of four town quarters: Miljska, Stolnična, Misana and Grad, which were from early on surrounded by a wall. The oldest wall was preserved by the seaside, whereas the part of the wall facing land gradually moved as the town grew. At the end of the 13th century, when Piran came under Venetian rule, the town started to gradually grow and develop. It was, therefore, eventually surrounded by a new wall, which included the town quarter of Campo, the part of which was also an inner dock still outside the town wall.

6.) ŠKULJANJE



Škuljanje is a traditional game in the Primorska region, where an individual or a team throws a škulja (a flat, carved stone or half-brick), trying to get it as close as possible to a jack. The person or team who first gets 13 points is the winner.

7. PANDOLO



Pandolo is a traditional Istrian social and sporting game. Two teams, each with three players, compete to take over a territory. The players use a wooden bat known as a maca to knock a short, sharp wooden stick or pandolo as far as possible from the base within a marked playing area.

5. Sources

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