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THE CONTRACT OF COLLEGANTIA IN THE LATE MIEVEAL LAW OF DUBROVNIK (RAGUSA)

HENRIK-RIKO HELD

Abstract: *Collegantia* is a type of *commenda*, a widespread contract in the late medieval Mediterranean between an investing partner, and a travelling, on occasion also investing partner, who usually traded overseas. Local variant from Dubrovnik is here examined, with special attention given to various social aspects, and particularly to the division of risks and allocation of profits.

Keywords: *collegantia*, *commenda*, Dubrovnik (*Ragusa*), maritime contracts, risk allocation

Introduction

Collegantia is a contract from the late medieval law of Dubrovnik (*Ragusa*), associated principally with maritime trade, in which an investing party provides the capital and a travelling party conducts the business venture, while the risks and eventual profits are distributed between them. The contract is terminologically and conceptually linked with its Venetian namesake (known also as *colleganza*), as well as with the contract of *commenda*, embedded throughout the Mediterranean at the time. The modern scholarship usually makes a basic distinction between a bilateral and unilateral *commenda*, and then subsumes local variants of the contract with different names under the one or the other.¹ In a bilateral *commenda* both parties to a contract invest while only one party travels in order to trade for profit, while in a unilateral *commenda* only one party invests (*socius stans* or commendator), while the other travels and trades (*tractator*).²

¹ See, for example, Walter Ashburner, *The Rhodian Sea Law*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909, 237-245, 237; J. H. Pryor, "The Origins of the Commenda Contract", *Speculum* 52/1 (1977), 10.

² W. Ashburner, *The Rhodian Sea Law*, 237-240; Vladislav Brajković, *Étude Historique sur le Droit Maritime Privé du Littoral Yugoslave*, Marseille: Société anonyme du Sémaphore du Marseille, 1933, 197-200; John H. Pryor, "Mediterranean Commerce in the Middle Ages: A Voyage under Contract of Commenda", *Viator* 14 (1983), 135-140; Yadira González

The contracts of this kind in the late medieval Mediterranean trade have been extensively analysed in literature.³ More recently, the scholarship has focused on certain specific issues and local variants.⁴ The contract of *collegantia* in the late medieval law of Dubrovnik also received some attention. However, various studies were either confined to statutory regulation, dealt with the matter peripherally or examined the sources fragmentarily.⁵

de Lara, "The Impact of Formal Monitoring on Financial Innovation: from Debt to Equity in Late Medieval Venice": https://www.unige.ch/sciences-societe/dehes/files/8615/0713/5354/sar_fall_2017_gonzalez_monitoring_financial_innovation_venice.pdf (accessed on 21 March 2025), 10-13.

³ A relatively recent account, with comprehensive references to contemporary and older literature, may be found in J. H. Pryor, "Mediterranean Commerce in the Middle Ages", 133-194; J. H. Pryor, "The Origins of the Commenda Contract", 5-37. See also Abraham Udovitch, "At the Origins of the Western Commenda: Islam, Israel, Byzantium?", *Speculum* 37 (1962), 198-207; John H. Pryor, "Commenda: The Operation of the Contract in Long Distance Commerce at Marseilles During the Thirteenth Century", *Journal of European Economic History* 13/2 (1984), 397-440. There is an abundance of literature on the Venetian *collegantia*, for example Adolfo Sacerdoti, "Le colleganze nella pratica degli affari e nella legislazione veneta", *Atti del Reale Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti* 49/2 (1899), 1-45; Ageo Arcangeli, "La commenda a Venezia specialmente nel secolo XIV", *Rivista italiana per le scienze giuridiche* 33 (1902), 107-164; Guido Astuti, "Note sulla collegantia veneta", *Rivista del diritto della navigazione* 7/1 (1941), 71-138; Gino Luzzatto, "La commenda nella vita economica dei secoli XIII e XIV con particolare riguardo a Venezia", in: Gino Luzzatto, *Studi di storia economica veneziana*, Padova: CEDAM, 1954, 59-79; Guido Astuti, *Origini e svolgimento storico della commenda fino al secolo XIII*, Torino: Bottega d'Erasmus, 1970. The issue was dealt with in the classics of the genre as well, such as Levin Goldschmidt's *Universalgeschichte des Handelsrechts* (for the present text, only Italian translation was available and thus consulted: Levin Goldschmidt, *Storia universale del diritto commerciale*, Torino: Unione tipografico-editrice Torinese, 1913, especially 201-213), Max Weber's *Zur Geschichte der Handelsgesellschaften im Mittelalter* (for the present text, only English translation was available and thus consulted: Max Weber, *The History of Commercial Partnerships in the Middle Ages*, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003, especially 63-75) and more specifically in Wilhelm Silberschmidt, *Die commenda in ihrer frühesten Entwicklung bis zum XIII. Jahrhundert*, Würzburg: Adalbert Stuber's Verlagshandlung, 1884.

⁴ For example, regarding local variants of the contract (Jeff Fynn-Paul, "The Land Commenda in the Late Medieval Crown of Aragon and the Rise of a 'Democratic' Investment Culture", *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis* 14/3 (2018), 85-107; Quentin van Doosselaere, *Commercial Agreements and Social Dynamics in Medieval Genoa*, Cambridge: CUP, 2009, 63-78) or pertinent gender demographics (Mark Angelos, "Women in Genoese commenda contracts, 1155-1216", *Journal of Medieval History* 20 (1994), 299-312). The problem of the allocation of risks as a particularly important aspect in the development of commenda contracts in Venice and their consequent widespread use was addressed in Y. González de Lara, "The Impact of Formal Monitoring on Financial Innovation" and same, "The Secret of Venetian Success: A Public-Order, Reputation-Based Institution", *European Review of Economic History* 12/3 (2008), 247-285. These issues are extensively analysed in the same author's PhD dissertation (same, "Enforceability and Risk-sharing in Financial Contracts: from the Sea Loan to the Commenda in Late Medieval Venice", Florence: European University Institute, 2000, available in open access: <https://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/4938> (accessed on 21 March 2025)). Summary of this dissertation is available in *Journal of Economic History* 61/2 (2001), 500-504).

⁵ W. Ashburner, *The Rhodian Sea Law*, 237-245; Marko Kostrenčić, "Pomorsko pravo u statutima primorskih naših gradova i otoka (Svršetak)", *Mjesečnik pravničkoga društva u Zagrebu* 1/5 (1915), 287-289; Gregor Čremošnik, "Naša trgovačka društva u srednjem veku", *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Bosni i Hercegovini* 36 (1924), 74-78; V. Brajković, *Étude Historique sur le Droit Maritime Privé du Littoral Yugoslave*, 197-200; Jelena Danilović, "O ugovoru 'collegantia' u dubrovačkom pravu u periodu mletačke vlasti", *Zbornik Filozofskog fakulteta u Beogradu* 11/1 (1970), 289-306; Antun Cvitanić, "Naše srednjovjekovno pomorsko pravo", *Zbornik radova Pravnog fakulteta u Splitu* 16 (1979), 221-222; Lujo Margetić, *Srednjovjekovno hrvatsko pravo. Obvezno pravo*, Zagreb: HAZU, 1997, 269-282; Ante Marinović, *Dubrovačko pomorsko pravo*, I, Split: Književni krug, 1998, 147-149; Ignacij Voje, *Poslovna uspešnost trgovcev v srednjeveškem Dubrovniku*, Ljubljana: Filozofska fakulteta, 2003, 106-112; Vilma Pezelj, Ljuba Barun, "Ugovori o iskorištavanju pomorskih brodova u dalmatinskom statutarnom pravu", *Zbornik radova Pravnog fakulteta u Splitu* 44 (2007), 223-226; Nikol Žiha, *Rimski pomorski zajam (fenus nauticum) kao preteča prava osiguranja*, Osijek: Sveučilište J. J. Strossmayera, 2009, 241-244.

Based on a comprehensive analysis of all the published sources, this paper thus seeks to investigate *collegantia* and other *commenda*-type contracts within the legal framework and practice of thirteenth-century Dubrovnik as a local variant of a contract described as "a medieval innovation of the highest importance" which "contributed greatly to faster growth of maritime trade" that facilitated the so-called commercial revolution of the Middle Ages.⁶

In order to outline the basic characteristics of this contract in Dubrovnik, the terminological and conceptual framework is elucidated first. Special emphasis is placed on the rules regulating the contract in the Statute of 1272.⁷ Afterwards, instances of the relevant contracts in practice are particularly addressed.⁸

Terminological and conceptual framework

The Venetian statutes of Jacopo Tiepolo from 1242 contain several references to *collegantia*, in its bilateral or unilateral form.⁹ However, in the Venetian documents from the period the term *collegantia* is used exclusively for the contract of bilateral *commenda*, while unilateral *commenda* does not have a particular designation at all.¹⁰ The term *collegantia* in late medieval Dubrovnik is found in the Statute of 1272, as well as in late medieval notary documents, although sometimes with minor textual variations (such as *collogancia*, *colligancia*, *conlegancia*, *colegancia*, etc.). Therefore, there is an obvious terminological connection with the *collegantia* in Venice (as well as with the other trading centres of the eastern Adriatic coast, such as Zadar and Split).¹¹

Notwithstanding some minor differences that will be discussed later on, it is probably correct to assume that *collegantia* in Dubrovnik was principally modelled after its

⁶ Robert S. Lopez, *The Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages*, Cambridge: CUP, 1976, 76.

⁷ *The Statute of Dubrovnik of 1272*, ed. Vesna Rimac, Vesna Baće, Nella Lonza, Dubrovnik: Državni arhiv u Dubrovniku, 2012).

⁸ Documents from the period 1278-1301 are published in the following editions: *Monumenta historica Ragusina*, I, ed. Gregor Čremošnik, Zagreb: JAZU, 1951 (MHR 1); *Monumenta historica ragusina*, II, ed. Josip Lučić, Zagreb: JAZU, 1984 (MHR 2); *Monumenta historica Ragusina*, III, ed. Josip Lučić, Zagreb: JAZU, 1988 (MHR 3); *Monumenta historica ragusina*, IV, ed. Josip Lučić, Zagreb: JAZU, 1993 (MHR 4).

⁹ *Gli statuti veneziani di Jacopo Tiepolo del 1242 e le loro glosse*, ed. Roberto Cessi, Venezia: Officine grafiche Carlo Ferrari, 1938, 122-123 (III, I-III). Unilateral *collegantia* is referenced in cap. III (this was noticed already in M. Weber, *The History of Commercial Partnerships in the Middle Ages*, 73, n. 29; see also J. H. Pryor, "The Origins of the Commenda Contract", 10, n. 12; Y. González de Lara, "The Impact of Formal Monitoring on Financial Innovation", 10, n. 14). In the Venetian maritime statutes from 1255, *collegantia* is mentioned only regarding the remuneration of expenses for the travelling merchants (*Gli statuti marittimi veneziani fino al 1255*, ed. Riccardo Predelli, Adolfo Sacerdoti, Venezia: Prem. stab. tip.-lit. Visentini cav. Federico, 1903, 163 (III, CXII)).

¹⁰ J. H. Pryor, "The Origins of the Commenda Contract", 10, with references to the sources in n. 19.

¹¹ *Statuta iadertina*, ed. Josip Kolanović, Mate Križman, Zadar: Matica hrvatska, 1997, 250-251 (lib. III, 7); *Statut grada Splita*, ed. Antun Cvitanić, Split: Književni krug, 1987, 101 (lib. III, 73).

Venetian namesake. Dubrovnik was under the rule of Venice in this period,¹² and the city had intensive commercial relations with the *Serenissima*.¹³ In the Venetian *commenda* contracts throughout the thirteenth century there is evidence of the involvement of the partners associated with Dubrovnik, or the mention of Dubrovnik as a destination.¹⁴ Thus trade networks and the hands-on experience with the contract created opportunity enough to introduce and spread it in the practice of Dubrovnik.

Actually, in Venice the unilateral form of the contract prevailed over the bilateral, and was predominantly used already by the third decade of the thirteenth century.¹⁵ It would be perfectly reasonable, then, to expect that at the time of the composition of the Statute in 1272,¹⁶ as well as in the accompanying documents in practice, unilateral *commenda* of Dubrovnik would generally be shaped in accordance with the most widely used Venetian model deemed to be optimal in practice. However, sources from the period reveal a rather complicated picture, in which terminology is sometimes used inadequately and elements of various essentially different contracts applied interchangeably. It is therefore hard, if not impossible, to systematise the data according to clear-cut juridical and scholarly categories. Contracts were sometimes

¹² More, with further references, in Robin Harris, *Dubrovnik. A History*. London: Saqui, 46-61. Details regarding the Venetian rule at the beginning of the thirteenth century are discussed in Nella Lonza, "Venetian Rule over Dubrovnik in the Early Thirteenth Century and the 'Leased Countship' of Giovanni Dandolo (c. 1209-1235)", *Dubrovnik Annals* 25 (2021), 7-52.

¹³ More in Bariša Krekić, *Unequal Rivals*, Zagreb: HAZU, 2007, 9-46; see also Josip Lučić, "Pomorsko-trgovačke veze Dubrovnika i Venecije u XIII stoljeću", *Pomorski zbornik* 8 (1970), 569-595.

¹⁴ Thus one *Fuscari Raguseo* was a tractator in a *collegancia* (a bilateral *commenda*) from 1206 concluded with *Çacharia Stagnario* (*Documenti del commercio Veneziano*, II, ed. Raimondo Morozzo della Rocca, Antonino Lombardo, Roma: Nella sede dell'Istituto, 1940 (hereafter as: Documenti II), doc. 519). *Çacharia* (*Zaccaria*) *Stagnario* was a grandson of a servant, a Croat from Dalmatia, who was freed from his service by his lord in a testament (his life is outlined, alongside references to sources, in: Diego Puga, Daniel Trefler, "International Trade and Institutional Change", *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 129/2 (2014), 773. See also: Vinko Foretić, "Hrvat Dobramir i još neki naši ljudi kao pomorski privrednici u Mlecima u 12. i 13. st.", *Pomorski zbornik* 1 (1963), 404-410; Neven Budak, "Kako je hrvatski rob mogao postati mletački patricij ili neke vijesti o ranim hrvatsko-mletačkim trgovačkim i drugim vezama (11.-13. st.)", in: *Spomenica Ljube Bobana*, ed. Mira Kolar Dimitrijević, Zagreb: Zavod za hrvatsku povijest, 1996, 79-81; Lovorka Čoralić, "Venecija", in: *Nova zraka u europskom svjetlu. Hrvatske zemlje u ranome srednjem vijeku*, ed. Zrinka Nikolić Jakus, Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 2015, 560-561). *Sebastiano Raguseo* was a tractator in a unilateral *commenda* from 1238 (Documenti II, doc. 711). In one *collegancia* dated as early as 1182 two Venetians agreed that the tractator would travel to Dubrovnik and elsewhere (*usque Ragusim et inde ubicumque compagnia eiusdem navis concordaverit*, in: *Documenti del commercio Veneziano* I, ed. Raimondo Morozzo della Rocca, Antonino Lombardo, Roma: Nella sede dell'Istituto, 1940, doc. 334). There is evidence from 1225 about an earlier unilateral *commenda* that included travel to Rab, Split, and Dubrovnik (Documenti II, doc. 624). It is possible that the anthroponym *Raguseus* and the toponym *Ragusa* used in the documents refer to the eponymous city on Sicily, but it is most likely that they actually refer to Dubrovnik, since it was a port alongside Venice's main trade routes towards Constantinople (more about those routes in: D. Puga, D. Trefler, "International trade and institutional change", 760-762).

¹⁵ Y. González de Lara, "The impact of formal monitoring on financial innovation", 9, 42; Frederic C. Lane, *Venice and History*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2019, 59.

¹⁶ Details regarding this process are analysed in Nella Lonza, "The Statute of Dubrovnik of 1272: between legal code and political symbol", in: *The Statute of Dubrovnik of 1272*, ed. Vesna Rimac, Vesna Baće, Nella Lonza, 9-12.

tailored in accordance with the immediate needs and interests of the parties, even to the detriment of the complete legal coherence.¹⁷

In order to make the best of the situation, in this paper I tried to assume the widest possible definition of a unilateral *commenda* and investigate its application in the sources. In so doing, unilateral *commenda* is conceived as a contract in which the commendator provides capital and the tractator pursues profit from it with his activities overseas or otherwise, while the rules for division of profits and allocation of risks may vary significantly. This approach may provide as adequate framework as possible, taking the current situation with the sources in account, for the understanding of the *collegantia* contract and its variants in the late medieval law of Dubrovnik.

Collegantia in the *Liber statutorum civitatis Ragusii* (1272)

Generally, statutory regulation has a limited value for the understanding of medieval law. It is often fragmentary and incomplete, derived from local custom, indeed intended to be used alongside custom, or sometimes even superseded by custom in practice. Additionally, private contracts of merchants were often shaped according to their own widespread customs, *lex mercatoria*, regardless of the statutes.¹⁸ Still, regulation regarding *collegantia* in the Statute, such as it is, should be outlined as a context for further analysis.

The *sedes materiae* regarding *collegantia* contracts may be found in Book Seven of the Statute, which is dedicated to maritime law.¹⁹ Rules for the allocation of risks and division of profits are detailed in the Statute, lib. VII, 50. According to these rules, regarding profits, when the money or merchandise is given over in *collegantia*, commendator receives 2/3 of the profits while the tractator receives the remaining 1/3 (if the parties do not agree otherwise).²⁰ Maritime risks (*fortuna*) are in principle borne

¹⁷ This typically medieval phenomenon is in the context of Dubrovnik law very aptly described in N. Lonza, "The Statute of Dubrovnik of 1272", 17.

¹⁸ This is excellently explained, with further references, in N. Lonza, "The Statute of Dubrovnik of 1272", 16-17.

¹⁹ Statute VII, 28, 50 and 51. See also J. Danilović, "O ugovoru 'collegantia' u dubrovačkom pravu u periodu mletačke vlasti", 291; I. Voje, *Poslovna uspešnost trgovcev v srednjeveškem Dubrovniku*, 106.

²⁰ Thus, division of profits in the Statute is at odds with the Venetian regulation, which, unless parties agree otherwise, awards 1/4 or 1/5 of the profits to the tractator (*Gli statuti veneziani di Jacopo Tiepolo del 1242 e le loro glosse*, 123-124 (III, III)). In the practice regarding the unilateral *commenda*, 1/4 of profits for the tractator and 3/4 for the commendator is a vastly prevailing model throughout the first half of the thirteenth century in Venice (Documenti II, doc.: 467-469, 475, 478-479, 483, 488-489, 495-497, 501, 512, 522-523, 525, 532, 545, 573, 587-588, 596, 601-605, 613, 618-620, 644, 656-657, 662, 664, 668, 671, 673, 675-676, 694-695, 700-701, 707, 709, 711, 716-717, 723, 726, 735, 741, 745-746, 749-751, 753, 759, 761, 764, 767, 769, 771-772, 780, 785, 792-794, 801, 806, 809, 811-812, 824-825, 828-829, 831, 835, 839-843, 858-859). Each party received a half of the profits in 4 instances from the period (doc. 472, 477, 715 and 808). Tractator received 1/3 of the profits only in one document from 1205 (doc. 471). In 6 instances the tractator decided how much of the profits would be given to the commendator (doc. 772, 791, 810, 821, 846 and 849).

by the commendator.²¹ However, if the tractator leaves the Adriatic (*Culfum*) without permission from the commendator, all the risks (*totum periculum*) are borne by him.²² If a part of the capital is lost, the commendator may choose to accept what remains and then the tractator will not have to reimburse the amount that was lost.²³ Division of profits associated with a ship on a business venture while the ship is outside Dubrovnik is detailed in the Statute, lib. VII, 28. Although *collegantia* is not explicitly mentioned, the rules obviously apply to this contract as well.²⁴

Other provisions in the Statute that mention *collegantia* are comprised in Book Three, which deals with civil procedure and jurisdiction of the courts.²⁵ According to the provision of the Statute, lib. III, 13, the debtors from *collegantia* contracts (alongside those from other maritime contracts) may request a postponement of the proceedings when summoned to court if they have an imminent business trip. The framers of this provision clearly take into consideration the fact that the persons involved in maritime trade often travel overseas on business, on account of which they deserve a preferential treatment as opposed to other debtors.²⁶ *Collegantia* is finally mentioned in the provision of the Statute, lib. VII, 46, which deals with *aptagi*, a sort of enforceable deed in debt proceedings.²⁷ In the present context the provision is important, since it confirms that the tractator was only responsible for the

²¹ In earlier literature there was a discussion regarding the interpretation of the expression *ipsos denarios seu merces debent habere ad fortunam eius cuius sunt clare facte*, associated with various possible interpretations about the ownership of the capital or risk allocation. More recently, these problems were convincingly put aside in favour of the meaning assumed in this text (L. Margetić, *Srednjovjekovno hrvatsko pravo. Obvezno pravo*, 270-274, with references to previous literature).

²² This is obviously a statutory guard against more risky and problematic voyage outside the Adriatic, but also a reference to the basic frame of the tractator's responsibility, in which instructions from the commendator were of importance (V. Brajković, *Étude Historique sur le Droit Maritime Privé du Littoral Yugoslave*, 198 and n. 4; Y. González de Lara, "The impact of formal monitoring on financial innovation", 15).

²³ If the commendator chooses to leave the remaining part of the sum originally given away with the tractator, he ought to keep it and try to compensate for the losses, on the same ship or otherwise, according to the parties' agreement (Statute, lib. VII, 51).

²⁴ According to this provision of the Statute, the ship's scribe is obliged to register every profit achieved separately. Profits also ought to be used to repair the damages suffered by the ship, and the provision details the rules for the return of profits already divided, or a part thereof, for this purpose.

²⁵ Statute III, 13, 20, 46.

²⁶ Of course, there are measures in place that do not allow this postponement to be used for the evasion of the proceedings altogether. There is a possibility that after the postponement the debtor does not appear before the court, or that even without the postponement a debtor extends his trip associated with a *collegantia* (or another similar contract) while the creditor wishes to settle the debt before the court. In those situations, the property of the debtor is mortgaged in his absence according to the same procedure usually reserved for present debtors who ritually prostrate themselves before the court in a plea for mercy (this intriguing procedure is analysed in Nella Lonza, "Ritual padanja ničice i sudsko založno pravo srednjovjekovnog Dubrovnika", in: *Liber amicorum. Zbornik radova posvećen Antunu Cvitaniću*, ed. Željko Radić, Split: Splitski književni krug, 2016, 283-304).

²⁷ More about *aptagi* in N. Lonza, "Ritual padanja ničice", 299-301. An earlier, divergent interpretation of *aptagi* was given by Jelena Danilović, "O pravnoj prirodi i razvoju ustanove 'aptagi' dubrovačkog prava", *Istorijski časopis* 12-13 (1963), 31-90.

losses for which he might be considered culpable (those done *malo modo et in sua culpa*), while he is not liable for other losses (those that occurred *iudicio Dei et non in sua culpa*).

Relevant contracts in the notarial documents from Dubrovnik (1278-1301)

Methodological remarks

The extant sample of the evidence from the notarial documents covers little more than 20 years. Three different notaries composed the documents: Thomasinus de Savere, from 1278 to 1286, Aço de Titullo, from 1295 to 1297, and Andrea Benessa, from 1295 to 1301. While Thomasinus de Savere has been acclaimed as an excellent and conscientious notary, trained in *ars notariae*,²⁸ Andrea Benessa, for example, was a local priest whose knowledge and expertise was not on a high professional level.²⁹ Expectedly, the notaries had distinctive styles, which must have impacted the content of the documents, *collegantia* included. Additionally, although in this period Dubrovnik experienced a rise of the written legal culture,³⁰ it was not required by law for *collegantia* contracts to be composed in written form,³¹ and therefore it is possible that many of them will remain unknown.

However, the fact that some of them were written down may also be revealing in a certain sense. It is perhaps reasonable to assume that written contracts contained provisions that differed in some aspects from the customs or statutory regulation, or that in such cases the parties wished to have assurance and certainty that only a written form could provide. At any rate, the number of the contracts analysed may also be indicative. As previously stated, the widest definition of a unilateral *commenda* is assumed as a starting point of this analysis (commendator provides capital with which tractator makes profit, division of profits and allocation of risks vary, the term *collegantia* is not always used). In the analysed period, a total of 53 relevant contracts fall into this category. This might be compared with the number of other written contracts involving maritime trade in Dubrovnik of the period, such as *entega* or *rogancia*.³²

²⁸ Francesco Bettarini, "Notaries-Chancellors in Late Medieval Dubrovnik", *Italian Review of Legal History* 7/21 (2021), 695-697, with further references.

²⁹ See MHR 4, p. 5.

³⁰ More about this in Nella Lonza, "Pravna kultura srednjovjekovne Dalmacije između usmenosti i pismenosti", *Zbornik Pravnog fakulteta u Zagrebu*, 63/5-6 (2013), 1203-1232.

³¹ J. Danilović, "O ugovoru 'collegantia' u dubrovačkom pravu u periodu mletačke vlasti", 289, 295. This phenomenon was also noticed generally in the context of *commenda* contracts in the Mediterranean (J. H. Pryor, "Mediterranean Commerce in the Middle Ages", 137-139).

³² *Entega* was a contract that involved three parties: an investor, a ship-owner and mariners, all of whom divided profits three-way between themselves. *Rogancia* is basically a mandate of one person towards another to assume a business voyage involving transport or sale of merchandise. More about these contracts in W. Ashburner, *The Rhodian Sea Law*, 248-251; V. Brajković, *Étude Historique sur le Droit Maritime Privé du Littoral Yugoslave*, 200-205; and more recently L. Margetić, *Srednjovjekovno hrvatsko pravo. Obvezno pravo*, 263-269, 282-284.

Entega is mentioned only in several instances in the sources,³³ and only four contracts are explicitly named as such.³⁴ *Rogancia* is found only in one instance in the sources.^{35,36} Therefore, for some reason *collegantia* (or unilateral *commenda* generally) has a much larger presence, which might indicate either a prevalently larger number of those contracts in practice, or a practical need to compose a written document that is for some reason particular to that contract.³⁷

It is possible that various preferences of the parties regarding the division of profits or allocation of risks manifested themselves most potently in the context of *collegantia* (and unilateral *commenda*), otherwise a generally prevailing type of maritime contract. At any rate, all of the abovementioned suggests caution when dealing with the contracts in the documents and drawing conclusions therefrom.

General data

Relevant contracts in the period under consideration almost exclusively involved an amount of money given over and not merchandise.³⁸ The amounts involved vary, but certain patterns can be discerned alongside general field of the application of contracts. In this regard, the contracts are here grouped in three categories: maritime contracts (involving a voyage by ship), local contracts (capital purposed to stay in Dubrovnik) and undefined contracts (use or destination not specified, but most likely involving travel on land).³⁹

³³ MHR 1, doc. 305, 336, 784

³⁴ MHR 2, doc. 177, 178, 1024; MHR 3, doc. 309.

³⁵ MHR 2, doc. 521.

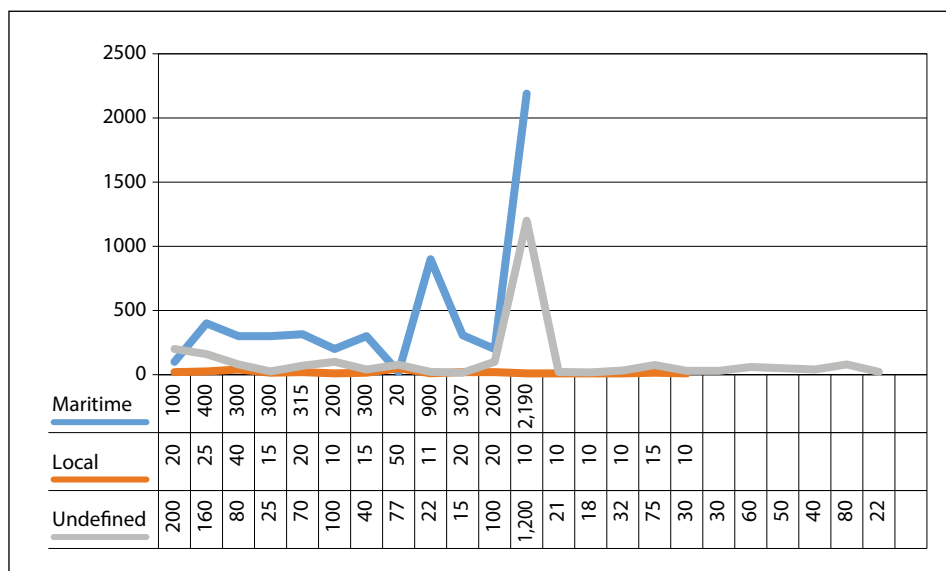
³⁶ In addition, sources reveal only one example of another maritime contract from this period, the so-called *cambium maritimum*, in which one party gave over an amount of money in one currency to be exchanged to another overseas at a profit (MHR 3, doc. 1100). More about this contract, specifically in Genoa at the time, in Raymond de Roover, "The *Cambium Maritimum* Contract According to the Genoese Notarial Records of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries", *Explorations in Economic History* 7/1-2 (1969), 15-33.

³⁷ Admittedly, the contract of *entega* was to be recorded by the scribe on board the ship (Statute, lib. VII, 45), which might have been sufficient for the parties in terms of written evidence.

³⁸ Indeed, only in one instance was merchandise given over in this contract (lambskins in MHR 2, doc. 665). In another example, money was given over but with an explicit purpose to be used for the specific merchandise (MHR 2, doc. 715). In one example, shares in the ship were the object of the contract, but their value was explicitly declared (MHR 4, doc. 537).

³⁹ Although maritime travel and trading was generally a crucial source of income and wealth of Dubrovnik (this is in the present analysis demonstrated with the amounts involved in maritime *collegantia* contracts), in this period the city also had lively trading relations with its eastern and northern inland area (A. Marinović, *Dubrovačko pomorsko pravo*, 27-29. For a general survey of the economic dynamics of Dubrovnik in the period, see various essays in Bariša Krekić, *Dubrovnik, Italy and the Balkans in the Late Middle Ages*, London: Variorum Reprints, 1980).

Figure 1. Amounts involved.



This division is best presented in a graph (numbers below indicate the amount in the currency used, *solidi denariorum grossorum* or *yperperi*).⁴⁰

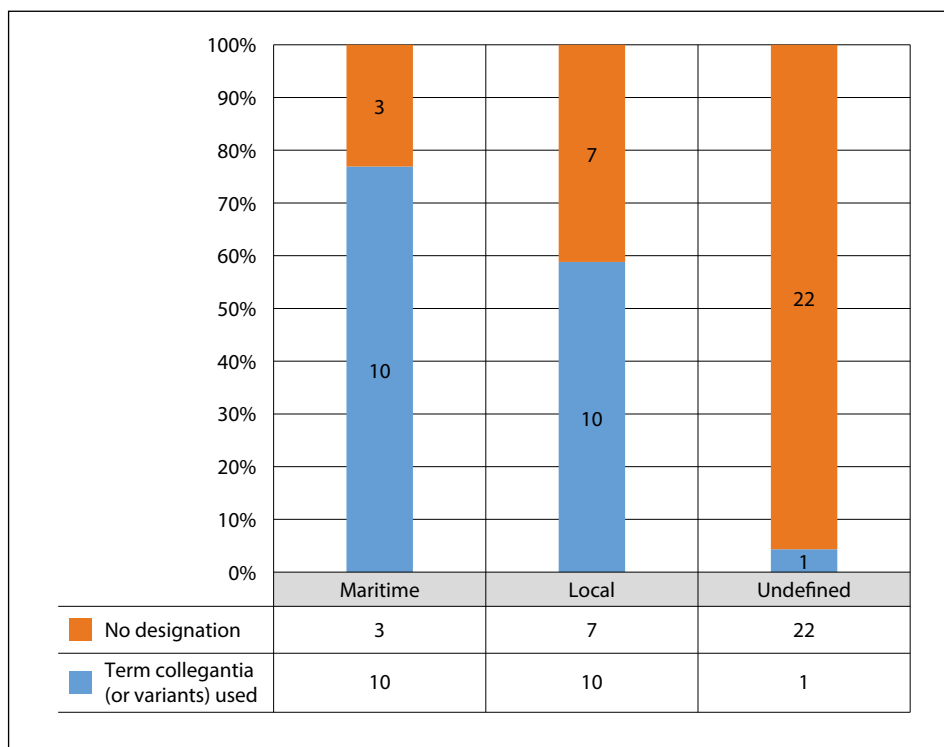
As it can be seen, with only one exception of a lower amount,⁴¹ maritime contracts attracted generally more conspicuous investments than the rest of the contracts, reaching even 900 *solidi* in one example,⁴² and a dizzying value of 2190 *yperperi* in another, although this is admittedly a somewhat atypical contract.⁴³ Peculiar example of a contract in the 'undefined' category reaching the value of 1200 *yperperi* possibly

⁴⁰ For more on the currency in Dubrovnik, see Milan Rešetar, *Dubrovačka numizmatika*, I, Sremski Karlovci: Srpska manastirska štamparija, 1924; II, Beograd: Grafički zavod Makarije a. d., 1925. Coins in circulation in Dubrovnik were described by Philippus de Diversis in the fifteenth century (Zdenka Janeković Römer, *Filip de Diversis. Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika*, Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 2004, 199-201). For perspective as to the value, with 160 *solidi* one could buy a house (MHR 1, doc. 417), with 238 a prime vineyard (MHR 1, doc. 722), while one fully equipped ship was in 1283 sold for 120 *yperperi* (MHR 2, doc. 1018).

⁴¹ The lowest amount of 20 *solidi* in MHR 2, doc. 475.

⁴² MHR 2, 585.

⁴³ This contract (MHR 4, doc. 537) actually involves a rare example of *collegantia* consisting neither of money nor of merchandise, but rather of shares in the ship.

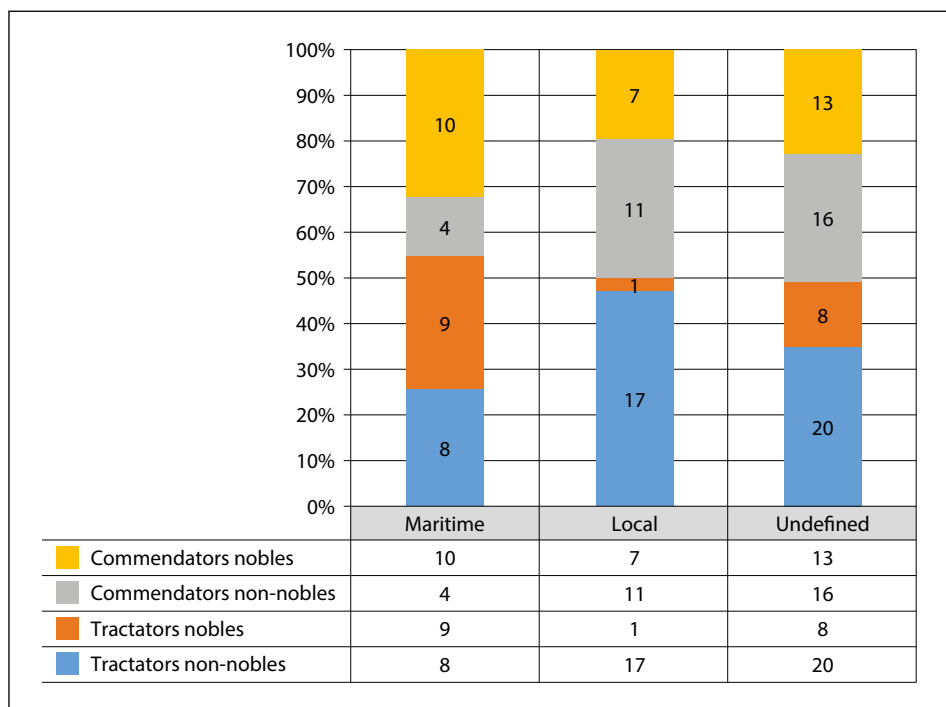
Figure 2. Use of term *collegantia* (or variants).

involved a maritime voyage as well, but a particular designation was, perhaps accidentally, left out by the notary.⁴⁴

At any rate, the 'maritime' category consists of typical *collegantia* contracts, which usually contain names of the parties, amount involved, explicit mention of the term *collegantia*, formulas indicating the purpose of the contract and the manner in which it should be carried out (*ad negotiandum per mare et per terram, ut mihi videbitur*), division of profits, allocation of risks (*ad periculum maris et gentis clarefactum*), and finally a time limit for the return of money. Contracts in the 'local' category are similar to a degree, as they sometimes contain the term *collegantia*, divisions of profit, time limits, etc. However, they significantly differ in containing a clear reference to the purpose of the given amount (to be used in Dubrovnik in a particular trade: *negotiarum de arte mea in Ragusio*) and an explicit prohibition for the money to be taken outside the city (*non*

⁴⁴ MHR 4, doc. 675. The document structurally resembles the usual *collegantia* contracts and uses the term explicitly (*colegancia*), which is otherwise completely absent in the 'undefined' category (this is discussed in further text).

Figure 3. Participation of (non-)nobility in the contracts.



debeo dictos solidos extrahere de Ragusio aliquo modo). Finally, the 'undefined' category consists of contracts principally similar to *collegantia* contracts, inasmuch as there is an indication of the tractor's obligation to trade and achieve profits in the way he sees fit (*debeo negotiari ut mihi videbitur*), a particular division of profits and allocation of risks but without a designation of where the profits should be achieved.

In the division of the relevant contracts into three mentioned categories another detail might be of importance, and that is the use of the term *collegantia*. It is almost always used in the 'maritime' category, in a majority of contracts in the 'local' category, but practically never in the 'undefined' category.⁴⁵

This actually makes it problematic to always refer to the contract of unilateral *commenda* in Dubrovnik as a *collegantia*, as one group of contracts (otherwise having the relevant characteristics of the *commenda*) is never designated as *collegantia* in

⁴⁵ The sole example of a contract in the 'undefined' category with the use of the term *collegantia* is an already previously mentioned instance of a likely maritime contract, lacking designation due to an error of the notary (MHR 4, doc. 675).

the sources. This might have something to do with the particular allocation of risks in *collegantia* contracts, which will be addressed further in the text.

Finally, some social features of the partners might also be of importance. At the time, local nobility was only establishing and consolidating its power.⁴⁶ However, certain patterns indicating their rising power can still be discerned, such as the fact that they apparently dominated the more lucrative maritime *collegantia* contracts (also generally involving higher amounts), at least as commendators or providers of the capital, and that they were generally present throughout all the categories. However, of note is also the fact that non-noble population participated in the contracts as well, almost indiscriminately.

Women participated in the contracts sporadically, and (perhaps logically) only as commendators.⁴⁷ Sometimes tutors invested money belonging to a woman in their care,⁴⁸ and it was also possible for testament executors to invest property entrusted to them.⁴⁹ This suggests that this species of contracts was not seen as particularly risky on the capital market. Foreigners also appeared in the contracts, and they were, unsurprisingly, mostly Venetians.⁵⁰

Division of profits

As earlier remarked, a provision in the Statute (lib. VII, 50) established that the commendator should receive 2/3 of the profits and the tractator 1/3, unless parties agree otherwise. The parties indeed often agreed so, at least in the available written contracts, and the divisions vary significantly in practice. This may lead to certain tentative conclusions, that in maritime contracts the parties rather preferred the division into

⁴⁶ More about this in Zdenka Janeković Römer, "Zatvaranje dubrovačkog plemstva i Vijeća u političkom i društvenom kontekstu 13. i 14. stoljeća", *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 56/1 (2018), 87-116. The seminal work on nobility in Dubrovnik is Nenad Vekarić, *The Nobility of Dubrovnik*, Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2019. Data regarding particular noble families was taken from *same*, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, vols. 2, 3, Zagreb-Dubrovnik, Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2012.

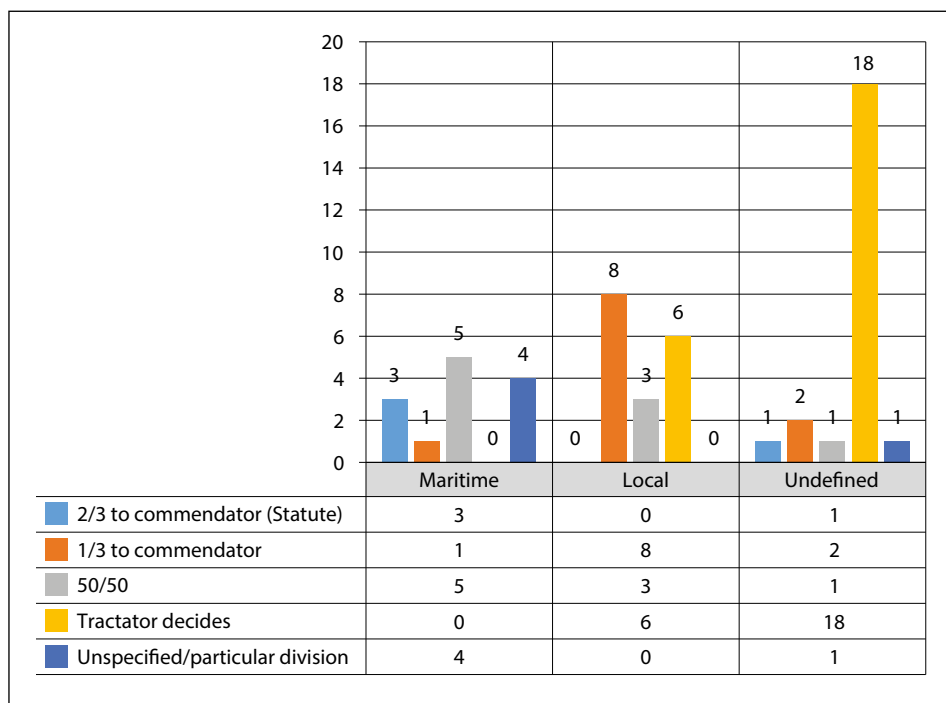
⁴⁷ Of those, 7 were noble (MHR 1, doc. 832, 923; MHR 2, doc. 75, 272, 277, 399, 771), and 5 non-noble women (MHR 1, doc. 880; MHR 2, doc. 239, 242; MHR 4, doc. 765, 1002). Women participated in maritime contracts in two instances (MHR 2, doc. 75, 239), in the 'local' category women appeared in 4 contracts (MHR 1, doc. 832, 880, 923; MHR 2, 242), and finally in the 'undefined' category there were 6 women commendators (MHR 2, 272, 277, 399, 771 (this last contract was subsequently cancelled by the parties); MHR 4, doc. 765, 1002 (interestingly, in this instance with a female non-noble commendator, tractator was a male noble).

⁴⁸ MHR 2, doc. 98. Similarly, in one example a commendator invested money belonging to his niece (MHR 1, doc. 581).

⁴⁹ MHR 4, doc. 764, 810.

⁵⁰ MHR 1, doc. 880 (Venetian tractator, 'local' variant of the contract); MHR 2, doc. 98 (Venetian tractator, 'local' variant of the contract), 369 (Venetian tractator, 'local' variant of the contract), 665 (both sides to the contract Venetian, maritime contract); MHR 3, doc. 1048 (a tractator from Kotor, maritime contract); MHR 4, doc. 1018 (both parties from Tarragona, maritime contract).

Figure 4. Division of profits.



equal shares,⁵¹ and that in the 'local' variant of the contract the majority of the parties chose a division in which commendator receives 1/3 (therefore, in complete contrast to the Statute). Of note is a predominant division of profits as the tractator sees fit (*pars lucri que mihi videbitur* or *placuerit*) in the 'undefined' category, although the same formula is sometimes used in the 'local' contracts as well. Generally, such diversity of profit division (largely in contrast with that in the Statute) might indicate at least one of the reasons why those contracts were put in writing.

⁵¹ In this context, the category of 'unspecified/particular division' in the following graph somewhat distorts the image about the general principles of division of profits in the maritime contracts. This category contains atypical divisions that could not be subsumed under any other category, such as the division according to the shares in the ship (MHR 4, doc. 537) or a division according to which all profits from the first part of the journey belong to commendator, and profits achieved on the return journey belong to the tractators (MHR 2, doc. 665). It was obviously possible for parties to come up with any sort of a particular division suited to their immediate needs. Still, a majority of one type of division likely indicates preference of the parties in practice.

Other from purely individual and particular reasons for a specific division of profits from case to case, rules for division of profits might be generally associated with certain macroeconomic factors. Larger shares of profits for the commendators might thus indicate their initial advantageous position in the market, when demand for capital was stronger than its supply. The same logic is applicable the other way around: larger shares for the tractators indicate their advantageous position, achieved as time passed and the number of wealthy people seeking to invest as commendators increased.⁵² If data from the sources are analysed from that perspective, it would seem that in the period there was actually an overabundance of capital, and that the commendators were eager to invest, even at a smaller share of profits (which was likely more than satisfactory in absolute numbers).

In all three categories, the majority of the contracts exhibit a division of profits different from the one specified in the Statute (2/3 to the commendator). Division of profits according to the discretion of the tractator, prevalently dominant in the 'undefined' category, is an example of an extremely privileged position of the tractator. It is possible that in those contracts sufficient profits in absolute numbers were expected, and that commendators were generally confident in the tractators to provide them with a satisfactory share. Either that, or an oral agreement as to the specifics of the division existed in parallel.

Allocation of risks

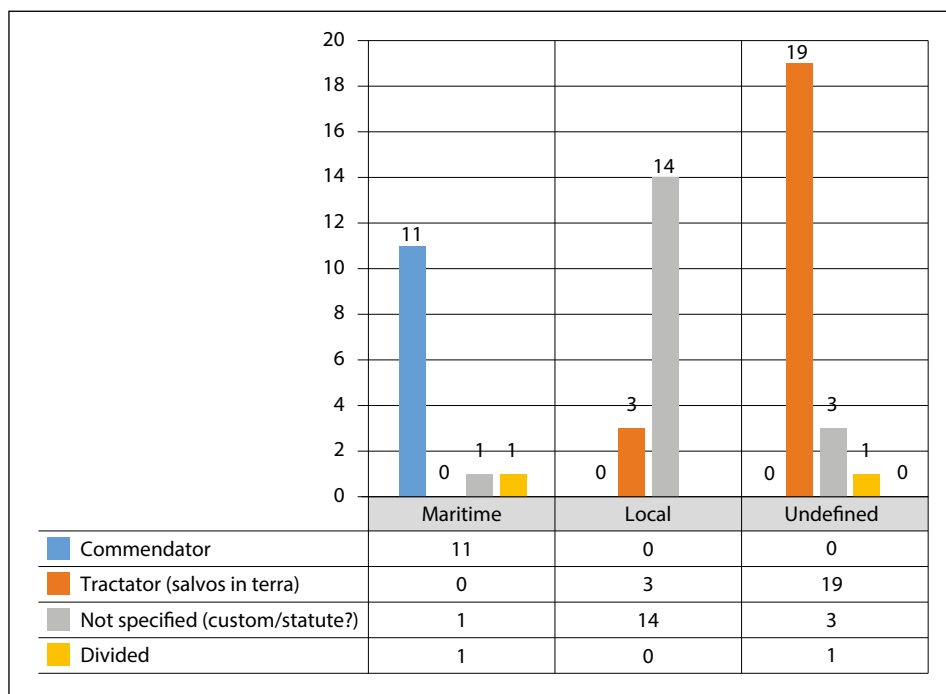
Allocation of risks is in a sense a central issue in the context of *collegantia* and *commenda* contracts. As was remarked earlier, commendator's undertaking of the maritime risks proved to be a turning point in the development of *commenda* in general, it became its key feature and a crucial element of its sudden expansion and popularity. In contrast to the division of profits, allocation of risks is much less diverse, and every category has a principal scheme with only sporadic exceptions.

In maritime contracts, almost exclusively, the commendator bears risks associated with travels at sea. This is usually expressed with the formula *dicti solidi sunt ad periculum dicti* [name of the commendator] *maris et gentis clarefactum*. The formula is common in Venetian documents of the time, and denotes perils associated with the sea generally (shipwreck due to storms etc.) and piracy or confiscation by foreign rulers.⁵³

⁵² This phenomenon, exactly in the context of the medieval Venetian *commenda* contracts, is very aptly explained in: D. Puga, D. Trefler, "International Trade and Institutional Change", 809-810.

⁵³ Y. González de Lara, "The Secret of Venetian Success", 252.

Figure 5. Allocation of risks.



The term *clarefactum* refers to the need that the occurrence of such extraordinary events which led to a loss of commendator's capital had to be sufficiently clarified.⁵⁴

When the tractator was obliged to return the given capital without any reference to such perils, this was usually expressed with the formula *salvos in terra*, sometimes with the addition *sine aliquo periculo dicti* [name of the commendator]. This means that the tractator was obliged to pay back what was given to him even if it was lost due to the mentioned extraordinary, unforeseen events. Such an allocation of risks, obviously to the detriment of the tractator, was not documented in maritime contracts. It exists in the 'local' variant, and is prevalent in the 'undefined' category. In those situations, apparently, commendators were not ready to accept responsibility for a possible extraordinary

⁵⁴ L. Margetić, *Srednjovjekovno hrvatsko pravo. Obvezno pravo*, 270-271. Indeed, there is evidence of court proceedings already in 1253 in which culpability of the travelling merchant regarding a seizure of a ship by pirates was being determined (*Codex diplomaticus Regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*, IV, ed. Tadija Smičiklas, Zagreb: Tisak dioničke tiskare, 1906, 542 (doc. 472)), and it is possible that this had something to do with an otherwise undocumented *collegantia*.

event on land, such as theft, fire, robbery etc.⁵⁵ It is possible that those events were less common than the perils at sea, and that there was no need for commendators to assume risks in order to encourage tractators to travel and trade for profit. On the other hand, the perils might have been common enough, making commendators reluctant to invest while assuming risks, especially if the expected profits were lower in comparison with maritime trade (which is likely).

Cases in which there is no explicit mention of the risk allocation might be somewhat problematic. In earlier literature it was argued that in those cases the risk was allocated along the same lines as the division of profits, so that the agreed share of the profits was applied to the allocation of risks as well.⁵⁶ There are indeed a few examples in which it is explicitly stated that the parties share both profits and losses (*lucrum* and *damnum*) in the contract in the same shares.⁵⁷ However, in those rare examples the contracts were obviously conceptually nearing the medieval *societas*, in which two or more parties invested while profits and losses were shared between them in accordance with their agreement.⁵⁸ In other words, those were essentially more *societas* than *commenda* contracts, or a transitional in-between variant, or even better, an *ad hoc* invention in accordance with the wishes of the parties, in which a legal systematisation was not of importance.

The assertion that in the contracts in which no allocation of risks is specified the same rules apply as regarding the division of profits has been criticised in more recent literature.⁵⁹ In this analysis, another observation may be added. The 'local' category is the only one which contains both *salvos in terra* formulas in some contracts and the term *collegantia* in other contracts, which are mutually exclusive. In other words, a contract may contain either a *salvos in terra* clause or it can explicitly mention the

⁵⁵ It was remarked in literature that such an allocation of risks conceptually turns these contracts basically into loans (L. Margetić, *Srednjovjekovno hrvatsko pravo. Obvezno pravo*, 276). Indeed, loans and *commenda* contracts are obviously linked, as was noted earlier. However, loan (*mutuum*) as a separate contract existed in the documents (for example, MHR 2, doc. 219, 254, 366, 468, 535, 841, 1203, 1313). Other than that, the sources are overflowing with the examples of simple debt instruments (indeed, they are the most common documents from the period (Henrik-Riko Held, "Cessio in the documents of Thomasinus de Savere, *notarius iuratus* and *scriba communis* in Dubrovnik 1277-1286", *Rivista dell'Istituto di Storia dell'Europa Mediterranea* 9/1 (2021), 125-126)), and they were dealing with an obligation to return a sum of money (possibly often in the context of an otherwise undocumented loan). Conceptually, various *commenda* contracts might have shared a certain degree of resemblance with other contracts, loans included, but if their basic structure was maintained, it might be best to consider them as having retained their distinct legal nature.

⁵⁶ J. Danilović, "O ugovoru 'collegantia' u dubrovačkom pravu u periodu mletačke vlasti", 302-305.

⁵⁷ For example, MHR 2, doc. 665; MHR 4, doc. 857.

⁵⁸ For example, MHR 1, doc. 788; MHR 2, doc. 1025. The fact that more than one party invests, after which there is a particular division of profits, led Margetić to conclude that those are essentially bilateral *commenda* contracts (L. Margetić, *Srednjovjekovno hrvatsko pravo. Obvezno pravo*, 275).

⁵⁹ L. Margetić, *Srednjovjekovno hrvatsko pravo. Obvezno pravo*, 277-279.

term *collegantia*, and this never occurs concurrently. In addition, both designations in respective contracts follow immediately after the specification of the amount of money given over.⁶⁰ All of that might indicate that the expression which is immediately following the amount serves as indication of the risk allocation scheme. Designation of a contract as *collegantia* would thus necessarily imply a particular allocation of risks, namely, that the commendator bears the extraordinary risks similar to those that occur at sea. This might be the reason why the term *collegantia* is practically never mentioned in the 'undefined' category of contracts, since *salvos in terra* clause seems to be their essential element.

It has already been noticed in literature that it is likely that the contract of *collegantia* conceptually inspired similar contracts occurring on land.⁶¹ This analysis might be a proof that this occurred not only regarding the general structure of the contract, but sometimes in the context of specifics (such as the allocation of risks) as well. Taking into account the particular geopolitical position of Dubrovnik and its orientation both towards the sea and to its hinterland, this is not surprising. For example, maritime rules about general average from the Statute, lib. VII, 7 (dealing with the division of losses on ship that occurred due to corsair attack or by jettison) were by analogy applied in the context of similar losses occurring in trade convoys on land.⁶² Therefore, influence of the *collegantia* contracts, both conceptually and in certain details, may be another example of maritime law, obviously a crucial component of the legal order in Dubrovnik, significantly inspiring and shaping other legal areas.

Conclusion

The contract of *collegantia* in the late medieval law of Dubrovnik is a local variant of the unilateral *commenda*, a contract widespread in the Mediterranean at the time, which was essential for an enormous economic expansion of many communities.

Analysis of the specifics offers an insight into the legal, economic and general particularities of the Ragusan trade of this period. Not only was the local nobility already establishing its wealth through trade and shipping, but other strata of the Ragusan society showed equal interest in business through their commercial pursuits

⁶⁰ For example, in MHR 2, doc. 742: *confiteor quod accepi a Nichola de Crossio solidos denariorum grossorum quindecim saluos in terra sine aliquo periculo ipsius Nichole* (emphasis added); MHR 2, doc. 754: *confiteor quod accepi a Blasio de Putigna solidos denariorum grossorum decem in collegantia cum usu Ragusii* (emphasis added).

⁶¹ J. Danilović, "O ugovoru 'collegantia' u dubrovačkom pravu u periodu mletačke vlasti", 297-298.

⁶² *Liber statutorum civitatis Ragusii*, ed. Valtazar Bogišić, Constantin Jireček, Zagrabiae: JAZU, 1904, 413-414; N. Lonza, "The Statute of Dubrovnik of 1272", 20.

on land and sea. Women are also present in the contracts, though scarcely and only as commendators.

The contract of *collegantia* in Dubrovnik was mainly modelled after its Venetian namesake, with certain variances associated with local specifics. Division of profits in written documents differs from the Statute, as the statutory solution is designed only to serve as a model, which can be rejected by the agreement of the parties. There was apparently more than enough capital seeking investment, as commendators were in the majority of cases willing to agree to a smaller share of profits than the one prescribed in the Statute. This might also indicate that the returns on investment were large enough in absolute numbers.

Risk was allocated according to the widely accepted model, in which the commendator bore the risk of the maritime perils, such as storms, attack of pirates or enemy seizure. This seems to be a characteristic conjoined inseparably with the term *collegantia*. Apparently, maritime *collegantia* was used in Dubrovnik as a model for contracts applied to trade and business on land. In this transition, the term *collegantia* was left out whenever a *salvos in terra* risk allocation scheme was applied (conferring risks on the tractator), although other characteristics of the contract were retained. Overall, maritime law was obviously the major legal matrix in trade, which inspired and shaped other legal areas.

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THE CONSTRUCTION OF HOLY SAVIOUR CHURCH IN DUBROVNIK (1520–1534)

DANKO ZELIĆ

Abstract: Along with an outline of the relevant historiography, the paper provides a historical survey of the construction of the votive church of Holy Saviour and discusses the roles of the main participants – the Senate, construction overseers, and chief builder Petar Markov Andrijić – in the conceptualisation, design, and execution of the edifice. The architectural shape of the church is analysed in the light of the facts regarding administrative and financial controversies, as well as the challenges and delays during the construction process.

Keywords: church architecture, sixteenth century, Gothic, Renaissance, Petar Markov Andrijić

Introduction

The earthquake that hit Dubrovnik on 17 May 1520, on the Feast of the Ascension of Jesus Christ, was by far the most devastating in the history of the medieval city.¹ As a sign of gratitude for the salvation from greater destruction and "to divert the wrath of God away from Dubrovnik", only a few days later, while the earth was still trembling,

¹ Vicko Adamović, *O trešnjama grada Dubrovnika*, Dubrovnik: Tiskarnica Joza Flori, 1883, 12-13; Giuseppe Gelcich, *Dello sviluppo civile di Ragusa considerato ne' suoi monumenti storici ed artistici*, Ragusa: Carlo Pretner Tip. Edit., 1884, 75-77; Mijo Kišpatić, "Potresi u Hrvatskoj", *Rad JAZU* 107 (1891), 97-98; Lukša Beritić, *Utvrdjenja grada Dubrovnika*, Zagreb: JAZU, 1955, 125-126; Lukša Beritić, *Urbanistički razvitak Dubrovnika*, Zagreb: Odjel za likovne umjetnosti JAZU, 1958, 27.

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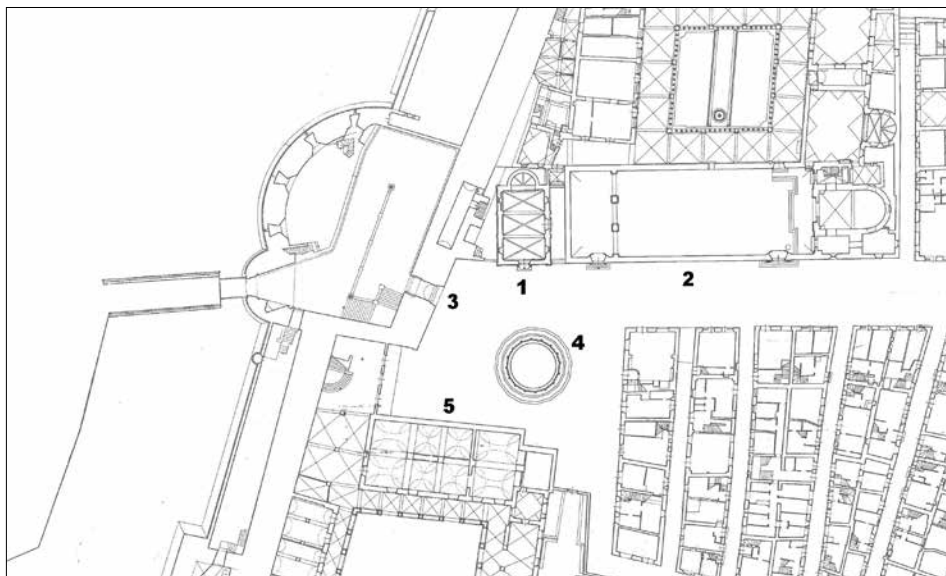


Figure 1. The location of Holy Saviour church within the urban fabric (1. Church of Holy Saviour; 2. Church of the Franciscan Monastery of the Friars Minor; 3. Pile Gate; 4. Onofrio's Fountain; 5. Church of St. Clare's convent, desacralized in 1806).

Ragusan Senate (*Consilium Rogatorum*) vowed to build a church dedicated to the Ascension – Holy Saviour.²

Locally known as *Sveti Spas*,³ the church was built between 1520 and 1534 at an eminently conspicuous position – in the immediate vicinity of the principal city gate, opposite the Great Fountain, at the beginning of the main street, the Placa.⁴

In spite of its fairly modest size, the monumentality of the edifice results from the compactness and proportions of its self-standing body as well as the architectural articulation of the exterior, notably the refined harmony between the smooth wall

² Nella Lonza, *Kazalište vlasti. Ceremonijal i državni blagdani Dubrovačke Republike u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, Zagreb, Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2009, 296-299.

³ The name of the church in Croatian form (*ecclesia Sancti Spassi; ecclesia Ascensionis sive Sancti Spassi*) appears in Latin-written public registers already in 1531 and 1532, see notes: 74, 75, 86.

⁴ Archival data cited in the notes of this article were compiled while preparing a historical survey for the purpose of conservation-restoration research of the Croatian Restoration Institute (programme director Krasanka Majer Jurišić), published in *Dubrovnik, crkva sv. Spasa. Elaborat konzervatorsko-restauratorskih istraživanja*, Zagreb: Hrvatski restauratorski zavod, 2021. Architectural drawings in this paper have been made according to architectural documentation created by Arhitektura i arheologija d. o. o., architects Pedro Gurriarán Daza, Salvador Garcia Villalobos and Nataša Ivanišević.



Figure 2. Church of Holy Saviour.

surfaces, built with perfectly fashioned ashlars, and masterly carved decoration. The front with a characteristic trefoil silhouette is articulated by means of pilasters and cornices, while its central part is distinguished by a rich figural and floral sculptural decoration,

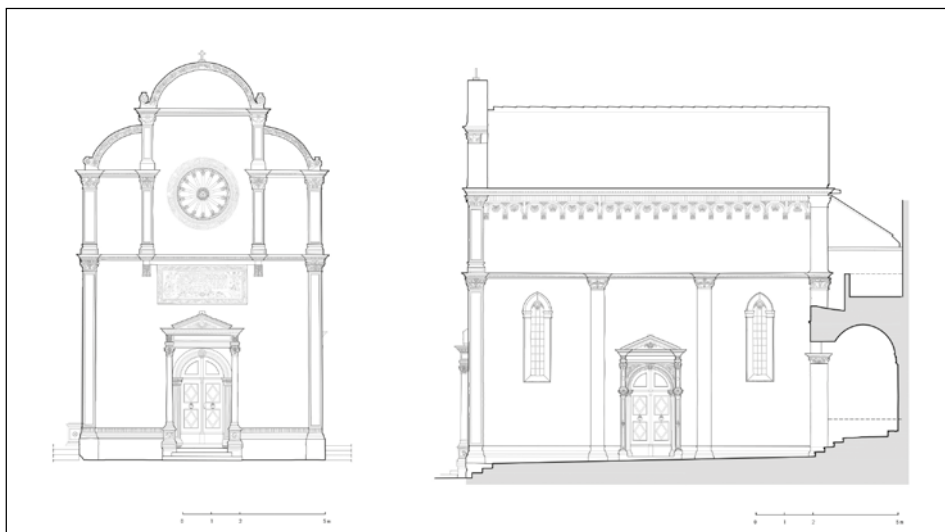


Figure 3. The main and east facade.

above all of the *all'antica* frame of the entrance doors and the rose window. Above the portal, built into the facade is a wide rectangular plaque with a commemorative Latin text; on an open scroll held by the naked winged *putti*, inscribed are the essential facts regarding the construction of the church.

Except for a somewhat lower apse at the back, the building may be perceived from the Placa in its entire volume. In the middle of its east lateral facade, divided by pilasters, is the classical side portal, while in the flanking fields are the narrow Gothic windows. The surface of the west side facade is also articulated with pilasters and the window

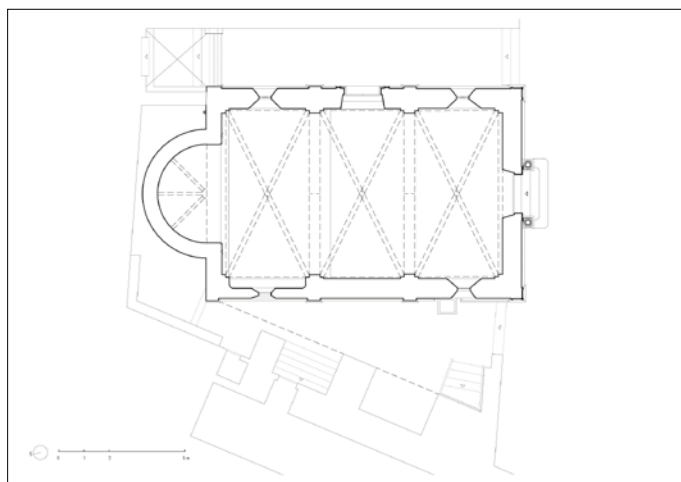


Figure 4. Ground plan.

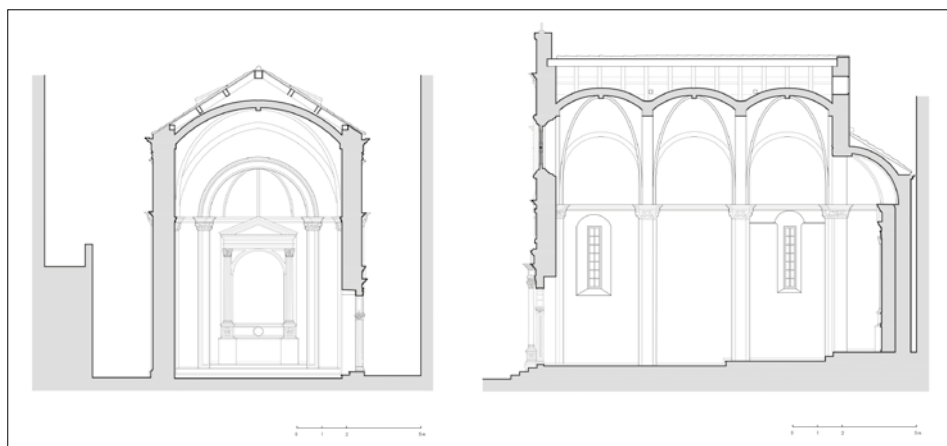


Figure 5. Cross section with view towards the sanctuary and longitudinal cross section.

openings are identical to those on the east facade. Both side facades have cornices resting on blind Gothic arches filled with relief carved shells.

The interior is divided into three bays and covered by cross-ribbed vaults separated by smooth transverse pointed arches. In the northern wall is a wide apsidal opening, flanked by pilasters supporting a round arch. The apse is semicircular in plan and its hemispherical vault is articulated by ribs.

Holy Saviour in historiography and art history

The multifaceted symbolism which surrounded the reason for the construction of Holy Saviour's – the earthquake of 1520 – met with extensive mentions in the texts of older Ragusan historians; in all local chronicles the reports on the seism are immediately followed by rather detailed accounts concerning the construction of the votive church.⁵ Based partly on the information drawn from these texts, and partly on the living collective memory are the legends of the construction as recorded in the historiography of the latter half of the nineteenth century.⁶ In Dubrovnik it was firmly believed (and still is) that the stone material for the Holy Saviour Ragusan noblewomen carried to the building site with their own hands, according to some versions, barefoot noblemen, too.⁷ A most thorough and reliable account of the events has been provided by Giuseppe Gelcich in 1884.⁸ Observing that there is nothing special in the interior and that the church is of relatively modest dimensions, he stated that, "as regards the exterior, it may be the most perfect architectural monument in Dubrovnik". Describing its architectural style as "Lombard at its peak",⁹ Gelcich was the first to compare the shape

⁵ Ludovici Tuberonis Dalmatae Abbatis etc. *Commentariorum de rebus, quae temporibus eius in illa Europae parte quam Pannonii et Turcae eorumque finitimi incolunt gestae sunt, Libri undecim*, Francofurti: Impensis Claudii Marnii, et haeredum Joannis Aubrii, 1603, 321–322; Serafino Razzi, *La storia di Raugia. Scritta nuovamente in tre libri*, In Lucca: Per Vincentio Busdraghi, 1595, 74–75; *Narrazioni o vero storia degli Arcivescovi di Raugia scritta da F. Serafino Razzi, teologo domenicano, della provincia Romana*, in: Serafino Razzi, *Povijest dubrovačke metropolije i dubrovačkih nadbiskupa (X. – XVI. stoljeća)*, ed. Stjepan Krasić, Dubrovnik: Biskupski ordinarijat, Split: Crkva u svijetu, 1999, 132; *Li Annali della Nobilissima Repubblica di Ragusa*, in: *Annales Ragusini anonymi item Nicolai de Ragnina* [MSHSM vol. 14, 1], ed. Speratus Nodilo, Zagrabiae: Academia scientiarum et artium Slavorum meridionalium, 1883, 98–99; Nicolò di Ragnina, "Annali di Ragusa", in: *Annales Ragusini anonymi item Nicolai de Ragnina* [MSHSM vol. 14, 1], ed. Speratus Nodilo, Zagrabiae: Academia scientiarum et artium Slavorum meridionalium, 1883, 277.

⁶ Matteo Zamagna, *La storia di Ragusa* [reprint of the edition from 1869], Trieste: Società Editrice Mutilati e Combattenti, 1931, 214; Stefano Skurla, *Ragusa. Cenni storici*, Zagabria: A spese dell'autore, 1876, 105; Giuseppe Gelcich, *Dello sviluppo civile di Ragusa*, Ragusa: C. Pretner, 1884, 76–77.

⁷ M. Zamagna, *La storia di Ragusa*, 214; S. Skurla, *Ragusa. Cenni storici*, 105; G. Gelcich, *Dello sviluppo civile di Ragusa*, 76.

⁸ G. Gelcich, *Dello sviluppo civile di Ragusa*, 76–77.

⁹ G. Gelcich, *Dello sviluppo civile di Ragusa*, 77. Indeed, Gelcich had the so-called Venetian-Lombard style in mind, named after fifteenth-century Venetian architect Pietro Lombardo.

of Holy Saviour's facade with those of the cathedrals in Hvar and Šibenik. Moreover, having traced an archival record by which, in 1520, "a certain engineer from Padova" working in Šibenik was summoned to Dubrovnik for the purpose of city restoration after the earthquake, Gelcich inferred that the architect of Holy Saviour was Bartolomeo di Giacomo da Mestre, *protomagister* of St. James' cathedral in Šibenik.¹⁰ Lastly, Gelcich points to some dissonant tones in the local historical narrative regarding both the length and the total cost of the works.

Thanks to Gelcich's writing, Holy Saviour came to occupy a distinguished place in the earliest comprehensive surveys of Dalmatian monuments, written in 1880s by Rudolf Eitelberger von Edelberg and Thomas Graham Jackson. In Eitelberger von Edelberg's opinion, the church, despite its small size, has beautiful harmonic form that reminds of the Venetian churches of S. Zaccaria and S. Maria dei Miracoli.¹¹ Jackson points to the relation between the Gothic and the Renaissance (i.e., *all'antica*) traits, both in design and in decoration: "Classic pilasters divide it into three bays, but the vaulting is of Gothic construction, and so are the side windows [...]. The cornice is arcaded in Gothic fashion, but like that at Curzola has each arch filled with a renaissance shell." British scholar also briefly discusses the origin of the curious format of the facade and its relation to the architecture of the interior: "The front has a semicircular gable between two quadrants like that of the churches at Lesina [Hvar Cathedral] and Cittavecchia [parish church in Starigrad, island of Hvar], a fashion perhaps borrowed from the cathedral at Sebenico, where however the rounded gables actually close and are generated by the constructive form of the vaulting behind them."¹²

Further comparisons between Holy Saviour and similar churches in Dalmatia have been put forward by Hans Karl Eduard von Berlepsch and Friedrich Weysser in 1894.¹³ Besides the facades of the cathedrals of Šibenik and Hvar, as a solution similar to that of Holy Saviour those two authors were the first to mention the church of St. Mary of the Benedictine nuns in Zadar, claiming that both were modelled after San Zaccaria in Venice.

¹⁰ The name of the *protomagister* of the Šibenik cathedral Gelcich learnt from the correspondence with Federico Antonio Galvani, Šibenik historian, see G. Gelcich, *Dello sviluppo civile di Ragusa*, chapter *Al lettore*, unpaginated).

¹¹ Rudolf Eitelberger von Edelberg, *Die Mittelalterlichen Kunstdenkmale Dalmatiens in Arbe, Zara, Nona, Sebenico, Traù, Spalato und Ragusa* [R. Eitelberger von Edelberg, *Gesammelte Kunsthistorische Schriften*, Bd. IV], Wien: W. Braumüller, 1884, 348.

¹² Thomas Graham Jackson, *Dalmatia, the Quarnero and Istria: with Cettigne in Montenegro and the Island of Grado*, vol. II, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1887, 380-381.

¹³ Hans Karl Eduard von Berlepsch, Friedrich Weysser, "Bauten in und um Ragusa", *Zeitschrift für Bauwesen* 44 (1894), coll. 237-238.

Holy Saviour also found its place in a voluminous study on the fifteenth-century architecture and sculpture in Dalmatia by Hans Folnesics (1914),¹⁴ although the author wrongly dated its construction to 1620. In line with Gelcich's criticism, Folnesics too points to the church's disproportional aedicule (i.e., the main portal), also warning about other deviations from classical architectural principles. He claims that the "trefoil" shape of the facade was borrowed from the cathedral of Šibenik, and blind arcades on the top of the side walls from some Romanesque cathedral.

The likeness between Šibenik cathedral and Holy Saviour has also been emphasised by Ljubo Karaman in his survey of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century art in Dalmatia (1933).¹⁵ Assessing the church of Holy Saviour as "an interesting example of typical provincial art", Karaman stresses the role of local workshops, to which he attributes the presence of "interesting Gothic details" in the "free composition" of the Renaissance church.

The most substantial contribution to the study of the church of Holy Saviour has been made by Cvito Fisković. In his works from the 1940s, based on a thorough archival research, Fisković brings a detailed chronology of the construction as well as the names of the builders and stonemasons involved.¹⁶ Having resolutely discarded the conjectures concerning the role of Bartolomeo da Mestre in Holy Saviour project, he introduced the name of Petar Andrijić into art historical literature, not only as the true author of the church but also as a leading architect in Dubrovnik of the day.¹⁷ Unlike older scholars who claimed that the shape of the Holy Saviour's facade echoed that of the Šibenik cathedral, Fisković draws attention to the fact that the Šibenik facade was completed in 1536, and the possibility of reverse influence.¹⁸ Moreover, the church of Holy Saviour, to his opinion "one of the most beautiful monuments of the Renaissance style in Dubrovnik",¹⁹ whose interior he nevertheless describes as "mainly Gothic", helped Cvito Fisković buttress his thesis on the co-existence of Gothic and Renaissance style in Dubrovnik architecture of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, epitomized in his paradigm of the "Gothic-Renaissance style".²⁰ He would repeat the same in his 1956 study dedicated to the church of St. Mary in Zadar, in which Holy Saviour is mentioned

¹⁴ Hans Folnesics, "Studien zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Architektur und Plastik des XV. Jahrhunderts in Dalmatien", *Jahrbuch des Kunsthistorischen Institutes* 8 (1914), 123, 166.

¹⁵ Ljubo Karaman, *Umjetnost u Dalmaciji. XV. i XVI. vijek*, Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1933, 101-102.

¹⁶ Cvito Fisković, "Dokumenti o radu naših graditelja i klesara XV–XVI stoljeća u Dubrovniku", *Izdanje Konzervatorskog zavoda u Splitu* 3 (1947), 8-10; C. Fisković, *Naši graditelji i kipari XV. i XVI. stoljeća u Dubrovniku*, Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1947, 141-144, 158-162.

¹⁷ C. Fisković, "Dokumenti o radu naših graditelja i klesara", 8-10; C. Fisković, *Naši graditelji i kipari*, 158-165.

¹⁸ C. Fisković, *Naši graditelji i kipari*, 143.

¹⁹ C. Fisković, "Dokumenti o radu naših graditelja i klesara", 8.

²⁰ C. Fisković, "O vremenu i jedinstvenosti gradnje dubrovačke Divone", *Prilozi povijesti umjetnosti u Dalmaciji* 7 (1953), 54-55.

as a comparative example, not only because of the similar shape of the facade, but also because of the resemblances in architectural decoration.²¹

The questions of architectural definition of Holy Saviour in terms of style have been recurrently addressed by Radovan Ivančević in the 1980s and 1990s, particularly with regard to its facade which he defined as "early Renaissance".²² However, discussing the building in its entirety he concluded that "the style in question is still a typical Dubrovnik combination of the Gothic-Renaissance style", where the "Renaissance shaped facade in compositional terms is subjected to the Gothic method of design and proportioning".²³

Renaissance features of the church were also emphasised by Anđelko Badurina.²⁴ Regarding the sculptural decoration of the facade, Nada Grujić argued that their author, Petar Andrijić, follows the design principles that had originated in the fifteenth-century solutions put forward by Leon Battista Alberti and Michelozzo Michelozzi.²⁵ Within broader analysis of the phenomenon of coexistence of Gothic and Renaissance in Dubrovnik architecture of the fifteenth and sixteenth century (2009), Nada Grujić also touches on the church of Holy Saviour, emphasising that it "introduced a new, reversed relationship between two styles: Gothic forms withdraw to side facades, giving way to Renaissance forms on the main facade".²⁶ The decorative motifs of Florentine origin were interpreted by Predrag Marković as "an expression of the presence of the masters from Michelozzi's circle".²⁷ The motifs of dolphins and birds on the capitals of the main portal Goran Nikšić (2008) views in the context of motif continuity in Korčula stonemasonry workshops, comparing them with decoration of the Korčula cathedral by Petar's father Marko Andrijić, as well as the church of the Annunciation in Dubrovnik, which Petar Andrijić executed in the 1530s.²⁸

²¹ C. Fisković, "Zadarska renesansna crkva Sv. Marije", *Prilozi povijesti umjetnosti u Dalmaciji* 10 (1956), 106.

²² As opposed to the "late Renaissance" facade of Hvar cathedral, see: Radovan Ivančević, "Odnos pročelja i prostora hvarske katedrale i problem stilskog određenja", *Prilozi povijesti umjetnosti u Dalmaciji* 24 (1984), 77 (n. 7), 82-83.

²³ Radovan Ivančević, "Proporcije trolisnih renesansnih pročelja u Hrvatskoj", *Peristil* 41 (1998), 65.

²⁴ Anđelko Badurina, "Crkva Svetog Spasa", in: *Zlatno doba Dubrovnika XV. i XVI. stoljeće: urbanizam, arhitektura, skulptura, slikarstvo, iluminirani rukopisi, zlatarstvo*, ed. Vladimir Marković, Zagreb: MTM, 1987, 327.

²⁵ Nada Grujić, "Antikizirajući kapiteli oko godine 1520. u Dubrovniku", *Radovi Instituta za povijest umjetnosti* 21 (1997), 12-13.

²⁶ Nada Grujić, "Gوتيčko-renesansna arhitektura Dubrovnika u 15. i 16. stoljeću", in: *Sic ars deprenditur arte. Zbornik u čast Vladimira Markovića*, ed. Sanja Cvetnić, Milan Pelc, Daniel Premerl, Zagreb: Institut za povijest umjetnosti, Odsjek za povijest umjetnosti Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 2009, 248.

²⁷ Predrag Marković, "Arhitektura renesanse u Hrvatskoj", in: *Hrvatska renesansa*, ed. Miljenko Jurković, Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, Zagreb: Galerija Klovićevi dvori, 2004, 79.

²⁸ Goran Nikšić, "Andrijići u Dubrovniku", in: *Renesansa i renesanse u umjetnosti Hrvatske. Zbornik Dana Cvita Fiskovića 2*, ed. Predrag Marković, Jasenka Gudelj, Zagreb: Institut za povijest umjetnosti, Odsjek za povijest umjetnosti Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 2008, 142-144.

The church of Holy Saviour has been devoted a separate chapter in the survey of Renaissance art in Croatia by Milan Pelc (2007),²⁹ who points to the "local tradition of combining architectural and style elements", that is, an interior space conceived as late Gothic behind a "Renaissance *coulisse*" of the trefoil facade. Although as the author of the church he cites Petar Andrijić (in line with Cvito Fisković), into the debate Pelc reintroduces the name of Bartolomeo di Giacomo da Mestre, hypothesising that the Italian master, after all, may have played a part in the design of Holy Saviour's facade.

The last to tackle the construction of Holy Saviour church is Emanuela Garofalo in her comprehensive study of the building activity in Dubrovnik after the 1520 earthquake (2009).³⁰

The chronology of construction

The Senate of Dubrovnik (*Consilium Rogatorum*) made a solemn vow to build a church on 22 May 1520, only five days after the disastrous earthquake.³¹ Two days later the same body designated the location, appointed construction overseers and accepted the initial budget.³² It was decided that the church be erected at the very beginning of the Placa, "in the courtyard near the monastery of the Friars Minor where there is a cistern".³³ That choice dictated the orientation as well as the size of the building. The length of Holy Saviour (approximately 15 metres) thus equals the width of the church of the Friars Minor; the two buildings are separated by a narrow public passage, which also serves as an access from the Placa to the entrance of the Franciscan convent. As regards the construction overseers (*provisores fabrice*), appointed directly were three

²⁹ Milan Pelc, *Renesansa*, Zagreb: Naklada Ljevak, 2007, 195. Bartolomeo di Giacomo da Mestre as author of the church of St. Saviour is also cited by Giuseppe Maria Pilo, "Per trecentosettantasette anni": la gloria di Venezia nelle testimonianze artistiche della Dalmazia, Monfalcone: Edizioni della Laguna, 2000, 230, claiming that Petar Andrijić merely started the construction.

³⁰ Emanuela Garofalo, "Terremoto e ricostruzione a Ragusa (Dubrovnik) nel 1520", *Città e Storia* 4/2 (2009), 502–504.

³¹ State Archives in Dubrovnik (hereafter as: SAD), HR-DADU-3, *Acta Consilii Rogatorum* (hereafter: *Cons. Rog.*), vol. 35, f. 227v. Document is mentioned by C. Fisković, "Dokumenti o radu naših graditelja i klesara", 9.

³² (...) *de fabricando in cortino contiguo monasterio fratrum minorum ubi est cisterna cum sabulo (...) quem locum reportaverunt officiales ad hoc deputati esse idoneum, aptum et sufficientem ad dictam fabricam et erectionem dicte capelle.* (*Cons. Rog.*, vol. 35, f. 228v). Document is mentioned by C. Fisković, *Naši graditelji i kipari*: 158.

³³ *Cisterna fratrum minorum* was among larger public cisterns of medieval Dubrovnik. It was built in 1388/89, on an empty site between the church of the Friars Minor and the city wall, where, next to the Pile Gate, stood the homonymous tower. The access to the monastery that ran in-between, alongside the west facade of the Franciscan church was already in the fourteenth century separated from the cistern with a wall. See: Risto Jeremić, Jorjo Tadić, *Prilozi za istoriju zdravstvene kulture starog Dubrovnika*, I, Beograd: Centralni higijenski zavod, 1938, 37; Risto Jeremić, Jorjo Tadić, *Prilozi za istoriju zdravstvene kulture starog Dubrovnika*, III, Beograd: Centralni higijenski zavod, 1940, 10, as well as *Odluke Veća Dubrovačke Republike*, II, ed. Mihajlo J. Dinić [Zbornik za historiju, jezik i književnost srpskog naroda, vol. 21]. Beograd: SANU, Naučno delo, 1964, 488, 524, 535, 571, 577.

noblemen who, in the same capacity, had been in charge of the works on the Rector's Palace initiated in 1515. Concerning the initial expenses, the Senate approved the sum of 300 ducats. Intensive activities regarding the supply of material and construction preparations were soon under way; a quantity of dressed stone blocks was immediately commissioned from the quarries on the island of Korčula.³⁴

By a contract registered on 16 June 1520, less than a month after the earthquake, Petar Markov Andrijić, styled as a stonemason from the city of Korčula, promised the overseers that according to the design he submitted he would put together "the entire facade" of the church, as well as deliver all of its carved elements: main portal decorated in relief, rose window, columns, cornices, mouldings, pilasters, and foliage ornaments.³⁵ The facade had to be 16 to 17 ells (8.2 – 8.7 m) wide, and of proportional height.³⁶ The deadline was not explicitly stated, and the price was set at 90 ducats.³⁷

In August the overseers commissioned four narrow and tall stone window frames, apparently for the side facades, at a price of ten ducats from Silvestar Vitičević, another stonemason from Korčula.³⁸ As agreed in November of the same year, steel bars for these windows were to be cast by blacksmith Ivan Miomanović.³⁹ Contracted in September and October were more shipments of dressed stone blocks.⁴⁰

³⁴ Between 1 and 12 June 1520, on three instances, a supply of 250 fathoms (equivalent to 500 metres in length) of stone blocks was contracted with Nikola and Andrija Pavlović, Ivan Kargo (warrantor Josip Andrijić) as well as Ludovik Karlović. SAD, HR-DADU-10-2, *Debita notariae pro comuni* (hereafter: *Deb. not. pro comuni*), vol. 1, f. 178v-179r, 179v. Documents are mentioned by C. Fisković, "Dokumenti o radu naših graditelja i klesara", 9; *Naši graditelji i kipari*, 159.

³⁵ *Petrus quondam Marci Andriich de Curzola lapicida (...) promisit (...) dare et consignare (...) totam faciem dicte capelle cum sua porta de intaleo, rota, columnis, cornisiis, listis, pilastris et foliaminibus, designi quod ipse Petrus eis ostendit, de pulcra petra de Curzola et de pulcro laborerio et bonis iuncturis ad laudem cuiuslibet boni lapicide, omnibus expensis dicti Petri exceptis bastasiis solvendis per comune et muratoribus tantum, sed magistri scarpelli sint expensis dicti Petri (...)* Et habeat pro toto dicto laborerio in totum ducatorum auri nonaginta (...) *Declarantes latitudinem dicte faciei brachiis sexdecim in decem et septem cum sua proportionem altitudinis (...)*. *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 1, f. 180r. Document is published by C. Fisković, "Dokumenti o radu naših graditelja i klesara", 22, n. 52.

³⁶ The facade is 8.63 m wide, and 14 m high (14.41 m including the stone cross at the top).

³⁷ The costs concerning the transport of the material from the city harbour to the construction site were to be covered by the government, while Petar promised to hire stonemasons at his own expense.

³⁸ These windows – each one ell wide, with jambs four ells tall and heads in one piece, i.e., comprising the capitals and an arch – were to be installed on the side facades. *Silvestar Vitičievich dictus Catharinovich de Curzola lapicida (...) promisit (...) dare et consignare (...) quattuor fenestras slanzatas, factas complitas, bene laboratas et de pulcra petra sine aliqua macula, latas in luce brachio uno de Ragusio et altas parestarum brachia quattuor de Ragusio, et pluri capitella et arcum in uno petio pro qualibet fenestra (...)*. *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 1, f. 180v. Document is mentioned by C. Fisković, "Dokumenti o radu naših graditelja i klesara", 9-10; *Naši graditelji i kipari*: 160.

³⁹ *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 1, f. 185v. Document is mentioned by C. Fisković, *Naši graditelji i kipari*, 160.

⁴⁰ Stonemasons Andrija Pavlović and Ludovik Karlović were obliged to deliver 30 bond stones (*Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 1, f. 182r). Document is mentioned by C. Fisković, *Naši graditelji i kipari*, 160. In October 1520 more stone material was ordered from Frane Anđelović, another stonemason from Korčula, *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 1, f. 183v. Documents are mentioned by C. Fisković, *Naši graditelji i kipari*, 160.

In late November 1520, the Senate deliberated further financing and decided that 300 ducats were to be spent, "both for the church and the cistern beneath",⁴¹ from which it can be inferred that the ancient water reservoir under the church was not filled in but repaired and continued to serve its purpose.

In the spring of the following year, more stone material for the walls was commissioned,⁴² and – judging from the payment entries – it is clear that all carved elements ordered from Petar Andrijić in June 1520 were delivered by 17 May 1521.⁴³

On 10 September 1521, following the approval of the Senate,⁴⁴ the new, second contract with Petar Andrijić was concluded. His brothers Josip and Andrija acting as warrantors, Petar pledges to "build, complete and finish the church" according to "the design and a model" submitted beforehand in the Senate, yet without the dome, for a sum of 300 ducats.⁴⁵ A special contractual term specified that, should the construction of the dome be subsequently approved, he would build it for another 120 ducats.⁴⁶

Indeed, nine days later the Senate changed its opinion and decided that the dome ought to be built at a price not exceeding 120 ducats, i.e., in conformity with what was promised earlier to Petar Andrijić.⁴⁷ The dynamics of disbursements to the builder testifies to an intensive activity at the site during the last quarter of 1521.⁴⁸

Quite unexpectedly, however, in the spring next year, as the documentary evidence indicates, certain difficulties in the course of the construction project occurred. On 22 March 1522, Josip Andrijić, perhaps as his brother's warrantor, officially declares that he

⁴¹ *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 35, f. 296v.

⁴² *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 1, f. 183v

⁴³ *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 1, f. 180r.

⁴⁴ (...) *de dando libertatem dominis provisoribus fabrice capelle Ascensionis Dominice quod possint convenire et achordium facere cum magistris pro complendo dictam capellam secundum modellum factum et presentatum in presenti consilio, tamen sine copula, pro quanto precio et mercato eis melius videbitur* (...). (*Cons. Rog.*, vol. 36, f. 100r).

⁴⁵ *Petrus Marci Andriich lapicida de Curzula (...) promisit fabricare, complere et finire de bona et firma petra Curzolensi et pulcro scarpello cum pulcris iuncturis et ligaturis et fornicibus bene factis incrustatis et laboratis iuxta designum et modelum superinde formatum et fabricatum et ad laudem cuiuslibet boni magistri et lapicide, omnibus expensis ipsius Petri, exceptis bastasiis quos dicti domini provisoires tenentur et debent dare a Ponta usque ad dictam ecclesiam, lignamina et ferramenta et plumbum neccesarium ipse fabrice. Et hoc pretio et foro ducatorum tercentorum* (...). *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 1, f. 190r. Document is published by C. Fisković, "Dokumenti o radu naših graditelja i klesara", 22–23, n. 54.

⁴⁶ (...) *hoc pacto quod ipse Petrus non sit obligatus facere ipsam copulam in modello existentem pro nunc, et casu quo dominium et de mente domini esset quod dicta copula fieret et fabricaretur in dicta ecclesia, tunc et eo casu ipse Petrus promisit facere precio et foro ducatorum centum viginti ipsam copulam* (...). *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 1, f. 190r.

⁴⁷ (...) *de concedendo provisoribus fabrice dicte capelle Ascensionis Dominice quod possint supra dictam capellam fieri facere dictam copullam, cum hoc quod in ea non possint expendere ultra ducatos centum viginti, secundum modelum* (...). *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 36, f. 117v.

⁴⁸ Between 17 October and 22 December Petar received 297 ducats, that is, (in addition to 100 ducats which he received as an advance payment) a total of 397 ducats. *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 1, f. 190r.

will refund 25 ducats – a part of a larger sum – to the works (*fabrica*) of Holy Saviour.⁴⁹ On the other hand, for his own work at the building site, on 16 April Josip confirms the acceptance of 20 ducats and on 7 May of the same amount.⁵⁰ Regrettably, none of these documents provide any specific details.

Subsequently, also in May 1522, Petar received 20 ducats and another 25 ducats at the beginning of June. Nevertheless, in the ensuing two years the sources afford virtually no information on the developments concerning the site.⁵¹ The project came to a halt in mid-1523 at the latest when Petar had to flee the city because of serious financial difficulties. Notably, in October that year the Minor Council decided to extend his safe conduct, i.e., immunity from debt prosecution, so he could complete the work on the fishmarket quay, agreed upon several months before, by the end of June.⁵²

By the beginning of 1524 the builder again departed from Dubrovnik. Testifying to that is the Senate's decision dated 31 March 1524, by which a safe conduct was given to him in order to complete the works on the church of Holy Saviour and Rector's Palace, for both of which, as stated, he had already been paid.⁵³ Soon afterwards, Petar returned to Dubrovnik,⁵⁴ where, apparently, he remained well after the designated deadline.⁵⁵ Given that his obligations on the Rector's Palace were no longer mentioned, in all likelihood he finished his work on that building in the second half of 1524. There is no information, however, whether the works on Holy Saviour were resumed at the time.

The next information concerning Holy Saviour is from April 1525. By order of the overseers, Josip Andrijić, Petar's brother, was to be disbursed 10 ducats (as part of the total sum, which is not specified) for some "executed and prospective" works at the building site, but the payment was suspended by the Minor Council.⁵⁶

Eight months later, on 2 January 1526, the construction of Holy Saviour was placed on the agenda of the Minor Council. It was first decreed that Josip or Petar Andrijić be

⁴⁹ *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 1, f. 191v.

⁵⁰ *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 1, f. 193r, 194r.

⁵¹ In that respect, attention should be drawn to a gap within the series *Debita notarie pro comuni*. Last entries in the first volume were dated 7 May 1522, while the entries in the second volume (in which the first twenty leaves are missing) start with 26 September 1523.

⁵² SAD, HR-DADU-4, *Acta Consilii Minoris* (hereafter: *Cons. Min.*), vol. 34, f. 262r. By the end of the same month, the same body approved a fifteen-day safe conduct to Marko's brother, Josip (*Cons. Min.*, vol. 34, f. 268v).

⁵³ (...) *de dando fidam et liberum saluum conductum ab omnibus suis debitis Petro lapicide de Corzula pro mensibus tribus proxime futuris a die qua veniret Ragusium, non obstantibus aliquibus suis debitis vel plegiariis per ipsum cuiquam factis, et hoc ut possit finire ecclesiam Glorioso Ascensionis et palatium domini pro quibus iam habuit solutionem* (...). (*Cons. Rog.*, vol. 37, f. 168r). Document is mentioned by E. Garofalo, "Terremoto e ricostruzione a Ragusa (Dubrovnik) nel 1520", 506, n. 44.

⁵⁴ His presence in Dubrovnik is documented on 12 April 1524, see note 103.

⁵⁵ On 3 August 1524 Petar confirmed to have received five ducats for the works on the Rector's Palace. *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 2, f. 13r.

⁵⁶ *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 2, f. 18v.

disbursed 15 ducats. Secondly, the supervisors of public finances, together with the construction overseers, were ordered to audit the accounts of Holy Saviour, having previously called the "stonemasons" (i.e., Andrijić brothers) to submit their own evidence of delivered material and works executed.⁵⁷ From the Senate conclusion voted on the next day it is clear that the chief builder was not in Dubrovnik at the time; accepted was the proposal by which Petar – "indebted due to the construction of Holy Saviour church" – be regranted the safe conduct for a period of four months, that is, to be guaranteed immunity from prosecution notwithstanding "his debts to the state as well as to private persons".⁵⁸ An additional entry in the register reads that Petar arrived in Dubrovnik on 7 May, which means that the deadline was calculated from that day on.

Less than a month later, on 2 June 1526, the Senate deliberated on Holy Saviour's dome; the conclusion from 1521 was revoked, and the idea of dome's construction explicitly rejected.⁵⁹

The report on the state of mutual accounts between the Republic and Petar Andrijić was submitted to the Senate on 2 August 1526.⁶⁰ By that day, for his work on Holy Saviour, Rector's Palace and Divona the builder had received a much larger sum than agreed upon by the respective contracts, as many as 350 ducats; almost half of that amount (168 ducats) concerned Holy Saviour. The calculation included the worth of certain carved architectural elements for the interior which Petar delivered in addition to what he had agreed in the contract. Their value was estimated at 80 ducats, specifying that the mentioned sum referred to the portal on the side facade, apse with the cornice and arch, pilasters of the triumphal arch, four pilasters and four half-pilasters in the church interior, mensa of the high altar with its colonettes, stairs inside and outside of the church, one capital, as well as another two capitals above the high altar.⁶¹

⁵⁷ (...) *de faciendo polliciam de ducatis quindecim provisoribus fabrice ecclesie Sancte Ascensionis in nomine officialium laborerorum comunis pro dando Iosepho Marci Andriich de Curzola obligato cum fratribus suis pro dicta fabrica, aut Petro eius fratri. Et quod interim officiales rationum comunis simul cum dictis provisoribus debeant videre rationem dicte fabrice et debiti dictorum lapicidarum, vocando ipsos lapicidis ut producant et ostendant eorum rationes pro laboreriis per eos factis et datis (...).* Cons. Min., vol. 35, f. 142r. Document is mentioned by C. Fisković, "Dokumenti o radu naših graditelja i klesara", 10; *Naši graditelji i kipari*, 161.

⁵⁸ Cons. Rog., vol. 38, f. 73v.

⁵⁹ Cons. Rog., vol. 38, f. 129v. The document was hitherto unknown; it was believed that the idea of the dome was tacitly abandoned.

⁶⁰ Cons. Rog., vol. 38, f. 149v–150v. Document is published by C. Fisković, "Dokumenti o radu naših graditelja i klesara", 23–24 (n. 57).

⁶¹ (...) *certi lavoreri (...) facti ultra le dicte conventione, zoe per le porte alla faza de Sancto Francesco et per la concha intorno lo altar grande cum la sua lista et arco et per li pilastri intorno lo dicto altare et per pilastri quatro et altri quatro mezo pilastri dentro ne la chiesa et per la pianca de lo altar grande cum le sue colonette de sotto et per certi schalini dentro et de fora de la dicta chiesa et certo capitello et ancora per doi capitelli sopra lo altare grande, stimate le dicte cose per piu homini pratici in questi lavoreri sopra loro conscientia ducati ottanta (...).* Cons. Rog., vol. 38, f. 149v–150v.

Soon after the approval of the financial report, it was proposed in the Senate that the builder should be admonished to complete the church within three months or be forced to pay the remainder of his debt; otherwise the state should be compensated from the private possessions of the construction overseers, and that, finally, the decision on the safe conduct, previously granted to Petar, remained in effect. However, the motion did not win the necessary majority vote and the decision was postponed.⁶² On the other hand, it appears that the construction was resumed after all. By the end of August, the builder's safe conduct was extended until the end of the current year, 1526.⁶³ Moreover, notwithstanding his debt, on 29 November Petar was given another 50 ducats for the works on the church,⁶⁴ and, by the end of December, the Senate approved the extension of Petar's safe conduct for another two months.⁶⁵

In spite of that, the sources lack any information about the construction works on Holy Saviour in 1527. This time the reason for the disruption at the building site should be ascribed to the force majeure – great epidemic of plague that reached Dubrovnik in the late 1526, and peaked in the first half of 1527.⁶⁶

By the end of May 1528, the building was still unfinished and, in the meanwhile, Petar Andrijić ended up in debtors' prison.⁶⁷ The proposal to set him free was rejected at first, only to be accepted a week later on several strict conditions, the foremost being that Petar, immediately upon release from prison, embarked on the completion of Holy Saviour.

At the end of June, the Minor Council appointed three noblemen who would once more determine the exact amount of Andrijić's debt.⁶⁸ The works were soon resumed. On 3 July Petar confirmed a receipt of five ducats,⁶⁹ while the next day the Senate ordered

⁶² (...) *de admonendo* (...) *Petrum Marci Andriich quod debeat complere capellam Ascensionis Domini de omnibus laboreris secundum pactum infra menses tres proxime futurum, attento quia habuit totam solutionem totius fabrice dicte capelle et etiam plus. Et si secus faceret quod debeat cogi ad solutionem resti debiti sui reportati superius. Et casu quo comune nostro non possit se valere super eum et plegios suos, quod tali casu debeat se valere super provisos dicte fabrice, videlicet ser Daniele Ni. de Restis et socios, secundum ordines, sine preiudicio fide seu salvconductus dati dicto Petro* (...). (*Cons. Rog.*, vol. 38, f. 150r). Document is mentioned by C. Fisković, "Dokumenti o radu naših graditelja i klesara", 10, C. Fisković, *Naši graditelji i kipari*, 161.

⁶³ *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 38, f. 160r.

⁶⁴ *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 2, f. 33v.

⁶⁵ *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 38, f. 193r.

⁶⁶ R. Jeremić, J. Tadić, *Prilozi za istoriju zdravstvene kulture starog Dubrovnika*, I, 92-96; Zlata Blažina Tomić, *Kac-morti i kuga: utemeljenje i razvoj zdravstvene službe u Dubrovniku*, Zagreb, Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2007, 147-161.

⁶⁷ *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 39, f. 78r, 82r. Document is mentioned by C. Fisković, "Dokumenti o radu naših graditelja i klesara", 10, and C. Fisković, *Naši graditelji i kipari*, 162.

⁶⁸ *Cons. Min.*, vol. 36, f. 8v.

⁶⁹ *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 2, f. 33v.

the supervisors of the state armoury to provide a rope (for hauling a load), as well as the necessary lead, steel and bronze.⁷⁰ By the end of October 1528 Petar received a payment of yet another five ducats.⁷¹

Between the latter date and the spring of 1530, the archival sources again provide no information on the construction. Yet, appointed in the Minor Council on 17 March 1530 were the officials who would again, for the third time, revise the accounts of Holy Saviour and establish the amount of Andrijić's debt to the state.⁷² Considering that it is the last in the series of such decisions, it may well be assumed that it concerned the closing balance, i.e., that the rough construction work headed by Petar Andrijić had been brought to an end.

The church, however, was still not functional and the obligations of the overseers had not yet been accomplished. At the end of 1530, shortly after the death of one of them, Danijel Nikolin Resti, the Senate elected Nikola Martinov Gozze from the three proposed candidates to fill the vacant post.⁷³

Finishing works and the bestowal of the church to the Friars Minor

On 22 February 1531, the overseers were allowed to spend 60 ducats "for the needs of the church".⁷⁴ Although it was not specified as for what exactly the money was intended, it can be assumed that the cost concerned the roof construction; on 19 December the Senate ordered the officials of the state armoury to deliver three thousand roof tiles for the church.⁷⁵

By the beginning of the next year, in 1532, commissioned for the church from Ragusan stonemasons were 400 square white stone tiles, one foot by one foot, chiselled in the same fashion as "those delivered from Kotor".⁷⁶ Ordered by the same contract

⁷⁰ *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 39, f. 96v.

⁷¹ *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 2, f. 33v.

⁷² *Cons. Min.*, vol. 36, f. 135v.

⁷³ *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 40, f. 124r.

⁷⁴ (...) *de dando libertatem dominis officialibus ecclesie Sancti Spassi quod pro necessitatibus dictae ecclesiae possint expendere a ducatis sexaginta infra prout eis melius videbitur* (...). *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 40, f. 154v.

⁷⁵ (...) *de dando libertatem dominis provisoribus armamenti quod possint dare cuppos tria millia de illis qui fuerunt preparati pro arsenali, pro fabrica ecclesie Sancti Spassi* (...). *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 41, f. 16v. In the meanwhile, in April 1531, the Senate again granted the safe conduct to Petar and Josip Andrijić for a term of three months (*Cons. Rog.*, vol. 40, f. 170r).

⁷⁶ *Nos Givan Stiepanovich de Bergato, Radoslav Ratchovich et Petar Radoevich, omnes lapicide, confitemur quod (...) habuimus et recepimus (...) ex ordine dominorum provisorum fabrice Gloriose Ascensionis ad bonum computum ducatos auri quatuor pro quibus promittimus ire Budimiam et ibi facere infrascripta laboreria de petra alba, videlicet quadros quatringsentos latitudinis unius pedis laboratos secundum formam illorum qui afferantur e Catharo, rectos et bonos* (...). *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 2, f. 103v.

pro sedilibus fiendis circum ecclesiam were also the stone slabs of the same quality, of at least two ells long, one ell wide and half a foot thick.⁷⁷ Although the total amount, i.e., length of the slabs is not specified, it appears that the term *sediles* refers to the elements of the base of the exterior church walls. Subsequent payment entries confirm that all the carved stone material was delivered by the beginning of November the same year.

Moreover, by decision of the Minor Council of 13 June 1532, officials of the lime kilns were ordered to deliver 30 *modia* (nearly 1,200 kg) of lime to the overseers, apparently for the plastering of interior walls and vaults.⁷⁸ In the autumn of that year, the Senate confirmed a disbursement of 100 ducats to the overseers to purchase "in Venice or elsewhere" gold and "other necessary things for the church".⁷⁹

The last archival entry pertaining to the works on Holy Saviour is dated 16 April 1534: the Senate approved that the officials of the state armoury hand over to the overseers lead for the windows, which was obviously used to hold the glass panes.⁸⁰ Therefore, fourteen years after the earthquake and the solemn vow to build a votive church, the works on Holy Saviour came to an end.⁸¹

Two years later, on 27 April 1536, the Senate decreed that the church be operated by the friars of the nearby Franciscan convent. They were obliged to celebrate a daily holy mass and, in return, promised an annual allowance of 20 perpers, as well as additional five perpers from the rector, when he and the Minor Council would visit the church on the Feast of the Ascension.⁸²

⁷⁷ (...) *et de pluri pro sedilibus fiendis circum ecclesiam promittimus laborare petras illius sortis ut supra longitudinis ad minus brachiorum duorum, latitudinis vero unius brachii, grossitudinis vero medii pedis, bene laboratas et spontatas* (...). *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 2, f. 103v.

⁷⁸ *Cons. Min.*, vol. 36, f. 292r.

⁷⁹ (...) *de dando libertatem officialibus templi Ascensionis quod possint mittere Venetias aut alio emptum aurum et alias res necessarias pro dicta ecclesia a ducatis centum infra prout eis melius videbitur* (...). *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 41, f. 125r.

⁸⁰ (...) *de dando libertatem dominis provisoribus armamenti quod ipsi possint consignare officialibus ecclesie Ascensionis unam petiam plumbi pro usu fenestrarum dicte ecclesie* (...). *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 42, f. 22v.

⁸¹ Most frequently cited as the year of completion is 1528. See: A. Badurina, "Crkva Svetog Spasa", 327; G. M. Pilo, "Per trecentosettantasette anni": *la gloria di Venezia nelle testimonianze artistiche della Dalmazia*, 230; M. Pelc, *Renesansa*, 195. The information that the church construction lasted 16 years, unquestionably sourced from the Annals of Nikša Ragnina (Nicolò di Ragnina, "Annali di Ragusa", 277), has been quoted by T. G. Jackson, *Dalmatia, the Quarnero and Istria: With Cettigne in Montenegro and the Island of Grado*, vol. II, 380.

⁸² (...) *de conferendo venerabilibus fratribus Sancti Francisci ecclesiam a dominio nostro fabricatam sub nomine Ascensionis Domini nostri Ihesu Christi* (...) *de dando in elemosinam predictis fratribus Sancti Francisci iperperos viginti pro missis quas quotidie celebrabunt in dicta ecclesia Ascensionis et dominus rector cum suo consilio annuatim in festo dicte ecclesie debeant sibi offerre iperperos quinque ultra dictos iperperos viginti et dicti fratres habeant curam gubernandi dictam ecclesiam* (...). *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 42, f. 281v. For a more extensive account of the procession that marked the mentioned feast, see: N. Lonza, *Kazalište vlasti*, 298, 413.

On church interior furnishing in the sixteenth century

Apart from the altarpiece of the Ascension of Jesus Christ, commissioned in 1527 from the painter Pierantonio Palmerini from Urbino,⁸³ the evidence concerning the original, sixteenth-century liturgical furnishings of Holy Saviour is very scarce. Only in the revision of the accounts from 1526, among the carved stone elements delivered by Petar Andrijić, also cited is the mensa of the high altar resting on its colonettes (*pianca de lo altar grande cum le sue colonette de sotto*),⁸⁴ of which nothing survives.

In other words, today's main (and only) church altar is certainly not the original one. Built on a solid stone base, it has the shape of an aedicula, the column pedestals of which are decorated with relief coats of arms of the Benessa noble lineage. Ambiguity arising from that fact – given that the rights of patronage over the votive church belonged to the Republic – has been resolved with the discovery of two documents which reveal that the altar in question originally stood against the side church wall. In February 1532, by decision of the Senate a distinguished Ragusan nobleman, Frano Pankracijev Benessa, was allowed to erect at his own expense "a chapel and altar" in the church of Holy Saviour.⁸⁵ In conformity with that, in early March the rector and the Minor Council, in Benessa's presence, designated the exact position of the altar: against the wall of the middle bay, opposite the side door of the church.⁸⁶ Benessa's supplication is not recorded and his motives – setting aside, of course, the reasons of the faith – as yet remain unknown, along with the possible services expected in return. In any manner, the Senate, almost unanimously, permitted Benessa to erect his own, private altar in a state-owned church. Indeed, this was a precedent case; to our knowledge, nothing similar has been recorded anywhere else in Dubrovnik. The questions of the dating and

⁸³ For a comprehensive account, see: Tanja Trška, "Pierantonio Palmerini's Altarpiece for the Church of St Saviour in Dubrovnik", *Dubrovnik Annals* 27 (2023), 7–26.

⁸⁴ *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 38, f. 150r. Based on sparse information in the document, it may be assumed that Andrijić's altar for the church of Holy Saviour belonged to the generic group (of Gothic) altars of the *Tischaltar* type, with a massive stone mensa supported by colonettes connected by arches, like the altar in the Lower Church of St. Francis in Assisi, see: Joseph Braun, *Der christliche Altar in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung* I, München: Alte Meister Guenther Koch & Co., 1924, 177, T. 24.

⁸⁵ (...) *de concedendo ser Francisco Pancratii de Benessa quod ad suas expensas possit facere in ecclesia Ascensionis in muro qui vergit ad partem ponentis unam cappellam cum altari prout ei melius videbitur et placebit et quod dominus rector et Consilium possint dicto ser Francisco assignare locum dicte cappelle et altaris prout eis melius videbitur* (...). *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 41, f. 35r.

⁸⁶ *Magnificus dominus rector Antonius lu. de Gondula et eius consilarii in executionem partis Consilii Rogatorum capte die 26 Februarii 1532 (...) fuerunt personaliter in ecclesia Ascensionis sive Sancti Spassi et ibi omni adtributa diligentia viderunt in qua parte essent aptius et commodius erigere altare et cappellam concessam ser Francisco Pancratio de Benessa et sic, dicto ser Francisco ibi presente et acceptante, consignaverunt et consignant arcum et partem qui sive que est in medio in muro qui est a parte ponentis, qui arcus sive pars est e regione sive contra portae existenti in muro a parte levantis dicte ecclesie, in qua parte sive arcu dictus ser Franciscus possit facere ad omnem suam voluntatem altare et cappellam secundum tenorem dicte partis Consilii rogatorum* (...). *Cons. Min.*, vol. 36, f. 275r.

attribution of Benessa's altar remain open for further archival research. Nevertheless, it is certain that this fine *all'antica* structure was not completed prior to Benessa's death in 1536. In his last will he bequeathed, among other, 100 ducats to erect an altar in the church of Holy Saviour "with the image of the Annunciation".⁸⁷ It was eventually commissioned and installed by the executors of his will – procurators of the church of St. Blaise.

Unlike Benessa's altar, above the mensa of the original high altar carved by Petar Andrijić there was no stone construction. In fact, its retable, a sumptuous altarpiece commissioned by the overseers in 1527 from Pierantonio Palmerini, a painter from Urbino, had a wooden frame, crafted in 1528 by woodcarver Zannetto di Francesco del Coro from Ancona.⁸⁸ Sadly, the frame has not survived, but the very dimensions of the altarpiece (307 × 255 cm) testify to the fact that the original high altar was comparatively larger than the present-day one.

From several hitherto unknown documents from the later sixteenth century one also learns that Holy Saviour's interior housed a chancel screen; in 1565 by order of the Senate the *chorus* of the church was to be repaired.⁸⁹ Regrettably, neither in the records concerned, nor in the decision of the Minor Council to hire a stonemason Ivan Klisac (Ivan Stjepanov),⁹⁰ and the payment entries that followed,⁹¹ can one find any details regarding its appearance. No material remnants of the screen have survived. Undoubtedly it was made of stone, and bearing witness to its position in the interior and approximate height are the traces on pilasters of the central bay, whose edges,

⁸⁷ (...) *Item lasso ducati cento che si faccia uno altare con la figura di la Annunciatione in la chiesa di la Ascensione in Raugi, in quello loco quale mi fu concesso per el Magnifico Consiglio de pregai del 1532 (...)*. SAD, HR-DADU-12, *Testamenta notariae*, vol. 37, f. 59v-60r.

⁸⁸ *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 2, f. 39v. Document is published in T. Trška, "Pierantonio Palmerini's Altarpiece for the Church of St Saviour in Dubrovnik", 16, n. 35.

⁸⁹ (...) *de dando libertatem magnifico domino rectori et consilio uz possint ordinem dare ut chorus ecclesiae Ascensionis adaptetur modo et forma prout sibi melius et commodius videbitur (...)*. *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 57, f. 194v.

⁹⁰ (...) *de dando libertatem officialibus laborerorum ut possint dare Ioanni Klisaz lapicidae iperperos viginti pro parte et ad bonum computum pretii et solutionis pro adaptatione chori in ecclesia Ascensionis facienda (...)*. *Cons. Min.*, vol. 47, 245v.

⁹¹ *Ioannes Stephani lapicida sponte confessus est habuisse et accepisse a ser Nicolino Fr. de Gondula et sociis officialibus scriptae laborerorum scutos auri septem ad bonum computum suae mercedis pro fabricando choro ecclesiae Ascensionis Christi (...)*. *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 4, f. 191r. From two documents it is clear that Ivan Klisaz is identical to Ivan Stjepanov, recorded in 1561 as one of the two partners of the naturalised Ragusan stonemason and architect of French origin, Jakov de Spinis, in a contract involving the renovation of communal houses in 1561. A few years later, in 1564, Spinis (alone) was commissioned for the chancel screen (*chorus*) of the church of St. Roch, see: C. Fisković, "Les artistes français en Dalmatie du XVe au XVIIe siècle", *Annales de l'Institut français de Zagreb* 14-17 (1964-1965), 37; Danko Zelić, "Short-lived *Opera bella e buona*: the 1564 Chancel Screen of the Church of St Roch in Dubrovnik", in: *Scripta in Honorem Igor Fisković*, ed. Miljenko Jurković, Predrag Marković. Zagreb: University of Zagreb, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Motovun: International Research Centre for Late Antiquity and Middle Ages, 2016, 271-281.

to enable the installation of the screen, were cut to the height of approximately 1.3 m, as evidenced by the inlaid pieces of stone that were used as substitutes for the missing parts after the removal of the screen. Therefore, spanning the entire width of the interior, the screen was installed immediately next to the side door, dividing the north bay of the church, i.e., the chancel, elevated by the height of one stair, from the south part of the length of two bays.



Figure 6. Apse with the altar of Frano Pankracijev Benessa (originally side altar).



Figure 7. Mark left by the chancel screen on the pilaster next to the east side portal.

Considering that the chancel screen is not mentioned in the documents from the period of construction, it was most probably a later addition. This must have taken place after 1536, when the building was entrusted to the friars of the Franciscan monastery, perhaps in relation to the Confraternity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, based in the church since an early, yet undetermined date.⁹²

Controversies and the main actors in the construction

Contrary to the edifice itself – the architecture of which shows no indication of adversities and interruptions – archival evidence clearly testifies to the fact that the construction project of Holy Saviour had encountered difficulties already in 1522/23, which, with varying intensity, lasted until the end of the works in 1534. Moreover, from an administrative viewpoint, practically from the very first day the whole undertaking exhibited surprising deviations from the local practice regarding the governance of public works. Setting aside unforeseen conditions and events – above all the great

⁹² See: N. Lonza, *Kazalište vlasti*, 278-279.

plague epidemic that raged in Dubrovnik in 1526/27 – it is clear that the dynamics of construction, and arguably the final appearance of the building, was impacted by a number of circumstances which are merely indicated by the documentary material. Bookkeeping irregularities, already evident in the first year of the construction, were soon coupled by serious financial problems related to builder Petar Andrijić, or rather the liquidity of his firm.

Considering the rigorous standards of public finance management developed and honed over the centuries by the Ragusan mercantile aristocracy, financial and administrative controversies surrounding the construction of Holy Saviour are fairly hard to explain. That the developments at and around construction site triggered negative reactions of the contemporaries and that a series of "affairs" consequentially escalated into a scandal, is indicated, ultimately, by indirect, though not less important, depictions in the local historical narratives as late as two and a half centuries after the church was completed. The anonymous local historiographer quoted by G. Gelcich emphasises, in the first place, the responsibility of the construction overseers: instead of the allocated 1,500 ducats, the total sum for the building and furnishing of the church finally reached as many as 2,500 ducats, while the church was still unfinished ten years after the beginning of the works because the overseers kept commissioning the "masters" for their own private construction sites.⁹³

Therefore, we ought to ascertain with fair precision the contributions as well as the accountability ("blame") that may be ascribed to each of the main participants in this project respectively – initiators/investors (Ragusan authorities, primarily the Senate), followed by construction overseers as principals and, lastly, the main contractor, builder and stonemason Petar Andrijić.

The Senate

The decision to build the votive church of Holy Saviour after the earthquake of 1520 was made by the Senate, the highest political authority and the most powerful institution of the Republic. It was again the Senate which, within a few days, decided upon the location and approved the initial budget. Already at that stage, however, while passing the decision on the construction overseers, the senators deviated from the usual procedure in similar cases. The members of the three-member collegial bodies which oversaw public works were, as a rule, elected by ballot from among ten or more

⁹³ (...) *chiesa in onore del Salvatore, per la cui fabbrica da esso governo fu terminato di spendere ducati mille e cinquecento (...) Per la fabbrica di questa chiesa furono fatti Provveditori (...) Questi nobili portarono nel conto la spesa che ascendeva a più di duemila e cinquecento ducati; e così lentamente fu fabbricata, che non fu terminata in dieci anni (...) Adoperarono li maestri nelle loro fabbriche (...).* (G. Gelcich, *Dello sviluppo civile di Ragusa*, 76).

nominated candidates.⁹⁴ By contrast, on that occasion submitted on the Senate was a direct proposal, subsequently unanimously accepted, by which the office should be conferred to three noble officials who, from 1515, had been entrusted with the works on the Rector's Palace.⁹⁵ This decision was essentially pragmatic and reflects the senators' determination to start and complete the construction of the votive church within the shortest possible term. A sum of 300 ducats was allocated for initial costs and, by the end of 1520, the Senate assigned another 300 ducats.

Although the overseers were given full authority, unlike the first contract, i.e., the 1520 contract for the facade, concluded directly between the overseers and Petar Andrijić, the contents of second contract with the builder (for the completion of the church) had to be verified by the Senate and was debated over at the session of 10 September 1521. In fact, at that moment the agreement between Andrijić and the overseers has already been drafted, because it was officially registered in the public notary on the very same day.

In any event, it was decided that the church be completed in accordance with the "design and a model" (*iuxta designum et modelum superinde formatum et fabricatum*; apparently the drawing and a maquette) submitted to the senators, yet without the dome. Added to the contract, however, was a clause by which the builder agreed, should the Senate change its position on it, to build a dome as well. Indeed, some ten days later the senators decided in favour of the dome.

That the construction of the votive church was among the major public priorities is testified by the fact that Holy Saviour, on several occasions, in 1521 and 1522, was explicitly (along with Divona and Rector's Palace) exempt from the senatorial decisions on temporary suspension of all public works,⁹⁶ caused primarily by shortage of liquid money due to the high costs of post-earthquake restoration of the city.

Unfortunately, the proceedings of the Senate do not describe the causes of the difficulties encountered at the construction site, but contain only the conclusions made to mitigate their consequences. Moreover, throughout the construction process there are long intervals without any mention of Holy Saviour. The senatorial approval may have been needed only in relation to substantial changes of the project, either concerning the design or the expenses. For instance, in June 1526 the Senate abandoned the idea of building a dome on the church and, shortly afterwards, the same body accepted the official report which confirmed that Petar owed nearly 350 ducats to the state; almost a half of that amount, 168 ducats, concerned the overpaid works on Holy Saviour.

⁹⁴ When it comes to churches, thus elected in 1533 were the overseers of the construction of St. Roch as well as the church of the Annunciation at Ploče, in both cases from among ten nominees, see: *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 41, f. 195v, 208v.

⁹⁵ *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 33, f. 184v-185r. It should be noted that in 1515, too, the same three nobles were nominated directly for the office of construction overseers, with wide authorities.

⁹⁶ *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 36, f. 74r, f. 195r, f. 208v.

Notwithstanding his debts, the builder was recurrently granted safe conducts for longer periods of time.⁹⁷

After the protracted period of inactivity at the building site caused by the plague epidemic in 1527, it is from the Senate's decisions dated 19 and 26 May 1528 that one learns that in the meanwhile Petar Andrijić ended up in debtors' prison. The proposal to set him free was rejected at first, only to be accepted a week later on several strict conditions. Firstly, it was ordered that the house of Petar's mother in Dubrovnik be confiscated and sold in order to satisfy his debts, secondly, that a new revision of all accounts between Petar and the state be carried out, and, thirdly, that Petar, immediately upon release from prison, embarked on the completion of Holy Saviour.

From then on, the construction of the church would find its way to the Senate agenda only when deciding on the safe conducts for Petar Andrijić, i.e., guaranteeing him immunity from debt prosecution, or approving materials and/or necessary expenditures for the project to be finalized.

Given the numerous unforeseen disruptions that the project experienced, the role of the Senate in overcoming all sorts of obstacles encountered was instrumental. Obviously, only the Senate as the supreme authority could approve that ever larger quantities of public money be spent on building, grant safe conducts to the builder for longer periods and eventually liberate him from debtor's prison.

Regarding the role of other governing bodies, it must be recalled that at the beginning of 1526 the official revision of the accounts between the state and the builder was demanded by the Minor Council. Although it might seem indicative that it was not decided by the Senate, that fact appears to be of little relevance because of the essentially shared composition of two bodies.⁹⁸

Construction Overseers – Danijel Nikolin Resti, Petar Junijev Sorgo and Damjan Ivanov Menze

Construction overseers of Holy Saviour (*provisores fabrice capelle Sancte Ascensionis domini nostri Iesu Christi*) were noblemen who belonged to the innermost circle of Dubrovnik's ruling elite. At the time, they were in their mature years; the oldest, Danijel Nikolin Resti, was in his seventies, while Petar Junijev Sorgo and Damjan Ivanov Menze were in their fifties.⁹⁹ During the third decade of the sixteenth century all three were

⁹⁷ Safe conduct passes to debtors in Dubrovnik were usually issued to a period of 15 days and by the Minor Council.

⁹⁸ For a concise account on the rotation of Ragusan patricians through the highest public offices and council membership, see: Nella Lonza, "Dubrovački patriciji pred izazovom prava (druga polovica 14. i 15. stoljeće)", *Acta Histriae* 16/1-2 (2008), 125.

⁹⁹ For Danijel Nikolin Resti (c. 1452–1529) see Nenad Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, vol. 6, *Odabrane biografije (Pi–Z)*, Zagreb, Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2015, 137; for Petar Junijev Sorgo (c. 1472–1535) see Nenad Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, vol. 3, *Vlasteoski rodovi (M–Z)*, Zagreb, Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2012, 273; for Damjan Ivanov Menze (c. 1474–1540) *ibid.*, 58.

elected to the highest public offices: they were, more or less, permanent members of the Senate and the Minor Council, judges of the criminal and civil court, *provisores civitatis*, and ultimately, rectors of the Republic. Apart from that, their competence and expertise in construction issues and site management should not be doubted; works on the restoration of the Rector's Palace, which they oversaw from 1515 onwards, were certainly by far more challenging than the construction of the votive church. In addition to their proven experience, the fact that the overseers had been already attuned as a team was arguably just as relevant.

The duties of construction officials were rather complex. They had to ensure continuous support of the public bodies (essentially the Senate), stable financial inflow, supply and due delivery and installation of building materials and parts. Most important of all was the finding and hiring of adequate, qualified labour – builders and stonemasons. Once the project was launched, the art of construction management implied the maintenance of construction dynamics; the possibility of encountering unexpected difficulties in the course of the process tended to increase with time. Typically, the final outcome, a completed edifice, has always been – as shown in the case of Holy Saviour – the result of various compromises.

The main priority of the overseers, with respect to either the Rector's Palace or Holy Saviour, was to keep up the pace of the project at all costs, even at the cost of administrative irregularities, and to retain the chief builder and stonemason, Petar Andrijić, on the site. Only this can account for the payments to the architect which, from a fairly early date, well exceeded the sums agreed upon in the contracts. Disbursements ordered by the overseers were evidently executed obediently on lower administrative levels.

At any rate, it can be argued that the overseers of Holy Saviour did not act merely as representatives and trustees of the investor – Dubrovnik Republic; on the contrary, they were also in the position to propose and advocate for their own ideas, persuade their fellow councilmen and influence all Senate's decisions related to the matter, which they unquestionably did. In this particular case, the evidence from the primary sources as well as the building itself suggest that it was precisely the role of construction overseers that must have been pivotal. It would otherwise be impossible to explain the untypical, unprecedented appearance and unique traits of the votive church. That building clearly conveys the will to create a structure that is extraordinary, conspicuous and unrivalled in all of its aspects and, if not one of a kind, manifestly different with respect to other Ragusan church buildings of the time. Moreover, it should be emphasised that in this particular case the documentary material clearly witnesses to the overseers' strong social authority and, consequentially, their "untouchable status".

In actual fact, following the energetic start of construction activities in 1520/1521 nothing suggested that the campaign would last another ten years. However, it is

not reasonable to assume – contrary to local historical tradition – that the entire responsibility for the total expenses and long overdue in the construction should be laid on the overseers.

As for the "engineering" competencies of the overseers of Holy Saviour, art historical literature mentions only Petar Junijev Sorgo in that respect. Apart from being engaged at the Rector's Palace and Holy Saviour, at the same time, in 1521, Sorgo acted as one of the three overseers of the works in the Arsenal,¹⁰⁰ and a few years earlier he embarked on the construction of his own prestigious villa at the Lapad seafront, on the southern side of the Gruž bay (today known as *Ljetnikovac Sorkočević*).¹⁰¹ By comparing the features of these buildings, Cvito Fisković sought to reconstruct Sorgo's "commissioner's" profile and came to a conclusion that his predilections in terms of architectural design varied depending on who the investor was.¹⁰²

Apparently, the tradition which attributes the disruptions in the construction of Holy Saviour to the overseers, in particular to "the engagement of the stonemasons on their private construction sites" does hold a shred of truth, albeit a single one. In April 1524 Petar Andrijić confirmed the receipt of 57 ducats as a down payment for the stonemasonry works on the house of one of the overseers, Damjan Ivanov Menze.¹⁰³ It was also stipulated that the quality of the execution be ultimately assessed both by Menze and Petar Junijev Sorgo, his fellow overseer. Although Petar Andrijić and/or his brothers were engaged on all public works supervised by Petar Sorgo, there are no data to confirm that he had hired any of them on the construction of his own suburban villa.

Unknown eighteenth-century historiographer cited by G. Gelcich also wrote that the overseers had their names inscribed in a stone plaque installed on the church front with an intent to make themselves immortal, but that they (in a historiographically didactic twist) were subsequently "punished" by apparently having their names erased from the plaque.¹⁰⁴ This, however, was never the case; the names of Danijel Resti, Damjan Menze and Petar Sorgo still remain clearly visible in the inscription.

¹⁰⁰ C. Fisković, *Kultura dubrovačkog ladanja (Sorkočevićev Ljetnikovac na Lapadu)*, Split: Historijski institut JAZU u Dubrovniku, 1966, 8.

¹⁰¹ C. Fisković, *Kultura dubrovačkog ladanja*, 8. The villa is today the seat of Institute for Historical Sciences of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Dubrovnik.

¹⁰² "He, therefore, at the same time, probably according to government instructions, respected medieval building tradition and accepted Renaissance as on his summer residence where the Gothic windows blend with Renaissance arcades." (C. Fisković, *Kultura dubrovačkog ladanja*, 8).

¹⁰³ SAD, HR-DADU-9, *Diversa Notariae*, vol. 98, f. 35v. Document is mentioned by C. Fisković, *Naši graditelji i kipari*, 154.

¹⁰⁴ *Per rendere questi signori i loro nomi immortali fecero scolpirli in una lastra di marmo et incastrarli nella facciata; ma subito per decreto pubblico furono cancellati.* (G. Gelcich, *Dello sviluppo civile di Ragusa*, 76).



Fig. 8. Inscription on the facade.

AD AVERTENDAM COELESTEM
 IRAM IN MAXIMO TERRAE TREMORE
 HANC SACRAM AEDEM · SE(natvs) · RHA(cusinv) VOVIT
 ANNO A CHRISTI · NATALI · DIE · D · XX
 SVPRA · M · XVI · CAL(endis) · IVN(ii) · DAN(iel)
 RHES(tivs) · ET DAM(ianvs) · MIN(tivs) · FACIENDAM
 CVRARVNT · ET PE(trvs) · SEOR(givs) ·

In the centuries-old history of the Republic such testimonies, when it comes to public buildings, are exceptionally rare.¹⁰⁵ In fact, the inscription containing the names of the overseers of Holy Saviour is the only extant of its kind in the city, while all the rest may be found in the remote parts of the Republic territory.¹⁰⁶ Documents from the time of the construction of Holy Saviour, however, make no mention of either the plaque or inscription.

¹⁰⁵ C. Fisković, *Prvi poznati dubrovački graditelji*, Dubrovnik: Historijski institut JAZU, 1955, 69; C. Fisković, *Naši graditelji i kipari*, 86; C. Fisković, *Kultura dubrovačkog ladanja*, 8.

¹⁰⁶ Two inscriptions that have survived to date are installed on the Count's Palace on Šipan (in 1450) and the fountain in Ston (in 1581). C. Fisković, "Likovna baština Stona", *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 22-23 (1985), 84, also mentions the inscription containing the names of the officials at the Podzvizd Fort from 1459.

Testifying to the high social prominence of the three overseers, lastly, is the fact that the Senate did not sanction them for the irregularities in managing the construction of Holy Saviour. Their accountability was arguably debated in the Senate on one occasion only, i.e., shortly upon the acceptance of the audit report regarding the church construction in 1526. However, the proposed motion that – if builder's debts could not be paid by him or his warrantors – the state should be compensated from the property of the overseers, did not win the necessary majority vote.¹⁰⁷ Ultimately, the whole burden fell on the back of the builder, Petar Andrijić.

The builder-stonemason

The creative and entrepreneurial profile of Petar Markov Andrijić (Korčula, c. 1480 – Dubrovnik?, c. 1553) has been meticulously delineated by Cvito Fisković.¹⁰⁸ As a master builder-stonemason and head of an unrivalled stonemasonry workshop Petar Andrijić represented the most important link between the Dubrovnik building market and the renowned quarries of his native island. Having earned his reputation on major public building sites in Dubrovnik (reconstructions of the Rector's Palace and Divona), Petar Andrijić and his workshop were equally indispensable in 1520, during the restoration of the city after the earthquake. Given the fact that his career in Dubrovnik was at its peak, the choice of him as the principal contractor for the construction project of Holy Saviour church seemed as the most logical, if not the only possible solution.

As has already been pointed out, the payments that Petar received for the works on Holy Saviour in the first years of the project, 1520 and 1521, had considerably exceeded the sums agreed upon in the respective contracts. Nevertheless, Petar continued to receive payments for his work on the church until May 1522 when, apparently, the whole project came to the first serious halt. From then to the end of 1523 all data on him in the official books pertain to other, either private or state commissions.¹⁰⁹ That he had to leave Dubrovnik in 1523 on account of debt one learns from the conclusion of the Minor Council of 5 October, by which it was determined that his safe conduct, i.e., immunity from prosecution due to debt, be extended until the completion of the works on the fishmarket quay.¹¹⁰ In conformity with that, Petar arrived in Dubrovnik,¹¹¹ only to leave again shortly. Namely, on 31 March 1524 the Senate granted him a new safe conduct "to come to Dubrovnik to complete the construction of Holy Saviour and

¹⁰⁷ See note 62.

¹⁰⁸ C. Fisković, "Dokumenti o radu naših graditelja i klesara", 8-10; C. Fisković, *Naši graditelji i kipari*, 152-165.

¹⁰⁹ In June it was decided to commission him for the delivery of stone for the restoration of the fishmarket quay. *Cons. Min.*, vol. 34, f. 242r, 244v.

¹¹⁰ *Cons. Min.*, vol. 34, f. 262r.

¹¹¹ In early December he received a payment for the work on Divona, *Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 2, f. 10v.

Rector's Palace for which he had already been paid".¹¹² Documentary evidence at the State Archives in Dubrovnik fails to indicate whether his insolvency was rooted in the dealings of his firm, his own losses, or, perhaps, debts caused by the warranties he gave to others.

According to the audit findings, in 1526 he owed 168 ducats to the state treasury for the works on Holy Saviour; the value of the remaining construction works on the church at that point was estimated at 80 ducats.¹¹³ For the works to be resumed, Petar was recurrently granted safe conducts by the Senate. By the beginning of 1528 he eventually ended up in debtors' prison, but was soon released, on condition that his debts be paid from the sale of his mother's house in Dubrovnik.¹¹⁴ Purportedly, there was no other builder in Dubrovnik at the time who could replace him, that is, finish the construction of Holy Saviour instead of him.

The last disbursements to Petar Andrijić for his work on the church in 1528, i.e., twice the amount of five ducats, likely intended to cover his daily costs, perhaps even his life necessities, testify to his seriously impoverished state.¹¹⁵ After finishing works on Holy Saviour, Petar spent the remaining twenty years of his life in Dubrovnik, where he continued to be engaged on private as well as public building sites. Yet, the church of Holy Saviour will remain by far his most important work, his *magnum opus*.

Architectural programme, architectural design(s) and execution

Among the churches of Dubrovnik which either closely preceded or succeeded it, Holy Saviour distinguishes itself by an incomparably higher level of architectural ambition as well as the abundance of masterly executed carved decoration. In other words, Holy Saviour largely departs from the simple single-nave church buildings of the same type previously built in Dubrovnik and its territory; its most distinctive architectural features are the trefoil facade, hitherto unseen in Dubrovnik, instead of the traditional, bell-gable front, as well as the semicircular apse (notwithstanding the fact that the rear end of the building is hidden, i.e., not visible from the outside).¹¹⁶

¹¹² *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 37, f. 168r.

¹¹³ (...) *et die dar quello si spendera a compire la capella quello non e compita, stimato andarano, ducati 80* (...). *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 38, f. 150v.

¹¹⁴ (...) *de relaxando ex carcere Petrum Andriich lapicidam cum securitate domus eius pro qua se despotestaverunt mater et uxor eius* (...). *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 39, f. 82r. Document is mentioned by C. Fisković, "Dokumenti o radu naših graditelja i klesara", 10.

¹¹⁵ On two occasions, on 3 July and 30 October 1528, Petar Andrijić received five ducats respectively (*Deb. not. pro comuni*, vol. 2, f. 33v).

¹¹⁶ It should be noted that in the recapitulation of Petar's commissions and disbursements in 1526 (*Cons. Rog.*, vol. 38, f. 150r) the apse (*la concha intorno lo altar grande cum la sua lista et arco*) is cited among the executed works not included by the contract. In other words, the execution of the apse as such departed from the design submitted in 1521.

There is no doubt that the innovativeness of the architectural concept was intentional. In search of the answer to the question as to whom this innovativeness should be attributed, the whole undertaking ought to be considered as a sequence of three consecutive stages: conceptualisation, design development, and execution. First of all, the fact that contracts with Petar Andrijić mention a drawing and a model made by him does not necessarily imply that he was the author of Holy Saviour in the modern sense of the word. In all likelihood – as for the aforementioned drawing and model – it is merely the execution that should be attributed to the builder-stonemason himself, while the architectural programme must have been previously conceived and even modified in the course of construction by no other but the overseers. Only in this way can one explain the fact that the initial programme, at least of the interior decoration, was subsequently considerably expanded.

Be that as it may, the architectural programme of Holy Saviour (if not initially, in 1520, then surely in the following year) had envisioned the building noticeably more complex and ambitious than the one that was finally executed.

Aporia over the trefoil facade of Holy Saviour

As with many other monuments of Dubrovnik and Dalmatia, after being extensively studied by Cvito Fisković in 1950s, the church of Holy Saviour was (and still is) considered to be more or less a closed topic. In the meanwhile, art historians have thematised only certain issues, such as the correlation between its Gothic and Renaissance stylistic traits, the sources of the motifs on the carved elements of architectural decoration, and above all, the edifice's most distinctive architectural feature – its characteristic, in Dubrovnik unique, trefoil facade.

The list of buildings with which the church of Holy Saviour resembles in this aspect began to be compiled fairly early, starting with G. Gelcich, and eventually encompassed all trefoil facade churches between Venice and Dubrovnik built from the 1460s (San Michele in Isola and San Zaccaria in Venice) until the seventeenth century (cathedral in Hvar). As one of the buildings in this group attention has also been given to St. Mary, church of the Zadar Benedictine nuns, the facade of which was long believed to date from the 1530s.¹¹⁷ Exact date of its construction has been eventually elucidated by Ivo Petricioli: the stone material had been commissioned in 1507 by Nikola Španić, a stonemason from Korčula, and the facade was assembled in 1509, a decade or so prior to that of Holy Saviour.¹¹⁸ The scholar also pointed to the connection between Španić and the Andrijić family "whose one member, Petar, built the Dubrovnik church of Holy

¹¹⁷ C. Fisković, "Zadarska renesansna crkva sv. Marije", *Prilozi povijesti umjetnosti u Dalmaciji* 10 (1956), 100-128.

¹¹⁸ Ivo Petricioli, "Umjetnička baština samostana sv. Marije u Zadru", *Radovi Instituta JAZU u Zadru* 12-13 (1967), 76-77 (n. 27a); Ivo Petricioli, "Renesansna pregradnja crkve sv. Marije u Zadru", *Zadarska revija* 16/2-3 (1967), 181.

Saviour with the round trefoil gable."¹¹⁹ Regardless, though, in his works published in the 1990s R. Ivančević persisted on his claim that the model for the entire group of buildings, Holy Saviour included, was the facade of the Šibenik cathedral, designed as early as in the 1470s by its then *protomagister* Niccolò di Giovanni Fiorentino.¹²⁰ In so doing, he disregarded the fact to which C. Fisković had pointed long ago – that the Šibenik facade was actually built between 1532 and 1536, that is, after that of Holy Saviour.¹²¹ Taking everything into account, the thesis on the facade of the Zadar church of St. Mary as the most direct precursor of the facade of Holy Saviour, despite the differences in scale and specific purposes of the two buildings, is the most plausible to date.

The dome controversy

With regard to the disruptions that occurred during the construction of Holy Saviour, a pivotal moment, and very likely the main source of challenges that accompanied the works, were the controversies over its ultimately unrealised dome.

Given that the dome is first mentioned in September 1521, in the second contract with Petar Andrijić, it is not possible to say whether it had been planned from the beginning, that is, envisioned in the design according to which in mid-1520 commissioned were the carved components and the assembly of the church front. It is even questionable as to whether this first design went "behind the facade" or it only concerned the front of the building. In fact, regarding the conceptual correspondence between the design drawing and a model mentioned respectively in two contracts with Andrijić in 1520 and 1521, one can merely speculate. (This also applies for the shape of the facade; unlike the facade of St. Mary in Zadar, that was undoubtedly supposed to have a trefoil ending from the outset,¹²² for the facade of Holy Saviour it cannot be accurately ascertained.)

In reality, the idea of building a dome on top of the church may as well have emerged after the signing of the facade contract. Such a scenario does not exclude the possibility of involvement on the part of Bartolomeo da Mestre, *protomagister* of the Šibenik

¹¹⁹ "If the name of master Nikola of Korčula refers to Nikola Španić or to Nikola Alegretov, both of whom were associates of the stonemasons from the Andrijić family, the church of St. Mary would be indirectly connected to the activity of that famous family, whose one member, Petar, built the Ragusan church of Salvation with the round trefoil gable." (I. Petricoli, "Renesansna pregradnja crkve sv. Marije u Zadru", 181). For more details on Španić, see Emil Hilje, "Djelatnost korčulanskih majstora u zadarskoj regiji", *Godišnjak grada Korčule* 3 (1998), 115-120.

¹²⁰ R. Ivančević, "Trolisna pročelja renesansnih crkava u Hrvatskoj", 94. In his work "Proporcije trolisnih renesansnih pročelja u Hrvatskoj", *Peristil* 41 (1998), 59-67, Radovan Ivančević fails to make any reference to the church of St. Mary in Zadar.

¹²¹ C. Fisković, *Naši graditelji i kipari*, 143.

¹²² The contract with Nikola Španić from 1507 (Giuseppe Praga, *Documenti per la storia dell'arte a Zara dal Medioevo al Settecento*, ed. Maria Walcher, Trieste: Istituto Regionale per la Cultura Istriano-Fiumano-Dalmata, 2005, 305) explicitly specifies *arcus superior* and *medii arcus collaterales*.

cathedral, who for a long time – until Cvito Fisković's discovery of contracts with Petar Andrijić – had been held to be the *architect* of Holy Saviour. In addition to the evident resemblance between the two facades, the attribution to Bartolomeo was essentially based on archival evidence on his brief sojourn in Dubrovnik. Having arrived from Šibenik on 12 September 1520 upon the invitation of Ragusan government, apparently as an expert needed for the post-earthquake restoration of the city,¹²³ the Italian architect stayed in Dubrovnik less than four months, which curiously overlapped with the time gap between the first and second contract with Petar Andrijić. Hence, if not for the trefoil facade ending, it is therefore possible that Bartolomeo da Mestre was somehow "responsible" for the idea of the dome of Holy Saviour. On the other hand, the dome above the nave has been a traditional feature in the ecclesiastical architecture of the region, from Early Medieval to Gothic period. It might have been monumental, like the dome of the old Dubrovnik cathedral, or a small, rudimentary structure. Indubitably, the dome of Holy Saviour was to be erected above the middle bay of the nave and it must have been conceived not as a merely symbolic, small cupola, but – as much as the given scale allowed – a monumental accent of the edifice, which is evident in its significant price with respect to the cost of the whole building. Apparently, for the dome the builder was promised 120 ducats in 1521 – exceeding by one third the sum he had agreed the previous year for the assembly of the main facade and execution of all of its carved decoration.

Whether the Senate decided to abandon this idea in 1526 on account of structural concerns or technical challenges, or, however, in order to bring the construction of the church to a speedy end, albeit in a reduced form, remains a matter of speculation for the time being.¹²⁴

Conclusion

The church of Holy Saviour is a remarkable outcome of the combined effort between a high-ambition investor (Ragusan government) and the contractor – the masonry workshop of Petar Andrijić. A proper acknowledgement should nevertheless be given to the construction overseers, whose role in the definition of the initial architectural programme as well as in the process of execution seems just as important, if not decisive. What leads to such a conclusion is the comparison of Holy Saviour with two corresponding, slightly later, yet far more conventional, i.e., traditionally conceived,

¹²³ In the contract between him and the procurators of the cathedral dated 12 September 1520 (*Debita notarie pro comuni*, vol. 1, f. 182v), Bartolomeo is styled *ingeniarius et magister de scarpello*.

¹²⁴ To the fact that the construction of the dome would require a vaulting fundamentally different from the conventional, cross-ribbed construction which was ultimately executed, points E. Garofalo, "Terremoto e ricostruzione a Ragusa (Dubrovnik) nel 1520", 504.

projects in Dubrovnik – that of Annunciation at Ploče (built in 1534)¹²⁵ and of the unrealised church of St. Roch (from 1532/33).¹²⁶

Generally recognised as the most notable monument of Renaissance style in the ecclesiastical architecture of Dubrovnik, votive church of Holy Saviour occupies just as important place in the "Renaissance chapter" of Croatian art history. On the other hand, it has been singled out as the most significant church building of the so-called Gothic-Renaissance style, as it was traditionally defined in Croatian art historical literature from the works of Cvito Fisković in the mid-twentieth century onwards. Nineteenth-century architectural scholars, had, however, rightly warned that the church of Holy Saviour should not be assessed by classical standards because in doing so one departs from appreciating its intrinsic architectural values. R. Eitelberger von Edelberg emphasised its "beautiful, harmonious form that deserves to be appreciated in all its details",¹²⁷ while T. G. Jackson stated that: "this little building is an example of the tenacity with which in that country architecture clung to the older forms when the art elsewhere was travelling away from them into newer developments."¹²⁸ In this light, equally noteworthy is the remark of Hans Folnesics; despite inconsistency in terms of architectural style, that scholar in the church of Holy Saviour – symbol, as he put it, "of state politics" – sees specific qualities and compares it, indisputably due to its stylistic ambiguity, with the (coeval) paintings of Nikola Božidarević, emphasising that they possess the same appeal.¹²⁹

Thanks to its extraordinary design and prominent location in the cityscape, Holy Saviour is – at least when church architecture is concerned – at the same time a unique achievement and key monument of the eclecticism-imbued local architectural culture of the fifteenth and sixteenth century – a period also known as the "Golden Age of Dubrovnik", witnessing to the particular significance of Dubrovnik in the architectural landscape of the Adriatic of that time.

¹²⁵ C. Fisković, *Naši graditelji i kipari*, 154-155.

¹²⁶ Danko Zelić, "Crtež s prijedlogom lokacije crkve sv. Roka u Dubrovniku iz 1532/33. godine", *Analiz Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 58 (2020), 73-92.

¹²⁷ (...) ein Steinbau, der zwar klein in seinen Dimensionen ist, aber von so schöner harmonischer Form, dass er es verdient, in allen seinen Details aufgenommen zu werden. (Rudolf Eitelberger von Edelberg, *Die Mittelalterlichen Kunstdenkmale Dalmatiens in Arbe, Zara, Nona, Sebenico, Traù, Spalato und Ragusa*, 348).

¹²⁸ Thomas Graham Jackson, *Dalmatia, the Quarnero and Istria, with Cettigne in Montenegro and the Island of Grado*, vol. II, 381.

¹²⁹ (...) wenn wir wie Burckhardt mit dem Maßstabe folgerichtiger Klassizität messen wollten, so würden wir nur ein Kompendium von Fehlern vor uns sehen (...) Wenn wir aber die Tabulatur aus der Hand legen und Burckhardts Merkerstuhl verlassen, so finden wir, daß dem kleinen Erlöserkirchlein derselbe Liebreiz innewohnt, wie den Bildern des Nikolaus Ragusinus, ein unwirkliches Hinträumen – ein Symbol der Politik des Stadtstaates (H. Folnesics, "Studien zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Architektur und Plastik des XV. Jahrhunderts in Dalmatien", 123-124).

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WILLIAM ROBINSON (C. 1540-1613): A GUNNER IN THE SERVICE OF THE DUBROVNIK REPUBLIC, ENGLISH CONSUL AND MERCHANT

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Abstract: A pluriperspective and comparative analysis of the Ragusan segment of the life and work of William Robinson, a gunner in the service of the Dubrovnik Republic, merchant and English consul, has helped portray a well-integrated non-noble foreigner, and at the same time complemented the picture of the city in a pivotal period, end of the "Golden Age" and the beginning of one of the crises. Attention has been drawn to the remarkable research potential of the State Archives in Dubrovnik and its most diverse archival materials that have been extensively used in this article.

Keywords: Dubrovnik, England, 16th century, 17th century, William Robinson, gunner, *bombardiere*, English consul, Levant Company, confraternity of bombardiers

Introduction

William Robinson, gunner in the service of the Dubrovnik Republic, trader and English consul in Dubrovnik from the later sixteenth to the early seventeenth century, is a figure both familiar and unfamiliar to historiography. Dragoljub Pavlović,¹ Vuk Vinaver and Veselin Kostić were familiar with this Englishman and his, mildly put, 'double career', in Dubrovnik. Vinaver, who focused on economic history, with emphasis on slave trade,

¹ Dragoljub Pavlović, *Danica* I, 2 (15th October 1940), 13-14, cited from: Veselin Kostić, *Dubrovnik i Engleska 1300-1650*, Beograd: SANU, 1975, 347.

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gave a cursory mention of Robinson's name.² Kostić, on the other hand, investigated the relations between England and Dubrovnik Republic, and his in-depth research also included this English consul in Dubrovnik and his primary duty as a bombardier mercenary in the service of the Dubrovnik Republic.

Information on the presence of an English consul in Dubrovnik in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth century has remained largely neglected from the historiographic aspect. It is not mentioned in the classical work on consuls in the Dubrovnik Republic by Bogdan Krizman,³ nor in the study published three decades later by Ilija Mitić, who, referring to the sources and literature, writes: "Of all the great European powers whose ships landed in the ports of the eastern Adriatic, England was the only one without consul".⁴ Robinson's career as a gunner in the service of the Republic proved just as invisible to scholars.

This article aims to reassess, update, contextualise and deepen the knowledge about William Robinson, English consul and gunner in the service of Dubrovnik. A pluriperspective and comparative analysis of the Ragusan segment of Robinson's life and work, at the same time, through a number of details provides a much broader picture of Dubrovnik in a pivotal period, that is, the last years of its "Golden Age" and the beginning of a crisis, from the perspective of one of its residents of foreign origin. In addition to literature, the research is to a great degree based on diverse archival material, which, on this occasion too, displays an exceptional research potential and wealth of the State Archives in Dubrovnik.

The portrayal of Robinson initially called for the definition of the time frame of his Ragusan years. Outlined in the next chapter are the most important political, economic, health, climatological and demographic developments that marked the life in Dubrovnik of the time and their implications on Robinson's everyday activities. Further provided is a most thorough analysis of William Robinson from a professional aspect, primarily his career as a gunner in the state service, merchant and English consul. Finally discussed is Robinson's social role in the professional, religious and family environment.

Time frame

The first known mention of William (Gulielmo) Robinson in the Ragusan sources dates from 2 September 1574, when, by decision of the Senate, he was officially hired

² Vuk Vinaver, "Crno roblje u starom Dubrovniku", *Istorijski časopis* 5 (1954-1955), 440.

³ Bogdan Krizman, *Diplomati i konzuli u Starom Dubrovniku*, Zagreb: IBI, poduzeće za izdavanje, prodaju i distribuciju knjiga, 1957.

⁴ Ilija Mitić, *Dubrovačka država u međunarodnoj zajednici (od 1358. do 1815.)*, Zagreb: JAZU; Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske, 1988, 189.

as a gunner, *bombardiere*.⁵ Testifying to the actual enforcement of this decision is the payment, dated two months later, for the gunner's typical duty of the procurement of artillery cleaning supplies.⁶ On the basis of a Minor Council decision of 1601,⁷ by which Robinson was released from night duty and manual work due to his advanced age (seventy), it may be assumed that he was employed as gunner around the age of thirty-five.

However, according to the decision of the Minor Council from 1610,⁸ it appears that he was ten years older and that he arrived in Dubrovnik around the age of forty-five. Robinson's contemporary, English travel writer John Fox, servant in the entourage of Henry Cavendish, member of English Parliament, who en route to Constantinople visited Dubrovnik in 1589, was astonished by Robinson's high degree of integration in the Ragusan society. The travel writer observed that time had altered Robinson to such an extent that he had become a Slav in nature. This information led Veselin Kostić to the conclusion that Robinson must have arrived in Dubrovnik as a young man,⁹ at an age when one is more susceptible to influences. Regardless of Robinson's age at his first encounter with Dubrovnik, a span of fifteen years in this eastern Adriatic republic left a discernible stamp on his manners and mentality, to such an extent that his compatriot experienced him as a foreigner of hybrid identity, Englishman by birth and "a Slav by nature".

Indeed, it is quite likely that Robinson had visited or even stayed in Dubrovnik well before 1574, yet no record has been found to confirm it. Had that been the case, it would imply that he did not require any notarial services, for instance, due to loans or debts, joint ventures contract, proxy or sales or purchase contract, that he did not hire

⁵ State Archives in Dubrovnik (hereafter cited as: SAD), ser. HR-DADU-3, *Acta Consili Rogatorum* (hereafter: *Cons. Rog.*), vol. 62, f. 271v.

⁶ SAD, ser. HR-DADU-47, *Guardie et armamento*, vol. 11, f. 28.

⁷ SAD, ser. HR-DADU-4, *Acta Consilii Minoris* (hereafter: *Cons. Min.*), vol. 65, f. 194v-195.

⁸ *Cons. Min.* vol. 69, f. 54.

⁹ Veselin Kostić, *Kulturne veze između jugoslovenskih zemalja i Engleske do 1700. godine*, Beograd: SANU, 1972, 283, 369; V. Kostić, *Dubrovnik i Engleska 1300-1650*, 347, 593; Veselin Kostić, "The English in Ragusa in the later Tudor and Stuart periods", in: *Dubrovnik's Relations with England: A Symposium April 1976*, ed. Rudolf Filipović and Monica Partridge, Zagreb: Department of English, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb, 1977, 188. Fox the travel writer wrote: "...tyme hathe so alterred the man that he ys becom a Slavonyan in natur" (*Mr. Harri Cavendish, his journey to and from Constantinople 1589 by Fox, his servant* [Camden Miscellany, vol. XVII. Camden Third Series, vol. LXIV], ed. Alfred C. Wood, London: Offices of the Royal Historical Society, 1940, 13). Unlike Fox's travelogue, Robinson was not mentioned in Fynes Moryson's travel accounts of Dubrovnik, on his sea voyage to Constantinople in 1596, nor by the Scotsman William Lithgow, who arrived in Dubrovnik upon his return from Alexandria in the early seventeenth century (Jorjo Tadić, *Promet putnika u starom Dubrovniku*, Dubrovnik: Izdanje Turističkog saveza u Dubrovniku, 1939, 303), nor by Henry Austell, who made a three-day stopover in Dubrovnik on his way from Venice in 1586. He was pleased with the reception and the contacts. Accompanied by six Ragusan merchants and Janissaries, he proceeded to Constantinople over the mainland (Rudolf Filipović, "Dubrovnik in early English literature", in: *Dubrovnik's Relations with England. A Symposium April 1976*, ed. Rudolf Filipović and Monica Partridge, Zagreb: Department of English, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb, 1977, 68-69).

aides or servants nor did he himself act in the capacity of aide or servant to another, nor accepted dowry, nor drafted the last will, nor appealed to the authorities, nor testified, sued or acted as defendant for an offence or crime, to mention but the most common types of documents in the Ragusan sources which could enable reconstruction of the activities of a person from the end of the sixteenth century, when parish registers had not yet been established in the Dubrovnik area. From the sources here listed, which have been consulted for the purpose of the research into Robinson's activities in Dubrovnik, one comes to realise that the majority of the Ragusans of the day were probably never recorded in them because their everyday life followed a fairly steady rhythm and routine, without the need to be regulated by legal norms and devoid of any conflict with the law or the need to seek justice at court.

Robinson can be traced in archival documents from 1574, though sporadically at first, and more frequently later. These thirty diverse records have helped reconstruct the Englishman's biography. Robinson's last personal trace in archival sources is his will, drafted on 7 June 1613, and executed six days later.¹⁰ In line with the available archival evidence, the years 1574 and 1613 have been taken as pivotal regarding Robinson's life in Dubrovnik.

The portrait backdrop: Dubrovnik of Robinson's day

A period of nearly forty years of the Englishman's life in Dubrovnik was marked by great changes in foreign policy and economy of the small Adriatic republic. Shortly after his arrival, Robinson was able to witness the vitality of Ragusan economy, as well as fairly stable social relations devoid of more serious internal dissent. There is reason to believe that these favourable circumstances might have prompted him to settle in Dubrovnik for good.

Ragusan economy by far exceeded the modest size and very limited political power and influence of the maritime state.¹¹ Political power of the Dubrovnik Republic relied on fair judgement in many important issues, such as where to seek allies, who ought to be kept at a distance and how, carefully and duly made choice of the prospective protectors among the current great powers, along with the perpetual evasion of direct conflicts and engagements which could jeopardise the proclaimed political neutrality,

¹⁰ SAD, ser. HR-DADU-12, *Testamenta Notariae* (hereafter: *Test. Not.*), vol. 54, f. 239v.

¹¹ For an estimate of the gross domestic product per capita on the territory of the Dubrovnik Republic, see: Vladimir Stipetić, "Population and Gross Domestic Product of Croatia (1500.-1913.) in the Light of Angus Maddison's Book *The World Economy: A Millennial Perspective*", *Dubrovnik Annals* 8 (2004), 162-168. For a brief survey of economic development, see: Oleh Havrylyshyn and Nora Srzentić, *Economy of Ragusa, 1300 – 1800. The Tiger of the Medieval Mediterranean*, Zagreb: Croatian National Bank, 2014.

which was of extreme benefit to Ragusan economy as well. On the other hand, economic power, and consequentially a rich double-bottom treasury which, if necessary, allowed withdrawal from the asset deposits made to religious and charity funds,¹² provided robust resilience against various kinds of political pressure and offered a possibility of "buying" freedom through gifts and bribe. Ragusan neutrality, from which everyone benefitted, was the most important "defensive weapon" of the Dubrovnik Republic.¹³

"War is a cost, a waste", while the possibility to make an autonomous choice between the state of war or peace is most commonly an attribute of the powerful, Braudel rightly emphasised.¹⁴ While other states waged wars, with its neutrality Dubrovnik more or less managed to avoid war damage and unexpected costs, and was often able to take advantage of the situation. It is precisely in the unexpected and high war expenditures, uncoordinated with the state revenue inflow, that we should seek the reasons for over-indebtedness of the European states in the latter half of the sixteenth century.¹⁵ Dubrovnik, however, stepped into the sixteenth century with a considerable surplus.¹⁶ Moreover, political neutrality of Dubrovnik had a positive impact on the interior stability of the state by evading potential sources of public discontent, e.g. due to high taxes, confiscation of property or drafting for war purposes, which were known to take place elsewhere.¹⁷

In the second half of the sixteenth century Spain was the main ally and protector of the Republic of Dubrovnik. King Philip II of Spain used Ragusan ships for commercial purposes and war campaigns.¹⁸ With the other, Austrian branch of the same Habsburg dynasty Dubrovnik maintained good relations, with occasional problems related mainly to Uskok raids.¹⁹ The tiny Catholic state surrounded by the Ottoman Empire also relied on the Holy See, perpetuating in their relations the classical rhetoric on the Christian

¹² Kosto Vojnović, "Državni rizničari republike dubrovačke", *Rad JAZU* 127 (1896), 1-2.

¹³ Vesna Miović, *Dubrovačka diplomacija u Istambulu*, Zagreb - Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2003, 18.

¹⁴ Fernand Braudel, *Sredozemlje i sredozemni svijet u doba Filipa II.*, vol. 2, trans. Mirna Cvitan Černelić and Jagoda Milinković, Zagreb: Antibarbarus, 1998, 203.

¹⁵ Antonio Di Vittorio, *Finanze e moneta a Ragusa nell'età delle crisi*, Napoli: Giannini, 1983, 117.

¹⁶ See Rina Kralj-Brassard and Nella Lonza, "Rukopis Nikše Ragnine kao izvor podataka o proračunu Dubrovačke Republike u 16. stoljeću", *Povijesni prilozi* 59 (2020), 143-163.

¹⁷ Lovro Kunčević, "O stabilnosti Dubrovačke Republike (14.-17. stoljeće): geopolitički i ekonomski faktori", *Analizavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 54/1 (2016), 26.

¹⁸ Vinko Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika do 1808, drugi dio. Od 1526. do 1808* (hereafter: V. Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika do 1808*, II), Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske, 1980, 42.

¹⁹ For a succinct account on the relations between Ragusans and Uskoks, see: V. Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika do 1808*, II, 61-63.

frontier guard.²⁰ The popes were generally well disposed towards Dubrovnik, except in delicate issues of church jurisdiction.²¹ Ottoman Empire acted as the Republic's official protector. Tribute (*haraç*) on the one hand was the price of peace, while on the other an admission ticket to the vast eastern trade market and a privilege for the strategically important Ottoman granaries.²² The tributary status of the Dubrovnik Republic implied concrete Ottoman protection, and thus neutralised any military pretensions of Dubrovnik's major and traditional rival, the Republic of Venice.²³ The *Serenissima's* essential goal regarding Dubrovnik was to achieve full economic control over the eastern Adriatic. However, France was emerging as an increasingly aggressive rival to the Ragusan economic interests in the eastern Mediterranean, in an attempt to terminate the privileged status of the Dubrovnik Republic within the Ottoman Empire. The generally benevolent attitude of King Henry VIII towards Ragusans, who were allowed to amass wealth based on trade, England replaced with a pragmatic and firm position of Queen Elizabeth I, who expanded domestic shipping and maritime trade by laying the foundations of a future world power. She saw Ragusans as insignificant rivals, along with many others, whom she tried to squeeze out.²⁴

Of all the mentioned challenges Ragusan foreign policy had to face, the most demanding and most delicate for the English subject in Dubrovnik was probably the conflict between the Ragusan main protector, Spain, and England, which most certainly put Robinson's loyalty at a test. The rumours that spread in 1587 – which

²⁰ On the development, method and purpose of the use of the rhetoric of Dubrovnik as the bulwark of Christendom, see: Lovro Kunčević, "The Rhetoric of the Frontier of Christendom in the Diplomacy of Renaissance Ragusa (Dubrovnik)", *Dubrovnik Annals* 17 (2013), 37-68.

²¹ On the allegations of the Ragusan archbishop Girolamo Matteucci, see: Josip Sopta, "Reformacija i Tridentski sabor u Dubrovniku", in: *Tisuću godina uspostave dubrovačke (nad)biskupije. Zbornik radova znanstvenoga skupa u povodu tisuću godina uspostave dubrovačke (nad)biskupije / metropolije (998.-1998.)*, Dubrovnik: Biskupijski ordinarijat Dubrovnik; Split: Crkva u svijetu, 2001, 393. For a detailed account on the state-church relations, see: Kosto Vojnović, "Crkva i država u dubrovačkoj republici", *Rad JAZU* 119 (1894), 32-142; "Crkva i država u dubrovačkoj republici: drugi dio", *Rad JAZU* 121 (1895), 1-91.

²² On the development of the relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Dubrovnik, the role of tribute, its size, collection and the payment modalities, see: V. Miović, *Dubrovačka diplomacija u Istanbulu*, 9-21, 169-210 and the literature cited herein.

²³ Domagoj Madunić, "The Defensive System of the Ragusan Republic (c. 1580-1620)", in: *The European Tributary States of the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Gábor Kármán and Lovro Kunčević, Leiden: Brill Publishing, 2013, 342.

²⁴ For a concise account of the relations between Dubrovnik Republic on the one and Spain, England and Venice on the other side in Robinson's time, i.e., from the end of the War of Cyprus to the first decades of the seventeenth century, see: V. Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika do 1808.*, II, 64-71, 79-84. For an adeptly contextualised overview of the relations between France and Dubrovnik Republic exemplified by the conflict over the jurisdiction of French consulate in Alexandria, see: Nikša Varezić, "Dubrovačka Republika i Levant u 16. stoljeću: Aleksandrijski spor", *Zbornik radova Filozofskog fakulteta u Splitu* 11 (2018), 91-110, notably 102-105.

one of the richest inhabitants of London at the time, Nikola Gozze, tried hard to refute, though unsuccessfully – concerned as many as 80 Ragusan ships and 4,000 mariners purportedly equipped to supply the Spanish king in his military campaign, had reached English authorities through unofficial channels, apparently from Florence.²⁵ Robinson, who socialised with the seamen, could have easily been accused of "spying activity", yet that did not happen as the information obviously leaked through other channels.²⁶

When Robinson assumed the duty of bombardier soon after the end of the War of Cyprus,²⁷ Dubrovnik Republic was at the sunset of its "Golden Age". The capacity of the commercial fleet still continued to grow,²⁸ as well as the Ragusan capital investments abroad.²⁹ However, first signs of a long-term crisis as consequence of the new division of great powers spurred by geographical discoveries began to surface. This resulted in the shrinkage of the Ragusan fleet, withdrawal of Ragusan commercial shipping agencies from the Levant due to the mounting French, English and Dutch competition, pirate raids and the decline of Ragusan intermediary trade.³⁰ By the end of Robinson's life, Ragusan public finances mirrored new and unfavourable economic circumstances. The public balance of income and expenditure made for the purpose of cost-cutting and a more balanced budget for the period 1610-1619 showed a serious deficit.³¹

²⁵ G. D. (George Daniel) Ramsay, "The city of London and the Republic of St. Blaise in the later sixteenth century", in: *Dubrovnik's Relations with England. A Symposium April 1976*, ed. Rudolf Filipović and Monica Partridge, Zagreb: Department of English, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb, 1977, 40-41.

²⁶ For a pluriperspective insight into the intelligence activity in Dubrovnik in Držić's day, see the collected papers: *Tajna diplomacija u Dubrovniku u XVI. stoljeću / Secret Diplomacy in the 16th Century Dubrovnik*, ed. Mirjana Polić Bobić, Zagreb: Sveučilište u Zagrebu, 2011.

²⁷ For a brief account on the political position of Dubrovnik during the War of Cyprus, that is, the Fourth Ottoman-Venetian War, see: V. Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika do 1808.*, II, 56-60.

²⁸ Between 1570 and 1585 Dubrovnik merchant fleet included nearly 200 sailing ships of the total capacity of 60,000 tons, equipped for voyage beyond the Adriatic. In the mid-sixteenth century, Dubrovnik Republic had more than 250 captains and around 5,000 seamen (Josip Luetić, *Brodari i pomorci Dubrovačke Republike*, Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske, 1997, 41). Jorjo Tadić makes an estimate of 170 to 200 larger ships and around 4,000 mariners for the entire sixteenth century (Jorjo Tadić, "Dubrovačka Republika do početka XVII. stoljeća", in: *Historija naroda Jugoslavije II*, ed. Branislav Đurđev, Bogo Grafenauer and Jorjo Tadić, Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1959, 223). The worth of the Ragusan fleet in the 1570s was estimated at approximately 700,000 ducats (Bernard Stulli, "Dubrovačka Republika u XV. i XVI. stoljeću", in: *Zlatno doba Dubrovnika, XV. i XVI. stoljeće*, ed. Vladimir Marković, Margarita Šimat and Ivana Čukman-Nikolić, Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Muzej MTM, 1987, 20).

²⁹ Antonio Di Vittorio, "Dubrovačka novčana ulaganja u Italiji od 16. do 18. stoljeća", in: Antonio Di Vittorio, *Između mora i kopna. Gospodarsko-financijski aspekti Dubrovačke Republike u novom vijeku*, trans. Slavica Tomašević, Dubrovnik: PGM Ragusa d.d., 2002, 42-49, table chart 43.

³⁰ Nenad Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika, 1. Korijeni, struktura i razvoj dubrovačkog plemstva*, Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2011, 257-258.

³¹ For more details, see: A. Di Vittorio, *Finanze e moneta a Ragusa nell'età delle crisi*, for analysis of the income and expenditure by year, 47-84. Briefly on the reasons behind Dubrovnik's economic decline at the end of the sixteenth and in the early seventeenth century, see: V. Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika do 1808.*, II, 120.

Apparently, in Robinson's time Dubrovnik was spared of the earthquakes,³² as well as larger epidemics. Yet, Robinson did witness only one outbreak of plague that reached the territory of the Dubrovnik Republic between 1585 and 1586 from the Ottoman hinterland, where it left countless victims over a longer period of time. Dubrovnik, however, was less affected by this epidemic,³³ but the widespread fear and uncertainty urged the Senate to establish a votive procession on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, on 3 May,³⁴ which inspired the poet Didachus Pyrrhus.³⁵ The Englishman was in the position to observe and experience the implementation of Dubrovnik's developed anti-epidemic measures, and perhaps attended the first votive procession, because he must have been in Dubrovnik in July 1585,³⁶ as well as in early February and in late May 1586.³⁷

In his advanced age Robinson witnessed the Rector's Palace being struck by lightning on 20 June 1610, which caused fire and explosion in the armoury. Although the arms in the central armoury were destroyed and the Senate chamber damaged, the fire did not spread further, which provided a good enough reason for the establishment of yet another solemn votive procession.³⁸

³² For the earthquakes in the Dubrovnik area before 1667, see: J(elenko) Mihailović, *Seizmički karakter i trusne katastrofe našeg južnog primorja od Stona do Ulcinja*, Beograd: SAN, 1947, 12-16, 18. Senate decision of July 1590, by which the crew of the Sokol Castle were allowed to spend the night outside the fortress, i.e., in the rampart due to the damage of the fortress caused by earthquake, implies that there may have been minor quakes outside the urban area (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 70, f. 232).

³³ Risto Jeremić and Jorjo Tadić, *Prilozi za istoriju zdravstvene kulture starog Dubrovnika*, I, Beograd: Centralni higijenski zavod, 1938., 99; Nenad Vekarić, "Broj stanovnika Dubrovačke Republike u 15., 16. i 17. stoljeću", *Analitički Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 29 (1991), 19; N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 1, 259.

³⁴ The Senate passed a decision on 11 March 1586. Besides the procession, the archbishop was to celebrate mass, which, on pain of fine, was to be attended by the rector and the members of the Minor Council (Seraphinus Maria Cerva, *Prolegomena in Sacram metropolim Ragusinam: editio princeps*, ed. Relja Seferović, Zagreb - Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2008, 443; R. Jeremić and J. Tadić, *Prilozi za istoriju zdravstvene kulture starog Dubrovnika*, I, 98). For more details on this votive procession, see: Nella Lonza, *Kazalište vlasti. Cereemonijal i državni blagdani Dubrovačke Republike u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, Zagreb - Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2009, 288-291.

³⁵ The ode entitled "*De urbe Rhacusa pestilentia laborante / O gradu Dubrovniku koji se muči s kugom*" (On the city of Dubrovnik labouring against pestilence) Didachus dedicated to Jeronim Orsat Cerva, member of the Senate and health official combating plague in 1586 (Vesna Miović, *Dubrovački ples s kugom. Vrijeme lazareta na Pločama*, Zagreb - Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2022, 99).

³⁶ Entered in the margin of the Senate's decision is Robinson's return from his private journey to Italy (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 68, f. 167).

³⁷ He took a loan and paid it off duly. See SAD, ser. HR-DADU-10, *Debata Notariae* (hereafter: *Deb. Not.*), vol. 94, f. 19-19v.

³⁸ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 82, f. 161-161v; N. Lonza, *Kazalište vlasti*, 299-300.

The most severe natural catastrophe in Robinson's time was probably the famine from the early 1590s, which struck the whole of Europe and Anatolia.³⁹ Bad weather seasons resulted in large-scale crop failure due to wheat diseases, more specifically, wheat rust. According to Guido Alfani, the famine caused a "systematic shock" on the Apennine Peninsula, slightly less dramatic than the "Black Death". Consecutive harvests across vast land failed. All the usual commercial channels for grain supply were exhausted, both private and public granaries emptied, as well as the municipal treasuries.⁴⁰

This great famine and its consequences, which we trace in the decisions of the Ragusan Senate, Robinson must have felt on his own skin.⁴¹ Due to the general food crisis, he felt the shortage of three things which, according to the manual from the later period, each gunner had to be amply provided with: bread, wine and money.⁴²

The Englishman was able to eyewitness how the eastern Adriatic republic coped with two great military and political threats on the domestic scene with long-term consequences: Lastovo crisis⁴³ and the Great Conspiracy.⁴⁴ Unlike these two detriments which primarily involved the ruling elite, the Uskoks represented a permanent foreign threat to the entire population of Dubrovnik and its property.⁴⁵ The Ragusans were also threatened by the pirates. Towards the end of Robinson's life he must have heard the news of the devastating raid of the island of Koločep and its inhabitants seized as slaves, to such a degree that the Senate even used the term "depopulation".⁴⁶

³⁹ Fredrik Charpentier Ljungqvist, Andrea Seim, Dominik Collet, "Famines in medieval and early modern Europe - Connecting climate and society", *WIREs Climate Change View*, e-859 (August 2023). <https://wires.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/wcc.859> (accessed 27 November 2023).

⁴⁰ Guido Alfani, "The Famine of the 1590s in Northern Italy. An Analysis of the Greatest 'System Shock' of Sixteenth Century", *Histoire & Mesure*, 2011, 26/1, 18, 34. See also Fernand Braudel, *Sredozemlje i sredozemni svijet u doba Filipa*, vol. 1, prev. Đurđa Šinko-Depierris, Zagreb: Antibarbarus, 1997, 635, 638, 640.

⁴¹ Joint loan taken by four bombardiers, Robinson included, paid off in instalments as recorded in February 1590, might be related to the high cost of living and shortages (*Deb. Not.* vol. 94, f. 137).

⁴² Lukša Beritić, *Dubrovačka artiljerija*, Beograd: Vojni muzej JNA, 1960, 138. Beritić provides the translation of the gunnery manual written by Antun Vanini, *proto* bombardier in the service of the Republic, published in 1666: *L'esame che si fa in presenza degl'illustrissimi signori proveditori dell'aramento, e delle guardie, à quelli scolari, che concorrono allo stipendio de cannonieri al servizio della serenissima Republica di Ragusa ordinato d'Antonio Vanini da Santo Arcangelo di Rimini capo bombardiere di tutto lo stato della medema serenissima Republica, et a quella dedicato*. In Ferrara M.DC.LXVI. per Alfonso e Gio. Battista Maresti.

⁴³ On the political and social context of this rebellion, see: Nenad Vekarić, "Lastovski pobunjenici 1602. godine", *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 43 (2005), 43-73.

⁴⁴ For details, see: Stjepan Čosić i Nenad Vekarić, *Dubrovačka vlastela između roda i države: salamankezi i sorbonezi*, Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2005, 16-47.

⁴⁵ In 1605 Uskok threats escalated to such an extent that all men fit for military service in the Dubrovnik area were armed (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 80, f. 53).

⁴⁶ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 83, f. 165v.

Upon his arrival in Dubrovnik, Robinson saw a bustling city and a state well populated. Economic development corresponded with the thriving population, yet the peak was soon followed by decline. At the turn of the century, the Republic of Dubrovnik lost approximately 10 per cent of the population in relation to the estimated maximum from around 1580.⁴⁷ The Englishman witnessed the gradual withdrawal of the nobility from direct economic activity in shipping and maritime trade, in which distinguished commoners tended to dominate.⁴⁸

Some of Robinson's contemporaries were exceptionally able men who had earned fame during their lives. Being evidently a well integrated foreigner, the Englishman must have known many of the most prominent Ragusans of his time, nobles and citizens alike, at least "by sight". Some of his acquaintances may be traced in the written evidence. For instance, Augustin Matov Pozza⁴⁹ and the famous Nikola Vitov Gučetić⁵⁰ together with Robinson acted as executor after the death of his spouse Marija.⁵¹ As executors of his own will drafted in 1613 Robinson designated the noblemen Miho Resti and Mato Orsatov Gondola, with whom he must have been close.⁵² The fact that the latter was a merchant in London⁵³ may have contributed to their mutual English-based interest relationship.

Bombardier in the service of the Republic

When Robinson applied for the gunner's post, Dubrovnik was by far the strongest fortification, albeit somewhat antiquated, in the eastern Adriatic, with the largest number of artillery pieces, with its own cannon foundry, immense reserves of various war supplies, developed local production and sufficient number of professional men

⁴⁷ N. Vekarić, "Broj stanovnika Dubrovačke Republike u 15., 16. i 17. stoljeću", 19.

⁴⁸ N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 1, 259.

⁴⁹ Augustin Matov Pozza (1527-1608) held the office of rector in several terms. He was responsible for the imposition of fees on the revenues from foreign monetary investments (*gabela di monti*) in 1579, and was elected *procuratore* of the Jesuits ten years later (Nenad Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 8. *Genealogije (M-Z)*, Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2017, 223; *Cons. Rog.* vol. 65, f. 63-63v; vol. 70, f. 104v).

⁵⁰ Nikola Vitov Gučetić (1549-1610), philosopher, recurrent holder of rector's office (Nenad Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 5. *Odabrane biografije (E-Pe)*, Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2014, 325-333). On Gučetić's social contacts, see: Ivana Skuhala Karasman, "Nikola Vitkov Gučetić i njegov kulturni krug", *Obnovljeni život* 78/1 (2023), 93-103.

⁵¹ The will was drafted in 1590 (*Test. Not.* vol. 62, f. 150v).

⁵² *Test. Not.* vol. 54, f. 239v.

⁵³ Nenad Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 7. *Genealogije (A-L)*, Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2016, 386. Ivan Orsatov Gondola and brothers owned a ship which in 1597, for the voyage from Rodos to Ancona, was armed with the hired state falconet cannons. The ship was seized by Spanish galleys and sunk by the English. The deposit for the cannons was agreed at 500 ducats, but did not exceed 1,399 perpers, i.e., 420 ducats, which was below the full value of the cannons (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 75, f. 146-146v, 183v).

specialised in the maintenance of the defensive system.⁵⁴ Ragusan peculiarity in hiring professional soldiers, gunners included, was that it was done without "professional" agents. Unlike other early-modern states which chose an expert as employer who would then hire "his own" professional soldiers to serve under his direct subordination, Ragusan professional soldiers were hired exclusively by the Senate.⁵⁵

Barabanti, mercenaries in the Ragusan service, had to satisfy specific territorial, language and religious criteria,⁵⁶ while the gunners were selected primarily on the basis of professional qualifications. A vast majority of gunners were foreigners,⁵⁷ Catholics without exception or seemed to have represented themselves as such. Robinson, together with other foreign gunners, his compatriots included,⁵⁸ was in a group of the invited, professional, and for the state "useful" foreigners.⁵⁹ To his last day Robinson maintained the status of foreigner with permanent residence in Dubrovnik, as opposed to some other professionals who, after official application, were granted Ragusan citizenship.⁶⁰

The Senate employed Robinson in the state service at a much higher salary than usual, 5 *scudi* per month, and, apparently, without any prior test of his skills.⁶¹ This could mean that his knowledge was unquestionable, either because the Senate was familiar with his high qualifications from an earlier though untraceable episode, or because he had come with a recommendation on his reliability and former experience, perhaps issued by one of the Ragusans who invested his capital in England.⁶²

⁵⁴ D. Madunić, "The Defensive System of the Ragusan Republic (c. 1580-1620)", 363-364, 367-368, 371-372. For an overview of older literature on Ragusan artillery, see: L. Beritić, *Dubrovačka artiljerija*, 13-14.

⁵⁵ D. Madunić, "The Defensive System of the Ragusan Republic (c. 1580-1620)", 352.

⁵⁶ In a letter to envoy in Vienna in 1618, the Senate explicitly specified that the *barabanti* be "Hrvati, našeg jezika i katolici" (Croats, of our tongue and Catholics) (Vladimir Koščak, "Korespondencija dubrovačke vlade s Nikolom Frankopanom i Petrom Zrinskim", *Zbornik Odsjeka za povijesne znanosti Zavoda za povijesne i društvene znanosti HAZU* 1 (1954), 190).

⁵⁷ In the payroll from April 1559 the gunners are entered by name. The international gunners' crew included Italians, Frenchmen, Germans, persons from Bosnia and locals (SAD, ser. HR-DADU-29, *Detta* vol. 2, f. 6).

⁵⁸ Dionysus the Englishman was a gunner in 1576 (*Deb. Not.* vol. 92, f. 50).

⁵⁹ On the position of foreigners in Ragusan society, see: Zdenka Janeković Römer, "Stranac u srednjovjekovnom Dubrovniku: između prihvaćenosti i odbačenosti", *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest* 26 (1993), 27-38; Zdenka Janeković Römer, "Gradani stanovnici, podanici, stranci, inovjerci u srednjovjekovnom Dubrovniku", in: *Raukarov zbornik: zbornik u čast Tomislava Raukara*, ed. Neven Budak, Zagreb: FF press, 2005, 317-345.

⁶⁰ For instance, in 1607 Camilo Camilli, rector of the Dubrovnik Gymnasium, was granted Ragusan citizenship (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 81, f. 25v).

⁶¹ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 62, f. 271v.

⁶² See V. Kostić, *Dubrovnik i Engleska 1300-1650*, 578, 586; A. Di Vittorio, *Između mora i kopna. Gospodarsko-financijski aspekti Dubrovačke Republike u novom vijeku*, 30; Veselin Kostić, "The Ragusan colony in London in Shakespeare's day", in: *Dubrovnik's Relations with England. A Symposium April 1976*, ed. Rudolf Filipović and Monica Partridge, Zagreb: Department of English, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb, 1977, 261-263; G. D. Ramsay, "The city of London and the Republic of St. Blaise in the later sixteenth century", 41; SAD, ser. HR-DADU-9, *Diversa Notariae* (hereafter: *Div. Not.*), vol. 132, f. 47-52.

Several persons were admitted to the gunnery service in the course of 1570 and 1571 upon recommendation of Miho Marinov Menze, Ragusan envoy to Naples.⁶³ It appears that Robinson was not admitted to the post upon recommendation, because in other cases the data on the intervention were entered in the Senate's decision, which in the decision regarding Robinson's engagement is not emphasised.⁶⁴ For another experienced gunner Menze had the salary prenegotiated in Naples, while the Senate, purportedly, only confirmed the settled amount.⁶⁵ Naples was the main Ragusan supplier of arms.⁶⁶ It was in Naples that they would seek and find a military gunpowder expert when they needed one.⁶⁷ As proof of the excellent relations with the Kingdom of Naples is the fact that the largest Ragusan foreign investments were made in Naples itself, in a conservative and very safe way, as a form of state crediting guaranteed by state revenues from various taxes.⁶⁸ In the early seventeenth century, the Senate was in search of gunners through its confidants in Ancona.⁶⁹ Vienna was also a place where military experts were sought. In the second decade of the seventeenth century, through their envoy in Vienna, Lujo Radibrati, the Ragusans were in search of four gunners, though in vain, as all of them had been already engaged in war.⁷⁰

The salary of a gunner hired by the Senate in 1574 ranged between two⁷¹ and five *scudi* at the most per month, as negotiated in Robinson's case. Yet another gunner, Battista Neri from Ancona, received the same remuneration as Robinson that year.⁷² As proof that Neri was an excellent and reliable gunner was the Senate's decision ten years later to promote him to the rank of vice chief gunner (*sotto capo*), as the chief gunner was no longer capable of performing his administrative duties.⁷³ Neri was held in high repute by the fellow gunners, who elected him as *gastaldo* of their confraternity.⁷⁴ He

⁶³ For biographical data, see N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 5., 246-247; *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 8., 61.

⁶⁴ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 60, f. 10v, 15v.

⁶⁵ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 60, f. 167v.

⁶⁶ When the armoury exploded in June 1610, a large amount of various arms, among which a thousand arquebuses, were ordered in Naples. Vicko Bune was in charge of the arms supply (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 82, f. 161v-162; N. Lonza, *Kazalište vlasti*, 300, note 1149; Jozo Luetić, "Pomorac i diplomat Vice Bune", *Anal. Historijskog instituta JAZU u Dubrovniku* 1 (1952), 262-263).

⁶⁷ In search of a gunpowder expert, in November 1611 the Senate addressed the Ragusan consul to Naples, Vicko Bune. At the end of March 1612, an unnamed candidate was offered a high salary of 10 ducats per month and paid accommodation (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 83, f. 39, 65).

⁶⁸ A. De Vittorio, "Dubrovačka novčana ulaganja u Italiji od 16. do 18. stoljeća", 47.

⁶⁹ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 81, f. 196.

⁷⁰ V. Koščak, "Korespondencija dubrovačke vlade s Nikolom Frankopanom i Petrom Zrinskim", 191.

⁷¹ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 62, f. 224.

⁷² *Cons. Rog.* vol. 62, f. 251.

⁷³ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 68, f. 13v-14.

⁷⁴ Dragan Roller, *Dubrovački zanati u XV. i XVI. stoljeću*, Zagreb: JAZU, 1951, 270.

repaired weapons,⁷⁵ and was also skilled in the preparation of gunpowder.⁷⁶ He was familiar with woodwork, too.⁷⁷ Another gunner of foreign origin, Niccolò from Ancona, had already been earning a monthly salary of somewhat less than 5 *scudi*. He applied for a raise and a workshop, which he was granted in December 1572. In his supplication he stated that he was skilled in making arms, and that he would maintain and inspect state arms.⁷⁸ He also produced gunpowder for the state needs.⁷⁹ His long-term labour gave fruit, as in 1595 he was assigned to the duty of chief gunner with a comparatively high monthly salary of 6 ducats.⁸⁰

The gunner's monthly salary in Robinson's day, and somewhat earlier, approximated up to 3 ducats, that is, 4 *grossi* per day.⁸¹ This standard monthly pay was also maintained in the second half of the eighteenth century, despite devaluation on account of inflation.⁸² It appears likely that Robinson was among the thirty-seven gunners who received their November salary in advance by the end of October 1576. A part of the salary was occasionally received in grain,⁸³ which was customary with some other state services as well.⁸⁴ By decision of the Senate of November 1581, gunners received their remuneration from the hands of the overseer of arms,⁸⁵ as was formerly also decided for the *barabanti*.⁸⁶ Senate's decision, on the one side, implies a better, more direct money control and, on the other, makes it clear that the *bombardieri* and *barabanti* owe their loyalty to the state, that is, to the nobility, and not to their commander.

⁷⁵ *Guardie et armamento* vol. 22, f. 4.

⁷⁶ *Guardie et armamento* vol. 19, f. 2.

⁷⁷ *Guardie et armamento* vol. 19, f. 9.

⁷⁸ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 61, f. 174v-175.

⁷⁹ *Guardie et armamento* vol. 13b, f. 7v.

⁸⁰ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 74, f. 109.

⁸¹ In May 1559, twenty-one gunners received a salary ranging from 1 ducat and 32 *grossi* to 4 ducats, earned by three gunners only, masters probably. The total salary amount paid to the gunners that month added to 62:26 ducats. The same amount was paid out in April (*Detta* vol. 2, f. 6, 14v-15). One Ragusan ducat was equivalent to 40 *grossi* (*denarii*), one *scudo* to 36 *grossi*, and one *perper* to 12 *grossi*. For a survey of the variety of Ragusan units of account, see: Milan Rešetar, *Dubrovačka numizmatika. 1. (historički) dio*, Sremski Karlovci: Srpska manastirska štamparija, 1924, 67-69. In the second decade of the seventeenth century, a gunner's salary, depending on experience, ranged between 3 and 5 *scudi* (D. Mađunić, "The Defensive System of the Ragusan Republic (c. 1580-1620)", 353).

⁸² See, for instance, a series of applications for the gunner's post from the latter half of the eighteenth century (SAD, ser. HR-DADU-7.3.8, *Diplomata et acta*, 18th century, vol. 188, no. 3353, doc. 4, 18, 38, 45-47; vol. 189, no. 3354, doc. 139, 140).

⁸³ It usually amounted to three *cupelli* of grain (about 55.545 litres) per person. Sometimes even twice a year, for example, in March and December 1578 (*Cons. Min.* vol. 54, f. 52, 135v).

⁸⁴ For example, in April 1582 (*Cons. Min.* vol. 56, f. 50v).

⁸⁵ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 66, f. 130.

⁸⁶ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 66, f. 91v.

Admission of a gunner to state service in most cases was preceded by a test of the candidate's artillery skills. Decision on the test the Senate, most likely, based on the candidate's application for the state post. Unlike a relatively large number of applications from the eighteenth century in which the candidates either directly⁸⁷ or through intermediary⁸⁸ applied for gunners in the state service, the applications from the sixteenth century have not been preserved in the original but only in the Senate minutes.⁸⁹ Among others, extant is a copy of an application for state service of an exceptional gunner from which, as it is imbued with self-praise, one may learn of all the skills expected from a top performing *bombardier*.⁹⁰ Robinson's application may have been penned in a similar manner.

In January 1570, the Senate admitted Ivan Jeronimov (Grifone) from Lopud⁹¹ to the post of chief gunner, at a salary of 6 *scudi* per month,⁹² whereas two years later he received additional 30 perpers per year for the flat rent,⁹³ with an extra duty to train all those interested in becoming gunners. This informal training preceded the official artillery school, established by the Senate in 1655 upon proposal of Antun Vanini, master gunner.⁹⁴ Ivan Jeronimov Grifone returned to his homeland after long absence, as a mature man, wishing to spend the rest of his life there. In his application he failed to mention where and how he acquired his evidently great artillery experience. Being an islander, it is likely that, in his earlier years at least, he sailed aboard one of the Lopud

⁸⁷ See, for instance, the application of barber Pavao Pavlov, who applied for the gunner's post in 1708 (*Diplomata et acta*, 18th century, vol. 187, no. 3352, doc. 26).

⁸⁸ Widow Marija Dešković applied for the gunner's post in 1796 on behalf of her son (*Diplomata et acta*, 18th century, vol. 194, no. 3359, doc. 132).

⁸⁹ Upon his third application for gunner's post, Matija Lukin was finally admitted in April 1596, despite a comparatively low salary of only two and a half *scudi* per month. To his application he added an element from his private life aimed to enhance his job prospects - the fact that he was married to one of the daughters of Stjepan the keykeeper, i.e., dungeon keeper (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 74, f. 280v-281).

⁹⁰ Some important characteristics and skills of a gunner have been outlined in the printed gunnery exam handbook from the mid-seventeenth century written by Antun Vanini, chief gunner. Thus, an ideal gunner is described as a younger, physically fit person, preferably a craftsman who can read and write, a good Christian, devoted to St. Barbara, loyal to the ruler and subordinate to commanders, elegant, modest and diligent. In addition, a gunner must be well versed in three types of artillery, projectile types and their advantages and disadvantages. He must know how to operate the gunner's "squadra", an equipment used for aiming cannon, how to use the compass, and he must know the range of particular artillery types. He should be knowledgeable of the gun barrels in and out, as well as the alloy used for their casting. He is expected to operate the cannon carriage and wheels, and assess if they suit the barrels. He must be able to distinguish gunpowder and saltpeter (L. Beritić, *Dubrovačka artiljerija*, 136).

⁹¹ I am indebted to Ivana Lazarević Vukovac for the data search on this Ragusan gunner in the Dubrovnik Population Database compiled by Nenad Vekarić. However, database search has produced no result regarding Ivan Jeronimov Grifone.

⁹² L. Beritić, *Dubrovačka artiljerija*, 84.

⁹³ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 61, f. 176.

⁹⁴ L. Beritić, *Dubrovačka artiljerija*, 133.

ships. In his application he stated that on account of his knowledge and experience he was qualified for a master gunner's post in the capacity as their *capo* and *proto*. He was engaged in artillery from his early youth, as his first profession, which explains why in his application he failed to mention any details about his knowledge of the operation of various types of cannons. He thus gave precedence to his other skills, typical of a best performing master gunner. The islander showed great skill in field artillery organisation and was able to make repairs if no engineer was available. He could measure the heights and distances, establish strong and weak spots, prepare gunpowder, respond to an attack by means of different projectiles. As his special skill, for which he was certain that non-professionals would describe as impossible, he emphasised the firing of a remote target projectile at a range resembling that from the City to Gruž, at an enemy sheltered behind a wall.⁹⁵ This confirms that sixteenth-century artillery equipment could shoot mortar-like projectiles.⁹⁶

By order of the Senate, the gunners' skills were tested by the overseers of arms, who also tested the knowledge of the cannon casters.⁹⁷ Archival research shows that the persons who applied for the gunner's post were generally versed in the artillery skills. The reports of the arms overseers have not been recorded in the Senate minutes, yet tracing the Senate's decisions regarding primarily the testing and then the admission to state service one may conclude that the overseers of arms, and later also the Senate, were mainly satisfied with the candidates.⁹⁸ Apparently, it took around two or more weeks between the call for testing and the day of the admission to service,⁹⁹ or even more than one month,¹⁰⁰ but most frequently the term proved shorter.¹⁰¹

The gunner candidates may be roughly divided into two groups. The first group, into which Robinson falls, includes individuals who have probably been, more or less professionally, acquainted with artillery since their young age, as stated by the gunners' *proto*, Ivan from Lopud, in his application. The second group encompasses persons who were trained in some other skills or crafts, and who wished to "reskill" for a better

⁹⁵ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 59, f. 201-201v.

⁹⁶ For a survey of older literature on Ragusan artillery, see: L. Beritić, *Dubrovačka artiljerija*, 13-14; for a short outline of the development of artillery in Europe, 15-23.

⁹⁷ Thus tested was *magister* Frano Antica from Lastovo in early 1578 (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 64, f. 171v-172; L. Beritić, *Dubrovačka artiljerija*, 85).

⁹⁸ Among the rare declined applications for the gunner's post was that of shoemaker Vicko Šimunov of 26 October 1595. Ultimately, the Senate changed its decision and admitted him two weeks later (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 74, f. 160v, 168v).

⁹⁹ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 67, f. 83v, 91.

¹⁰⁰ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 62, f. 224, 240; more than two months, usually during harvest when the government bodies rested (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 74, f. 147, 149, 160, 161).

¹⁰¹ For example, the admission procedure of the gunner Luka Ivanov from Zaton lasted only six days. The overseers of arms were authorised by the Senate to test his artillery skills on 20 May, and by 26 May 1569 he was already admitted to the post (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 59, f. 119, 124).

or additional gunner's duty which would bring them extra wages.¹⁰² In this group, for example, we can find carpenters,¹⁰³ a mason,¹⁰⁴ blacksmith¹⁰⁵ and clockmaker.¹⁰⁶ The skills required for a gunner and clockmaker appeared to be similar, as evidenced by the gunners' applications for the extra duty of clockmaker¹⁰⁷ and the clockmaker's application to be admitted and additionally remunerated, besides his regular job, as a gunner.¹⁰⁸ Traced in the archives between 1574 and 1590 is the state clockmaker Gašpar performing explicit artillery duties, for example, preparation of gunpowder, sulphur powder and operational inspection of arquebuses.¹⁰⁹

The career of Marin Kuzmin from Lastovo, Ragusan gunner and later state clockmaker, started in 1583 when the Ragusan gunner Nikola Stjepanov from Bar, apparently also master blacksmith, took him as apprentice to train as blacksmith.¹¹⁰ Marin Kuzmin was admitted as gunner in state service in 1595.¹¹¹ His former knowledge as blacksmith helped him with his new duty, as he apparently advanced by becoming skilled in the knowledge of clockwork. In addition to the duty of master gunner and assistant clockmaker, in 1609 he applied for the post of master clockmaker. His application for

¹⁰² Petar Marinov, "djetić", assistant of master Nikola, *proto* gunner, boasted of his salary of 3 *scudi* per month in 1606 on the Placa in the vicinity of St. Francis in front of carpenter Marko Pavlov, whose mind was tickled by the very idea. Petar ridiculed him by alluding to some of his inabilities on account of which he could not qualify for a gunner. Evidently, Marko felt insulted and punched Petar in the face (SAD, ser. HR-DADU-20, *Lamenti de Criminale*, vol. 6, f. 194). According to Vanini's gunnery exam manual from the mid-seventeenth century, craftsmanship was looked upon as desirable basic knowledge for a future gunner, literacy being compulsory. Perhaps the offended carpenter was illiterate.

¹⁰³ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 73, f. 207; vol. 75, f. 45.

¹⁰⁴ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 77, f. 36v.

¹⁰⁵ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 82, f. 77.

¹⁰⁶ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 80, f. 248.

¹⁰⁷ Nikola, *proto* gunner, applied for the clockmaker's post in 1602 at an extra salary of 30 *scudi* per year, which was rejected by the Senate (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 78, f. 60). Marin Kuzmin from Lastovo, first hired as a gunner in 1595, in 1609 was also engaged as a clockmaker at a salary of 30 *scudi* per year (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 74, f. 160v-161; vol. 82, f. 39, 58).

¹⁰⁸ Silvio Pieramati from Venice was first admitted in 1605 as state clockmaker at a salary of 80 *scudi* per year, paid flat and workshop. A year later he applied for the gunner's post at an extra 36 *scudi* per year, i.e., 3 *scudi* per month. In his application he stated that, if he were admitted as gunner, he would reveal the secret of how to protect the arms from rust (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 80, f. 248, 251, 273-273v).

¹⁰⁹ *Guardie et armamento*, vol. 11, f. 2-2v; vol. 20, f. 2, a tergo; vol. 13b, f. 4v.

¹¹⁰ SAD, ser. HR-DADU-15, *Diversa Cancellariae* (hereafter: *Div. Canc.*), vol. 171, a tergo, f. 52v. A gunner by the name of Nikola Stjepanov, no place of origin specified, with possible reference to two candidates, one from Ancona and the other from Bar, in 1586 employed Luka Ivanov Perić, apparently a minor because the contract was witnessed by the father, as apprentice at a term of eight and a half years, with an obligation to train him in the art of gunnery and blacksmithing (*Div. Canc.* vol. 174, a tergo, f. 71v). Santino Neri, gunner and woodworker, hired Stjepan Ivanov from Konavle as apprentice in early 1606 in woodwork and his other crafts for a term of eight years (*Div. Canc.* vol. 194, f. 125v).

¹¹¹ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 74, f. 160v-161.

the additionally salaried duty was first declined, though accepted eventually.¹¹² With time, he employed his own apprentices.¹¹³ In 1607 Marin Kuzmin tried to find substitute for his gunner's post on the Fortress of St. Lawrence and elsewhere, offering training designed to guarantee the candidate's minimum skill for the admission to state service. The training fee was 10 ducats, on condition that the payment be made after the candidate's (*soldat's*) admission at St. Lawrence Fortress as gunner in state service.¹¹⁴

Traced in the mid-sixteenth century is a case of a gunner whose additional activity was bookbinding.¹¹⁵ Accumulation of responsibilities as well as their occasional rotation was favoured by the state, especially if there was a lack of specifically qualified workforce.¹¹⁶

Robinson did not apply for the clockmaker's post and it seems that he did not train others in artillery skills either.¹¹⁷ Regular duties, daily routine, as is often the case, are less visible in the sources. Given the range of his salary, it may well be assumed that the Englishman did not considerably lag behind *proto* Ivan in his knowledge of artillery skills, and that the bulk of what the islander stated in his application was equally true of Robinson.

The sources, however, reveal some special skills and jobs with which Robinson occupied himself. He was skilled in the cleaning of the artillery equipment known as *smiralj*.¹¹⁸ He repaired the fence on the Bokar Tower.¹¹⁹ Like Ivan from Lopud, Robinson also produced firework rockets.¹²⁰ Fireworks, among others, were usually used to mark the installation of new sultans.¹²¹ It was also used for private purposes, as in 1589 the production of rockets and their firing during private celebrations was strictly banned on pain a 50 perper fine. If any of the gunners violated the decree, they were fined by

¹¹² *Cons. Rog.* vol. 82, f. 19, 39, 58.

¹¹³ In April 1610, for an apprenticeship of seven years he recruited the minor Martin Andrijin by permission of the latter's brother Ivan (*Div. Canc.* vol. 197, f. 53).

¹¹⁴ *Div. Canc.* vol. 195, f. 116-116v.

¹¹⁵ Relja Seferović, "Dubrovački knjižari 16. stoljeća u državnoj službi", *Arhivski vjesnik* 51 (2008), 385.

¹¹⁶ By end of May 1610, the commander of guards in the loggia was temporarily relieved from the obligation of permanent station in the loggia so that he could engage in woodwork in the city, at Peskarija and the city ditch, as well as in Ston. He was to return to the loggia only upon the order of the overseer of guards (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 82, f. 151).

¹¹⁷ Frano Radov, gunner of Ston, received an extra *scudo* per month on condition that he remained in Ston permanently and trained men in the artillery skills (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 60, f. 30).

¹¹⁸ *Guardie et armamento*, vol. 11, f. 28.

¹¹⁹ *Guardie et armamento*, vol. 24, f. 12v.

¹²⁰ All components were obtained from the state bookbinder Curcio (*Guardie et armamento*, vol. 11, f. 30). Later, for the same purpose of the preparation of fireworks rockets the necessary components were acquired from another state bookbinder, Curcio's pupil, Silvestro Barletta (*Guardie et armamento*, vol. 24, f. 3v). On state bookbinders Curcio Troiano and Silvestro Barletta, see: R. Seferović, "Dubrovački knjižari 16. stoljeća u državnoj službi", 386-389.

¹²¹ The fireworks were organised in 1595 to celebrate the new sultan (Mehmed III) (*Guardie et armamento*, vol. 24, f. 4, a tergo).

the loss of salary and an extra 25 perpers.¹²² Knowing how skilled he was in preparing fireworks, this ban may have directly concerned Robinson as well.

The gunners are occasionally recorded in the sources with the *magister* title, which implies a higher level of professional skill.¹²³ Their main duties included the maintenance of arms and production of components, production of gunpowder and cannon balls of various sizes, maintenance of the artillery on the fortifications across the entire Republic territory. Robinson appears to have served in Ston, but equally so in the Sokol Castle in Konavle, because by the end of February 1597 he was released from these unpleasant duties for reasons unknown.¹²⁴ Gunners also participated in the construction and repairs of the state armed ships - fuste¹²⁵ and frigates¹²⁶ - aboard which they sometimes sailed,¹²⁷ and for which they were additionally remunerated.¹²⁸ They built benches in the arsenal¹²⁹ and repaired fortification doors.¹³⁰ Cannons were built by a special professional, cannon caster, but when, on one occasion, this post became suddenly vacant due to caster's abandonment of duty, the duty was assumed by a gunner.¹³¹ The fact that the gunners were well acquainted with ships and the use of various equipment is testified by their engagement in the haul of wrecked ships, upon permission of the Senate.¹³² There was a considerable amount of arms in Dubrovnik since it was customary for the citizens of all strata to keep guard and defend the city if necessary.¹³³ These private weapons were maintained and repaired on the gunners' own account, some of whom had their own workshops.¹³⁴

¹²² *Cons. Min.* vol. 60, f. 14-14v.

¹²³ For example, in a lawsuit from 1589 (SAD, ser. HR-DADU-21, *Lamenta de Intus* vol. 124, f. 258).

¹²⁴ *Cons. Min.* vol. 64, f. 68v.

¹²⁵ *Guardie et armamento* vol. 11, f. 34v, a tergo.

¹²⁶ See, for instance: *Guardie et armamento* vol. 12, f. 25; vol. 19, f. 6.

¹²⁷ For example, in May 1586 a gunner aboard an armed frigate of 14 benches was Vicko Vidov, and in August Ivan Feza (*Guardie et armamento* vol. 15, f. 16-16v).

¹²⁸ Gunner Andrija Fiamengo was paid 3 *grossi* per day for the service aboard a state frigate in June 1581 (*Guardie et armamento* vol. 18, f. 10).

¹²⁹ Gunner Battista Neri and his assistant were commissioned for this job in August 1585 (*Guardie et armamento* vol. 19, f. 9).

¹³⁰ Gunner Santino and his work companion repaired the door on the Minčeta Tower in March (*Guardie et armamento* vol. 24, f. 1v).

¹³¹ In early 1588, gunner Luka replaced in the foundry the cannon caster Frano who had abandoned the post (*Guardie et armamento* vol. 20, f. 5v, a tergo). He might have had some earlier experience, because a certain bombardier Luka had worked in the foundry and abandoned it by order of the Senate in 1578 (*Cons. Min.* vol. 54, f. 85v).

¹³² In December 1581, the Senate refused to issue permission to Ivan, *proto* gunner, who, accompanied by a few men, was to set out in a state boat to haul a sunken Venetian ship by using beams from the city arsenal. This salvage also included a deposit in case of state property damage (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 66, f. 153).

¹³³ In 1575 the state equipped *barabanti* with arquebuses, which they had to pay off in instalments, by subtraction from the state salary (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 62, f. 337).

¹³⁴ Đuro Vlahov, bombardier, applied for a raise in salary in August 1594, supporting his petition with shortages and poor gains from his commercial property (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 73, f. 201v-202).

The state-employed bombardiers sailed regularly on Ragusan merchant ships which carried the state grain supplies from abroad, because local production could not meet the population needs. On these voyages, the gunners usually sailed on the ship's expenses and were not salaried by the state, but exceptions were known, when, during more perilous voyages, they still received a state salary as if they were stationed in Dubrovnik.¹³⁵ For such occasions merchant ships chartered by the state were equipped with arms hired from the state arsenal.¹³⁶

The bombardiers were known to take a two-,¹³⁷ three-¹³⁸ or a several-month¹³⁹ leave of absence from Dubrovnik on account of private reasons, during which they received no salary from the state, although it appears that their gunner's post was "reserved" for them for at least some time. This explains the fluctuating number of salaried gunners by month.¹⁴⁰ A non-salaried gunner's leave was approved by the Senate.¹⁴¹ The Senate's approval was not merely a formality because the leave, albeit rarely, was known to be rejected.¹⁴² Permission for the departure abroad was submitted by the *barabanti* and other state officials, such as physician, *zdur*, chancellor.¹⁴³

Robinson petitioned for absence and it was approved on several occasions. During these absences he may have served as gunner on merchant ships, traded on his own account or engaged in any other activity related to his main profession or not. Dated March 1580, is Robinson's travel destination during his six-month leave, which he

¹³⁵ Frano Radov and Pavao Nikolin, gunners aboard the vessel Beribaca which, in late July 1569, set sail for the Levant for the supply of grain for the commune, by decision of the Senate received a state salary (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 59, f. 143).

¹³⁶ Overseers of arms, by order of the Senate, armed the ship of Ivan Vickov which in 1581 sailed to Dürres for the state supply of grain. Ivan Vickov received one falcon, one falconet, ten arquebuses, ten hellebardes and two barrels of gunpowder, leaving a deposit of 300 ducats (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 66, f. 33v). For more examples on the deposit-paid equipment of private vessels with arms from the state arsenal in the course of the sixteenth century, see: L. Beritić, *Dubrovačka artiljerija*, 121-123.

¹³⁷ See, for instance: *Cons. Rog.* vol. 63, f. 263; vol. 77, f. 30.

¹³⁸ See, for instance: *Cons. Rog.* vol. 62, f. 135-135v, 170v; vol. 63, f. 32v-33, 133v; vol. 68, f. 92; vol. 75, f. 109, 231.

¹³⁹ For an example of approved six-month leave of absence, see: *Cons. Rog.* vol. 65, f. 214; vol. 68, f. 306; vol. 74, f. 158-158v; for a ten-month absence: *Cons. Rog.* vol. 58, f. 168v; for a year's absence: *Cons. Rog.* vol. 64, f. 254; vol. 70, f. 254.

¹⁴⁰ Thus thirty-seven gunners received salary for November 1575, thirty-nine for December, and forty for February 1576 (*Detta* vol. 3, f. 6, 19, 29).

¹⁴¹ Detected in the examined archival material is a case, recorded on 23 June 1588, in which the rector and the Minor Council, and not the Senate, approved of a non-salaried leave of absence to a gunner (*Cons. Min.* vol. 59, f. 161).

¹⁴² On 15 July 1580 the Senate rejected the petition for a two-year non-salaried leave to the *proto* of the gunners' crew (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 65, f. 232).

¹⁴³ For examples, see *Cons. Rog.* vol. 58, f. 155, 224v; vol. 67, f. 117. Towards the end of March 1600, Year of Jubilee and before Easter, the Senate issued an exceptional permission to the captain of the guards (*zduri*) stationed at the Rector's Palace for his salaried three-month leave of absence due to the pilgrimage to Rome (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 77, f. 29v-30).

intended to spend in Italy.¹⁴⁴ Although he apparently failed to return by the expected date, the circumstances being justifiable, by the end of October 1583 the Senate formally re-admitted him to his former post at a salary he had previously earned,¹⁴⁵ yet a decision of this kind was not passed automatically.¹⁴⁶ When in early 1585 Robinson again petitioned for a four-month leave on account of some private business matter in Italy, which he was granted, entered in the margin is the exact date of his departure from Dubrovnik, 6 February, and his return, 24 July.¹⁴⁷ Apparently, the delay in Robinson's return had no serious consequences for his career.

Because of the importance of the gunners' duty for state security, their unauthorised absence from duty and travel abroad carried serious consequences. Insubordination and disregard of the Senate were drastically punished, as evidenced by a case of gunner Ivan Jeronimov Grifone from Lopud, who, for having wilfully abandoned the Republic territory while on state duty in 1595, was deprived of the salary, banished from the state under very strict terms of the provisions regarding rebels and murderers, promulgated in November 1590.¹⁴⁸ It remains open whether such a harsh sentence was also impacted by the destination, purpose of the trip, that is, owners of the ship the gunner had probably boarded when he left the state.

There is reason to believe that Robinson may have been involved in slave trade in Dubrovnik where that activity was legal. By the famous decree of 1416 slave trade was partly restricted but not suspended. In early July 1599, at a price of 60 Venetian gold sequins, Robinson sold two "black" slaves from "Barbary" to the French captain Francisco Vioni from Marseille to serve him on the ship.¹⁴⁹ In another document dated May 1603, for 60 Venetian gold sequins William Robinson sold a fifteen-year-old "black" girl, formerly owned by Captain Riciardo Dolphi, to Antonio Imberti.¹⁵⁰ In the first case there is no mention of the persons Robinson purchased the slaves from, yet in the second case it is clear that Robinson acts as a middleman between the seller, captain and Italian buyer. This business notwithstanding, it is possible that Robinson's intermediary role in slave trade was infrequent and a mere side activity.

¹⁴⁴ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 65, f. 177v.

¹⁴⁵ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 67, f. 187.

¹⁴⁶ For example, gunner Rusko Petrov, first engaged in 1573, was not restored to his "old" post in 1588. The Senate repeatedly rejected his application to be hired to the same post in 1590 (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 62, f. 134; vol. 69, f. 283; vol. 70, f. 157).

¹⁴⁷ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 68, f. 167.

¹⁴⁸ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 74, f. 109. For the provisions concerning murderers and rebels, see: *Cons. Rog.* vol. 70, f. 278-279v.

¹⁴⁹ V. Vinaver, "Crno roblje u starom Dubrovniku", 440; *Div. Not.* vol. 129, f. 140.

¹⁵⁰ *Div. Canc.* vol. 191, f. 147v.

Documents from the State Archives in Dubrovnik fail to provide a clear answer as to whether bombardier Robinson was a seaman. Namely, in April 1602, Captain William Robinson, master of the English vessel "Lanareta",¹⁵¹ appeared at the Ragusan chancery. Enquired by Jeronim Orsatov Cerva about the nature of his calling on the chancery, he stated that he had received a reward for the import of grain from the Levant on behalf of the absent Bernard Giorgio.¹⁵² Data from May 1603 regarding the decision of the Minor Council to disburse all the remaining salaries to gunner Robinson¹⁵³ may lead to the conclusion that they were suspended for some reason, perhaps due to his absence from Dubrovnik. Was he sailing as captain of an English vessel? If not, then we might be dealing with two men by the name of William Robinson, a gunner and a captain, in which case the information about slave trade could be ascribed to the gunner's namesake.

Robinson's financial situation varied, as he petitioned and was granted protection from forcible collection of debt.¹⁵⁴ He was known to be in debt,¹⁵⁵ but at the same time gave loans, e.g., in his will he mentioned two debtors.¹⁵⁶ During his lifetime, it seems that he was not impoverished and managed to acquire modest property. He lived in a relatively comfortable home, where he received his compatriots en route to other destinations.¹⁵⁷ He had a single mast sailing boat with four oars, sufficient for coastal sail to Albania.¹⁵⁸ The accusation regarding the breaking and stealing of the contents from a chest of a deceased man from Mljet in late 1590 points to the fact that Robinson had some earlier business connections with Mljet.¹⁵⁹ By the end of 1592, when the shortage caused by unusual climate oscillations seemed to relax, Robinson bought a larger

¹⁵¹ The name of this ship is not known in the literature according to which two English ships, "The Royal Merchant" and "Phoenix", landed in the Dubrovnik port in 1602 (Josip Luetić, "English mariners and ships in seventeenth century Dubrovnik", in: *Dubrovnik's Relations with England. A Symposium April 1976.*, ed. Rudolf Filipović and Monica Partridge, Zagreb: Department of English, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb, 1977, 226-227). Both ships belonged to the Levant company (Mortimer Epstein, *The early history of the Levant company*, London: George Routledge & Sons Ltd, 1908, 227).

¹⁵² *Div. Canc.* vol. 190, f. 115.

¹⁵³ *Cons. Min.* vol. 66, f. 141.

¹⁵⁴ By decision of the Minor Council, in September 1609 Robinson was released from a debt obligation to private persons, but not from his debt to the state, to a term of fifteen days (*Cons. Min.* vol. 68, f. 251v).

¹⁵⁵ *Deb. Not.* vol. 94, f. 19-19v.

¹⁵⁶ *Test. Not.* vol. 54, f. 239v.

¹⁵⁷ V. Kostić, *Kulturne veze između jugoslovenskih zemalja i Engleske do 1700. godine*, 283; V. Kostić, *Dubrovnik i Engleska 1300-1650*, 347.

¹⁵⁸ *Div. Canc.* vol. 191, f. 93. Owner of a presumably even bigger vessel that could sail to Bari on the coast across the Adriatic was bombardier Santino Neri (*Div. Canc.* vol. 180, f. 121).

¹⁵⁹ *Lamenti de Criminale* vol. 5, f. 28.

quantity of wine, 40 *quinquia* (c. 800 litres), some of which was certainly intended for sale.¹⁶⁰ Three years later, the payment of the Mljet wine supplies met with difficulties.¹⁶¹

Gunner's duty did not deter him from engaging in other activities, notably trade. In addition, his business connections and good knowledge of the market qualified him for a person of confidence and a worthy representative of the English people in Dubrovnik.

English consul

Robinson's position as English consul has been mentioned randomly as an additional argument for the grant of the concessions in the execution of gunner's duties on two occasions in the early seventeenth century. No data are available as to when and how Robinson assumed the post of English consul, but it must have taken place before 1601. It also remains open whether the title used by the authorities in official documents had the meaning of consul in the formal or practical sense. The latter is far more likely. Kostić argues that William Robinson was not appointed by the English government, but was titled as consul by the Ragusans or earned the title on the basis of a private contract with the Levant Company.¹⁶² It seems that Robinson held the duty for life, as after his death in 1613 no other person bore the title of English consul in Dubrovnik.¹⁶³

Apparently, no other person had held this office before Robinson either, most likely because there was no need for it. The bulk of English merchants appear in the Ragusan sources in the 1520s, after which they rarely visited Dubrovnik up until the last decades of the sixteenth century, when the Ragusans almost entirely controlled the export of English goods to Dubrovnik,¹⁶⁴ and further to the eastern markets. As for the Ragusans heading for England, it is known that during the reign of Henry VIII an average of two large Ragusan ships landed each year in Southampton or Margate.¹⁶⁵ During the conflict

¹⁶⁰ *Div. Canc.* vol. 183, a tergo, f. 77.

¹⁶¹ SAD, ser. HR-DADU-18, *Sententiae di Cancellaria*, vol. 160, f. 138.

¹⁶² V. Kostić, *Dubrovnik i Engleska 1300-1650*, 381.

¹⁶³ Miho Krtica, a very wealthy Ragusan, shipowner and captain who started his career as a shipbuilder in the Gruž dockyard, was explicitly forbidden by the Senate in early 1804, on pain of capital punishment, to accept the title of English consul or even mediate in trade for the English. Yet, English government persisted on the idea of opening a consulate and ultimately decided to appoint an Englishman as consul. The Senate approved of the proposal with a single majority vote, and that the English consul be welcomed and accommodated in Dubrovnik on condition that his arrival be represented as private initiative of Miho Krtica. French occupation foiled their plan. Krtica maintained strong business ties with the English, and in Vlahović's opinion, he could have made these contacts in Dubrovnik, where English boats anchored, or in Albania, where the Ragusan and English merchants purchased timber for the building of ships (Josip Vlahović, "Pokušaj osnivanja britanskog konzulata u Dubrovniku za vrijeme Republike", *Naše more: znanstveni časopis za more i pomorstvo* 5/2 (1958), 114-115).

¹⁶⁴ V. Kostić, *Dubrovnik i Engleska 1300-1650*, 187.

¹⁶⁵ V. Kostić, *Dubrovnik i Engleska 1300-1650*, 578-579.

between Philip II and England in the 1570s, the goods from the Levant were carried to England by Ragusan boats.¹⁶⁶

The need for an English consular representative in Dubrovnik due to the growing presence of Englishmen may be related to England's aspirations to expand trade in the eastern Mediterranean and its relations with the Ottoman Empire. For this purpose the Turkey Company was established in 1581 as well as the Venice Company in 1583. The two companies merged in the Levant Company in 1592.¹⁶⁷ The establishment of companies had a negative impact on the position of Ragusan merchants in London. In the 1580s the Ragusans experienced severe and disloyal local competition, because the mentioned companies enjoyed monopoly privileges.¹⁶⁸ The escalating competition impacted the final withdrawal of the Ragusans from that market. From 1605 the Levant Company had the monopoly on trade with Dubrovnik.¹⁶⁹ The monopoly concerned the whole territory of the eastern Mediterranean.¹⁷⁰

The Levant Company appointed English consuls to protect its interests and, as a rule, they were not diplomatic representatives of the Royal Crown.¹⁷¹ Their main duty was to collect the 2 per cent tariff on the import and export of goods owned by English merchants. The provisions on the possible salary varied from case to case.¹⁷² The consuls of the Levant Company were to be the Company members who resided in the place of their mission. They had judicial power to act in commercial disputes among all English traders, members of the Company and others alike.¹⁷³ Initially, age was among the principal qualifications required for the membership in the Levant Company, above 26 or one year upon the completion of apprenticeship at the earliest, and the payment of the admission fee.¹⁷⁴ In 1605 the Levant Company was granted formal royal permission to appoint consuls.¹⁷⁵

¹⁶⁶ G. D. Ramsay, "The city of London and the Republic of St. Blaise in the later sixteenth century", 38-39.

¹⁶⁷ Listed in the first charter of the Levant company are the names of 53 merchants headed by governor Sir Richard Osborne (M. Epstein, *The early history of the Levant company*, 36).

¹⁶⁸ G. D. Ramsay, "The city of London and the Republic of St. Blaise in the later sixteenth century", 39-40.

¹⁶⁹ G. D. Ramsay, "The city of London and the Republic of St. Blaise in the later sixteenth century", 41. Dubrovnik is on the list of ports added to the original privileges of the Levant company (M. Epstein, *The early history of the Levant company*, 231).

¹⁷⁰ M. Epstein, *The early history of the Levant company*, 64.

¹⁷¹ Niels Steensgaard, "Consuls and nations in the Levant from 1570 to 1650", *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 15/1-2 (1967), 34-36.

¹⁷² M. Epstein, *The early history of the Levant company*, 94-95.

¹⁷³ M. Epstein, *The early history of the Levant company*, 63.

¹⁷⁴ M. Epstein, *The early history of the Levant company*, 60.

¹⁷⁵ N. Steensgaard, "Consuls and nations in the Levant from 1570 to 1650", 50; M. Epstein, *The early history of the Levant company*, 62.

The list of places with resident consuls preserved in the documents of the Levant Company makes no mention of Dubrovnik.¹⁷⁶ This may lead to the conclusion that it was not the Royal Crown that bestowed the consular title upon Robinson, nor the Levant Company, or that an official document certifying the act is not extant.

Kostić holds that Robinson was consul in 1589, when he hosted five travellers in his home, three of whom were servants.¹⁷⁷ The most distinguished among them was a venturing English nobleman in his thirties, and purportedly an able military commander, as his war skills were highly esteemed by the Spanish rivals, Henry Cavendish, Parliament Member and eldest son of William Cavendish and his third wife Elizabeth Hardwick, known as "Bess of Hardwick", with Royal Family ties. Godmother at Cavendish's baptism was the future queen, Elizabeth I. The second traveller, albeit of much lower rank and common descent, was Richard Mallory, merchant, who, on behalf of Walsingham, the Secretary of State, carried a letter for Edward Barton, English diplomatic representative to Constantinople. Barton was an English agent from 1588 to 1591 or 1593, and ambassador from 1591 or 1593 to 1597.¹⁷⁸

Robinson's consular activity may be traced, for instance, in his procurement of accommodation for an ill Englishman and mediation in the settlement of his affairs in 1608. It was then that Dubrovnik saw the arrival of one of the largest ships of the Levant Company, "The Royal Exchange" (*Cambio Real*), aboard which were several English merchants. The most prominent among them was Henry Parvis, who chose Venice as the centre of his merchant ventures. Merchant Henry Belton fell ill, and at the house of the English consul William Robinson where he was accommodated, he issued instructions regarding the money and goods that were entrusted to him. Besides the ill merchant and Robinson, hosted at the latter's house were also Henry Parvis, Ralph Symes and Pavao Gondula, who interpreted from English into Italian.¹⁷⁹

Apart from emergent, critical situations due to illness, in the capacity of English consul Robinson could lobby the Senate to accept the petitions of English merchants for a preferential treatment, e.g., petition submitted by Rudolph Inglsion, who in June 1603 brought a huge load of salted fish, harrings, tunas, etc. Inglsion petitioned to pay

¹⁷⁶ M. Epstein, *The early history of the Levant company*, 214-216.

¹⁷⁷ V. Kostić, *Kulturne veze između jugoslovenskih zemalja i Engleske do 1700. godine*, 283; V. Kostić, *Dubrovnik i Engleska 1300-1650*, 347.

¹⁷⁸ Alfred C. Wood, "Introduction", in: *Mr. Harri Cavendish, his journey to and from Constantinople 1589 by Fox, his servant* [Camden Miscellany, vol. XVII. Camden Third Series, vol. LXIV], ed. Alfred C. Wood. London: Offices of the Royal Historical Society, 1940, III-VI.

¹⁷⁹ V. Kostić, *Dubrovnik i Engleska 1300-1650*, 338. Mentioned among Belton's business partners are the Englishmen Henry Parvis and Richard Dick, Ivan Gleđević, along with the Ragusan Jews David Miranda and Isaac Jeshurun. Belton, among others, traded in textiles (*Div. Not.* vol. 132, f. 198v-199).

only the customs tariff of 2 per cent for the imported food commodities, and to be exempt from other dues.¹⁸⁰

Similarly, Robinson may have intervened in 1607, regarding the petition of English merchants, evidently members of Levant Company, Richard Dick and Thomas Freeman, who aboard their ship "Saphire",¹⁸¹ anchored off Lokrum, carried 50 bales of kersey. They petitioned for the payment of taxes on sold goods only.¹⁸² Ralph Symes was formerly granted Senate's permission for the export of unsold goods exempt from transit customs tariff.¹⁸³ The same concession was petitioned for and granted, perhaps with Robinson's assistance, by English traders aboard the ship "The Royal Exchange" in 1608.¹⁸⁴ English merchants petitioned for exemption from transit tariffs later, too, for example, in 1612. By that time, it was already a customary procedure.¹⁸⁵

The contacts with English traders opened new business opportunities, such as that in early 1603 when Robinson gave a short-term loan of 50 ducats to Englishman Peter Emerson, captain of the ship.¹⁸⁶ The connection with the Englishmen who arrived in Dubrovnik for the purpose of trade was likely to thrust Robinson into the witness role as well. Thus together with Abram Abeatar, Ragusan Jew, he testified in a dispute between three English merchants over the unload of goods from a ship in March 1604. The procedure was conducted in the English language, whereas the text was translated into Italian, maybe by Robinson himself.¹⁸⁷

Confraternity member, husband, father

Veneration of Saint Barbara, one of the fourteen holy helpers in need,¹⁸⁸ and the confraternity membership under the saint's protection according to Vanini's gunnery

¹⁸⁰ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 78, f. 241-241v.

¹⁸¹ The ship of the Levant Company (M. Epstein, *The early history of the Levant company*, 224).

¹⁸² *Cons. Rog.* vol. 78, f. 107v-108.

¹⁸³ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 78, f. 50-50v.

¹⁸⁴ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 81, f. 171. "The Royal Exchange" was one of the biggest ships of the Levant company, capacity of 300 tons (M. Epstein, *The early history of the Levant company*, 225).

¹⁸⁵ *Cons. Rog.* vol. 83, f. 55.

¹⁸⁶ *Div. Canc.* vol. 191, f. 60v-61. The English were known to take loans from Ragusan Jews. In March 1605, Ragusan rector decided on the seizure of the goods of Englishman Nikola Perdi, who did not duly pay off his debt to the Ragusan Jews Daniel Abeatar and Moshe Maestro, in favour of the creditors. The Englishman's goods were stored with Vlaho Ilijin (*Div. Canc.* vol. 193, f. 165).

¹⁸⁷ *Div. Canc.* vol. 192, f. 122-126.

¹⁸⁸ For more on the patroness, veneration and practices, see: Ante Škrobonja, *Sveti od zdravlja. Ilustrirani leksikon svetaca zaštitnika*, Zagreb: Kršćanska sadašnjost, 2004, 41-44; Marko Dragić, "Kult sv. Barbare u kršćanskoj tradiciji Hrvata", *Nova prisutnost* 13/2 (2015), 141-163.

manual were expected of every gunner,¹⁸⁹ Robinson included. On occasion, Robinson may have frequented the Church of St. Barbara¹⁹⁰ or the Church of St. Sebastian¹⁹¹ to hear mass and participate in the confraternity activities.¹⁹²

The original statute of the confraternity of St. Barbara has not been preserved, yet extant is the new statute in a copy from 1697. The duties of confraternity members cited in the New Statute considerably depart from their responsibilities stated in the early sixteenth century. Duties tend to multiply, monetary donations are higher, e.g., admission fee was 1 ducat (40 *grossi*), in addition to many other details.¹⁹³ For instance, twenty days prior to the Feast of St. Barbara the assembly was convened, on which three masters of ceremonies, *festanjuli*, were elected, whose duty was to prepare the celebration and decorate the church. Evasion of this duty was punished with a degree fine of 5 perpers or more, even imprisonment if the fine was not paid. The Feast of St. Barbara was celebrated with a chanted evening mass and the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. The chosen brethren collected alms on the first Lent Sunday. On the Feast

¹⁸⁹ Venetian confraternity of bombardiers was established by decision of the Council of Ten (*Consiglio dei Dieci*) in 1500 (Lovorka Čoralić, "Hrvatski useljenici u Mlecima, Bratovština topnika i kotorski biskup Angelo Baronio", *Povijesni prilozi* 44 (2013), 171; for reference on the literature and sources regarding this Venetian confraternity see 172, note 3).

¹⁹⁰ The church stood in Od Vare Street with the portal facing Božidarevićeva Street. It was destroyed in the 1667 earthquake. See Lukša Beritić, "Ubikacija nestalih građevinskih spomenika u Dubrovniku", *Prilozi povijesti umjetnosti u Dalmaciji* 10 (1956), 50-51.

¹⁹¹ By the end of 1518, the Senate permitted the bombardiers confraternity to install an altar of St. Barbara at the Church of St. Sebastian (*Cons. Rog.* vol. 35, f. 32).

¹⁹² Cerva mentions that the confraternity of St. Barbara had its seat at the Church of St. Sebastian near the Dominican Monastery (Seraphinus Maria Cerva, *Prolegomena in Sacram metropolim Ragusinam, editio princeps*, edited by Relja Seferović, Zagreb-Dubrovnik, Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2008, 435). The confraternity of Venetian bombardiers was a powerful and respected brotherhood with a sizeable membership in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth century. From 1611 the confraternity was seated in a building next to S. Maria Formosa Church, which was consecrated by Angelo Baronio, bishop of Kotor, descendant of a Venetian patrician family. Standing in front of the building is a flagpole on which the confraternity flag (*confalon*) was raised (L. Čoralić, "Hrvatski useljenici u Mlecima. Bratovština topnika i kotorski biskup Angelo Baronio", 171, 178).

¹⁹³ For the sake of comparison, data related to the early-sixteenth-century confraternity of bombardiers of Ston can be useful. Admission fee was 2 *grossi*, and the same amount was paid for the annual membership fee on the Feast of St. Barbara. Absence and other offences were fined with 15 *follari*, i.e., half a *grosso*. The money was used for the support of confraternity's activities. The confraternity was obliged to celebrate at least five masses a year, one of which was a solemn mass commemorating the patron saint on 4 December. Commemoration mass was celebrated for a deceased member. Confraternity *gastaldo* was to encourage the brethren to attend the masses. The Ragusan confraternity under the same name probably had similar terms, but they are not stated in the provision on the establishment that was confirmed by the Minor Council (D. Roller, *Dubrovački zanati u XV. i XVI. stoljeću*, 260-261). Roller provides a transcript of the decisions of the Minor Council regarding the establishment of the confraternity of bombardiers in Ston (1508.) and Dubrovnik (1509.). As a local term for a gunner he quotes "lumbardar". In the Venetian confraternity of bombardiers discipline was often unsatisfactory, as they quarrelled with each other, delayed in or avoided the payment of annual membership fee (*benintrade, luminarie*) (L. Čoralić, "Hrvatski useljenici u Mlecima, Bratovština topnika i kotorski biskup Angelo Baronio", 171).

of Candlemas the brethren were to carry the confraternity flag in a procession from the church to the house of the chosen flagbearer.¹⁹⁴

We cannot say with exactitude to what extent the original provisions of the early-sixteenth-century statute were altered and new ones added by Robinson's day. For instance, were the *festanjuli* in charge of the celebration of the Feast of St. Barbara elected in Robinson's time? If so, was he ever elected to that honour? In all likelihood, under the confraternity flag and with a burning candle in his hand Robinson may have taken part in the celebration of Candlemas, when the members of Ragusan confraternities, according to a strictly established order, entered the cathedral carrying candles and votive gifts, the size and quality of which were prescribed by the authorities.¹⁹⁵

Robinson was not buried in the Church of St. Barbara, nor did he make any bequests to it.¹⁹⁶ His choice of churches for the decime and primicie in the will did not depart from the Ragusan traditional practice: St. Mary Major, St. Blaise and Our Lady of Danče. In the Church of St. Sebastian, or perhaps that of St. Barbara, the brethren, most likely, paid mass for the deceased Robinson, as it was an obligation stated in the statute.¹⁹⁷ He designated Dominican Church as his burial place and priest Toma to conduct the funeral service.¹⁹⁸ He was probably buried in one of the confraternity graves.¹⁹⁹

Robinson's confraternity duties may have prompted his visits to the Church of St. Sebastian in the vicinity of the Dominican Monastery at least several times a year or to the Church of St. Barbara, where he attended public celebrations, religious and profane.

The bombardiers also gathered in front of the Church of the Friars Minor. Robinson and Ivan of Lopud, *proto* gunner, met one summer Saturday evening in front of the Franciscan church, where, upon invitation, gunner Vicko joined them. The meeting soon

¹⁹⁴ Tonko Marunčić, "Matrikula bratovštine dubrovačkih topnika (bombardijera) u prijepisu iz 1697. godine", *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 45 (2007), 287, 292-293, transcription of the statute 297-315.

¹⁹⁵ N. Lonza, *Kazalište vlasti*, 363-364. Because of its military status, the Venetian confraternity of bombardiers enjoyed a series of privileges, e.g., distinguished position in processions and exemption from certain state tariffs, which gave rise to disputes and envy on behalf of the members of other confraternities (L. Čoralić, "Hrvatski useljenici u Mlecima. Bratovština topnika i kotorski biskup Angelo Baronio", 171).

¹⁹⁶ In his will of January 1577, gunner Frano Bocararo designated the Church of St. Barbara as his burial place, and in addition to the usual bequests to St. Mary Major (*Gospa Velika*) and Our Lady of Danče (*Gospa od Danača*), to the Church of St. Barbara he bequeathed 4 *grossi* (*Test. Not.* vol. 44, f. 185v). Venetian bombardiers who originated from the eastern Adriatic coast were known to designate in their wills the confraternity church as their burial place, leaving partial property bequests to the confraternity (L. Čoralić, "Hrvatski useljenici u Mlecima, Bratovština topnika i kotorski biskup Angelo Baronio", 175).

¹⁹⁷ T. Marunčić, "Matrikula bratovštine dubrovačkih topnika (bombardijera) u prijepisu iz 1697. godine", 294, 309.

¹⁹⁸ *Test. Not.* vol. 54, f. 239v.

¹⁹⁹ The statute of the confraternity of St. Barbara from the seventeenth century mentions that the confraternity graves were located with the Dominicans and Franciscans (T. Marunčić, "Matrikula bratovštine dubrovačkih topnika (bombardijera) u prijepisu iz 1697. godine", 294).

evolved into an incident recorded by the Criminal Court. The *proto* insulted and slapped gunner Vicko on account of his adverse reaction to the invitation and appearance.²⁰⁰ The case points to a close relationship between Robinson and chief gunner, and at the same time indicates the existence of visible hierarchy signals and discipline among gunners even outside their immediate work environment.

The gunners used to pass their time in playing games. On the Feast of St. Joseph (19 March), three decades prior to Robinson's admission to the gunner's service, at Pile, where the game known as "na *naramzu*" was usually played, a serious incident occurred which involved the death of one of the players, gunner Robert the Englishman.²⁰¹ Details sketch the gunners' everyday life and testify to the relationships between mercenaries, military professionals in state service, then, as well as in Robinson's day, the majority of whom came from various European states.

The game was played in the ditch (*fossato*). It started as a competition of pairs, only to expand with one player on each side, gunner Luka from Lopud on the one, and upon his proposal, gunner Robert the Englishman on the other side. Both teams were "international", as they included Frenchmen, Germans, an Englishman and others. The spectators, too, were international. The game was watched by the gunners Rinaldo from Flanders and Leonardo from Germany. The conflict was sparked by the Frenchman's discontent with the show of his team and disagreement with the Englishman over the signs. It all started with an exchange of insults, to be followed by the drawn-out swords. Ultimately, the Englishman died due to the mortal wound inflicted by the Frenchman. The process, which lasted about two months and was concluded with the admission of guilt, was carried out before the rector and the Minor Council²⁰² with the use of torture and as many as seven jerks of the pulley. According to eyewitness accounts, the conflicting parties exchanged insults, each in his own mother tongue, and obviously understood each other well. The Frenchman offended the Englishman by calling him a Lutheran, while the Englishman slandered him by naming him a French dog and a *nuovo Turcho* (*poturica* or convert to Islam).²⁰³

²⁰⁰ SAD, ser. HR-DADU-21, *Lamenta de Intus et de Foris*, vol. 6, f. 145.

²⁰¹ The incident is mentioned by Kostić (V. Kostić, *Dubrovnik i Engleska 1300-1650*, 346-347). A year before, yet another Ragusan gunner faced the rector and the Minor Council on account of violent behaviour for having crushed bread with his feet and battered to bleeding a female bread seller who dared to sell fresh bread while he had not yet sold his old (SAD, ser. HR-DADU-19, *Lamenta politica*, vol. 4, f. 249).

²⁰² On judicial jurisdiction of the Minor Council, see: Nella Lonza, *Pod plaštem pravde. Kaznenopravni sustav Dubrovačke Republike u XVIII. stoljeću*, Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 1997, 65-68.

²⁰³ *Lamenta politica* vol. 4, f. 289-294v. Religious intolerance reflects the spirit of the era. A year after the Englishman's murder, Dubrovnik saw the first investigation related to the Protestants, the purpose of which was to detect Lutheran publications. When the Ragusans welcomed the Huguenots who had fled from France after St. Bartholomew's massacre two years prior to Robinson's arrival, the government evidently had some other interests in mind, leaving aside the confessional issue (K. Vojnović, "Crkva i država u dubrovačkoj republici, drugi dio", 16, 56; J. Tadić, *Promet putnika u starom Dubrovniku*, 254; J. Sopta, "Reformacija i Tridentski sabor u Dubrovniku", 383, 385).

There is no record of whether Robinson took part in the games, but we do know that he was the victim of insults in public space, because of which he pressed charges on at least two occasions.²⁰⁴ The selection of verbal offences in the first complaint - *renegato ribaldo* (debaucherous scoundrel) and *inbringo mariolo* (thief, rogue) - most likely targeted Robinson's religious 'apostasy'. In a case from 1608, elderly Robinson sought justice in the protection of his wife who was publicly offended by being called names from the window, insulted as a Turkish prostitute and a Jewish pimp.²⁰⁵ These were the most common slanders against women. The religious and ethnic identity of the alleged clients of the offended female person is also mentioned some fifteen years later, in an insult against a woman who procured Englishmen, Turks and Jews.²⁰⁶ A countersuit was immediately launched against Robinson's wife and domestic, though abruptly suspended soon after,²⁰⁷ which implies that the exchange of insults may have been mutual and that the lawsuits were resolved by settlement. The gunners' spouses were known to file claims against other women for verbal offences,²⁰⁸ slaps even.²⁰⁹ Disputes between women often evolved into physical fights and hair pulling.²¹⁰ In the analysed Criminal Court records in which the gunners or the members of their families are mentioned in the capacity of plaintiff or defendant rarely can we find the court ruling.²¹¹ This, however, was a common judicial practice and without exception concerned all other inhabitants of Dubrovnik of that time.

Archival documents which could shed more light on Robinson's everyday life and his property status are scarce. We do not know, for instance, whether he owned any land in the outlying area, such as Nikola Stjepanov, gunner from Ancona, who owned

²⁰⁴ *Lamenta de Intus* vol. 124, f. 258; *Lamenta de Intus et de Foris* vol. 8, f. 261.

²⁰⁵ *Lamenta de Intus et de Foris* vol. 16, f. 188.

²⁰⁶ Slavica Stojan, *Vjerenice i nevjernice: Žene u svakodnevnici Dubrovnika (1600.-1815.)*, Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Prometej; Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2003, 280.

²⁰⁷ *Lamenta de Intus et de Foris* vol. 16, f. 190.

²⁰⁸ *Lamenta de Intus* vol. 115, f. 231, 237; *Lamenta de Intus et de Foris* vol. 6, f. 66v.

²⁰⁹ *Lamenta de Intus* vol. 115, 248v.

²¹⁰ *Lamenta de Intus et de Foris* vol. 6, f. 64.

²¹¹ An interesting exception that sheds light on how delicate the issue of morality was dates from 1582, when besides the general allegation, by which the gunner's wife was accused of engaging in prostitution, a concrete information regarding the biological father of the gunner's son was added. The slanderess was sentenced to 15 days of labour at St. Lawrence Fortress (*Lamenta de Intus* vol. 116, f. 160v). Yet another relatively unique verdict dates from 1581, by which a twenty-year-old nobleman Dominik Ivanov Ragnina was sentenced to a 25-perper fine by reason of verbal abuse and violence against the son and wife of a bombardier (*Lamenta de Intus* vol. 116, f. 15). Marin Vlahov Držić was sentenced to a 20-perper fine for having appropriated some objects from the store held by a gunner's wife in Između polača (*Lamenta de Intus* vol. 117, f. 141). For assaulting a gunner in the Placa, Ilija Kotoranin was sentenced in 1584 to three months at the oar, in chains, on a state frigate. In case of his absence from the city when the frigate was at sea on an assignment, the prescribed sentence was three months of imprisonment (*Lamenta de Intus* vol. 117, f. 133).

a vineyard and a field of wheat in Šumet.²¹² That estate may have earlier been the property of Nikola's late father-in-law. In 1573 Nikola married Marija, daughter of the late Pavao Lukin, mariner from Šumet. A dowry valued at a total of 250 *scudi*, of which 50 *scudi* in clothing, was to be disbursed by canon Ivan Resti.²¹³ The ties between the receiver and disburser of dowry ("dota") were maintained well after, as in 1586 the gunner acted as executor of canon Ivan (Benediktov) Resti's will.²¹⁴ From a procedure involving a theft from Nikola's house, we learn that sixty ducats in various coins were stolen, eight silver forks and two silver spoons.²¹⁵ Nikola was an ambitious and able man, and as such appointed as chief bombardier, who chose a commoner, with some noble ties and a considerable dowry for spouse. He became established in terms of property, and like the Venetian bombardiers who drew their roots from the eastern Adriatic coast, he may have fallen in the group of middling, well-integrated citizens who acquired their status through marriage.²¹⁶

Dowry size and the social capital to be shared with the future in-laws most certainly impacted the choice of the spouse, which was clearly the case with other gunners too. Robinson's compatriot, gunner Thomas, probably followed the same pattern, when in 1582 he married Marija, illegitimate daughter of Dominik Mihov Cerva. He received a dowry of 150 *scudi* in cash, plus around 110 ducats in gold and clothes.²¹⁷ Gunner Santino Neri from Ancona, having married Jeluša, daughter of Nikola from Primorje, in 1583, received a dowry in gold, silver, clothing and decorations. The dowry was valued at 450 *scudi*.²¹⁸ Ivan Jeronimov Grifoni from Lopud, chief bombardier, provided their daughters with a more substantial dowry. According to a record from 1590, Deša, in keeping with the island custom, was given clothes, while the son-in-law was given the right to a house with a garden in the Gruž shipyard, which he could return to his father-in-law in exchange for 400 *scudi*.²¹⁹ Two years later, the gunner's second daughter, Marija, by marriage to Ivan Jeronimov received a dowry of 100 *scudi*, a house on the Island of Lopud, at Igalac, and land.²²⁰ Frano Ivanov Grifoni, perhaps the son or kin of

²¹² *Lamenta de Intus* vol. 119, f. 155, 184, 197; *Lamenti de Criminale* vol. 5, f. 101v; *Lamenta de Intus et de Foris* vol. 13, f. 74 and further.

²¹³ SAD, ser. HR-DADU-13, *Pacta matrimonialia* vol. 9, f. 181.

²¹⁴ In that capacity he sold one hundred *quinqua* of wine (around two thousand litres), among others, to cover the funeral costs and other expenses (*Div. Not.* vol. 123; *Test. Not.* vol. 47, f. 64v-65; N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 8., 281).

²¹⁵ *Lamenta de Intus* vol. 125, f. 7.

²¹⁶ L. Čoralić, "Hrvatski useljenici u Mlecima, Bratovština topnika i kotorski biskup Angelo Baronio", 173.

²¹⁷ SAD, HR-DADU-13.1, *Libri dotium notariae*, vol. 15, f. 67.

²¹⁸ *Div. Canc.* vol. 171, a tergo, f. 11-11v.

²¹⁹ *Pacta matrimonialia* vol. 10, f. 187-188.

²²⁰ *Pacta matrimonialia* vol. 10, f. 206v-207.

the mentioned Ivan Grifoni, married Anica, daughter of Grgur Ivanov Parapugna, having received a dowry of as many as one thousand *scudi*.²²¹

The size of the dowry that Robinson received is not known, nor the date of marriage, yet it was certainly before 1590, when he is mentioned in his wife's will. Robinson had no daughters. Had that been the case, their dowries and the choice of grooms may have enabled an estimate of the property status of Robinson's family. Judging by the will contents, he could hardly compare with the Florentine consul Rafaele Naldini, whose list of property and belongings, among others, included extravagant clothes and gemstone jewellery.²²² In the modest will, which Robinson drafted in his advanced age and poor health, listed are his one-perper bequests for decime and primicie to St. Mary Major, Our Lady of Danče and St. Blaise, and equal donations to the Franciscan and Dominican monasteries. As universal heir he designated his wife Marija, daughter of Maroje Boškov,²²³ whose bequests were far more generous. She designated 10 perpers for Gregorian masses for her soul, 1 perper to each of the female convents and 6 *grossi* to each hospice within the city walls. Her will was drafted two decades prior to that of Robinson. In that will Marija designated her husband, Robinson the Englishman, as universal heir and one of executors, yet she survived her husband for more than two decades.²²⁴ By the terms of Robinson's will, his illegitimate son Antun, upon Marija's death, was to be recognised as legitimate and was to inherit all the goods. Robinson's small household also included Marica the maid, whom Robinson recommended to his wife.

Antun, Robinson's illegitimate son, grew up in Dubrovnik, where he was probably born. In terms of his career, he did not follow in his father's footsteps, although the "English connection" most likely influenced the choice of his profession. Six years after his father's death, Antun Robinson, as servant, joined the crew of the English captain Henry Beal (Bell). The service was contracted for a term of three years at an appropriate salary of one Venetian sequin per month.²²⁵ Under Captain Henry Beal (Bell), the type of English ship known as *berton* had previously sailed into Ragusan port with a cargo of salt for the Dubrovnik state.²²⁶

²²¹ *Pacta matrimonialia* vol. 9, f. 250.

²²² *Div. Canc.* vol. 181, f. 32v-36, 38-43v.

²²³ *Test. Not.* vol. 54, f. 239v.

²²⁴ *Test. Not.* vol. 62, f. 150v.

²²⁵ *Div. Canc.* vol. 200, f. 40v.

²²⁶ J. Luetić, "English mariners and ships in seventeenth century Dubrovnik", 228; Josip Luetić, "Engleski pomorci i njihovi jedrenjaci u Dubrovniku XVII stoljeća", *Naše more* 5-6 (1985), 257.

Conclusion

A pluriperspective and comparative analysis of the Ragusan segment of the life and work of William Robinson, a bombardier in the service of the Republic, English consul and merchant, has helped portray a well-integrated non-noble foreigner, and at the same time complemented the picture of the city in a pivotal period, the end of the "Golden Age" and the beginning of one of the crises.

Englishman William Robinson first appears in Ragusan sources in 1574, when the Senate hired him as a bombardier, offering him an above average salary, in accordance with the skills of a master gunner. His bombardier's career, including intermissions due to business travels, lasted at least until 1610, and most probably until his death in 1613. He joined a group of military experts gathered in a confraternity under the protection of St. Barbara, in which, as a rule, the foreigners were a majority, many of whom, like Robinson, were well-integrated in the Ragusan society through kin, friendship and professional ties. Before 1590 he married Marija, a local, with whom he had no children. He had an illegitimate son named Antun, who pursued a career in seafaring, having joined a crew of an English captain.

Apart from gunnery, Robinson was also engaged in trade. Apparently, in two cases his name is recorded as an agent in "black slave" trade.

In the decisions of the Minor Council of 1601 and 1610 regarding bombardier Robinson, he is titled as English consul, although he was not an official diplomatic representative of the English Crown nor is he mentioned in the hitherto known documents of the Levant Company, which appointed its men as agents and consuls to the places of commercial relevance. According to archival evidence, Robinson intermediated and provided assistance to the English, therefore, performed practical consular duties. Although familiar to a part of historiography of Dubrovnik, data on the presence of an English consul in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth century, recognised in such a capacity by the Ragusan government, has not been mentioned in the classical works dealing with Ragusan international relations.

Robinson acquired modest property. In his will, he made bequests to three churches in Dubrovnik. His wife was designated as universal heir, and after her his illegitimate son. For his final resting place he designated the Dominican church in Dubrovnik, where he is believed to have been buried in one of the fraternity graves.

A telling testament to the high degree of Robinson's integration into Ragusan social environment has been provided by his compatriot, Fox. The latter observed a curious change in the behaviour of the Ragusan Englishman, "a man of many words but slo in performing, for tyme hathe so altered the man that he ys becom a Slavonyan in natur, but a veary kynd fellow in hys facyon".²²⁷

²²⁷ *Mr. Harri Cavendish his journey to and from Constantinople 1589 by Fox, his servant*, 13.

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THE FIGURE OF MARY MAGDALENE IN ROBERT SOUTHWELL'S *MARY MAGDALENS FUNERALL TEARES* AND RAGUSAN BAROQUE LONG POEMS

KRISTINA GRGIĆ AND DOLORES GRMAČA

Abstract: The paper analyses the image of Mary Magdalene in three representative examples of the Baroque "literature of tears" – two Ragusan long poems by Ivan Bunić Vučić (1592-1658) and Ignjat Đurđević (1675-1737), and an English prose treatise/meditation by Robert Southwell (1561-1595). Their hitherto unexplored similarities and differences are investigated in the light of their specific religious and cultural-historical contexts, as well as their position and meaning in the reception history of the Mary Magdalene figure. In addition to the typical Baroque preoccupation with the relationship between pragmatism and aesthetics, sacred truth and poetic fiction, a comparative analysis of the three texts also aims to highlight their treatment of the Mary Magdalene figure, taking into account her traditional image of the sensuous penitent, but also the possibility of re-valuating her initial gospel image of a devout disciple and the apostle to the apostles.

Keywords: religious literature, literature of tears, the Baroque, Mary Magdalen, contrition, female apostolate

Introduction: the multifaceted figure

As one of the most popular and intriguing biblical female characters, who has inspired a rich and long tradition of artistic representation, spanning various national and supranational cultural spaces, Mary Magdalene has become an exemplary figure of cultural transfer. During the centuries, this figure has accrued a plethora of meanings, based both on the primary biblical sources as well as on the later apocryphal and

legendary additions.¹ One image created along these lines emerged as probably the most influential in the Western theological and cultural tradition – that of a former sinner (commonly associated with bodily unchastity and sensuousness) who later became a disciple of Jesus and a witness to his crucifixion and resurrection. This Mary Magdalene was actually a composite figure, conflating the character explicitly attested by the Gospels – i.e., identified by this name and described as a disciple and a witness to Christ's resurrection – with the two other biblical women: the penitent sinner who wept at Jesus's feet and anointed them (Luke 7, 37-50),² and Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha and Lazarus who also anointed Christ's feet shortly before crucifixion (John, 12, 1-8).³ Definitely established by Pope Gregory the Great in 591, this image was not accepted by the Eastern tradition, which insisted on separating the three female figures. Despite occasional similar attempts by individual scholars, the Western tradition, and particularly its Catholic segment, took longer to fully recognise this fact – it was only in the mid-twentieth century, for instance, during the 1969 liturgical calendar reform, that the Catholic Church officially acknowledged Mary Magdalene's separate identity. More serious attempts at her revalorisation have only been undertaken in the last decades within feminist theology, especially with regard to her discipleship and her apostolic role, which began with her annunciation of Christ's resurrection to other disciples, and thus earned her the title of the *apostolorum apostola*, that is, an apostle to the apostles.

The overall European and Western religious and cultural history, however, appears to have found the composite figure of Mary Magdalene more appealing and intriguing. As Joseph Gibaldi aptly summarises, despite its being "sheer invention completely without Biblical support, it does make the saint a more vibrant, more fully developed, and certainly more attractive figure than the splintered ones we see in the gospels".⁴ Combined with the legendary and apocryphal elaborations of her post-biblical story, which included the presumed final arrival in southern France, her apostolate there and later eremitical seclusion and death,⁵ such a multifaceted image of Mary Magdalene also proved adaptable to different periods and their various agendas.⁶

¹ The additional, specific interpretations of Mary Magdalene which arose within the gnostic teachings remain out of the scope of this paper.

² Moreover, this figure is sometimes conflated with the adulteress in John 8, 1-11 and/or the woman from Samaria in John 4, 6-42.

³ Hence, this figure is sometimes amalgamated with the woman who anointed Christ's head (Matthew 26, 6-13 and Mark 14, 3-9).

⁴ Joseph Gibaldi, *The Baroque muse: Mary Magdalen in European literature, 1500 to 1700*, dissertation, New York: New York University, 1973, 15.

⁵ Among the various versions of Mary Magdalene's post-biblical life, the one included in *The golden legend* (*Legenda aurea*) by Jacobus de Voragine, which combined her so-called *vita eremitica* and *vita apostolica*, proved to be the most popular and influential.

⁶ Selecting out of the vast body of literature devoted to the Mary Magdalene figure, the above overview is based on J. Gibaldi, *The Baroque muse*; Susan Haskins, *Mary Magdalen: myth and metaphor*, New York: Riverhead Books, 1995; Katherine

Following her highly popular saintly cult in the Middle Ages, the Early Modern period witnessed a renewed interest in Mary Magdalene, particularly in the late sixteenth and throughout the seventeenth centuries. Heralded in the early sixteenth century with the controversy sparked by Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples's (1517) attempts at dismantling her tripartite figure, this interest was later fostered both by the Counter Reformation (intent, among other things, on preserving this figure)⁷ and its programme of devotional reform, as well as by the rise of the wider European Baroque aesthetics and worldview.⁸

This common framework allows for comparison of Mary Magdalene's literary representations in different contexts, even if they lacked direct contact at the time, as was the case with the English and Croatian culture. This paper will focus on three such exemplary texts – two Ragusan long poems by the renowned authors Ivan Bunić Vučić (1592-1658) and Ignjat Đurđević (1675-1737), and an English prose treatise/meditation by Robert Southwell (1561-1595), a highly influential author, albeit somewhat of an outsider whose literary merits took some time to be acknowledged by the English literary history. All three texts arose within the Catholic tradition and hence adhere to the tripartite Mary Magdalene image. Their specific takes on this image, as well as the segments of Mary Magdalene's biographical narrative they chose to retell, show indicative convergences and divergences, and involve a number of religious, social and aesthetic issues, both of the then-contemporary relevance and of a broader (literary-)historical interest.

The Baroque Mary Magdalene: Southwell, Bunić and Đurđević

The first of the three texts, Southwell's *Mary Magdalens Funerall Teares* (1591),⁹ has the narrowest focus and is concentrated merely on a brief segment of Mary Magdalene's

Ludwig Jansen, *The making of the Magdalen. Preaching and popular devotion in the later Middle Ages*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000; Željana Puljiz Šostik, *Književno prikazivanje sv. Marije Magdalene. Primjeri baroknih poema i modernističkih drama u hrvatskoj književnosti*, master's thesis, Zagreb: Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 2006; Jadranka Rebeka Anić, "Marija iz Magdale od Novoga zavjeta do legendi", in: ed. Jadranka Rebeka Anić, Irena Sever Globan, *Marija Magdalena: od Isusove učenice do filmske bludnice. Teološko-kulturalna analiza*, Zagreb: Institut društvenih znanosti Ivo Pilar, 2018, 43-293; Philip C. Almond, *Mary Magdalene. A cultural history*, Cambridge etc.: Cambridge University Press, 2023.

⁷ Criticism of the traditional composite figure, on the other hand, resonated well with the Protestant animosity towards saints' cults in general (K. L. Jansen, *The making of the Magdalen*, 334). The Protestant perception of Mary Magdalene in this period was nonetheless neither monolithic nor entirely dismissing and will be further considered below.

⁸ Cf. J. Gibaldi, *The Baroque muse*, 29; K. L. Jansen, *The making of the Magdalen*, 334-335. The term Baroque here denotes a heterogenous (literary-)historical construct covering the period from the late sixteenth and entire seventeenth centuries, as well as the eighteenth century to a certain extent, leaving aside debates and scepticism regarding its usage, especially in the English literary scholarship.

⁹ Although the protagonist's name is spelled "Marie" on the title page of the first edition of Southwell's text, it is modernised into "Mary" within the printed text itself (with only occasional exceptions). The same principle is applied to the spelling of the adjective "funerall", printed as "fvneral" on the title page. This edition is quoted throughout this article (Robert Southwell, *Marie Magdalens Fvneral Teares*, London, 1591), following its transcription, except in evident spelling errors.

gospel story – the morning of Christ's resurrection and Mary's desperation at the (apparent) loss of his body, as well as her insistent wish to retrieve it. Primarily based on the account in John 20, 11-18, Southwell's narrative includes Christ's appearance in the so-called *hortulanus* scene, where Mary mistakes him for the gardener and is prohibited to touch him. This is yet followed by a telling addition from the Gospel of Matthew (28, 1-10) – a subsequent new encounter with Christ, where Mary is eventually allowed to embrace his feet, together with other women in her company.¹⁰ In both gospel episodes Mary is commissioned to take the news of Christ's resurrection to the disciples, as she is in Southwell's version, while her previous, composite history is here only briefly and occasionally hinted at, with references to her past sinfulness ("former alluring glaunces" and "artificiall paintings"; 56) and to the gospel accounts of Mary of Bethany. In addition to the biblical texts, Southwell relied on another primary source – the medieval homily *De Beata Maria Magdalena* (twelfth century, misattributed to Origen or Bonaventure), which he partially translated as well. The homily provided him with the core story and a dialogical structure,¹¹ but Southwell substantially amplified it, creating a version "roughly three times" longer than the original.¹²

Unlike Southwell's, the two Croatian texts present a more extensive version of Mary Magdalene's composite history. Ivan Bunić Vučić's *Mandalijena pokornica* (*Magdalene the Penitent*, 1630, 1638, 1659), a poem in three cantos (literally *plačevi* = weepings), unfolds a linear narrative, conflating all evangelical reports¹³ and amplifying them with the traditional medieval accounts of her origin and previous sinful life.¹⁴ Mary Magdalene is thus portrayed as a beautiful young sinner who undergoes conversion after seeing and meeting Christ (Bunić has an additional, initial episode of Christ's preaching in the temple not attested by the gospels). The topic of conversion and contrition occupies the largest part of the poem, encompassing all three cantos, and the final canto includes an amplified description of Christ's crucifixion, followed by the report on his resurrection and the aforesaid Mary Magdalene's apostolic commission.

¹⁰ Cf. Emily A. Ransom, "Passions and the passion: Robert Southwell's Mary Magdalene", *Studies in philology* 121/1 (2024), 110, 120.

¹¹ Cf. Debora K. Shuger, *Scholarship, sacrifice, and subjectivity. The Renaissance Bible today*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-Oxford: University of California Press, 1994, 169; Patricia Badir, *The maudlin impression. English literary images of Mary Magdalene, 1550-1700*, Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009, 65-71; E. A. Ransom, "Passions and the passion", 117-119.

¹² E. A. Ransom, "Passions and the passion", 119.

¹³ Each canto has a motto with a short biblical quotation in Latin: Lk 7, 36-37 (1st); Lk 7, 37,48 (2nd); John 20, 12, 17 (3rd). These mottos function as symbolic signposts, although Bunić does not rely exclusively on the quoted gospel segments.

¹⁴ Cf. Ž. Puljiz Šostik, *Književno prikazivanje sv. Marije Magdalene*, 53-56.

Ignjat Đurđević's *Uzdasi Mandalijene pokornice* (*Sighs of the Penitent Magdalene*, 1728), a somewhat belated specimen of the Baroque poem, is longer than Bunić's – it has eight cantos (literally "sighs" = "uzdisanja")¹⁵ – and espouses a different temporal and narrative perspective. Đurđević's Magdalene is presented in the post-gospel context, as a penitent eremite in the "Marseille desert" ("marsijska pustoš")¹⁶ who at the same time retrospectively reflects on her past life. Đurđević similarly incorporates descriptions of her previous sinful ways¹⁷ and the features of Mary of Bethany in this account, as well as an extensive analepsis on crucifixion, but omits the resurrection episode.¹⁸ His story of Mary Magdalene ends with her beatific vision of heaven and subsequent death, which in this case equals the final state of bliss in unity with God.

As is evident from the comparison of their brief summaries, all three examples present Mary Magdalene as a repentant sinner, although the Croatian poems place more emphasis on this aspect, while Southwell is primarily preoccupied with her pain at the loss of Christ. It is worth noting here that his image of Mary Magdalene can be complemented with Southwell's two short poems: *Mary Magdalen's Complaint at Christ's Death*, which is also concentrated on the protagonist's mourning for the Lord, and *Mary Magdalen's Blush*, where she herself reflects on her earlier sinful life devoted to secular love and earthly pleasure. Both poems nevertheless emphasise Mary's powerful feeling of love for Christ, as one of the key features of her traditional saintly image that dominates the examples in focus of this analysis as well. Southwell acknowledges this already in the prefatory dedication to Dorothy Arundel ("The Epistle Dedicatorie"), where he praises Mary Magdalene as the paragon of "a most sincere and perfect loue", and her unwavering and passionate love for Christ is repeatedly evoked and discussed within the text. Bunić's and Đurđević's Magdalene is similarly described in these terms, for instance, as being the "most powerfully inflamed" with love ("najvrucije užežena"; Bunić) or as "a flaming lover" ("ljubovnica ognjena"; Đurđević).¹⁹ Her love as a theological

¹⁵ The first version of the poem, available in a manuscript, consisted of only two cantos, which Đurđević incorporated into the final, widened and printed version of his poem (cf. Krešimir Šimić, "Uzdasi Mandalijene pokornice Ignjata Đurđevića kao apologijska religiozna poema", in: Krešimir Šimić, *Književni svjetovi. Književnohermeneutičke studije iz hrvatske književnosti*, Osijek: Matica hrvatska-Ogranak Osijek, 2007, 123-124).

¹⁶ Đurđević's narrative framework is, in other words, based on Mary Magdalene's *vita eremitica*, which, moreover, shows evidence of conflation with the life of another penitent eremite and a former prostitute – Saint Mary of Egypt (K. L. Jansen, *The making of the Magdalen*, 37-38; S. Haskins, *Mary Magdalen: myth and metaphor*, 108; Zoran Kravar, "Uzdasi Mandalijene pokornice", in: *Leksikon hrvatske književnosti: djela*, ed. Dunja Detoni-Dujmić et al., Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 2008, 923).

¹⁷ Đurđević's text omits the episode in Simon the Pharisee's house (Lk 7, 37-50) but expands the story on Mary Magdalene's obsession with her beauty and seduction.

¹⁸ Cf. also Ž. Puljiz Sostik, *Književno prikazivanje sv. Marije Magdalene*, 57-63.

¹⁹ Ivan Bunić Vučić's poem is throughout cited from Dživo Bunić Vučić, *Djela*, ed. Dunja Falševac, Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska, 1995, and Ignjat Đurđević's from Ignjat Đorđić, *Djela Iliacija Ćorgi (Ilgata Đorđića). Krhiga prva (Stari pisci hrvatski. Kriha XXIV)*, ed. Milan Rešetar, Zagreb: Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, 1918.

virtue implies a strong desire for a spiritual union with Christ, which overcomes a mere desire for absolution from sin. All three texts explicitly mention and comment upon such symbolic implications of Mary Magdalene's figure, with substantial portions of reflexion and argumentation in Southwell's and Đurđević's case.

The three authors' choice of subject matter appears as symptomatic of their age not only in terms of the general Baroque inclination towards religious topics, fuelled by the Counter Reformation in the Catholic context, but also in a more specific manner. The immense popularity of Mary Magdalene in the Baroque, evidenced by her countless artistic representations, is usually ascribed to her double appeal as a model of penance and as of "spiritualised sensuality"²⁰ or "sacred eroticism".²¹ Although her figure and its treatment cannot be reduced to these two aspects, they are indicative of some of the wider trends in the Baroque and overall Early Modern (religious) literature. These included the movement from secular and erotic (*amor carnalis*) to divine love (*amor sacralis*)²² and the accompanying appropriation of amorous discourse for religious purposes, what Louis Martz's once-influential study termed as "sacred parody".²³ This tendency was not without earlier precedents, both biblical (especially *The Song of Songs*) and medieval, and could at the same time be viewed as a form of reclaiming, bearing in mind that medieval and Early Modern secular love poetry had previously borrowed from the same religious discourse. The term "theologised Petrarchism"²⁴ could be appropriate in this context as well, in view of the enormous influence of Petrarch's poetry in the Early Modern era and its own transition from a secular to a sacred object of devotion – albeit with a caveat that Petrarchism was not the only (dominant) model of love poetry at the time. Neoplatonic love poetry in particular, as a cognate model aimed at divinisation of love, provided another possible source of influence.²⁵

The Ragusan poems initially employ elements of amorous discourse in their literal sense, when describing Mary Magdalene's sinful past, dominated by her obsession with

²⁰ J. Gibaldi, *The Baroque muse*, 141.

²¹ D. K. Shuger, *Scholarship, sacrifice, and subjectivity*, 192.

²² Dunja Fališevac, *Ivan Bunić Vučić*, Zagreb: Zavod za znanost o književnosti Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu-Sveučilišna naklada Liber, 1987, 72.

²³ Louis Martz, *The poetry of meditation: a study in English religious literature of the seventeenth century*, New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 1955, 186. This term has become a critical commonplace in the English literary scholarship, although it has not been accepted without reserve and/or critique (see e.g., Rosamund Tuve, "Sacred 'parody' of love poetry, and Herbert", *Studies in the Renaissance* 8 (1961), 249-290; Gary M. Bouchard, "'If his compare with mine': re-thinking sacred parody in light of Robert Southwell's version of Edward Dyer's 'Fancy'", *Renaissance* 75/2 (2023), 111-128).

²⁴ Anne R. Sweeney, *Robert Southwell. Snow in Arcadia: redrawing the English lyric landscape, 1586-1595*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006, 241.

²⁵ Cf. D. Fališevac, *Ivan Bunić Vučić*, 72.

beauty and secular love pursuits.²⁶ This is, however, followed by the crucial moment of transition, which provides amorous vocabulary with a new meaning. Mary's love for God is thus described in some of the typical Petrarchan terms, with the imagery of fire and flames (as in the abovementioned examples), eyes and light, captivity, arrows and wounds to the heart.²⁷ Elaborating on the antithesis between human and divine love, both authors, among other things, use the image of the hunter becoming the hunted to refer to the moment of transformation:

Ko bi t' reko, Mandalijena,
kad se u lov ti odpravi
da ćeš biti ulovljena
od nebeske tad ljubavi? (Bunić, canto 1, p. 149)

(Who could have told you, Magdalene, / when you embarked on a hunt, / that you yourself would then get captured / by heavenly love?).

Žudjeh nekad, o gizdavi
nad sviem ľudskiem sinovima,
da te ljepos mǎ zatravi,
nu stravljenā tvo'im zracima
i požudna tvoga pliena
bih u plienu zaplieńena (Đurđević, canto 3, p. 511)

([Addressing Christ]: Once I yearned, oh the beautiful/ son of human above all others, / to enchant you with my beauty, / but charmed by your rays, /while desiring for you to become my prey / I myself became the captured prey.)²⁸

Southwell's portrayal of Mary Magdalene, who is similarly described as a "captiue in so many prisons (...) Loue being her Jailor in them all" (p. 7), highlights another antithetical aspect of love, fundamental for Petrarchan poetry. Love in this sense implies a bitter-sweet emotion that inevitably involves pain, caused by the beloved's rejection, absence and/or death, although it does not leave the lover any less steadfast nor adamant in his pursuit. This aspect is also present in the two Ragusan poems, but with Mary Magdalene herself as the source of her own pain, since it is her earlier sinful conduct that has deprived her of divine presence, threatening to plunge her into a state of spiritual death, as well as injuring Christ as the new object of her love and causing his expiatory suffering. In Southwell's portrayal of Mary Magdalene, the feeling

²⁶ Bunić and Đurđević (in his earlier years) wrote amorous poetry. On the other hand, Đurđević's Mary Magdalene explicitly criticises secular love poetry (in cantos 2 and 3), which fuelled her own amorous appetites and fed her vanity as well.

²⁷ See also Ž. Puljiz Šostik, *Književno prikazivanje sv. Marije Magdalene*, 64-73.

²⁸ All translations from Croatian into English are by the authors of this article. Quotations from Bunić's and Đurđević's poems are at times deliberately literal, as in the abovementioned examples, in order to preserve the specificities of their style and rhetoric.

of abandonment and absence is externalised, and even more strongly pronounced. Her extensive mourning for Christ hence comes closer to "the peculiarly Petrarchan form of melancholia"²⁹ and foregrounds love's close relation to death, which opens the narrative and is elaborated throughout the text:

Amongst other mourneful accidents of the passion of Christ, that loue presenteth it selfe to my memory, with which the blessed Mary Magdalen louing our Lord more than her life, followed him in his iourney to his death, attending vppon him when his Disciples fledde, and being more willing to die with him, than they to liue without him. But not finding the fauour to accompany him in death, and loathing after him to remaine in life, the fire of her true affection enflamed her heart, and her enflamed heart resolved into vncessant teares; so that burning and bathing between loue and griefe, shee led a life euer dying, and felt a death neuer ending. (pp. 1-2)

In addition to Petrarchan, Southwell's Magdalene figure invokes references to another literary model, popular and influential in the Early Modern era – Ovid's *Heroides*. Echoes of Ovid's portrayal of abandoned women-lovers³⁰ are nevertheless cast in a specific, Christianised form: Southwell's, as well as a number of other Mary Magdalene narratives that emerged at the time, "fuse this highly eroticized Ovidian representation of abandoned females with the *Song of Songs* and the hagiographic tradition, producing a self-conscious amalgam of the ancient rhetoric of female desire and the biblical language of erotic spirituality".³¹ Southwell's Ovidian intertext might be widened to include the figures of speechless women such as Philomela and Lucrece, whom his Mary Magdalene comes to resemble in her partial state of speechlessness before the risen Christ.³²

The two Croatian poems can fit into this picture to a certain extent, inasmuch as they include a temporarily abandoned lover's address to the absent beloved,³³ but bearing

²⁹ Gary Kuchar, "Gender and recusant melancholia in Robert Southwell's *Mary Magdalene's Funeral Tears*", in: *Catholic culture in Early Modern England*, ed. Ronald Corthell et al., Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007, 143; see also Gary Kuchar, *Divine subjection: the rhetoric of sacramental devotion in Early Modern England*, Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2005, 59; Mark Russell Benedict, *The ministry of passion and meditation: Robert Southwell's Marie Magdalens Funeral Teares and the adaptation of continental influences*, master's thesis, Atlanta: Georgia State University, 2010, 18-27.

³⁰ D. K. Shuger, *Scholarship, sacrifice, and subjectivity*, 170-176; M. R. Benedict, *The ministry of passion and meditation*, 14-17.

³¹ D. K. Shuger, *Scholarship, sacrifice, and subjectivity*, 171.

³² G. Kuchar, *Divine subjection*, 65-66; G. Kuchar, "Gender and recusant melancholia", 147-148.

³³ Cf. also Lovro Škopljanc, "Šižejna izgradnja poeme u starijoj hrvatskoj književnosti", in: *Komparativna povijest hrvatske književnosti. Zbornik radova XVII. Poema u hrvatskoj književnosti: problem kontinuiteta*, ed. Cvijeta Pavlović, Vinka Glunčić-Bužančić, Andrea Meyer-Fraatz, Split-Zagreb: Književni krug Split-Odsjek za komparativnu književnost Filozofskoga fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 2015, 44.

in mind that her suffering emanates from her own guilt. Bunić's Mary Magdalene is partly speechless as well, in the central episode of her repentance and absolution by Christ (canto 2), based on the biblical account of the sinner who anointed his feet. As further analysis will show, however, neither Croatian nor Southwell's Magdalene figures remain entirely silent.

The fact that Mary Magdalene in all three instances has her desire fulfilled and is finally united with Christ departs from the Petrarchan (and Ovidian) intertext, but also sanctifies her passion and religious passion in general. Fostering of "a somatic experiencing of the sacred" in artistic representations of Mary Magdalene,³⁴ which resonated well with the Baroque sensibility and its emphasis on sensuality,³⁵ made her figure exemplary in the wider context of the Early Modern sacred rhetoric, which aimed to reaffirm the value of "passionate discourse"³⁶ as part of the overall amalgamation of emotional with spiritual and cognitive experiences.³⁷

Southwell seems to have been aware of the possible objections to Mary Magdalene's display of excessive passion and hence felt the need to provide justification in his prefatory paratexts. The dedication to Dorothy Arundel maintains that Magdalene's passions "were not guides to reason, but attendantes vpon it" and were "commanded by such a loue as could neuer exceede, because the thing loued was of infinite perfection". The address "To the Reader" promises that the text will help him "to teach his thoughts eyther to temper passion in the meane, or to giue the bridle onely where the excesse cannot be faultie". Southwell's arguments are informed by the then influential Augustinian theory, which sanctioned excessive passion when directed towards God as the supreme object,³⁸ viewing emotions as a function of the will and emphasising the indispensable symbiosis of love and reason in his pursuit.³⁹ Approaching it from a gender perspective, Gary Kuchar underlines the difference between "a feminized, Augustinian language of excess", and the opposing "masculinized, Aristotelian language of temperance", as another important authority that is partly evoked in Southwell's justifying explanations.⁴⁰ This

³⁴ Lisa McClain, "'They have taken away my lord': Mary Magdalene, Christ's missing body, and the mass in Reformation England", *The sixteenth century journal* 38/1 (2007), 95-96.

³⁵ Cf. J. Gibaldi, *The Baroque muse*, 141.

³⁶ As E. Ransom has pointed out, the terms passions and affections appear as more appropriate in this context, rather than emotions, whose prevalent usage dates back only to the nineteenth century (Ransom, "Passions and the Passion", 102, n. 4).

³⁷ Debora K. Shuger, "The philosophical foundations of sacred rhetoric", in: *Religion and emotion: approaches and interpretation*, ed. John Corrigan, Oxford etc.: Oxford University Press, 2004, 121-123; see also Ivana Brković, "Sainly love of Saint Catherine in a mystical poem by Junije Palmotić", *Dubrovnik Annals* 54 (2020), 106-109.

³⁸ G. Kuchar, "Gender and recusant melancholia", 138, 140.

³⁹ D. K. Shuger, "The philosophical foundations of sacred rhetoric", 123.

⁴⁰ G. Kuchar, *Divine subjection*, 69; cf. also G. Kuchar, "Gender and recusant melancholia", 150.

difference opens up the issue of Mary Magdalene's femininity and the (in)acceptability of female spiritual authority, prompting the assumption that Southwell's need to contain the excessive passion of such a figure of "female ideality" within acceptable bounds, in the prefaces and within the text, could have made her more acceptable to both male and female audience at the time.⁴¹

Passions and affections nevertheless remain important for Southwell's depiction of Mary Magdalene and the message her figure is presumed to convey. This does not exclude the corporeal dimension either – it is emphasised throughout the text, in Mary's resolute pursuit of Christ's physical body and even in her desire to identify with it in the pain of crucifixion and in death. Deeming herself yet unworthy of such complete identification, she embraces a state of paralysis and incessant mourning on the verge between life and death:

shee was not there where shee was, for shee was wholly where her Maister was; more where shee loued than where shee liued, and lesse in her self than in his body, which notwithstanding, where it was shee could not imagine. For she sought, and as yet found it not, and therefore stood at the Tombe weeping for it, being now altogether giuen to mourning & driuen to misery (p. 6).

On the other hand, the corporeal dimension is positively reasserted in the added conflation with Matthew's gospel (not to be found in the pseudo-Origen's homily), where Mary Magdalene is finally allowed to touch Christ's feet.⁴² Exploring the epistemological implications of this dimension in Southwell's prose, as well as in a number of similar narratives from this period, Debora Shuger views their figures of Mary Magdalene as exemplary for "the premodern constructions" of desire on various levels: "bodily, religious, and intellectual".⁴³ By emphasising bodily presence and resisting (exclusive) allegorisation of the story,⁴⁴ these texts present "an erotics of knowledge", wedding, instead of dissociating, reason and passion.⁴⁵

The texts of Đurđević and Bunić are more critically inclined towards the body, which is finally renounced in Mary Magdalene's death and her soul's ascension into heaven (briefly described in Đurđević's and acknowledged as a fact in Bunić's text). Negative connotations of corporeality and passions are highlighted in the narrative of the heroine's past sinful life, where her indulgence in her own sensuous beauty and amorous pursuits is explicitly condemned. They are nevertheless depicted in some detail, especially in Đurđević's case, and she is equally passionate in her subsequent

⁴¹ Cf. G. Kuchar, *Divine subjection*, 69.

⁴² Cf. E. A. Ransom, "Passions and the passion", 119-120.

⁴³ D. K. Shuger, *Scholarship, sacrifice, and subjectivity*, 8.

⁴⁴ D. K. Shuger, *Scholarship, sacrifice, and subjectivity*, 173.

⁴⁵ D. K. Shuger, *Scholarship, sacrifice, and subjectivity*, 186-187.

endeavours to renounce and punish her flesh. Bunić's Magdalene dramatically strips all her adornments after the first encounter with Christ, violently crying and marring her appearance to become dishevelled and bloodied, and finally swoons from the emotional strain. Đurđević's Mary Magdalene is already an eremite⁴⁶ who regularly mortifies her flesh, not only by meagre and harsh living conditions (she is at first depicted in the classical *locus horridus*, symbolic of her sin and repentance),⁴⁷ but with physical punishment, i.e., self-flagellation. In addition, she is subject to strong emotional suffering, as she struggles with her guilt and with various inner temptations, which appear as her nightly thoughts in what comes to resemble an internal morality play in canto 4. Emotional excess is thus equally important in the two Ragusan poems, but again as long as it presumes channelling the protagonist's (and readers') affective responses in the proper direction.

These narratives feature the body of Christ as well, with emphasis on its salvific function. Bunić's Mary Magdalene is allowed to have direct contact with Christ in the aforesaid episode of repentance and anointment of his feet, where she remains outwardly silent, but lets her bodily actions act as a substitute for speech and a path to her redemption:⁴⁸

S tijem je sudim pridrazima
vrh Božjega slavna tijela
mastim, suzam i pramina
i celovim zadaždjela.

Njega maže, sebe ozdravlja,
nnd njim suzi, sebe umiva,
sebe odriješa, na nj vez stavlja,
koga izdava, sad celiva.

Izrijet jednu riječ ne more,
jadnu pjesan da ponovi,
ali za nju sveđ govore
mas, pram, suze i celovi. (canto 2, p. 163)

(With these precious vessels / she rained a rain of ointment, tears, tresses and kisses / on God's glorious body. // Anointing him, she heals herself, / crying over him, she washes herself, / liberates herself and binds him, / whom she betrayed now she kisses. // One single word she is unable to utter, / her mournful poem to repeat, / but in her stead continue to speak / ointment, tresses, tears and kisses.)

⁴⁶ The heroine's future eremitical life is only announced at the end of Bunić's canto 1.

⁴⁷ Cf. K. Šimić, "Uzdasi Mandalijene pokornice", 124.

⁴⁸ Mary does go on to pronounce her penitent confession to God, but inwardly, starting with the address to Christ's feet.

The rhetorical power of outward, bodily signs of inexpressible passion, especially tears and sighs, is similarly asserted in Southwell's text, where they act as Mary Magdalene's "mighty oratours" (p. 56) in the encounter with the risen Christ:

Loue would haue spoken, but feare enforced silence. Hope frameth the words, but doubt melteth them in the passage; (...) In fine teares issued in lieu of words, and deep sighes in stead of long sentēces, the eie supplying the mouths default, and the heart pressing out the vsyllabled breath at once, which the conflict of her disagreeing passions, would not suffer to be sorted into the seuerall soundes of intelligible speeches (p. 59).

The crucified body of Christ plays an important role in the two Croatian poems too, both on the literal and symbolic levels of narrative. Their recounting of his passion provides another opportunity to foreground the affective dimension of the text, with dramatic and emotionally charged descriptions of his suffering and of the emphatic reactions of Mary Magdalene, as well as his mother and some of the other disciples (John in both poems and Peter only in Đurđević's).⁴⁹ Mary Magdalene additionally agonises over her own complicity in Christ's crucifixion as a former sinner, and Đurđević's heroine, like Southwell's, later wishes to identify with Christ and partake in his pain and agony (cantos 4 and 7), although her physical suffering primarily serves to expiate her sins.

Depiction of the body and passions in these two texts has a clear didactic purpose, providing a vivid lesson in morality and piety. In this sense it possesses an epistemological dimension as well, inasmuch as it teaches by example and uses the body and passions as a mental and imaginative path, in order to explore the nature of sin and remorse, divine mercy and love. The final goal of such a pursuit is the presence of, and unity with Christ – the prime object of desire for all three Magdalene figures. The treatment of passions and sensory experiences in these texts thus aptly reflects the general Counter-Reformation emphasis on their proper usage and primary ethical implications – that is, the need for an appropriate combination of "repressive and stimulative elements"⁵⁰ that will "solicit desired emotional and behavioural responses"⁵¹ from the recipient community of believers.

⁴⁹ Bunić's version of the crucifixion includes Mary's impassioned, plaintive address to the Virgin Mary, Christ and the cross, as well as the narrator's plea to Mary herself. Đurđević's account is more extensive and elaborate, and accordingly more emotional. It includes not only Mary's addresses to Christ and the Virgin Mary, but also an angry condemnation of the already dead traitor Judas, as well as the speeches by other participants: the Virgin Mary's complaints, John's lamenting report on Christ's capture and previous torture, and Peter's remorseful confession of his denial of Christ. Such a dramatic presentation of Christ's passion bears resemblance to the ritual of The Way of the Cross, and to the similar popular forms of this type of devotion.

⁵⁰ Wietse de Boer, "The Counter-Reformation of the senses", in: *The Ashgate research companion to the Counter-Reformation*, eds. Alexandra Bamji, Geert H. Janssen and Mary Laven, Abingdon-New York: Routledge, 2016, 254.

⁵¹ W. de Boer, "The Counter-Reformation of the senses", 252.

All three texts repeatedly and explicitly state their moral and religious aims. In addition to the aforementioned authorial comments on the proper use of passions in the paratext, Southwell's narrator, for instance, concludes his account with an address to the reader ("O christian soule"), prompting him to follow Mary Magdalene as an example ("mirrour") of penitence, devotion and love. Bunić's poem opens with an invitation to the audience ("Oh ye mortals") to repent with Mary Magdalene's guidance and help. In a similar vein, Đurđević's narrator apostrophises "the soul" (canto 3), and later refers to the collective subject, i.e., "we" as sinners and mortals, when delivering a lesson or a warning. Both Ragusan narrators present Mary Magdalene as a model and a guide for themselves as well, in direct appeals to her and to God. Reflective and moralising passages are generally dispersed throughout these three texts, sometimes even in the form of the narrator's instructive apostrophes to the heroine herself.

Prefatory paratexts of Southwell and Đurđević provide some further guidelines in terms of their authorial intent and their texts' potential reception. Đurđević's address "To the Reader" (*Štiocu*) provides, among other things, a justifying explanation of his lengthy depiction of Mary Magdalene's earlier sinful life, as possibly disturbing content that should again serve as a mirror in order to deter young girls from committing the same errors, or at least encourage them to repentance (pp. 466-467).

Even more importantly, these paratexts offer a form of literary legitimation and self-reflexion, revealing the authors' aim of merging religious and aesthetic functions of their texts, in accordance with the Horatian precept of *docere et delectare*. Hoping that his portrayal of Mary Magdalene will be accepted as "not vnfit to entertaine well tempered humorous, both with pleasure and profit", Southwell deems literary "fables" acceptable insofar as they can contain "morall trueths, and that couertly vttered to a common good, whiche without a maske woulde not finde so free a passage". This extends to his own employment of motifs and devices from the then popular secular (love) poetry, which he openly criticises, but also modifies to fit his devotional purposes. In the prefatory dedication to his other biblical lament, the poem *Saint Peters Complaint*, Southwell aptly describes such an approach as weaving "a new webbe" in the secular poets' "owne loome", in order to "let them see the errour of their workes" and "inuite some skilfuller wits to goe forward in the same, or to begin some finer peece, wherein it may be seene how well verse and vertue sute together."⁵²

Southwell's twofold, affirmative and pragmatic, view of literature was informed by the then current Jesuit theories of "writing as ministry".⁵³ As a member of this order, a Jesuit student and afterwards a teacher in Rome, Southwell forged his own "sacralised

⁵² Robert Southwell, *Saint Peters Complaint, With other Poemes*, London, 1595, A3.

⁵³ A. Sweeney, *Robert Southwell*, 20.

poetics"⁵⁴ in the attempt to reconcile "the exercise of priestly ministry and the production of literary texts".⁵⁵ When devoted to the transmission of the divine message and to religious and moral edification in general, the artist is in this sense sacralised as a (secondary) creator, legitimised by God's scriptural authority and example⁵⁶ to replicate his creative process.⁵⁷ What F. W. Brownlow terms as Southwell's "aesthetics of holiness"⁵⁸ hence sanctions the use of artifice, not any more perceived as a mere hindrance or an opposite to, but as a prerequisite for conveying the sacred content.⁵⁹ Southwell's literary programme was not, however, a mere elaboration of the Jesuit agenda, as it engaged in some of the key universal issues in the Western literary tradition that dated back to the antiquity and were raised again in the then contemporary debates and defences of poetry, particularly those composed in the Neoplatonic vein. The challenge of balancing between pragmatism and aesthetics, the (divine) truth and poetic "lies" or fictions, indeed became one of the major Baroque concerns.

The two Ragusan poems can also be viewed along the lines of the Jesuit and the overall Counter-Reformation view of art as an effective tool for evangelisation. Jesuits were actively involved in the religious, cultural and educational life of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Dubrovnik,⁶⁰ and Ignjat Đurđević was initially a member of this order too, although he afterwards switched allegiance to join the Benedictines. Like Southwell, he expressed his views on the abovementioned issue explicitly in two prefaces. Whereas the first one, a brief dedicatory epistle to the Zadar archbishop Vicenco

⁵⁴ A. Sweeney, *Robert Southwell*, 228.

⁵⁵ Scott Pilarz, *Robert Southwell and the mission of literature 1561–1595: writing reconciliation*, Aldershot-Burlington: Ashgate, 2004, xiv.

⁵⁶ The preface to *Saint Peters Complaint* explicitly invokes divine authority by claiming that God, "who deliuering many parts of Scripture in verse, and, by his Apostle willing vs to exercise our deuotion in Himnes and spirituall Sonnets, warranteth the Arte to bee good, and the vse allowable" (Southwell, *Saint Peters Complaint*, A2).

⁵⁷ A. Sweeney, *Robert Southwell*, 228–268; S. Pilarz, *Robert Southwell and the mission of literature*, 169. This tradition goes back to the ancient notion of poets as prophets (cf. Ernst Robert Curtius, *European literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. by Willard R. Trask, Princeton-Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013, 145–146), as well as to the medieval notion of the poet as theologian (E. R. Curtius, *European literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, 214–227).

⁵⁸ F. W. Brownlow, *Robert Southwell*, New York: Twayne Publishers; London etc.: Prentice Hall International, 1996, 41–42.

⁵⁹ This point is further elaborated by Brian Oxley: "That man is a work of art akin to a literary work is an implication of the view of God as an artificer 'whose works our wit exceed' (...) In all these instances the creative artist is God, but although Southwell gives the credit to God, it is certain that he views man's own wit and artistic faculty, created by God, as a co-worker with God in this secondary creation" (Brian William Oxley, *The poetry of an artificial man: a study of the Latin and English verse of Robert Southwell*, PhD thesis, St Andrews: Faculty of Arts of the University of St Andrews, 1985, 227).

⁶⁰ The first Jesuits arrived in Dubrovnik in the sixteenth century and set up their residence in 1604, although their presence was not continuous due to the sometimes-strained relationship with the authorities (for an informative overview of Jesuit activities in Ragusa, see e.g., Stjepan Ćosić and Mijo Korade, *Isusovci u Dubrovniku*, Zagreb: Leykam international, 2019, 5–53).

(Vicko) Zmajević, mainly aims to legitimise his writing by obtaining the patronage of such a figure of religious authority, the second preface is formulated as an authorial defence and a short comprehension guide to the presumed benevolent reader, who is apostrophised as a "friend". The notion of poetry's "falsity" is one of the key issues discussed in this paratext – more precisely, the alleged insincerity of grieving in an ornate manner. Responding to the unnamed critics who levelled this accusation at his poem, Đurđević distinguishes "natural" (i.e., real-life) from literary expression of grief,⁶¹ and asserts the latter's autonomy, supporting his argument with examples from tradition, selected from oral poetry and devotional literature. Đurđević's final point even goes beyond the bounds of strictly religious purposes, as he attempts to legitimise his overall writing by proclaiming as its final aim the glorification of his homeland and native language.⁶²

The abovementioned dichotomies are also implicitly evoked in all three portrayals of Mary Magdalene, as they are interwoven in the very fabric of the text. The heroine's earlier indulgence in her own beauty and sensuous pleasures, whether only alluded to (Southwell) or depicted (Bunić and Đurđević), is in a way transposed onto the level of poetic expression, which is embellished in a typical Baroque fashion, with an abundance of rhetorical figures, including numerous antitheses and paradoxes. Use of these two figures is to a certain extent fostered by the content itself (the pivotal opposites of sinfulness and grace, profane love and divine love, death and life), as well as by the shared intertext of Petrarchan poetry, where they dominate the discourse. Đurđević's defence of his ornate style could here be extended to the other two examples, since all three texts demonstrate a high level of literary awareness.⁶³ While it may on the surface appear as a form of "sinful" poetic indulgence, their ornate style is simultaneously employed as an edifying tool that can create the desired affective response and impress upon the audience the moral and religious message more efficiently.⁶⁴

The conjunction of affects and richly figured style, that ultimately forms the basis of the overall Early Modern "passionate discourse",⁶⁵ is furthermore inscribed in the common generic framework of these texts, cast in the then popular European mould of

⁶¹ "[Ne] minu je tko reče da uzdisaće Mandalijenino nije naravno i da tko plače nazbiļ svoj grijeh, nije moguć urešeno bolovati" (I. Đorđić, *Djela Iñacija Gorgi*, 466; [My *Mandalijena*] was not spared by some who claimed that Magdalene's mourning is not natural and that those who truly weep for their sins are not able to grieve in an ornate manner).

⁶² For a more detailed analysis of both prefaces, see Pavao Pavličić, "Ignjat Đurđević", in: *Skrivena teorija*, Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 2006, 215–238.

⁶³ A number of earlier interpreters of Southwell's work criticised the "mannered artifice" of his style as a mere addition apparently unsuitable for religious content and purpose (F. W. Brownlow, *Robert Southwell*, 41).

⁶⁴ Cf. D. Fališevac, *Ivan Bunić Vučić*, 74; D. K. Shuger, "The philosophical foundations of sacred rhetoric", 122.

⁶⁵ Cf. D. K. Shuger, "The philosophical foundations of sacred rhetoric".

the so-called literature of tears. Southwell encountered its Italian sources and models during his stay in Rome, and they were familiar to the Ragusan authors through regular cultural transfers between Croatian and Italian Early Modern literatures. In addition to their key shared source that focused on the figure of Mary Magdalene, Erasmo de Valvasone's poem *Le Lagrime della Maddalena* (1586),⁶⁶ it is worth noting that Southwell partly translated the foundational poem of the genre, Luigi Tansillo's *La Lagrime di San Pietro* (1560/1585), and later went on to render his own version of the story in *Saint Peters Complaint* (1595). Tansillo's text, moreover, served as one of the sources for the first Croatian poem of this type, Ivan Gundulić's *Suze sina razmetnoga* (*The Tears of the Prodigal Son*, 1622), which proved highly influential for the subsequent Croatian Baroque poetry of tears (often termed *plačevi* [weepings/weeping poems]) and the religious narrative/long poems in general.⁶⁷

The generic makeup and origins of all three examples are still somewhat more complex. The letter might be broadened to encompass the aforementioned Ovidian, as well as the medieval (secular and religious) complaint tradition,⁶⁸ which was also continued in the Early Modern secular complaint poems, especially popular in English literature.⁶⁹

While Southwell's two short Mary Magdalene lyric laments remained in the wider domain of poetry, the use of prose distinguishes his *Mary Magdalene's Funerall Teares* even further from its two Croatian counterparts. Its expression nevertheless borders on the poetic, and it has accordingly been classified as a prose poem,⁷⁰ as well as a prose

⁶⁶ The two Croatian poems are more indebted to this source than Southwell's text is (for a brief overview of Valvasone's poem, see e.g., J. Gibaldi, *The Baroque muse*, 221-227; S. Haskins, *Mary Magdalen: myth and metaphor*, 266-267; and for Bunić's poem and its relation to this and a number of other Italian sources, cf. D. Fališevac, *Ivan Bunić Vučić*, 60-69).

⁶⁷ See Pavao Pavličić, "Neke zajedničke crte baroknih *plačeva*", in: *Rasprave o hrvatskoj baroknoj književnosti*, Split: Čakavski sabor, 1979, 105-128; Pavao Pavličić, "Poema", in: *Hrvatska književna enciklopedija*. Sv. 3, ed. Velimir Visković, Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2011, 392-393. In addition to Bunić's and Đurđević's poems, other key examples include Antun Kanižlić's *Sveta Rožalija* (*Saint Rosalia*, eighteenth century), that echoes but also modifies the "tears-poetry" tradition, and, outside its bounds, Junije Palmotić's mystic poem *Katarina Sijenska* (*Saint Catherine of Siena*, seventeenth century; for this poem, see Brković, "Saintly love of Saint Catherine").

⁶⁸ Of particular importance here is one of the religious subspecies, the *planctus Mariae*, the Virgin Mary's lamentations by the cross (for Southwell, cf. E. A. Ransom, "Passions and the passion", 114-115, and for Đurđević cf. Terezija Kordić, *Analiza teoloških motiva u "Uzdasma Mandalijene pokornice" Ignjata Đurđevića*, master's thesis, Zagreb: Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 2023, 20-21).

⁶⁹ See Emily A. Ransom, "Complaint as reconciliation in the literary mission of Robert Southwell", in: *Precarious identities: studies in the work of Fulke Greville and Robert Southwell*, ed. Vassiliki Markidou, Afroditi-Maria Panaghis, London-New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020, 172-204; E. A. Ransom, "Passions and the passion"; and for possible parallels with Croatian literature, L. Škopljanač, "Šižejna izgradnja poeme", 43-44.

⁷⁰ Pierre Janelle, *Robert Southwell the writer: a study in religious inspiration*, London: Sheed and Ward, 1935, 191; A. Sweeney, *Robert Southwell*, 44, 125.

meditation⁷¹ and a treatise,⁷² and its partial similarity to the homily can be traced back to its Latin source *De Beata Maria Magdalena*.⁷³ Notwithstanding such generic nuances, both Southwell's biblical complaints provided the key impetus for the development of English "literature of tears", with a number of followers of Catholic and Protestant persuasion (including Gervase Markham, who reworked *Mary Magdalens Funerall Teares* in verse).⁷⁴

Southwell played an indispensable role in the overall rise of the English religious literature in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, particularly of its meditative strain.⁷⁵ The shaping influence of meditation as an intense mental and spiritual experience is evident in Southwell's and in the two Ragusan portrayals of Mary Magdalene, especially Đurđević's. One of their major and highly influential common precedents was developed by the founder of the Jesuit order, Ignatius Loyola. His meditative method was based on intense self-searching and visualisation, highlighting the importance of "emotional response as a legitimate way to experience God, and the recollected memory of that response as a methodology for Jesuit witness and ministry".⁷⁶ As an expression of the Jesuit "incarnational spirituality",⁷⁷ this method resonated well with the Baroque penchant for strong affective responses and their captivating and memorable artistic representation,⁷⁸ while also supplying a path for profound reflection

⁷¹ S. Haskins, *Mary Magdalen: myth and metaphor*, 267; P. Badir, *The maudlin impression*, 65.

⁷² Paul Cefalu, "Noli me tangere and the reception of Mary Magdalene in Early Modern England", in: Paul Cefalu, *The Johannine Renaissance in Early Modern English literature and theology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017, 27.

⁷³ As has already been noted, Gary Kuchar views Southwell's homiletic framework as a means of containing Augustinian excess of passion. The earlier assumptions that Southwell's text was originally intended and delivered as a sermon have now been dismissed (F. W. Brownlow, *Robert Southwell*, 40). It is worth noting that the notions of the sermon and the homily were not identical in Post-Reformation England, where, as H. Yip maintains, the printed homily "was not always a simple sermon for unskilled preachers, but was fluid in its function as doctrinal pamphlet, polemical treatise and devotional text" (Hannah Yip, "What was a homily in Post-Reformation England?", *Journal of ecclesiastical history* 72/1 (2020), 69).

⁷⁴ For an overview, see e.g., Alison Shell, *Catholicism, controversy and the English literary imagination, 1558-1660*, Cambridge etc.: Cambridge University Press, 2004, 56-104.

⁷⁵ This fact was foregrounded in the previously quoted Louis Martz's study (*The poetry of meditation*), an important milestone in the study of Southwell's and English religious poetry in general, even though it has in the meantime been critically re-examined, elaborated as well as disputed on the grounds of simplification (see e.g., G. Kuchar, *Divine subjection*, 265, note 80; Sophie Read, *Eucharist and the poetic imagination in Early Modern England*, Cambridge etc.: Cambridge University Press, 2013, 61-61; P. Cefalu, "Noli me tangere", 29).

⁷⁶ A. Sweeney, *Robert Southwell*, 8.

⁷⁷ S. Pilarz, *Robert Southwell and the mission of literature*, 154.

⁷⁸ One of the key components of the Ignatian meditative method was the "composition of place", a clear and focused mental presentation of a specific topic, such as the crucifixion or Mary Magdalene's wake by Christ's grave (cf. J. Gibaldi, *The Baroque muse*, 83; A. Sweeney, *Robert Southwell*, 49; M. R. Benedict, *The Ministry of passion and meditation*, 52). Loyola's pivotal (albeit not exclusive) influence in this respect has become a critical commonplace in literature on Southwell.

on "aspects of the individual's relationship with God, including extensive visualisations of the Passion of Christ".⁷⁹ In other words, it provided an apt form of individual and impassioned devotion that fitted in well with the Counter-Reformation agenda of evangelisation, as a complement to communal liturgical rites and rituals.⁸⁰

The spiritual experience in all three texts is, moreover, elevated to the higher stage of mystical converse and union with God, already reached by the heroine and desired by the narrator for himself and/or for his audience. Their similar use of amorous discourse in reference to Mary Magdalene's union with Christ⁸¹ was also common in the Christian mystical tradition, having been canonised by the well-known and influential interpretation of the biblical *Song of Songs* by Bernard de Clairvaux,⁸² whose meditational practice in general provided an important precedent for the Jesuit and wider Early Modern tradition.⁸³

Through her mystical union with Christ, the figure of Mary Magdalene evolved into an allegorical representation of the human soul longing for God,⁸⁴ which transcends her traditional and popular (Baroque) image of a sensuous penitent. While this image is to a varying extent still present in the three analysed texts, it is hence upgraded to further levels of symbolic meaning. Since Bunić's poem is more focused on presenting a vivid narrative of Mary Magdalene's earthly life until Christ's resurrection, her mystical experience and significance are not presented in detail, but they are explicitly evoked in several references, as well as implicitly foreshadowed in the heroine's powerful desire for Christ's presence during his life on earth. Southwell also depicts Magdalene's passion for Christ prior to his ascension, with only a concluding announcement of her later heavenly bliss, which stresses that Christ "made the period of her expiring griefes (...) the preamble to her nowe entring, and neuer ending pleasures" (p. 67). Along similar lines, the narrator's earlier comments accentuate the true, symbolic and spiritual, significance of Magdalene's passion, prompting her to surpass the senses and interiorise love and faith. His speculation on the meaning of Christ's initial prohibition of touch, for instance, makes this point explicit:

⁷⁹ A. Sweeney, *Robert Southwell*, 19.

⁸⁰ On the importance of, sometimes overlooked, "individual affective experience" in the Counter-Reformation devotion, see e.g., Anne Boemler and Bryan Brazeau, "Tears in heaven: tracing the contours of a Pan-European transconfessional genre", *Humanities* 11/4 (2022), 2.

⁸¹ Both Croatian poems employ bridal imagery, that is, the notion of heavenly marriage as the traditional metaphor for mystical union, Christ being Mary's "heavenly bridegroom" (Bunić, canto 3) and she his "heavenly bride" (Đurđević, canto 5; cf. also T. Kordić, *Analiza teoloških motiva*, 33).

⁸² Cf. Diana Marie Shaw, "'Such fire is love': the Bernardine poetry of St. Robert Southwell, S. J.", *Christianity & literature* 62/3 (2013), 333-354; D. K. Shuger, *Scholarship, sacrifice, and subjectivity*, 172-173; I. Brković, "Saintly love of Saint Catherine", 104.

⁸³ Cf. D. Fališevac, *Ivan Bunić Vučić*, 76; D. M. Shaw, "'Such fire is love'", 343.

⁸⁴ D. Fališevac, *Ivan Bunić Vučić*, 75-76; F. W. Brownlow, *Robert Southwell*, 43; D. M. Shaw, "'Such fire is love'".

O Jesu what mystery is in this? (...) with forbidding her to touch thee, as if thou haddest said.

O Mary know the difference betweene a glorious and a mortall body, betweene the condition of a momentary and of an eternall life (...) embrace me first in a firme faith, and then thou shalt touch me with more worthy hands. It is now necessary to weane thee from the comfort of my externall presence, that thou maist learne to lodge mee in the secretes of thy heart, and teach thy thoughts to supply the offices of the outward senses. (...). but what thy eie then seeth not, thy heart shall feelee, and my silent parly will find audience in thy inward eare (pp. 61-63).

The closing address reiterates this lesson, inviting the reader, i.e., the "Christian soul", to follow Mary's example of a constant search for Christ in terms of their individual repentance and conversion, faith, hope and love.

Đurđević's poem offers the most extensive portrayal of Mary Magdalene's spiritual and mystical experience, as well as of its theological implications. The heroine, for instance, contemplates the nature of divine mercy (canto 5), as well as of human and divine love (canto 7), while her heavenly vision in the final canto (8) comprises her inner speculation on the divine essence, which ultimately remains beyond human comprehension and power of articulation, accessible only through complete surrender in love – a conclusion consonant with the so-called negative theology and apophatic discourse, common in mystical experience and writing.⁸⁵ According to Đurđević's prefatory address to the reader, the extent of the protagonist's theological knowledge was such that he felt obliged to justify it by her discipleship of Christ, in another response to the unnamed critics who apparently deemed it unconvincing and improbable for a woman (p. 466). Đurđević's dedication to the archbishop Zmajević is further indicative in this respect, as Mary Magdalene is here explicitly called *apostolorum apostola* (in reference to St. Jerome's writings)⁸⁶ and symbolically linked with the archbishop as a figure of theological and pastoral authority, and a similarly "fervent lover of the Highest" (p. 463).

⁸⁵ K. Šimić, "Uzdasi Mandalijene pokornice", 133-134. Negative theology and its accompanying apophatic discourse paradoxically reduce knowledge to non-knowledge, emphasising that it is only possible to ascertain and articulate what God is not, since his essence remains beyond human comprehension (for a wider discussion, see e. g., Alen Širca, *Teopoetika. Študije o krščanskem mističnem pesništvu*, Ljubljana: KUD Logos, 2019, 13-116).

⁸⁶ Đurđević is probably referring to Jerome's commentary on the Book of Zephaniah, where he names all the women who were the first to witness Christ's resurrection as apostles to the apostles (cf. Julian R. Backes, "Apostola apostolorum: observations on the proper of St. Mary Magdalene in the *Breviarium praemonstratense*", *Antiphon* 21/1 (2017), 67; K. L. Jansen, *The making of the Magdalen*, 58; J. R. Anić, "Marija iz Magdale", 226-227). A reference to Mary Magdalene as the one "who was privileged to see the rising Christ first before even the apostles" can also be found in Jerome's *Epist. CXXVII ad Principiam virginem* (S. Haskins, *Mary Magdalen: myth and metaphor*, 55; K. L. Jansen, *The making of the Magdalen*, 21, n. 9).

By interweaving different aspects of the Mary Magdalene interpretive tradition, the analysed examples thus present three specific images of this biblical character, endowing her with various layers of symbolic meaning. In particular, they (re)assert her significance as a spiritual role-model and a guide in faith and love, and in this way demonstrate the potential to re-evaluate her initial gospel image of a devout disciple and the apostle to the apostles, who had an important role in the early Church. This image can also capitalise on their appropriation of amorous discourse, in light of the exegetical tradition (again best illustrated by *The Song of Songs*) that interprets the relation between God and his chosen people – Israel and later the Christian Church – as a loving matrimonial union.⁸⁷

Further comparison along these lines can help to uncover additional similarities and differences in the three authors' interpretations of the Mary Magdalene figure, which have proved relevant both in their immediate contexts, as well as from the wider, both historical and universal, viewpoint of the Western literary and cultural tradition.

The three portrayals of Mary Magdalene: symbolic significance and legacy

The three texts have throughout been contextualised within the Counter-Reformation imperative of spiritual renewal; however, it should be borne in mind that the Counter-Reformation itself was multifaceted in its various aspects and in different communities, where, as M. Leven points out, the "experience of the Catholic minority was different from that of the Catholic majority."⁸⁸ The two Croatian poems emerged in the predominantly Catholic context, shared by the author, narrator and the intended audience. They were nevertheless well aware of the continuing threat to their religion and community (as a free city-state) presented by the Ottoman Empire, which had conquered the majority of neighbouring territories and required constant diplomatic balancing by the authorities, causing internal disputes among the ruling classes themselves.⁸⁹

The more homogenous Catholic context, as well as the infidel threat that could also be viewed as a form of God's punishment for sins,⁹⁰ can account for Bunić's and Đuđević's more typical, stronger emphasis on Mary Magdalene's penitence, and (partly) explain the symbolic significance of her discipleship. Bunić does not elaborate the latter, but nevertheless presents it as an important aspect of her character. Mary

⁸⁷ Cf. D. K. Shuger, *Scholarship, sacrifice, and subjectivity*, 172.

⁸⁸ Mary Leven, "Introduction", in: *The Ashgate research companion to the Counter-Reformation*, ed. Alexandra Bamji, Geert H. Janssen, Mary Laven, Abingdon-New York: Routledge, 2016, 9.

⁸⁹ For more on this issue, see e.g., Stjepan Čosić and Nenad Vekarić, *Dubrovačka vlastela između roda i države. Salamankezi i sorbonezi*, Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2005.

⁹⁰ On the appearance and meaning of this notion in Croatian Early Modern Literature, cf. Davor Dukić, *Sultanova djeca. Predodžbe Turaka u hrvatskoj književnosti ranog novovjekovlja*, Zadar: Thema, 2004.

Magdalene's devotedness to Christ's teachings is in his case supported by a reference to her conflation with Mary of Bethany, the Mary and Martha episode from Luke's gospel, where Christ praises Mary's choice of listening to his words instead of serving him like her sister Martha (10, 38-42).⁹¹

S tobom trudi, s tobom muči
i bremena čas ne gubi
da tvoj sveti Zakon uči,
er goruće sasma ljubi.

Razmišljan'ja nad sva dobra,
ti nju hvaleć ču se rijeti,
dio najbolji ona obra,
koji neće njoj se oteti. (Bunić, canto 3, p. 172)

([Addressing Christ]: With you she labours, with you she suffers / and loses no time / to learn your holy Law / since she burns entirely with love. // For thinking of the highest good / you were heard to praise her, / having chosen the better part, / that will not be taken from her.)

Đurđević's extensive theological reflection, which reinforces more strongly her image of a figure of spiritual authority, testifies to his own authorial position of a priest. Krešimir Šimić suggests that Đurđević's poem may have been motivated by a specific theological agenda, promoted by the dedication addressee Zmajević. The archbishop undertook various efforts to strengthen Catholic faith through devotional writing, as a countermeasure to the spread of the Orthodox Church and its political instrumentalisation by the Ottoman Empire, which he perceived as a serious threat. Viewed as part of this agenda, Đurđević's texts can be read as an "apologetic religious long poem", written in defence of the "true" (Catholic) faith.⁹² While such a contextual reading does not exhaust the entire interpretive potential of Đurđević's poem, it does add a new and significant dimension to it, which could find a parallel in Southwell's text.

Mary Magdalens Funerall Teares originated in a somewhat different set of circumstances, dominated by the English prosecution of non-Protestant denominations.⁹³ Southwell probably started to compose his text while still in Rome, but he intended it for the English audience, as part of his (Jesuit) mission of converting his home country back to the Catholic Church. Upon his arrival in England (1586), his pastoral work was largely

⁹¹ Southwell's narrator also refers to this episode, with a direct quotation of Christ's words, but as a cue to reflect on the meaning of Christ's promise of his permanent presence (p. 12).

⁹² K. Šimić, "Uzdasi Mandalijene pokornice", 144-146.

⁹³ By the Act of Uniformity of 1559, attendance at the Church of England's Book of Common Prayer service became obligatory (Marie B. Rowlands, "Recusant women 1560-1640", in: *Women in English society, 1500-1800*, ed. Mary Prior, London-New York: Routledge, 1985, 112), establishing "Protestantism as England's only legal religion" (L. McClain, "They have taken away my lord", 80).

(albeit not exclusively) directed at the prosecuted Catholic community, ending in his early death that earned him the title of a martyr for the Catholic faith.

A number of readings have located Southwell's portrayal of Mary Magdalene within the context of his mission. According to what has now become a critical commonplace, the heroine's grief at the loss of Christ and her mourning at his empty tomb epitomises the experience of Catholic recusants, who covertly adhered to their religion and refused to attend the Church of England service, but suffered the loss of communal religious experience and rituals, especially the mass and the Eucharist.⁹⁴ The sacramental body of Christ is in this reading symbolically equated with his missing corpse, and also evoked as a form of spiritual nourishment, by the use of food imagery as a metaphor for Mary Magdalene's hunger for his presence.⁹⁵ Southwell's final address to the audience would in this sense constitute an encouraging call for spiritual (re)union with Christ without access to sacraments, and a lesson on the need for "spiritual seeing"⁹⁶ without material presence of the sacred. In a similar vein, Southwell's text and his entire literary *oeuvre* could be viewed as a form of sacramental literature, providing imaginative remembrance of the mass and the Eucharist.⁹⁷

Southwell's primary religious allegiance did not, however, cancel out his national allegiance and concern for the spiritual welfare of the English society as a whole, which was not monolithic from a religious viewpoint, but rested on a complex and fluid relationship between different strands of Christianity.⁹⁸ Although their faith was officially proscribed, Catholic writers were thus able to exercise notable influence in the domain of devotional literature.⁹⁹ From the very start, Southwell's works were read and imitated by Catholic and Protestant authors,¹⁰⁰ with *Mary Magdalens Funerall Teares* as one of the most popular texts (together with *Saint Peters Complaint*) that received 10 editions in the period from 1591 to 1636.¹⁰¹

⁹⁴ See e.g., S. Pilarz, *Robert Southwell and the mission of literature*; G. Kuchar, *Divine subjection*; G. Kuchar, "Gender and recusant melancholia"; A. Sweeney, *Robert Southwell*; L. McClain, "'They have taken away my lord'"; P. Badir, *The maudlin Impression*; M. R. Benedict, *The ministry of passion and meditation*; S. Read, *Eucharist and the poetic imagination*.

⁹⁵ S. Pilarz, *Robert Southwell and the mission of literature*, 174; L. McClain, "'They have taken away my lord'", 83-84; S. Read, *Eucharist and the poetic imagination*, 50.

⁹⁶ P. Badir, *The maudlin impression*, 65.

⁹⁷ A. Sweeney, *Robert Southwell*, 236; S. Read, *Eucharist and the poetic imagination*, 42, 61-68.

⁹⁸ S. Pilarz, *Robert Southwell and the mission of literature*, xxviii; Alexandra Walsham, *Catholic Reformation in Protestant Britain*, Farnham-Burlington: Ashgate, 2014, 30-31.

⁹⁹ For a broader overview and discussion of the position and treatment of Catholicism in Southwell's time, see e. g., Anthony Milton, "A qualified intolerance: the limits and ambiguities of early Stuart anti-Catholicism", in: *Catholicism and anti-Catholicism in Early Modern English texts*, ed. Arthur E. Marotti, Basingstoke-London: Macmillan Press, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999, 85-115.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. e.g., M. R. Benedict, *The Ministry of passion and meditation*, 51.

¹⁰¹ F. W. Brownlow, *Robert Southwell*, 43.

One of the reasons for its favourable reception might lie in the fact that, notwithstanding the general Protestant dislike and criticism of the cult of saints, Mary Magdalene was still relatively positively perceived as a figure of a sinner forgiven through her faith alone, in accordance with the reformed theology's doctrine of salvation.¹⁰² Paul Cefalu's recent interpretation uncovered a more specific common point with the contemporary Protestant writings, which brings into question the exclusive emphasis on Southwell's symbolic representation of the recusant Catholic experience and his presumed appeal for spiritual seeing as the true union with Christ. By uncovering the hitherto overlooked aspect of Southwell's intertextual foundations in John's gospel, Cefalu focuses on Christ's prohibition of touch in the garden scene as the interpretive key of this episode and the entire text, reading it as a lesson to Mary Magdalene on the importance of hearing over seeing. By means of a typical Johannine "ironic method of productive misunderstanding as a means of revelation",¹⁰³ Southwell in fact represents Mary Magdalene's epistemological failure, that is, her misunderstanding of Christ's earlier words and his promise of resurrection, which is rectified in his final revelation – a point that could resonate well with the Protestant accent on verbal, i.e., scriptural access to the divine.¹⁰⁴

On the other hand, Southwell's text could cater to the Protestant audience even through its divergence from their religious tenets, filling a receptive and emotional gap created by the Protestant disapproval of excessive display of affections,¹⁰⁵ while also tapping into the commonly shared tradition of Christian late medieval affective devotion.¹⁰⁶ The depiction of Mary Magdalene's affective and rational faculties and (mis)perceptions could in any case offer a suitable response to the need to reconceptualise individual devotion in the midst of an emerging trend of desacralisation and secularisation of society that would take a stronger hold in the following centuries.¹⁰⁷ Gary Kuchar describes this response in terms of "divine subjection" or construction of early modern religious subjects exclusively through their relation to God, and not (any more) to political or social authorities. While Southwell's specific circumstances highlighted the

¹⁰² L. McClain, "They have taken away my lord", 93; for a more detailed account, see P. C. Almond, *Mary Magdalene*, 191-205.

¹⁰³ P. Cefalu, "*Noli me tangere*", 98.

¹⁰⁴ P. Cefalu, "*Noli me tangere*", 98. To the degree that the heroine in all three analysed texts figures as a disciple who listened to, transmitted and responded to Christ's words, the Croatian poems could also be said to echo the abovementioned Johannine intertext, albeit articulated from somewhat different angles.

¹⁰⁵ E. A. Ransom, "Passions and the passion", 109-110. Such a view was particularly emphasised in the then influential Calvinist doctrine. It also informed Calvin's own and less favourable opinion of Mary Magdalene, whom he criticised for excessive tears and her focus on Christ's physical body (E. A. Ransom, "Passions and the passion", 108-110).

¹⁰⁶ E. A. Ransom, "Complaint as reconciliation"; E. A. Ransom, "Passions and the passion".

¹⁰⁷ D. K. Shuger, *Scholarship, sacrifice, and subjectivity*, 185; G. Kuchar, *Divine subjection*.

importance of this issue in view of his abovementioned conflicting allegiances, such an interpretive framework could accommodate the two Ragusan poems, together with the related examples from the European "literature of tears", and religious literature in general. This tendency is eventually inseparable from the wider context of Early Modern identity formation as a process that was simultaneously oriented inwardly and outwardly (i.e., towards various religious, cultural, social and political institutions and authorities).¹⁰⁸

While all three portrayals help to position Mary Magdalene outwardly, in a recognisable religious, and indirectly also literary- and cultural-historical context, they show a notable move towards the inner perspective, providing a deeper psychological insight into the protagonist's character.¹⁰⁹ Presentation of her heightened emotional state and inward moral distress complements her universal dimension of a (legendary) role-model, allowing her to be read as a relatable embodiment of the new Early Modern sinful and "impassioned" self, and a source of inspiration for individual devotion.¹¹⁰ Narrative perspective plays an important role in this respect, as all three texts give voice to Mary Magdalene herself, in monologues and speeches to other characters – primarily to Christ, who is often merely an implied, silent and/or absent, addressee, and to the Virgin Mary in the Ragusan texts.

The narrator features as an equally significant figure, who is emotionally and morally involved in the story, and possesses a high degree of autoreflexivity. In addition to the reflexive and instructive comments, sometimes included in his apostrophes to the reader, all three narrators address God and the protagonist. In the Croatian texts, these passages usually contain a plea for guidance and help for their own salvation, and in Đurđević's case for the composition of the poem as well, in the two invocations (cantos 1 and 8). Bunić's apostrophes to Mary Magdalene can also be instructive, and this tendency is even more pronounced in Southwell's text, where the narrator often tries to reason with the protagonist in order to dispel her misconceptions and excessive grief.

¹⁰⁸ Such a notion of the two-sided process of identity formation has been forwarded by the more recent cultural history, and lies at the core, for instance, of R. von Dülmen's idea of the (Renaissance) discovery of the individual (Richard von Dülmen, *Die Entdeckung des Individuums: 1500-1800*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1997), or of S. Greenblatt's "self-fashioning" (Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance self-fashioning: from More to Shakespeare*, Chicago-London: The University of Chicago Press, 1980).

¹⁰⁹ For Southwell, see also e.g., J. Gibaldi, *The Baroque muse*, 153-154; A. Sweeney, *Robert Southwell*, 146, 151-157; G. Kuchar, *Divine subjection*, 60; G. Kuchar, "Gender and Recusant melancholia", 144; for Bunić, see e.g., D. Fališevac, *Ivan Bunić Vučić*, 81.

¹¹⁰ A. Sweeney, *Robert Southwell*, 154-155.

The dialogical form creates a multiperspectival narrative that helps to build a more dynamic and complex image of Mary Magdalene.¹¹¹ What is at issue here is not merely her voice, but her gender, which was not easily acceptable for a figure who could be said to embody the Early Modern religious subjectivity¹¹² and, what is more, spiritual eminence. The traditional misogynist discourse that considered women as inherently sinful and lascivious, epitomised in the image of Eve as a seductress and the perpetrator of the original sin, is incorporated into the Mary Magdalene's composite image. However, her original gospel character possesses potential for female empowerment and female agency, which is preserved in the three analysed texts. Southwell's narrator, among other things, acknowledges her status of a privileged witness to Christ's resurrection even through her error of judgement, as he expounds on the traditional typological interpretation of the *hortulanus* scene, where Christ figures as the new Adam:¹¹³

For this also was Mary permitted to mistake [Christ for a gardener], that we might be informed of the mystery, and see how aptly the course of our redemption did answer the processe of our condemnation (p. 47).

Bunić's protagonist is similarly depicted as the one worthiest to see the resurrected Christ first, being the "most enflamed by love" for him and the most persevering of his followers. Although Đurđević does not describe the encounter on the morning of resurrection, his Mary Magdalene is privileged even to a higher degree, as she is granted spiritual access to the heavenly realm before her final ascension, where she embarks on an inner spiritual quest.

Feminist theology of the last decades has brought to the light the importance of women and female apostolate both in the early church and in the following centuries, which was usually suppressed in historical accounts. This fact bears a specific significance in Southwell's case, considering that recusant Catholic women played an analogous role, secretly harbouring and supporting priests, and abiding by their faith at the cost of potential death. Despite their vital contribution, such a role could nevertheless create anxiety over female empowerment and female agency,¹¹⁴ whose traces might

¹¹¹ Southwell inherited the dialogical structure from his Latin source homily, but elaborated it further, partly also inspired by the Ignatian meditation practice, which was devised in a form of colloquy, as well as by the Johannine devices of dramatic irony and discussion (P. Cefalu, "*Noli me tangere*"). Multi-voiced structure, with the protagonist's monologues, is a common feature of the Croatian poetry of tears and can be found in the Italian poems of this type as well. For a more detailed analysis of Bunić's narrative structure, see D. Fališevac, *Ivan Bunić Vučić*, 69-82; and of Đurđević's, see Julijana Matanović, *Barok iz suvremenosti gledat (Primarna i sekundarna generička obilježja u Đorđeviću "Uzdasi Mandalijske pokornice")*, Osijek: Revija izdavački centar Otvorenog sveučilišta Osijek, 1992.

¹¹² D. K. Shuger, *Scholarship, sacrifice, and subjectivity*, 191.

¹¹³ Cf. also J. R. Anić, "Marija iz Magdale", 128.

¹¹⁴ G. Kuchar, *Divine subjection*; G. Kuchar, "Gender and recusant melancholia"; M. B. Rowlands, "Recusant women".

be visible in Southwell's narrator's superiority to her own voice.¹¹⁵ Despite this, as well as the fact that both Croatian poems still rely on the appeal of the sensuous penitent, all three portrayals of Mary Magdalene in varying degrees cross the boundaries of the patriarchal misogynist discourse and its insistence on female inferiority and subordination, following the tradition of positive Christian female images, such as mystics and learned women. This makes their individual contributions relevant to the overall Mary Magdalene tradition, and specifically to its Early Modern segment, but also to the contemporary discussions on the need for more equality and a more active role of women in the church.¹¹⁶

The history of Mary Magdalene's representations in the Western literature and culture has turned her into a multilayered figure of cultural memory, inscribed with different meanings. This has finally allowed her to function, in the words of Patricia Badir, as the privileged site for reflection on "the commemorative form and mnemonic function of religious art" itself,¹¹⁷ which strikes at "the very core of Christian representational practice"¹¹⁸ and its, often uneasy, balancing between the sacred truth and artistic fiction. Such preoccupations have left their mark on all three texts, as well as in Southwell's and Đurđević's paratexts. The heroine's mnemonic function is more pronounced in Southwell's case, which could again be related to his immediate context, where religious art became a form of another mourned-for absence, following its condemnation and proscription by the Protestant majority.¹¹⁹ However, all three Mary Magdalene figures could be said to function as symbolic custodians of Christ's sacramental sacrifice and his teachings, who abide by him at all times, and as such continue to provide a role model and spiritual guidance for the narrators, authors and the intended readers. The analysed texts themselves are thus transformed into sites of memory which take on the heroine's apostolic and pastoral role, as well as a symbolic devotional function. The aforementioned notion of Southwell's "sacralised poetics" is in this sense comparable to the amalgamation of the sacred and the aesthetic in the two Ragusan poems, and both can be metaphorically related to their common generic framework of "literature of tears". Inasmuch as the central motifs of tears and sighs here function, in the words of D. Fališevac, as "a metaphor for a work of art, the religious poem"¹²⁰ – or prose, they

¹¹⁵ In addition to this, Southwell's prose contains occasional remnants of the traditional misogynist stereotypes of female excessive affectivity, foolishness and weakness. These are, however, presented with irony, since the narrator generally takes Mary Magdalene's side and praises her steadfastness in love.

¹¹⁶ See Susan Haskins, *Mary Magdalen: myth and metaphor*, 386-394.

¹¹⁷ P. Badir, *The maudlin impression*, 3-4.

¹¹⁸ P. Badir, *The maudlin impression*, 8.

¹¹⁹ P. Badir, *The maudlin impression*, 9, 64. Mary's concern at the possible loss of memory of Christ reappears as a leitmotif throughout the text.

¹²⁰ D. Fališevac, *Ivan Bunić Vučić*, 78.

reinforce the equation of an act of writing with an act of repentance (in the Ragusan texts), and, even more importantly for all three examples, with an expression of faith and love, that belongs to the realm of the aesthetic and is achieved "by the means of the aesthetic".¹²¹ It should also be borne in mind that these texts evolved in close contact with secular literature, especially its amorous tradition, which treated women as the privileged aesthetic objects, with Petrarchan and Neoplatonic idealisation of their physical and spiritual beauty, which could again function as a means of legitimising and sanctifying the very act of its literary representation.

While the three analysed texts share a common Catholic orientation and a number of indicative features, their approaches to Mary Magdalene have at the same time shown significant divergences: Đurđević's and Bunić's approach was more typical of the wider European Counter-Reformation tendencies, whereas Southwell responded to his specific English context, presenting a heroine that is not predominantly a repentant sinner but a "type of constancy and perseverance".¹²² On the other hand, Southwell's and Đurđević's texts were somewhat less interested in building up a captivating narrative in comparison to Bunić's, and more in theological, as well as in reflection on the protagonist's spiritual and mental state. At the same time, it should not be overlooked that all three representations possess a universal dimension that finally cuts across confessional, cultural and historical divides, making them still relevant for contemporary discussions on the (im)possibilities of female agency and empowerment on the one hand, as well as on the complex relation between literature, religion and society on the other.

¹²¹ D. Fališevac, *Ivan Bunić Vučić*, 78.

¹²² S. Read, *Eucharist and the poetic imagination*, 48.

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rites of passage: vestition, novitiate and solemn profession in the female convents of eighteenth-century dubrovnik*

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Abstract: This article examines the process young women and novices underwent when entering convent life or preparing to take solemn vows. It is based on eighteenth-century records preserved in the Archives of the Diocese of Dubrovnik, which provide information about the candidates themselves but also shed light on the ceremonies, their location, participants, and the questions asked. Furthermore, it analyses a young woman's entry into a convent as described in the Dubrovnik Book of Ceremonies, offering deeper insights into the transition process and the symbolic elements of the associated liturgical celebrations.

Keywords: nuns, female convents, vestition, novitiate, solemn profession, Dubrovnik, 18th century

Introduction

Occupying an important place in European and world historiography, the study of the history of female monasticism has elucidated an array of relevant issues. One of them concerns the rites through which young women passed in order to become part of the monastic community and take the solemn vows.¹ In a society in which life largely revolved around rituals,² the study of ceremonies related to the life of nuns

¹ Elizabeth A. Leffeldt, "Uneven conversions: how did laywomen become nuns in the Early Modern world?", in: *Conversions. Gender and religious change in early modern Europe*, ed. Simon Ditchfield and Helen Smith, Manchester: Manchester university press, 2017, 127-143; Danielle Rives, "Taking the veil: clothing and transformation of identity", *Journal of the Western society for French history* 33 (2005), 465-486; Eleni Sotiriou, "Monasticizing the monastic: religious clothes, socialization and the transformation of body and self among Greek Orthodox nuns", *Italian journal of sociology of education* 7/3 (2015), 140-166.

² On the meaning of ritual in that period, see: Nella Lonza, *Kazalište vlasti. Ceremonijal i državni blagdani Dubrovačke Republike u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2009, 19-22.

*Translated by Vesna Baće.

reveals a myriad of details about the everyday life behind convent walls. What were the steps the girls had to undertake in order to enter convent? How did they express their aspiration for conventual life or taking the solemn vows? Who conducted the examinations and in what manner? When and in what manner did they take the vows? Is there a link between the ritual of entry into convent and secular marriage, as suggested by relevant literature?

These are the questions this article seeks to address on the example of eighteenth-century Dubrovnik, based on the analysis of the preserved archival material housed in the Archives of the Diocese of Dubrovnik and the State Archives in Dubrovnik. Available from this period are the records pertaining to three female convents, which enable the reconstruction of the rite through which the young women passed from the moment they expressed their desire to enter convent to the very act of taking the solemn vows. Noteworthy among the sources is the record from the Dubrovnik Book of Ceremonies regarding the rite of a novice's admission to St. Clare's convent, which casts additional light on the young woman's transition from parental home to the convent.

The research into the earlier period, albeit marked by the presence of as many as eight female convents within the tiny city nucleus,³ is not possible due to the loss of material in a fire that destroyed the archives of the Dubrovnik Diocese in the aftermath of the 1667 earthquake. Despite large-scale destruction of the city, the nunneries⁴ and a high death toll among the nuns,⁵ two convents were restored by the end of the seventeenth century—St. Clare's convent of the Franciscan sisters and the convent of St. Mary of Kaštel of the Benedictines.⁶ The newly-founded Dominican convent of St. Catherine of Siena opened its doors in 1706.⁷ All three convents continued to operate until the fall of the Dubrovnik Republic, when they were dissolved by the new French administration. This article aims to analyse the accessible archival material regarding the mentioned convents and rites that had taken place in them, providing an insight into the everyday monastic life and rituals that shaped the social and religious frames of that time.

³ For a general survey of Ragusan convents before the earthquake of 1667, see: Minela Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, PhD thesis, Zagreb: Sveučilište u Zagrebu, 2016, 11-20.

⁴ For the destruction of convents, see: Kosta Vojnović, "Crkva i država u dubrovačkoj republici. Prvi dio", *Rad JAZU* 119 (1894), 66; Lukša Beritić, *Urbanistički razvitak Dubrovnika*, Zagreb: Zavod za arhitekturu i urbanizam Instituta za likovne umjetnosti JAZU, 1958, 28; Relja Seferović, "Crkva iza dvora. Kroz povijest Dubrovačke crkve 18. stoljeća uz prateću Serafina Marije Cerve", in: Serafin Marija Cerva, *Prolegomena za Svetu dubrovačku metropoliju*, ed. Relja Seferović, Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2012, 98.

⁵ On the number of nuns among the killed, see: M. Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, 22-23.

⁶ On the restoration of these two convents, see: M. Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, 32-39.

⁷ On the foundation of this convent, see: Minela Fulurija, "Utemeljenje ženskoga samostana Sv. Katarine Sijenske u Dubrovniku", *Povijesni prilozi* 32/45 (2013), 115-134.

Entry into convent

In order to become a nun, a young woman had to undergo a series of rites which symbolised her transition from the secular to spiritual life. The transition from family environment to the convent changed over the centuries. The original, simple vows of dedication to religious life evolved into more complex rituals, which differed depending on the region and the monastic order to which the nun belonged.⁸ Since the earliest of times, there is a clear parallel between the rite of entering convent and secular marriage ceremonies, given that the act of entry into convent may be viewed as the giving away of a girl to Christ, and may thus be interpreted as the giving away of a girl to a groom.⁹ As early as the third century Tertullian used the term "the bride of Christ" for a girl who symbolically married Jesus, while St. Jerome referred to Eustochia as "the bride of my Lord". This term became established in the fourth century, when St. Ambrose in his work *On virginity* recognised consecrated virgins as the brides of Christ. St. Ambrose also emphasised the similarities between wedding ceremonies and the rite of the consecration of virgin.¹⁰ Both secular marriage and entry into convent symbolised a profound change in a girl's life and the beginning of a new period. Required in both cases was the consent of the participants along with the dowry which the girls brought to the new community.¹¹ Given the importance of rites and public rituals in medieval and early modern society, it is understandable why the girls who decided to dedicate their lives to God had to follow very strict rules. In addition, the Church itself with a succession of reforms, notably in the period of Christian revival and the Council of Trent, introduced a series of new rules to be observed.¹²

Becoming a nun could not be achieved through a single instant act nor merely by personal will and decision. It was a complex process which implied strict rules as well as scrutiny of both the Church and secular authorities.¹³ According to the English historian Kate Lowe, that transition may have been traced through four main rites: acceptance

⁸ E. A. Leffeldt, "Uneven conversions", 127-129.

⁹ Kate Lowe, "Secular brides and convent brides: wedding ceremonies in Italy during the Renaissance and Counter-Reformation", in: *Marriage in Italy 1300-1650.*, ed. Trevor Dean, Kate J. P. Lowe, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, 41-46.

¹⁰ K. Lowe, "Secular brides and convent brides", 41; Rabia Gregory, *Marrying Jesus: Brides and the bridegroom in Medieval women's religious literature*, PhD thesis, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina, 2007, 2-3.

¹¹ K. Lowe, "Secular brides and convent brides", 43-45. On nuns' dowries in Dubrovnik, see: M. Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, 61-62.

¹² K. Lowe, "Secular brides and convent brides", 41-42. On its twenty-fifth session, the Council of Trent passed twenty-two decrees related to monks and nuns. *Papal Encyclicals Online. Your guide to online Papal and other official documents of the Catholic Church*. See: <https://www.papalencyclicals.net/councils/trent/twenty-fifth-session.htm> (accessed: 28 December 2024).

¹³ K. Lowe, "Secular brides and convent brides", 42-43.

of convent life, the rite of vestition (*vestizione*), solemn profession of vows (*professione*) and consecration, that is, the blessing of the nun. However, in practice these formalities were often simplified and, as a result, most frequently performed were two key rites, vestition and profession, which sometimes merged with consecration.¹⁴ Indeed, these two rites also convey a special symbolic meaning. The rite of vestition emphasises the girl's transition from parental household and secular environment into the cloistered world of the convent, while the vow stresses the final renunciation of secular life and full dedication to spiritual vocation.¹⁵ Not only did these rites symbolise a spiritual transition, but they also reflected the social norms and the control of the Church and secular authorities over the status of women in the community.¹⁶

Acceptance of monastic life was the first ceremony which, in the period under consideration, was known to take place on several locations in Dubrovnik. Most commonly it was the girl's family home, convent church or some other city church. An exception to this practice has been recorded on 27 November 1749, when Ana, daughter of Luka Nikolin Gozze, affirmed her aspirations to enter the convent of St. Clare.¹⁷ The ceremony of the examination of aspiration was held at the Rector's Palace, because her father held the office of rector at the time.¹⁸ The ceremony of the examination of aspiration followed a transparently regulated procedure with an aim to examine the sincerity of the girl's decision and to disperse any doubt regarding coercion or manipulation. Archbishop of Dubrovnik or his envoy would ask the girl the usual questions, and based on her responses, he would discern whether she felt genuine vocation. Sadly, only the general descriptions of the procedure have survived, while the concrete questions the girls were asked have not been recorded. The examination of Margarita Proculo of 20 June 1713 may serve as illustration. Margarita was examined by chancellor Bucchia on behalf of Archbishop Roberti at the church of St. Jerome, whereby he discerned that the girl was not seduced nor in any manner whatsoever coerced, deluded or convinced to enter convent but upon her own will decided to dedicate her life to God, accepting

¹⁴ K. Lowe, "Secular brides and convent brides", 43.

¹⁵ Jutta Gisela Sperling, *Convents and the body politic in late Renaissance Venice*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999, 137; Elizabeth Kuhns, *The habit. A history of the clothing of Catholic nuns*, New York: Doubleday, 2002, 22; Sharon T. Strocchia, *Nuns and nunneries in renaissance Florence*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009, 16.

¹⁶ On the importance of these ceremonies for the nuns' families in Italy, see: K. Lowe, "Secular brides and convent brides", 50-53.

¹⁷ Ana took the religious name Marija Ana and was the daughter of Luka Nikolin Gozze and Paula, daughter of Antun Cerva. Born on 13 June 1720, she had three brothers and three sisters. She entered the convent at the age of twenty-nine, and died on 3 January 1814 after the abolition of female convents, in the house of Nikola Buljković. Archives of the Diocese of Dubrovnik (hereafter: ADB), *Regularium et Monialium*, ser. 6, vol. 2, f. 133v; Nenad Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, volume 8, Genealogije (M-Z), Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 2017, 159.

¹⁸ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 133v.

the rules of the monastic order she aspired to enter.¹⁹ This example also testifies to the inclusion of secular authorities in religious rites, as the questioning was conducted by the city chancellor.²⁰ On 13 June 1730 Archbishop Franchi visited the home of Frano Marinov Tudisi to examine the aspiration of his daughter Marija to enter the convent of St. Clare.²¹ By using a similar formulation, it was discerned that the girl desired to enter the mentioned convent of her own free will.²² Such an examination procedure of the girls who aspired to enter convent bears witness to the importance of formality in the process of entry into convent, as well as the role of archbishop's authority in securing the legitimacy of the decision. Also traced are the cases of sisters whose aspirations to enter convent were examined on the same day.²³ Thus on 6 May 1746 at the church of St. Mary of Kaštel sisters Glorija and Nika, daughters of Vladislav Gozze,²⁴ affirmed that they felt a genuine calling for entering the convent of St. Mary.²⁵ According to the sources, the rite of the examination of aspiration to enter convent was known to be attended by other secular persons, mainly by distinguished married women. Always entered was the name and surname of one attendee, in addition to the expression *aliis* or *aliis matronis nobilibus*, which referred to the presence of other prominent women.²⁶

Given the importance of the act of examination of the girls' religious vocation, the attendance of other city notables may have been expected, in this case of those of the female sex considering that the persons concerned were their close kin. The presence of distinguished ladies during the examinations may have served as a kind of support

¹⁹ ...*amotis adstantibus, et praemissis debitis interrogationibus ad id necessariis, et opportunis auditisque responsionibus reperit dictam puellam non vi, dolo, malo, metu, aut suasionem aliqua seductam, aut circumuentam fuisse, sed sponte ac deliberata voluntate se Deo dicare velle...* (*Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 56). I am indebted to Jadranka Bagarić for her assistance with the translations and interpretations of the Latin sources.

²⁰ On the role of notary in secular marriages in Italy, as well as in the girl's entry into convent, see: K. Lowe, "Secular brides and convent brides", 45-46.

²¹ Marija was born on 15 April 1710 to the family of Frano Marinov Tudisi and Slave, daughter of Marko Bassegli. Besides Marija, they had four daughters and six sons. Marija was twenty when she entered the convent. *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 74-74v; N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 8, 399.

²² *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 74-74v.

²³ Mexican convents also bear witness to a practice of sisters entering the same or different convents (Asunción Lavrin, *Brides of Christ. Conventual life in colonial Mexico*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008, 29-30).

²⁴ Glorija and Nika were the daughters of Vladislav Pavlov Gozze and Pera, daughter of Orsat Sorgo. They had six brothers and six sisters, two of whom died in childhood, one married, and three were the nuns at St. Clare's convent. Although in his genealogical research N. Vekarić does not cite that Glorija, known by the secular name Slava, was a nun of the convent of St. Mary of Kaštel, it is doubtless the same person as he makes note of Slava who was born on 18 November 1718, whereas nun Glorija took her vows on 14 May 1747, reported to have been twenty-eight at the time (*Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 126-126v; N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 8, 162).

²⁵ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 122-122v. They shared their path to monastic life in other rites as well – after the completed novitiate, again on the same day they responded to the questions pertaining to the aspiration for the profession of vows, which they took together (*Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 126-126v).

²⁶ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 1, f. 41-41v; vol. 2, f. 4v-5v, 7v-8, 12-12v, 13v-14, 14v-15, 15v.

to the girls in this important act, but also as a device of social control in keeping with the marriage politics and family interests of the day.²⁷ Once it was discerned that the girl felt a true vocation, she would proceed to the convent to be accepted by the nuns as well. The first to arrive at the convent church was the convent prioress, who had previously been informed of a girl aspiring to enter convent. Then to the chime of bells all nuns eligible to vote gathered as they were to decide whether they accepted the girl as novice of their convent.²⁸ Not a single case of a girl being denied admission has been preserved for the eighteenth century.²⁹ However, this form of novice acceptance on behalf of the nuns has been traced only at the beginning of the analysed source, whereas later a different form was used in which there is no mention of the nuns gathering for the purpose of the acceptance of the girl who was to enter convent.³⁰ Although the practice of the acceptance of a girl through the nuns' joint decision is not mentioned in the sources of the later period, these rituals probably survived as an important element of monastic life, as was commonly the case elsewhere.³¹

The rite of vestition

Having discerned the girl's genuine religious vocation through examination, it was time for her to enter convent. Dubrovnik Book of Ceremonies³² contains the only extant description of this rite, which details the girl's entry into convent. Hence on 12 June 1740, daughter of Ivan-Toma Markov Bassegli entered the convent of St. Clare, during the

²⁷ On reasons for entering convents and the possible means of control and coercion, see: Zdenka Marković, *Pjesnikinje starog Dubrovnika. Od sredine XVI do svršetka XVIII stoljeća u kulturnoj sredini svoga vremena*, Zagreb: JAZU, 1970, 353-355; M. Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, 50-66.

²⁸ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 4-4v.

²⁹ Recorded in the earlier period is a case of Vito Klementov Gozze, who in 1436 complained that he had repeatedly kindly petitioned the prioress of the convent of St. Clare to admit his daughter to the convent, but each time she responded that she would not admit her or any other girl due to overcrowding. Ultimately, the prioress yielded in compliance with the government's decision of 30 October 1415, by which it was decreed that the convent of St. Clare was to admit all patrician daughters, regardless of whether they had one or more sisters there. On this occasion, the nuns were warned not to act in any manner contrary to that decision in future because the convent was not their property but of the Ragusan commune. See Zdenka Janeković Römer, *The Frame of freedom. The nobility of Dubrovnik between the Middle Ages and Humanism*, Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2015, 312; M. Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, 16.

³⁰ A total of eight recorded cases testify to the fact that the nuns gathered to accept the girl, while the last case in which this is mentioned concerned the vocational discernment of Mara Getaldić, held on 5 June 1700. *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 4-4v, 4v-5v, 6-7, 7-7v, 7v-8, 12-12v, 13v-14, 14v-15.

³¹ The nuns of Zadar were independent in their decisions to admit novices into the convent. See Zdenko Dundović "Thriller of the Zadar nun Cattarina Marchi: true or false story?", *Historical contributions* 42/64 (2023), 167, n. 104.

³² On ceremony as state medium and the Book of Ceremonies, see: N. Lonza, *Kazalište vlasti*, 19-39.

rectorship of Nikola Nikolin Bona.³³ Curiously, the text of the ceremony fails to mention the girl's name, which, in a specific manner, contributed to her marginalisation. Although this act had a direct impact on her further life and was expected to be the result of her own will, the woman in the sources continued to be primarily identified as someone's daughter, which mirrors the social norms of the day.³⁴ Data related to the girl may still be found in other sources. Marija Rosa, daughter of Ivan Bassegli,³⁵ was questioned by the Ragusan archbishop Franchi in her father's house on 30 May 1740, so as to discern her decision to enter the convent of St. Clare. Archbishop discerned that the girl had made the decision upon her own free will, without any coercion, and that she wished to accept the rules of the Order.³⁶ This information, apart from the girl-related data, also poses the question about the gap between the time when she expressed her desire to enter convent and the act of entrance itself. Namely, Marija Rosa entered the convent of St. Clare thirteen days later, when she commenced the period of novitiate.³⁷

As earlier mentioned, the Book of Ceremonies contains a detailed description of Marija Rosa's rite of vestition into the convent of St. Clare. According to that description, Rector Nikola Bona left the Rector's Palace to join mass at the cathedral, after which, in keeping with custom, honour was paid to Our Lady of Karmen. The rector then returned to the Palace, where, in the Minor Council chamber, he awaited the arrival of the chaplain of the convent in which the novice was about to start her new life.³⁸ At the convent church all the preparations for the rite were made. The attendants sat on the chairs upholstered in red damask, arranged in a circle resembling a crown, which stretched as far as the church doors. Seated first was the rector, followed by the members of the Minor Council, behind them the convent procurators, and finally the girl's parents.³⁹ A short while later, a sonata was played⁴⁰ to mark the start of the ceremony, while the girl, dressed like a bride, entered the church ushered by her cousin, Marin Franov Tudisi.

³³ State Archives in Dubrovnik (hereafter: SAD), HR-DADU-14, *Cerimoniale, Manuali pratici del Cancelliere* (hereafter: *Cerimoniale*), vol. 1, f. 225.

³⁴ Zdenka Janeković Römer, *Rod i grad. Dubrovačka obitelj od XIII do XV stoljeća*, Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 1994, 126-127; Z. Janeković Römer, *The Frame of freedom*, 278-279.

³⁵ Marija was born on 9 June 1715 to the family of Ivan-Toma Markov and Deša, daughter of Antun Resti. Besides Marija, they had four daughters and seven sons. One daughter died a few months after birth, while all the others entered one of the city convents. Nenad Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika, 7. Genealogije (A-L)*, Zagreb-Dubrovnik, Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2016, 63.

³⁶ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 103.

³⁷ It was common practice for the girls to enter convent after ten days. M. Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, 51-53.

³⁸ *Cerimoniale*, vol. 1, f. 225-225v; M. Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, 67.

³⁹ *Cerimoniale*, vol. 1, f. 225-225v; M. Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, 67.

⁴⁰ On the role of music in the rites of vestition and profession of vows, and the parallels with secular marriage, see: K. Lowe, "Secular brides and convent brides", 46-47.

She was escorted by distinguished ladies, her cousins, dressed in solemn attire. Upon entering the church, the girl stopped and first bowed to the rector, then to the Minor Council, and all the present, before she proceeded to the benches where she took her seat.⁴¹ The chaplain then held the mass,⁴² while the girl approached the altar to have her veil blessed. The mass was followed by the usual ceremonies and blessings (not specified in the documents), after which the chaplain gave the girl a crucifix in her right hand and a candle in her left. With the crucifix in one and candle in the other hand, the girl made her way towards the convent, escorted by cousins, followed by the chaplain and his assistants. Upon entry into convent, after the chime of bells, the girl showed herself on the choir balcony (*balatur*) behind the screen,⁴³ amidst all nuns, dressed in habit, with a gold crown on her head.⁴⁴ The priest then returned to the altar, started singing *Te Deum* and ended the ceremony of vestition with the usual sermon,⁴⁵ after which the rector returned to the Palace.⁴⁶ Also recorded in the Book of Ceremonies is that Rector Serafin Rafaelov Gozze was present when the daughter of the late Vlaho Junijev Cerva entered the convent of St. Clare, and that the ceremony itself followed an identical pattern as the one previously described.⁴⁷

Although this is the only description of the rite of vestition in Dubrovnik in the period under consideration, there is reason to assume that it followed a common pattern. However, we are unable to ascertain exactly whether the rector attended every rite of vestition. The fact that this ceremony remained recorded testifies to the need of the Ragusan community to stress the importance of the act of convent entry not only for the girl and her family, but for the community as a whole. Official presence of the rector at a personal act such as that testifies to the awareness of the ruling rank of the significance of female convents for the survival of lineage and class.

⁴¹ *Cerimoniale*, vol. 1, f. 225v-227; M. Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, 67.

⁴² According to the Book of Ceremonies, at least one chaplain was to take part in the rite, who would present the rector and his Minor Council with thyme and peace. An identical act involving the convent procurators and girl's parents followed, whereby the priest's or chaplain's assistant was to conduct that rite in a circular sequence. *Cerimoniale*, vol. 1, f. 226v; M. Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, 67.

⁴³ *Balatur* was a common architectural feature of the interiors of the Ragusan patrician houses. It was a kind of a mezzanine balcony with a wooden screen, behind which the girls observed the entertainment in the hall below them. *Balatur* was reached by the wooden staircase, while in the fifteenth and sixteenth century it was also equipped with a door, benches and backs (Z. Marković, *Pjesnikinje starog Dubrovnika*, 38).

⁴⁴ *Cerimoniale*, vol. 1, f. 226.

⁴⁵ On the role of sermon on the occasion of convent entry in the Habsburg lands, see: Veronika Čapšková, "Framing a young nun's initiation: Early Modern convent entry sermons in the Habsburg lands. Vestiges of a lost oral culture", *Austrian history yearbook* 45 (2014), 33-60.

⁴⁶ *Cerimoniale*, vol. 1, f. 225-227; M. Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, 67-68.

⁴⁷ *Cerimoniale*, vol. 1, f. 227.

Sadly, the sources fail to provide a clearer insight into the rite of vestition, especially when it concerned the girls from the citizen rank. Whether this rite differed and to what extent if the girl was born to privilege or not is hard to say. Although doubtless there were no differences in the liturgical part of the rite, it is quite inconceivable that the Ragusan rector would attend the rite of vestition of a girl from a non-noble rank. There are no data on how the girls prepared for this act in their own homes, nor how they made their way from parental home to the convent church, nor where they gathered prior to entering the church. The only detail known is that they were accompanied by their cousins, which was a common practice beyond the Ragusan framework as well.⁴⁸ Assumingly, elder cousins had already attended similar rites and their role was to look after the girl and advise her on what steps to take. In Venice it was customary for a girl prior to her entry into convent to recite Psalm 42, which expresses the desire for the meeting with God. After the recitation, the procession would proceed towards the convent. Leading the procession was a priest who carried a cross and led the girl to the convent doors, where she was greeted by the abbess and other nuns. In the late sixteenth century Bishop Grimani expressed his disapproval with the mentioned custom which, as he put it, had lost its spiritual purpose and turned into a performance. He stated that some girls were known to spend months preparing the psalm recitation, by which this holy act was converted into an expression of vanity. As a result, the bishop prohibited the display of pomp that accompanied the girls' entry into convent, demanding that they avoid silk clothes, extravagant jewellery and sizeable escort.⁴⁹ Recitation prior to convent entry has not been traced in Dubrovnik, yet the practice of writing dedicatory poems and verse to mark this occasion has been recorded.⁵⁰

The described rite of vestition and convent entry had a couple of interesting and symbolically important moments. The girl entered the church dressed like a bride—the fact that she wore bridal garments not only allowed a comparison with secular wedding, but at the same time conveyed an important symbolic meaning of the renunciation of these garments by entering convent. Renunciation of secular garments usually took place well beyond the public eye, and the girl's appearance in nun's habit in the presence of other nuns was a clear signal that the girl no longer belonged to the secular, family community but from that moment on she belonged to the monastic community, and that the nuns had accepted a novice. Similar examples of the girl's appearance in the

⁴⁸ M. Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, 68. In Italy during the early modern period a girl entering convent was to leave her parental home in the morning in the company of her closest female kin, without pomp and the presence of other people. See Silvia Evangelisti, "Monastic poverty and material culture in early modern Italian convents", *The Historical journal* 47/1 (2004), 6.

⁴⁹ J. G. Sperling, *Convents and the body politic*, 137-138.

⁵⁰ Z. Marković, *Pjesnikinje starog Dubrovnika*, 356-359.

new habit, along with the various signs of the novice's acceptance on behalf of the prioress and other nuns, may also be traced in relevant literature.⁵¹

Nuns wore the habit of the order to which their convent belonged.⁵² Habit, like the veil, was a symbol of their life in the monastic community and had a disciplinary function—it reminded the nuns of the life they had chosen and accepted. Taking a habit was a public statement of their belonging to a new, spiritual family.⁵³ It also represented their virgin status and that is why it covered the whole body, from head to toe. In the antiquity, the veiling of married women was regulated by law, and in some cultures it was believed that the wearing of black veil helped ward off evil.⁵⁴ In Christianity, in the First Epistle to the Corinthians St. Paul had already given instructions on the women's obligation to cover the head with a veil during religious ceremonies, suggesting that behind it was an instruction given by Christ. Until 1983 the veil during mass was obligatory for all women.⁵⁵ The nun's veil symbolically conveys the status of a married woman as well as that of a widow, worn in the memory of the deceased bridegroom. The veiling ceremony probably dates from as early as the second century.⁵⁶ In support of the virgins' veiling, among whom was also his sister, in the fourth century St. Ambrose stated that it was customary for married women of his day to wear a veil. The earliest records cite that the candidates wore a white veil which they renounced by solemn profession, when they took a black veil. First virgins either veiled themselves or were veiled by their parents and wore it at all times, not only during the rite. After some time, the rite of veiling was assumed by the bishops and priests.⁵⁷

⁵¹ S. Evangelisti, "Monastic poverty and material culture in early modern Italian convents"; 6; A. Lavrin, *Brides of Christ*, 54; Jo Ann Kay McNamara, *Sisters in arms. Catholic nuns through two millennia*, Cambridge-London: Harvard University Press, 1998, 537; D. Rives, "Taking the Veil", 470-473; Krsto Stošić, "Benediktinke u Šibeniku", *Croatia Sacra* 4/7 (1934), 26.

⁵² Although the habit was subject to norms, the visitators were known to encounter inappropriately dressed nuns in convents. Thus in 1525 Venetian patriarch Querini encountered a girl wearing plaits, which he personally cut off. In 1578 Patriarch Trevisan, however, encountered nuns with blond and curly hair, as well as those wearing platform shoes or pleated clothes. A year later, he excommunicated the nuns of St. Lucia because they refused to wear black veils (J. G. Sperling, *Convents and the body politic*, 120-124). In the seventeenth century Petar Gaudencije, bishop of Rab, drew the habit rules for the nuns of the convent of St. Andrew the Apostle, stressing that their clothes had to be plain, void of decoration and by no means made of silk. Nuns were forbidden to adorn with gold and silver, wear jewellery and style their hair, while the breach of these rules was punished by excommunication from the convent. The colour of the socks was exclusively specified as either black or white, also forbidden were the shoes with high heels, ribbons or those made of silk (Saša Potočnjak, "Redovnice i rukopisna kultura: slušanje, čitanje, prevođenje i pisanje u rapskim ženskim samostanima", *Književna smotra: časopis za svjetsku književnost* 55/210(4) (2023), 23).

⁵³ On habit and its meaning with the Greco-Orthodox nuns, see: E. Sotiriou, "Monasticizing the monastic", 148-150.

⁵⁴ Silvia Evangelisti, *Nuns. A history of convent life 1450-1700*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2007, 29; E. Kuhns, *The habit*, 53-54.

⁵⁵ E. Kuhns, *The habit*, 54-55.

⁵⁶ E. Kuhns, *The habit*, 55.

⁵⁷ "Habit", in: *Leksikon ikonografije, liturgike i simbolike zapadnog kršćanstva*, ed. Anđelko Badurina, Zagreb: Kršćanska sadašnjost, 1990, 248; E. Kuhns, *The habit*, 55-56.

It is noteworthy that in the described rite the girl wore a gold crown on her head. The cases traced in literature usually mention a floral or thorn crown, which the novices could choose and which were directly related to Jesus Christ.⁵⁸ The Book of Ceremonies provides no information on the cutting of the girl's hair prior to entry into convent, which was common practice in other convents.⁵⁹ The rite of public haircut before witnesses may have been interpreted as an act of sacrifice, in which the nuns, renouncing worldly life, voluntarily renounced of their hair as a symbol of beauty and sexuality, which further enhanced the purity of their body. In addition, the Book fails to specify whether it was mandatory for the nuns to treat the attendants with lunch, as it was customary and regulated by law in the fifteenth century.⁶⁰ In Italy of the early modern period there is evidence that the kin of the girl entering convent were forbidden to organise banquets or offer meals at the convent or their own homes, which implies that such practice used to be customary in the earlier times. Records also testify to strong resistance against these decisions although the Church was determined to put an end to this kind of practice, deeming them very dangerous. On the other hand, the families did not wish to miss an opportunity to display their power and prestige by organising banquets for the guests. Food offering after nuns' ceremonies may also be compared to secular marriages where the shared meal had an important role.⁶¹

Nor is there any mention of the girl changing her name upon entry into convent, yet under a new name she was first mentioned when taking her solemn vows. However, it is assumed that by the very act of entering convent the girl changed her secular name and took a new, monastic name, which was a common practice in other convents as well.⁶² In the description of vocational discernment usually entered was the novice's monastic name, her former secular name and the name of her father. Hence, Marija Placida Ragnina, novice of the convent of St. Mary of Kaštel, on 3 November 1736, at the age of twenty-four, responded to the questions on her aspiration to take the solemn

⁵⁸ K. Stošić, "Benediktinke u Šibeniku", 26; D. Rives, "Taking the Veil", 471-472; S. Potočnjak, "Redovnice i rukopisna kultura", 26.

⁵⁹ In his description of the rite of vesting regarding the Benedictine nuns in Šibenik, Krsto Stošić cites that at the end of the rite the bishop would cut the girl's hair (K. Stošić, "Benediktinke u Šibeniku", 26). The ceremony of the profession of vows of the Rab nuns includes an information that the ceremony master prepared scissors for haircutting (S. Potočnjak, "Redovnice i rukopisna kultura", 26). For the ritual of head shaving in Venetian convents, see: J. G. Sperling, *Convents and the body politic*, 138-139. On the ceremony and meaning of the ritual of hair shaving with the Greco-Orthodox nuns, see: E. Sotiriou, "Monasticizing the monastic", 150-158.

⁶⁰ In 1426 it was decided that to mark the occasion of convent entry a girl was to treat the sisters with lunch to the value of ten perpers (*Liber viridis*, ed. Branislav Nedeljković, Beograd: SANU, 1984, c. 209, p. 160).

⁶¹ S. Evangelisti, "Monastic poverty and material culture in early modern Italian convents", 6; K. Lowe, "Secular brides and convent brides", 49-50.

⁶² On symbolism and name changing patterns, see: D. Rives, "Taking the Veil", 473-474; E. Sotiriou, "Monasticizing the monastic", 153-154.

vows.⁶³ It was then that, in addition to her monastic name, her secular name Katarina was entered.⁶⁴ However, during the vocational discernment held on 4 November 1735, only her secular name, Katarina, was entered.⁶⁵ The reason for this probably rests in the fact that the occasion concerned solely the process of vocational discernment, and not the act of convent entry itself. For that reason, as well as for the symbolism behind the taking of a new, monastic name, it may be assumed that the girls changed their names the minute they entered convent. Apparently, name changing marked the end of old and a start of new life, along with the belonging to a new community which the novice joined. There is no record of the girls having to speak their new names aloud so as to inform the witnesses, as it is documented in Italy.⁶⁶

Of the girls' entry into convent we may also learn from the monastic rules. Already in the first known rule written exclusively for women, Caesarius of Arles emphasised the importance of the renunciation of possessions prior to entering the monastic community.⁶⁷ In the Rules established for the good behaviour of the sisters of the Order of St. Dominic⁶⁸ it is also explicitly underlined that all girls prior to entry into convent are to renounce of all private belongings in the name of the community. They should not aspire towards material goods and become arrogant, but ought to "aspire to God heavenwards and refrain from things frivolous and vain; that Monasteries should not be of benefit to the rich, but to the poor".⁶⁹ Renunciation of material possessions had a

⁶³ Marija Placida Ragnina, birth name Katarina, was born on 6 January 1712. Her father was Savin Franov Ragnina, and mother Jelena, daughter of Orsat Sorgo. They had six sons and five daughters, three of whom joined the nunnery of St. Mary of Kaštel, while Marija Placida also acted as the convent abbess from 1783 till her death in 1789. *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 178v-179v; N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 8, 266.

⁶⁴ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 94v.

⁶⁵ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 90v.

⁶⁶ For instance, on the occasion of changing her name in Rome in 1578, sister Candida informed the witnesses that her secular name used to be Lucija (K. Lowe, "Secular brides and convent brides", 48).

⁶⁷ *Redovnička pravila*, ed. Hadrijan Borak, Zagreb: Kršćanska sadašnjost, 2005, 209, 218-219. On canon rules related to the issue of renunciation of possessions, see: Arthur Vermeersch, "Novice", *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (hereafter: CE), vol. 11, ed. Charles G. Hebermann, Edward A. Pace, Condé B. Pallen, Thomas J. Shahan, John J. Wynne, New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911. Accessible on: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11144a.htm> (accessed: 13 December 2024).

⁶⁸ The source is kept at the State Archives in Dubrovnik and is without dating, but it may well be assumed that it was used by the nuns of the Dominican convent of St. Catherine of Siena. It is written in Croatian. See: SAD, *Naredbe postavljene za dobro vladanje sestara reda svetoga Dominika* (hereafter: *Naredbe postavljene za dobro vladanje*), *Manuali pratici del Cancelliere, Memoriae*, HR-DADU-14, vol. 141. On book culture of the Ragusan nuns, see: M. Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, 90-97.

⁶⁹ *Naredbe postavljene za dobro vladanje*, f. 6. Contrary to the rule prescribing renunciation of property, in some Italian convents there is evidence that the girls had personal belongings, as well as private, luxuriously decorated cells (Mary Laven, *Virgins of Venice. Enclosed lives and broken vows in the renaissance convent*, London: Penguin Books, 2003, 2-8). Petar Gaudencije, bishop of Rab in the seventeenth century, however, ordered the abbess of the convent of St. Andrew the Apostle to carry out an inspection every year on the Feast of the Birth of St. John the Evangelist, with an aim to examine the contents of the nuns' chests and whether they had any forbidden items, such as apples, scents and mirrors (S. Potočnjak, "Redovnice i rukopisna kultura", 23).

twofold purpose—apart from the fact that material goods represented an obstacle to a true spiritual vocation, by renouncing the worldly the difference between rich and poor girls was eliminated.⁷⁰ Renunciation of personal possessions in favour of the community had its roots in the life of Christ, emphasising the person's readiness to abandon old life in exchange for the commitment to serve God. Upon entry into convent, the nuns had to hand over all personal belongings which would become communal. Whatever they may have received after taking the vows, also became the common property of the convent.⁷¹ Due to the requirement regarding full renunciation of any form of possession prior to entry into convent the girls often drafted their wills. Thus, for example, extant is the will of Magda Bosdari, which she drafted before entering the convent of St. Catherine of Siena.⁷² Magda, who later took a monastic name Marija Josipa, in her will of 15 February 1759 renounced of all her goods to the benefit of Marin Martellini, whom she designated as her universal heir.⁷³ Similar examples have been recorded in other cities. Preserved in Zadar is a contract of the nun Marija Elisabetta Carrara, by which she voluntarily renounced the legacy of her father's property. In turn, her father, on his own behalf and that of his heirs, promised to pay her ten ducats per year until the end of life, and secure medical care in case of illness. Should any of his heirs defy this decision, the annual disbursement was to be raised to thirty ducats.⁷⁴

Before the candidates were admitted into convent, it was necessary to examine whether there were any impediments for their entry. According to canon rules, marital status was one of the impediments for a candidate to be rejected.⁷⁵ The only exception to this was when both spouses wished to enter convent or if one of them had already taken the vow of chastity. Also, if one spouse on account of his behaviour had compromised the union, the other could file for divorce and thus become eligible for convent. Parents were not allowed to enter convent unless they had provided for their children, while the children who provided for their parents were not permitted to enter convent if such an act would discontinue the mentioned care. Persons with debt were also forbidden to wear a monastic habit, as well as all those related to criminal deeds.⁷⁶ Secular authorities were in a position to additionally regulate entry into convent and its governance. With time, Dubrovnik witnessed the government's increasing meddling

⁷⁰ *Naredbe postavljene za dobro vladanje*, f. 6.

⁷¹ S. Evangelisti, *Nuns. A history of convent life 1450-1700.*, 28; M. Laven, *Virgins of Venice*, 2-8.

⁷² Magda was the daughter of Frano Vlahov Bosdari and Petra-Amelija, daughter of Andrija Ricciardi. Born on 7 July 1717, and died at the age of eighty on 24 March 1798. She entered convent at the age of forty-one. ADB, *Regularium et Monialium*, ser. 6, vol. 3, f. 18; N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 7, 180.

⁷³ SAD, *Testamenta Notariae*, HR-DADU-12, vol. 81, f. 12-13.

⁷⁴ Z. Dundović, "Thriller of the Zadar nun Cattarina Marchi: true or false story?", 164-165, n. 74.

⁷⁵ A. Vermeersch, "Novice".

⁷⁶ A. Vermeersch, "Novice".

into monastic life.⁷⁷ Only noblewomen could hold the rank of prioress, as it was upon the Ragusan government to designate the convents which admitted noble girls as opposed to those admitting non-noble women.⁷⁸ The convents were not allowed to admit novices without the Senate's permission, nor was any novice permitted to take the solemn vows without special permission of the Senate-appointed tutor. Further, the Senate was empowered to confirm the naming of the convent chaplains and confessorers, and also managed the convent revenues, determining the number of novices to be supported from these means. In addition, the Senate regulated the size of monastic dowry and the term of novitiate.⁷⁹ The government was responsible for all female convents, driven not only by an aspiration to preserve Catholicism but also by a belief that men were to be held responsible for women's behaviour, whether they were married or cloistered.⁸⁰ Therefore, they deemed it their duty to watch over the honour and good reputation of the women who had dedicated themselves to the vow of chastity.⁸¹ A similar practice of the meddling role of secular authorities into the regulation of conventual life has been recorded elsewhere in Europe and beyond. For instance, in the colonial Mexico the girls who aspired to become nuns had to fulfil four basic requirements, one of which was the "blood purity", that is, racial status. Although entry into convent was not entirely forbidden to illegitimate daughters, their birth legitimacy was an important factor in the final decision. Moreover, all candidates had to provide a dowry, their age was taken into consideration along with the virgin status.⁸²

Novitiate

The girl's entry into convent marked the beginning of the novitiate, or probation. Novitiate is the initial period of life in a monastic community from entry into the institution to the first vows, aimed at a better introduction of the novices to the God's vocation,

⁷⁷ Z. Marković, *Pjesnikinje starog Dubrovnika*, 365; M. Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, 15-20, 52-53, 61-62. On the relations between the church and secular authorities, see: Z. Janeković Römer, *The Frame of Freedom*, 306-323.

⁷⁸ Before the disastrous earthquake of 1667, three out of eight female convents in Dubrovnik were reserved exclusively for noblewomen: Franciscan convents of St. Clare and SS. Peter and Paul, along with the Dominican convent of St. Michael. After the earthquake, of the three restored convents only that of St. Clare retained the same purpose, admitting only the female members of the nobility (Z. Marković, *Pjesnikinje starog Dubrovnika*, 348-349; M. Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, 89).

⁷⁹ K. Vojnović, "Crkva i država u dubrovačkoj republici. Prvi dio", 66, 136; Z. Marković, *Pjesnikinje starog Dubrovnika*, 368; Z. Janeković Römer, *The Frame of Freedom*, 312-313.

⁸⁰ On the position of women and role of noblewomen in Dubrovnik, see: Z. Janeković Römer, *The Frame of Freedom*, 278-306.

⁸¹ Z. Janeković Römer, *The Frame of Freedom*, 314.

⁸² A. Lavrin, *Brides of Christ*, 18-25.

in a house especially designated for the purpose, to a term of at least twelve months, or two years at the most. During this period the novices are under the guidance of a novice mistress who is responsible for their spiritual development, and who discerns and examines their vocation.⁸³ Novitiate thus marks a period in which a novice learns the rules of the order and is introduced to the convent's interior discipline, and questions her own vocation through the development of self-discipline so as to achieve the expected monastic virtues: humbleness, modesty, self-constraint and obedience.⁸⁴ Although it was the Council of Trent that regulated the novitiate to a term of at least one year, the practice of the period of probation prior to the profession of solemn vows dates back to the first years of monasticism. Even the earliest communities, such as Coptic in the fifth century, were familiar with the institution of novitiate, for a term of three years.⁸⁵ The Council of Trent decreed the age of sixteen as the earliest age for taking vows that followed the novitiate, which leads to a conclusion that a novice had to be fifteen years of age if the monastic order required a one-year novitiate, or fourteen if a two-year novitiate was required. This opinion related to nuns was also confirmed by a decree of the Holy Congregation of Bishops and Monks of 28 May 1689.⁸⁶

Becoming a nun was a process which required strength, determination, adaptability and utter dedication. Fifteen as the minimum age prescribed for entry into novitiate, symbolised the point at which it was believed that a girl was able to comprehend the weight and significance of her decision. That age also signifies the threshold of puberty and the beginning of sexual maturing, due to which it may be interpreted as the period when girls were to retreat to convent in order to preserve their virgin status and devote their life to God. On the other hand, convent rules sometimes designated the maximum age for profession, which was often placed at the mid-thirties. That upper age limit may be interpreted as a period when the women should opt for either conventual life or marriage, and was often connected to the practice of the girls' education and training in convents, where many of them remained as potential candidates for novitiate. The upper age limit for the profession of vows left enough room for the girls to bring the final decision before their term at convent might have been deemed inappropriate, and were thus able to avoid the stigma of spinsterhood.⁸⁷

⁸³ *Zakonik kanonskog prava (Codex Iuris Canonici) proglašen vlašću pape Ivana Pavla II. (25. siječnja 1983)*, Zagreb: Glas Koncila, 1996, kan. 646.-653. Accessible on: https://hbk.hr/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Zakonik_kanonskoga_prava.pdf (accessed: 18 December 2024).

⁸⁴ A. Lavrin, *Brides of Christ*, 48-49.

⁸⁵ A. Vermeersch, "Novice".

⁸⁶ A. Vermeersch, "Novice".

⁸⁷ A. Lavrin, *Brides of Christ*, 23. On the practice of admitting girls for the purpose of education in the female convents of eighteenth-century Dubrovnik, see: M. Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, 101-112.

In the eighteenth century, a one-year novitiate was common in Ragusan convents, which was in compliance with the provisions of the Council of Trent. On the occasion of the solemn profession, the novices had to respond to the question as to how much time had passed from their entry into convent and the beginning of the novitiate. Their regular answer was that a year had passed.⁸⁸ However, on occasion examples of longer novitiate periods have been traced. In such cases the novices explained why they had not taken their solemn vows earlier. Hence, for instance, on 7 July 1701 four novices of the convent of St. Clare were questioned about the reasons for their aspiration to take the solemn vows. Novice Frana Saraca was the first to step before Archbishop Scotti, and responded that she had been in the convent for more than three years.⁸⁹ Enquired as to why she had not taken the vows after one year, she explained that it was not possible due to the archbishop's absence. Other three nuns gave similar answers, stressing that they were unable to take the vows earlier due to the archbishop's absence. Two of them had been in the convent for three years, and one for two.⁹⁰ The longest period that a novice spent in the convent without taking the vows was recorded on 4 November 1690. Enquired about her term in the convent, Justina Bona, novice of the convent of St. Mary of Kaštel,⁹¹ responded: "Ten years". The reasons for the delayed vows, as she put it, lay in the archbishop's absence, as well as some other legitimate reasons.⁹² Similar cases were known to appear both earlier and later, most frequently between 1676 and 1709.⁹³ In that period the archbishops were often absent from the city and their duty, the reasons of which should be sought in their discontent with the assigned office. Their absence could account for the delay in vow taking. The archbishops' discontent partly resulted from their inability to become fully integrated with the city and the majority of non-Italian speaking inhabitants.⁹⁴ Also, one should bear in mind that these deviations tended to take place in the immediate aftermath of the catastrophic earthquake that

⁸⁸ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 38-41, 45-45v, 140-140v, 147-147v, 156, 158v-159, 161v-162, 164, 168-168v, 179v-180, 185v-187v, 192-192v, 194v.

⁸⁹ Frana was the daughter of Nikola-Miho Pavlov and Marija, daughter of Frano Bobali. Besides her, they had four sons and six daughters, two of whom were the nuns in the convent of St. Catherine of Siena (N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 8, 300).

⁹⁰ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 16-17.

⁹¹ Prior to entering convent, Justina was known as Deša, and was the daughter of Serafin Ivanov Bona and Paula, daughter of Ivan Gondola. Besides her, they had three sons and six daughters, two of whom were nuns in the convent of St. Clare. Although in his genealogical research N. Vekarić failed to mention that she was a nun of the convent of St. Mary of Kaštel, it is doubtless the same person as Vekarić cites Deša born in 1667, and the novice Justina who was twenty-three at her examination in 1690 (*Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 1; N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 7, 150).

⁹² *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 1.

⁹³ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 1, f. 21-21v; vol. 2, f. 16-17, 19v-20, 37v-38, 46-46v.

⁹⁴ On the service of Ragusan archbishops during the eighteenth century and their relations with the secular authorities, see: R. Seferović, "Crkva iza dvora", 11-77.

hit Dubrovnik in 1667. The convents suffered devastating damage or were completely destroyed, forcing the nuns to abandon their communities.⁹⁵ The prolonged process of restoration, along with the general destabilisation of the city everyday life,⁹⁶ additionally disrupted the regular novitiate period and the taking of the solemn vows within the usual one-year term.

Stated in The Rules established for good behaviour of the Sisters of the Order of St. Dominic (*Naredbe postavljene za dobro vladanje sestara reda svetoga Dominika*) is a provision by which not a single novice may be admitted into the Order prior to the lapse of a certain period, *vrjeme od Novicata* (period of Novitiate), which was to last one year or longer, as decreed by the head.⁹⁷ In addition, one nun was to be assigned as the novices' assistant, who would draw attention to their possible misconduct. Novices were to be humble, obedient, they were to confess their sins regularly, not aspire for material goods, walk with their eyes downcast and in so doing, avoid haste. From the moment of their entrance into convent they were to be taught not to speak at inappropriate times, to take care of all the convent goods, including books and habits. They also had to be guided into "mastering a manual work of some sort, to keep them busy".⁹⁸ It all leads to a conclusion that a nun who was responsible for the novices had to be a person of utmost confidence and knowledge, because she was entrusted with a duty to help the young girls embrace new life and the rules of conduct. Sadly, in the preserved list of the nuns of St. Catherine of Siena who belonged to the Dominican Order and honoured these Rules, the names of the nuns who performed this duty are not mentioned. Nor is there any mention of the method by which the girls were to adopt the prescribed behaviour patterns. Orsola Formicini, nun of the Roman convent of St. Cosimato, wrote that at the age of eight she learned to pray by observing and imitating one of her five mistresses during her prayer.⁹⁹ It appears likely that all the necessary knowledge and

⁹⁵ On the fate of nuns after the earthquake, see: Minela Fulurija Vučić, "Sudbina samostana i redovnica nakon potresa 1667. godine" in: *Sačuvaj nas Bože rata, kuge, gladi i velike trešnje: Dubrovnik kroz krize, sukobe i solidarnosti. Collected papers from the session "Dubrovnik through crises, conflicts and solidarity" held within the Fifth Congress of Croatian Historians at the University in Zadar from 5 to 8 October 2016*, ed. Gordan Ravančić, Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2018, 91-105.

⁹⁶ On the earthquake and its scope, see: Jelenko Mihailović, *Seizmički karakter i trusne katastrofe našeg južnog primorja od Stona do Ulcinja*, Beograd: SANU, 1947: 18-32; Radovan Samardžić, *Veliki vek Dubrovnika*, Beograd: Prosveta, 1962, 241-248; Robin Harris, *Povijest Dubrovnika*, Zagreb: Golden marketing, 2006, 327-345. On earthquake phenomenon in literature, see: Slavica Stojan, "Poetika katastrofe – pjesnici o velikoj trešnji 1667. godine u Dubrovniku i okolici", *Analiz Zavoda za povijesne znanosti u Dubrovniku* 53/1 (2015), 113-148.

⁹⁷ *Naredbe postavljene za dobro vladanje*, f. 34.

⁹⁸ *Naredbe postavljene za dobro vladanje*, f. 35-36; E. Kuhns, *The habit*, 31.

⁹⁹ Kate J. P. Lowe, *Nuns' chronicles and convent culture in renaissance and counter-reformation Italy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, 66-67.

skills were transmitted through the method of imitative learning, and that the novices learnt from the models of the elders.

During novitiate the monastic community was to observe the novice and evaluate her adaptation to new life.¹⁰⁰ On occasion, that task also included the examination of novices so as to discern genuine vocation. According to The Rules established for good behaviour of the Sisters of the Order of Saint Dominic, the novice was examined by the convent prioress and two nuns appointed by the nuns' choir. The candidate was to come to the chapter, prostrate in the middle of it and to the question "What do your desire?" respond "God's mercy, and yours." She was allowed to get up only by permission of the prioress, after which she would place The Rules of the Order before her eyes, seeking her decision. If the candidate agreed to observe all the rules, she was to add "May the God who has begun, finish it", after which they would all together utter "Amen". This rite was followed by the candidate's change of clothes from secular to the habit, by which she was officially admitted into the community of nuns.¹⁰¹ Although this examination procedure is cited in the rules of the Dominican Order observed by the nuns of the convent of St. Catherine of Siena in Dubrovnik, in the period under consideration not a single concrete record on the performance of the examination of this kind has been traced. Nor has the procedure of this sort been recorded in other two Ragusan convents. In the convent of San Paolo in Milan it was common practice that the nuns voted on whether they would accept a particular young woman into their convent, for which a two-thirds majority vote was required.¹⁰² Similar practice has been recorded in the colonial Mexico, where the nuns, having heard the report of the novices' mistress and her recommendation for admission or rejection of a novice, voted for or against admission.¹⁰³

Taking the solemn vows

In Ragusan convents the completion of novitiate was succeeded by a new examination of religious vocation, this time in relation to the solemn vows. The objective was to examine the true vocation of the novice, her familiarity with monastic life and whether there were any impediments to the profession of vows. A question-and-answer session followed virtually the same pattern in all convents—the archbishop would visit the convent church in order to examine the novice's aspiration for profession. The examination may have been carried out by some other church prelate, whereby it

¹⁰⁰ A. Lavrin, *Brides of Christ*, 49.

¹⁰¹ *Naredbe postavljene za dobro vladanje*, f. 34.

¹⁰² K. J. P. Lowe, "Secular brides and convent brides", 45.

¹⁰³ A. Lavrin, *Brides of Christ*, 49-50.

was always noted that he had performed it on behalf of the archbishop.¹⁰⁴ The novices were asked questions pertaining to their desire to take the vows, their basic purpose being to discern whether the novice aspired to take the solemn vows on her own free will and if she understood the meaning of it.¹⁰⁵ The questions were not always asked in the same manner, nor in the same order, nor were they identical. If several novices were questioned on the same day, the questions were written down for the first novice only, while the answers of the rest were recorded in abbreviated form, which suggests that they were all asked the same questions. Besides basic information on the reasons for taking vows, these records contained other data as well: novice's date of entry into convent, her age, since when she had felt the God's calling, whether she was familiar with the rules of the Order which she wished to join and whether she was knowledgeable of performing the necessary services. Novices were also asked about their readiness for the life in community and eternal claustration, whether they would honour their superiors, and whether there was any impediment for taking the vows, such as a marriage promise in the present or future.¹⁰⁶ Also examined was whether the novice was physically and intellectually sound, whether she had any hidden defects, and if more than a year had passed since her entry into convent, why she had not taken her vows earlier. Questions and answers were mainly standardised, with some exceptions, and were most frequently formulated as yes/no questions, requiring a simple response depending on the question. These data point to the assumption that the novices had been acquainted with the prospective questions as well as the answers they were to provide well before the official examination of solemn profession. Given the importance of this act in their personal and religious life, they probably felt certain anxiety and prepared for the examination. That the preparation for vow taking was a usual practice in other female convents is evidenced by the extant Book of Ceremonies of the Rab convent of St. Andrew the Apostle,¹⁰⁷ which contains a description of the solemn profession rite in Italian, although the ceremony itself was performed in Latin. The novices uttered phrases in Latin, which they mostly learnt by heart, considering that prior to entry into convent they may have been illiterate. According to the records, on 28 September 1750 Bishop Calebotta, while preparing for the ceremony, asked the novices if they could read and

¹⁰⁴ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 37v-41, 45-45v, 131v-132, 135v.

¹⁰⁵ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 1, f. 21-21v; vol. 2, f. 65v, 67, 79, 137v, 179v, 185v. On variations of the posed question, see: M. Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, 240, n. 54.

¹⁰⁶ On marriage patterns in Dubrovnik, see: Zdenka Janeković Römer, *Maruša ili suđenje ljubavi. Bračno-ljubavna priča iz srednjovjekovnog Dubrovnika*, Zagreb: Algoritam, 2007, 121-160.

¹⁰⁷ Based on Roman Ritual, the Book of Ceremonies was composed in 1668 by the master of ceremonies don Antonio Dominis, chaplain of the female Benedictine community. The oldest known Rab Book of Ceremonies used in the church of Rab and convent of St. Andrew the Apostle is today housed at the Bodleian Library in Oxford, shelfmark MS. Canon. Misc. 336 and is dated to the fifteenth century (S. Potočnjak, "Redovnice i rukopisna kultura", 24-27).

write. All three candidates responded that they could not write, but they could read and recite the book of prayers, because that was what they regularly did with the nuns in the choir.¹⁰⁸ According to the Book of Ceremonies, the solemn profession ritual started on the eve of the act itself, when the bishop questioned the candidates and examined whether they fulfilled all the formal requirements—such as whether they were at least twelve years of age, whether they had been forced to enter convent, if they could read and write—but were also enquired about life, death and awareness. It was also stated that the master of ceremony prepared the novice for holy mass, and that each of them was to have a previously prepared habit, white veil and a floral crown. The master of ceremony was responsible for the provision of some other items as well, such as scissors for the haircut, towel, vessel of holy water, crosses, Pontifical for the bishop, Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary, along with other necessary objects.¹⁰⁹

In Dubrovnik the first recorded case of a novice being examined took place on 25 April 1676, when Archbishop Petar Torres visited the confraternity of the Rosary¹¹⁰ and asked three novices a series of questions. The novices concerned were Elizabeta, daughter of Martolica Cerva,¹¹¹ and sisters Ana and Marija, daughters of Marin Bona.¹¹² All three were of noble descent and were novices of the convent of St. Clare. The archbishop asked them six questions, to which the novices responded almost identically, which confirmed that the examination was conducted according to the decrees of the Council of Trent for the discernment of vocation. All three emphasised that they had already been three years at the convent and that they had not taken solemn vows earlier due to archbishop's absence. Also, all three stated that during the novitiate they had acquainted themselves with the rules of St. Clare and that they decided to take the vows on their own free will, without any force or persuasion. The answers provide information on their age, and in this regard an interesting answer was given by Elizabeta, who stated that she was twenty-one, of which she was certain because her mother told her so.¹¹³

The questions were asked exclusively in Latin, while the novices' answers were recorded in a combination of Latin and Italian, which leads to an assumption that the

¹⁰⁸ S. Potočnjak, "Redovnice i rukopisna kultura", 26.

¹⁰⁹ S. Potočnjak, "Redovnice i rukopisna kultura", 26.

¹¹⁰ Given the fact that female convents had not yet been restored by the time, the nuns found temporary residence in the quarters of the male Dominican convent and in the premises of the confraternity of the Rosary (M. Fulurija Vučić, *Ženski samostani u Dubrovniku u 17. i 18. stoljeću*, 30–32).

¹¹¹ Elizabeta's secular name was Nika, and she was the daughter of Martolica Marinov Cerva and Paula, daughter of Miho Bona. Besides her, they had six sons and four daughters, all of whom were nuns in one of the city convents. The three of them had entered the convents before the 1667 earthquake, while Nika and sister Marija after the earthquake (N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 7, 246).

¹¹² Ana and Marija were the daughters of Marin Đurov Bona and Marija, daughter of Marin Menze. Besides them, they had six daughters and six sons (N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 7, 150).

¹¹³ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 1, f. 21–21v.

novices did not have a good command of Latin. Later, this practice changed, in that the questions were mainly asked in the Italian language. First examination in Italian took place on 30 September 1709 at the convent of St. Catherine, when the archbishop examined four novices, Tereza Menze,¹¹⁴ Veronika Zlatarić,¹¹⁵ Agneza-Tereza¹¹⁶ and Justina-Marija Pozza.¹¹⁷ What is striking is that all questions were recorded in the plural, suggesting that the archbishop interrogated all four novices at the same time.¹¹⁸ Hence the question remains as to what extent they were able to provide personal answers in this group examination. On 13 October 1730 the novices of the convent of St. Clare, one after another, arrived before Archbishop Franchi. By order of appearance, they were Marija Gertruda Bassegli (22), Antonija Bassegli (20) and Marija Eugenija Sorgo (16). In their case both the questions and answers were written in the plural, and judging by their answers, all three expressed aspiration for taking solemn vows, stating that they wished to serve God because of which they had retreated to the convent.¹¹⁹ Enquired as to whether they were forced, deceived or advised either by parents, nuns or any other person to enter convent or they spontaneously upon God's calling aspired to make a solemn profession, they responded that it was on their own will to enter convent.¹²⁰ Then the archbishop enquired as to how long they had felt the God's calling, to which all three responded that they felt it since childhood. They also stated that they had not promised marriage to anyone, nor then nor in the future and that they were all in good health, without any defect. Asked as to whether they understood the meaning of the mentioned vows, they responded affirmatively, and also affirmed their determination to live in the community, in eternal claustration, respecting the superiors. With his last question the

¹¹⁴ Tereza, birth name Ana, was the daughter of Jeronim Ivanov Pozza and Nika, daughter of Ivan-Petar Pauli. Born in 1677, entered convent at the age of thirty, and died in 1730. She had two brothers and three sisters (*Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 3, f. 15v; N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 8, 67).

¹¹⁵ Nika was the secular name of Veronika Marija, who was the daughter of Stjepan Mihov Zlatarić and Marija, daughter of Marin Sumičić. Born in 1689, she entered convent one day prior to her eighteenth birthday. She died in 1773, aged eighty-three. She had five brothers and a sister (*Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 3, f. 16; N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 8, 452).

¹¹⁶ Agneza-Tereza's secular name was Ana, and she was the daughter of Mato Lucijanov Pozza and Marija, daughter of Nikola Bona. Born in 1690, entered convent at the age of seventeen, and died in 1773, one day prior to her eighty-third birthday. The nuns of the convent of St. Catherine of Siena chose her four times as prioress. She had three brothers and three sisters (*Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 3, f. 16, 34v-35v; N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 8, 227).

¹¹⁷ Justina Marija, birth name Ana, was the daughter of Luka Lucijanov Pozza and Ana, daughter of Sebastijan Zamagna. Born in 1691, entered convent at the age of sixteen, and died in 1782. She had two brothers and four sisters, two of whom were the nuns of the convent of St. Clare (*Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 3, f. 16; N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 8, 228).

¹¹⁸ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 51v-52; vol. 3, f. 15v-16.

¹¹⁹ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 75v-76.

¹²⁰ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 76.

archbishop wished to discern their knowledge of Christian teaching, whether they could read and recite Divine Office, and if they were prepared to bear Lord's cross, renouncing their own selves, following the crucified Christ. They responded shortly with "yes."¹²¹

Equally interesting is an example of the vocational discernment of a novice of the convent of St. Mary of Kaštel, Marija Agneza Saraca of 29 November 1802.¹²² Archbishop Nikola Bani asked her a series of usual questions in order to discern her genuine religious calling and familiarity with the rules of the Order and claustration. An additional question concerned her reading ability, to which she responded that her reading was very good.¹²³ The last recorded vocational discernment was held on 9 April 1805, when a novice of the Benedictine convent of St. Mary of Kaštel, Marija Benedikta Gozze (25), before Archbishop Bani responded to the questions on her calling.¹²⁴ It should be noted that the sources make no mention of the examination of the prioresses about the physical, spiritual, intellectual and voluntary readiness of a particular novice for taking vows, as was the case in Zadar.¹²⁵

Once it was discerned that the novice satisfied the requirements, the ceremony of profession followed, by which the novice affirmed her aspiration for solemn vows. During the ceremony, she made three solemn vows—of chastity, poverty and obedience. Having made the vows, the novice received the habit and thus became a rightful member of the community.¹²⁶ Although one might expect that these important events would be regularly recorded in the sources, it becomes apparent that not all novices are mentioned. For instance, on 17 October 1730 it was recorded that sister Marija Eugenija Sorgo took solemn vows,¹²⁷ yet the sources omit to mention that these same vows were taken by other two novices, Marija Gertruda Bassegli and Antonija Bassegli,¹²⁸ who were

¹²¹ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 76v.

¹²² Marija Agneza was the daughter of Pavao-Vicko Saraca and Paula, daughter of Orsat Cerva. Besides her, they had two sons and a daughter. She entered convent at twenty-three, and died at the age of seventy-three (*Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 198-198v; N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 8, 301).

¹²³ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 202-203v.

¹²⁴ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 205-205v.

¹²⁵ Z. Dundović, "Thriller of the Zadar nun Cattarina Marchi: true or false story?", 165.

¹²⁶ Arthur Vermeersch, "Religious life", *CE*, vol. 12., ed. Charles G. Hebermann, Edward A. Pace, Condé B. Pallen, Thomas J. Shahan, John J. Wynne, New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911. Accessible on: <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12748b.htm> (accessed: 20 December 2024).

¹²⁷ Marija Eugenija Sorgo was the daughter of Vladislav Nikolin Sorgo and Marija, daughter of Rado Gozze. Besides her, they had three sons and six daughters, two of whom were also nuns at the convent of St. Clare (N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 8, 365).

¹²⁸ This concerns the sisters who were the daughters of Ivan-Toma Markov Bassegli and Deša, daughter of Antun Resti. Marija Gertruda's secular name was Marija, and Antonija's Nika. They entered the convent together, a year earlier when Marija Gertruda was twenty-one and Antonija twenty years of age. They had seven brothers and three sisters, one of whom died in infancy, while the other two were also nuns. *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 71-71v; N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 7, 63.

examined that same day.¹²⁹ Nor do other records make any mention of their profession. An entry regarding sister Marija Eugenija states that, after a year of the novitiate, she made the solemn vows according to the rules of the Clares. Attending the ceremony was the current archbishop Franchi, Miho Bošković, confessor of the nunnery of St. Clare, along with Frano Lekić, master of ceremony.¹³⁰

By comparing the dates of the examination with the dates when the novices actually took the vows it is clear that the nuns made profession within a period of several days after examination.¹³¹ Also recorded are the cases of novices who took solemn vows on the same day when they were examined,¹³² while slightly over two months was the longest gap between examination and the profession itself.¹³³ The records make no explicit mention of the presence of other nuns during the rite. However, there is reason to assume that at least the convent prioress must have attended the rite, which is evident from the formula of the solemn vows taken by the novices in the convent of St. Catherine. Also, there is no record of the family members attending the novice's profession, although it was common practice across Europe and in the colonial America.¹³⁴ For example, in 1435 in Florence, sisters Antonia and Camilla Bardi took solemn vows in the presence of Archbishop Corsini, abbess Cecilia Donati, gathered nuns, clerics and a part of kin.¹³⁵ The chronicles of the famous Florentine *Le Murate* convent describe extravagant ceremonies of profession, which were attended by so many family members that the ceremonies had to be held in one of the larger convent halls.¹³⁶ In the colonial Mexico, the family of the prospective nun often expected to attend the ceremony of profession, so as to be given an opportunity to display the family wealth and prestige.¹³⁷ Similar practice has been traced in France in the seventeenth century,¹³⁸ as well as in the convents of Venice.¹³⁹

¹²⁹ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 76v.

¹³⁰ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 76v.

¹³¹ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 76v, 79v, 80v, 85, 86v, 95, 100, 101, 101v, 105, 106, 114, 121v, 123v, 126v, 127v, 128v, 132, 132v, 135v, 141v, 147v-148, 156-156v, 164v, 168v, 177, 180-180v, 186, 186v, 187v, 188v-189, 192v-193, 194v-195, 203v-204, 206.

¹³² *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 96-96v, 146-146v, 162.

¹³³ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 133.

¹³⁴ E. A. Leffeldt, "Uneven conversions", 129; K. Lowe, "Secular brides and convent brides", 45-46.

¹³⁵ S. T. Strocchia, *Nuns and nunneries in renaissance Florence*, 18-19.

¹³⁶ E. A. Leffeldt, "Uneven conversions", 129.

¹³⁷ A. Lavrin, *Brides of Christ*, 53-54, 77.

¹³⁸ Elizabeth Rapley, *A Social history of the cloister. Daily life in the teaching monasteries of the old regime*, Montreal: McGill Queen's University Press, 2001, 181.

¹³⁹ J. G. Sperling, *Convents and the body politic*, 139-140.

In eighteenth-century Dubrovnik it is noticeable that several nuns from the same convent took solemn vows on the same day. Thus, for instance, on 15 June 1732 five nuns of the convent of St. Clare took solemn vows. According to the source, they approached the collocutorium fence¹⁴⁰ in the church of St. Clare, where they took vows in the presence of Archbishop Franchi, Frano Lekić, master of ceremony, and their confessor Miho Bošković.¹⁴¹ Some ten years later, on 30 July 1752, solemn vows were taken by two nuns of the same convent.¹⁴² They were Marija Domenika Sorgo¹⁴³ and Marija Angelica Gozze, who were not examined on the same day.¹⁴⁴ The rite of solemn vows was held after the holy mass at the convent church, celebrated by Archbishop Milković, wearing his pontifical vestments and in accordance with the current rules.¹⁴⁵ On 31 December 1786 Marija Tereza Gozze, novice of the convent of St. Mary of Kaštel, took her vows during the solemn mass before Archbishop Lazzari at the convent church, in accordance with the book of rituals, rules and constitution of the Order. The rite was attended by the canon and deputy of archbishop Ivan Matov Ghetaldi, canon Luka Nikolin Sorgo and many other clerics, including the chancellor who recorded this event.¹⁴⁶ This example draws attention to the fact that the rite was attended by as many clerics as possible,¹⁴⁷ which was an established practice. Although the sources mention that the rite was attended by a multitude of people,¹⁴⁸ rarely is it explicitly cited that they were clergymen, and not other individuals.¹⁴⁹

Preserved for the convent of St. Catherine is the formula of the solemn vows which the novices placed in archbishop's hands, in the presence of the convent prioress. According to that formula, the novices vowed to "All Mighty God, Blessed Virgin Mary, Blessed Dominic, Blessed Catherine of Siena and All Saints, as well as to the Revered

¹⁴⁰ Collocutorium was a visiting room used for conversation with persons outside the convent. See Vanja Kovačić, "Simboličko značenje prostora u ženskim benediktinskim samostanima dalmatinskih gradova", *Crkva u svijetu* 58/1 (2023), 144.

¹⁴¹ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 80v.

¹⁴² *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 138v.

¹⁴³ Marija Domenika, by secular name Petrunjela, was the daughter of Vladislav Nikolin Sorgo and Marija, daughter of Rado Gozze. Cloistered at St. Clare's were also her other two sisters. They had three brothers and four sisters. On one of her sisters as nun, see note 128 (N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika*, 8, 365).

¹⁴⁴ Marija Angelica Gozze was examined on 26 July 1752, and Marija Domenika Sorgo two days later, 28 July (*Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 137v-138).

¹⁴⁵ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 138v.

¹⁴⁶ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 186.

¹⁴⁷ In the source cited as *alisque quam plurimis clericis* (*Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 186).

¹⁴⁸ Elsewhere cited only as *alisque quam plurimis* (*Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 76v, 80v, 85-85v, 96-96v, 100, 101, 101v, 105, 106, 114, 121v, 123v, 126v, 127v, 128v, 132, 132v, 133, 135v, 138v, 141v, 144v-145, 146-146v, 147v-148, 159-159v, 162, 164v, 168v, 177, 186v, 187v, 192v-193, 194v-195, 203v-204, 206).

¹⁴⁹ Apart from this, I have traced only two more examples where it is explicitly stated that the gathering involved as many clerics as possible (*Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 2, f. 180-180v, 188v-189).

Lord Archbishop, his successors and the convent prioress, to live in obedience, poverty, chastity and claustration their entire life, observing the rule of St. Augustin, apostolic constitutions and Dominican orders".¹⁵⁰ The third volume of the *Regularium et Monialium* fond includes a catalogue of entries for each novice of the convent of St. Catherine of Siena respectively, with the date of the solemn vows, name of archbishop to whom the girl vowed, along with the name of the prioress who attended the solemn act. It becomes apparent that the novices always took the solemn vows on Sunday, and in most cases also entered is the name of the saint whose feast was celebrated on that day.¹⁵¹ Thus, for instance, on 6 October 1709, when eight nuns took their vows, that day was noted as the Feast of Our Lady of Rosary. On 23 April 1719, on the second Sunday after Easter, the Feast of St. George, two girls took solemn vows.¹⁵²

Considering that it was an act by which the girls vowed to eternal chastity and dedicated their life to God, it is understandable that the ceremony was held on Sunday, on the holiest day of the week, with additional emphasis on the church feast celebrated on that day. However, a detailed description of the ceremony itself has not survived, that is, there is no mention as to when and how the novice was to utter the profession formula, as is the case in some other European convents. Thus, for instance, preserved from fifteenth-century England is an interesting example of the profession ceremony of the Benedictine sisters, from which it is evident that the ceremony was performed at the altar of the convent church in the presence of other nuns. The novice uttered her profession in the presence of a priest, after which she made a sign of the cross in the book of profession. She then approached the altar, kissed it and bowed, chanted specific verses and prostrated herself. This was accompanied by the priest's and nuns' chant of various verses. The novice would then stand up, whereupon her veil was consecrated and placed on her head. She again uttered the wording of the profession before the convent prioress, prostrated herself again, and after the chants she would join the rest of the nuns in the choir. In the end, she was to receive the eucharist.¹⁵³ A similar accent on the solemn and symbolic character may also be traced in the preserved Book of Ceremonies of the Rab convent of St. Andrew the Apostle from the seventeenth century. On the day of the profession of vows the bishop, accompanied by the clerics, would make a solemn entrance into the church to the sound of organs, while the nuns stood in the choir. The novices wore a black habit, and above it the solemn wedding attire with ornaments, white veil and floral crown. They approached

¹⁵⁰ *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 3, f. 55v.

¹⁵¹ Out of the thirty-eight recorded cases of the profession of solemn vows, only six did not have a comment on the religious feast celebrated that day (*Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 3, f. 56-61v).

¹⁵² *Regularium et Monialium*, vol. 3, f. 57-58.

¹⁵³ E. A. Lehfelddt, "Uneven conversions", 128.

in twos, with a burning candle in hand, while the children dressed in angels walked before them. Having laid the crowns and veils on a prepared cabinet, the bishop called them out and examined in Latin. The congregation would then sing and pray, while the act of profession included a series of symbolic gestures—renunciation of secular life was symbolised by the casting of the floral crown on the floor and a haircut in the form of a cross, which the bishop performed by using special scissors, assisted by the matrons who collected the hair into previously prepared handkerchiefs.¹⁵⁴

Conclusion

The study of rites through which the girls passed in order to become nuns provides an insight into a myriad of questions on female monasticism in the past. The rites of passage from the secular to the spiritual life, novitiate and the profession of vows reveal the complexity of the process, as well as the social, family and religious context that shaped it. During the eighteenth century, Dubrovnik witnessed the usual form of the girls' admission into convents, regardless of the religious order and the rules that followed. Archbishop or any other prelate examined the girls about their true aspiration to enter convent, but neither the questions nor the answers were consistently recorded. Solely recorded was the usual form from which it may be learnt that the girl felt a religious vocation after which she could enter the convent.

Scarce data have survived regarding the manner of the girl's transition from parental home to the convent, yet the description of the ceremony provides an insight into the manner of convent entry. It is evident that the members of the family participated in the transition, along with other influential persons of the time. Also, the transition contained the usual symbolic elements, which was in keeping with the rules and practice elsewhere in Europe. Thus, a girl, after the liturgical celebration, upon entering the convent discarded her secular clothes and appeared dressed in the habit, surrounded by other nuns. That act symbolised her belonging to a new community, that of the spirit. The change of secular name also symbolised the spiritual "rebirth", which additionally confirmed the separation from secular life.

The period of novitiate was a key phase in which the novices adapted and prepared for monastic life, observing the rules of the order they had joined, in which the mistresses were responsible for their training. In all Dubrovnik convents, the novitiate, as regulated by canon law, was designated for a minimum of one year. If the novitiate lasted longer, the reasons for it were stated, and in most cases it was because of the archbishop's absence. The completion of the novitiate was followed by the profession of solemn vows, that is, vows of chastity, poverty and obedience, from which it is

¹⁵⁴ S. Potočnjak, "Redovnice i rukopisna kultura", 26.

evident that the rite, regardless of the convent, was the same. First, the novice was to be examined again, and the archbishop would arrive at the convent church where he questioned the novices. The questions were not always identical, on occasion they were recorded in abbreviated form, notably in cases when several novices were examined and took the solemn vows on the same day. The main purpose of the questions was to discern whether the novice concerned aspired to take the solemn vows on her own will and whether she understood its meaning. Also examined was the existence of any impediment for the profession of vows, such as marriage promise or any physical disability. The questions and answers were generally uniform, though not entirely. That leads to an assumption that the novices prior to official examination had already been acquainted with the questions they would be asked, as well as the answers they were to give. Once the genuine vocation was discerned, the novice took the solemn vows, most frequently a couple of days after the examination. That act was attended by the archbishop and other members of the church, while there is no mention of the presence of the kin or other secular persons.

Further, also apparent on the Dubrovnik example is a specific resemblance between the rite of marriage and the monastic rites, such as the wearing of wedding gown or crown, which points to the influence of secular authorities on the shaping of these ceremonies. Given that secular authorities had a certain impact on church issues as well, the nuns' families shared a different view of the ceremonies their daughters passed through from that of the Church. They insisted on the preservation of the rites' similarity with an aim to emphasise family values, especially in the cases when their daughters entered the most elite city convents, and it is likely that by telling stories about the rites they tried to bring cloister life closer to their daughters. Considering that from the earliest childhood the girl was determined either for marriage or convent, and that by telling stories about virginity as a sublime lifestyle little girls were introduced to that choice, the stories about ceremonies were probably assigned the same role. Apparently, the families were aware of the impression such a ceremony could have on the frail girls' hearts in which they played the central role. The fact that the archbishop also participated in the ceremonies added even greater significance to the entry into convent. Ceremonial rites were not only important for the novices, but they also had an important role for other nuns by breaking the monotony of everyday convent life and reminding the community of the purpose and missions of the monastic vocation.

Reviews

Benedetto Ligorio, *L'interesse commune nel Rinascimento: I network dei sefarditi della Repubblica di Ragusa tra Italia e Balcani*. Roma: Editori Riuniti, 2024. Pages 280.

The book of the Italian historian Benedetto Ligorio is an extended and revised version of his doctoral dissertation, dealing with social, family and economic networks of the Sephardic Jews of Dubrovnik in the Adriatic and the Balkans in the period between the establishment of the ghetto in 1546 and the Great Earthquake of 1667. Ligorio has presented the results of his research in four chapters, each covering a different, though intertwined themes— residential patterns in and outside the ghetto, Sephardic Jews in Adriatic and Balkan trade, Jewish debtors, and family alliances—generously supplemented with graphic illustrations.

Ragusan Jews lived in and outside the ghetto. By investigating the rental market, the author has established that in the transition of the commercial properties and flats from Christian hands into those of the Jewish leaseholders no discriminating factors were at work, clearly testifying to the pragmatism which permeated all economic segments of the Dubrovnik Republic. Apart from Ragusan economic pragmatism, of equal importance for Jews was the security provided by the neutral Ragusan state: unstable markets in the Ottoman Empire, Venice and the Papal States due to continuous war conflicts, prompted Sephardic merchants to migrate to Dubrovnik. In this chapter the author draws an interesting parallel between Venetian provisions regulating the setting up of the ghetto in Venice in 1516, Ragusan decrees on the establishment of the ghetto in Dubrovnik in 1546, and the decrees regarding the Roman ghetto in the Bull issued by Pope Paul IV *Cum nimis absurdum* in 1555.

The section devoted to trade and intermediary activities of the Ragusan Jews is based on the research of the *Naula et securitas* series of the State Archives in Dubrovnik, as well as the trade ledgers of the Ragusan merchants — Martol Giorgi in Venice (1580-1583) and Benedikt Resti in Sofia (1590-1605). The analysis has shown that, among other things, the Jews played a significant role as intermediators and business partners of Ragusan patricians, especially in the trade of hides and skins from the Balkan hinterland. Having detected a dominant position of Jewish traders along the routes between Ancona and Venice, as well as Sofia and Valona, the author provides a business turnover breakdown for each of the mentioned four ports. In order to protect and maximise trade, Dubrovnik Republic itself decided to engage Jews: for almost a century, the members of the Coduto Jewish family acted as Ragusan consuls to Valona, a very important commercial centre.

According to Ligorio's research results, Jewish trade networks were particularly active in the periods 1590-1600 and 1613-1620, and the export to Venice in 1589, 1591, 1599,

1607, 1619, 1626 and 1646 exceeded export to Ancona. Therefore, the development of the Split harbour in the late sixteenth century did not affect the trade ventures of the Ragusan Jews. Conversely the author argues, it was then that the Jews came to occupy a prominent place in Ragusan trade. Through this powerful trade network, they imported skins and textiles from the Ottoman hinterland, and traded in spices, wax, pigments, carpets, jewellery, grain. Women were also part of this network, and for the purpose of trade they used agents from their own community.

The first trade crisis took place between 1603 and 1612, and after a short recovery, a systematic decline followed from 1627, which shows that the network operated in keeping with the economic fluctuations of the host state.

Reconstruction of the commercial credit markets in Dubrovnik in the period 1560-1614 is based on the study of the *Debita Notariae* archival series. The author comes forward with a significant conclusion according to which, between 1560 and 1614, the Jews who were indebted to the Christians, notably to Ragusan noblemen, largely outnumbered the Christians indebted to the Jews. The case of Dubrovnik, therefore, refutes the entrenched stereotypes of Jews as usurers, and proves that commercial loan was an important source of Jewish trade financing. The data, particularly regarding the two decades of the greatest expansion of the Jewish commercial loans, show the following: in the period 1595-1604, the value of Christian loans to Jews amounted to 21,119 ducats, while the value of Jewish loans to Christians was seven times smaller, and amounted to 2,796 ducats. Between 1605 and 1614, from Ragusan Christians the Jews loaned 31,262 ducats, while the Christians from Jews 20,782 ducats.

Indeed, as with the insurance market, after 1620 a rapid decline of the Ragusan credit system followed. In this chapter, as much as archival sources allowed, the author also analysed the Jewish internal loan network. In addition, he reconstructed the credit networks of some prominent Jewish merchants. In all the cases mentioned, analysis has shown constant mutual ties between Christians and Jews, in which the Jews tended to dominate as debtors.

The "marriage market" of the Jews in Dubrovnik is a topic addressed in the last chapter, with an introduction discussing the characteristics of a Jewish family, betrothal, marriage and divorce, along with the structure of the marriage contract. The author has analysed the data derived from 91 Jewish marriage contracts, which he compared with 258 unpublished Christian marriage contracts dating from the mid-sixteenth century to the end of the eighteenth century. The results of the analysis point to the maintenance of Sephardic customs, but also to the wellbeing of Jews in Dubrovnik. The dowries of Ragusan Jewish women resembled those of the wealthiest citizen families, and exceeded considerably those of the daughters of Ragusan merchants and craftsmen. The traditional addition of the groom to the dowry, *tosefet*, in Dubrovnik was usually

50 per cent of the dowry value, higher than in Rome and Ancona, yet similar to the practice in Livorno.

Various types of endogamy have been traced in the marriage practice, exemplified by the powerful Oef and Cohen merchant and rabbi families. Clearly, such patterns were guided by economic logic and served to strengthen business ties and partnerships, as well as the establishment of positions in the Adriatic and Balkan trade. Through inmarriage, the Oef and Cohen families controlled the export market which via Dubrovnik connected Sofia and other Balkan cities with Ancona. Similar strategies were employed by the Danon and Maestro families, as well as the Cohen de Herrera family.

The book of Benedetto Ligorio is a valuable contribution to the knowledge that the Jews of Dubrovnik, thanks to the pragmatism of the Ragusan authorities and the Republic's neutrality, represented a dynamic and venturing minority community of the Dubrovnik Republic and played a key role in the preservation of commercial connections between the East and West, especially between Venice and Ancona, and the Ottoman Empire.

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Nicolaus Viti Gozzius, *Breve compendium in duo prima capita tertii De Anima Aristotelis. A critical edition with introduction and indices*, ed. Šime Demo and Pavel Gregorić. Turnhout: Brepols, 2024. Pages iv+134.

Published as a new result of the research project "Croatian Renaissance Aristotelianism: A New Era in Thinking the Past", conducted from 2018 to 2023 at the Institute of Philosophy in Zagreb and supported by the Croatian Science Foundation, is a manuscript of Nikola Vitov Gozze containing a treatise on the fourth chapter of Book Three of Aristotle's "On the Soul". The difference in relation to the original title, which in translation reads "A brief compendium of the first two chapters of Aristotle's third [book] on the soul", is interpreted by a different structure of Aristotle's work: the traditional, Averroistic arrangement, largely adhered by Gozze, has been replaced with a newer, standardised one, originating on the basis of the contemporary editions of all Aristotle's works. This dualism in the exterior approach to the text also anticipates the dualism in its interpretation, which, besides the endeavour of publishing the manuscript, proves to be the greatest value of this book. Through comparative analyses of various approaches

to Aristotle, from the day of his renowned medieval interpreters, St Thomas Aquinas and Averroes, to Gozze's contemporaries involved in the debates over the immortality of the soul, the editors offer a welcome insight into the disquieting everyday life and various challenges of the Renaissance intellectuals.

Latinist Šime Demo, full professor at the Department of Croatian Latinism, Faculty of the Croatian Studies, University in Zagreb, and philosopher Pavel Gregorić, scientific advisor with tenure at the Institute of Philosophy, made a joint effort to introduce to the public Gozze's thoughts on a rather controversial and to a large extent anti-Christian Aristotle's work. The publisher is a reputable Belgian house "Brepols", on whose website Nikola Vitov Gozze (1549-1610) is described as a distinguished statesman and scholar of the Dubrovnik Republic, author of theological and philosophical treatises, dialogues in the Platonic spirit and erudite commentaries on the texts from Aristotelian tradition, a prolific writer who has earned the membership of several academies and honorary titles of Doctor of Theology and Philosophy, awarded to him by Pope Clement VIII.

This edition further contributes to the contemporary research into Gozze's work. It appears that out of all Croatian Renaissance thinkers, Gozze's works have drawn particular attention of the publishers, especially over the last thirty years, as evidenced by the catalogue of the National and University Library in Zagreb. In the abovementioned research project of the Institute of Philosophy, Nikola Vitov Gozze was given priority along with his two contemporaries, compatriot Antun Medo, merchant and philosopher under strong influence of the Paduan philosophical school, and the Franciscan Conventual Matija Frkić from Krk, Scotist philosopher dedicated to peripatetic philosophical problems. Therefore, within the same project, published in the same year was a new edition of his commentaries of the first book of Aristotle's "Rhetoric" (Nicolaus Viti Gozzius, *In primum librum Artis Rhetoricorum Aristotelis commentaria. Uses of Aristotle's Rhetoric in the Late Renaissance*, ed. Gorana Stepanić and Pavel Gregorić. Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2024). In both cases, the publishers are prestigious international houses, "Brill" and "Brepols", which speaks in favour of the high editorial quality of the Croatian editors, and equally so of the increasing international interest in Croatian philosophers, prompting national publishers to seriously reconsider the publishing of Gozze's *opera omnia*.

Generally outlined in the short foreword (pages iii-iv) is the distribution of editorial work between the two editors. While preparing the edition, Demo was responsible for the transcription, and he wrote parts of the introduction regarding biographical, linguistic, textual and general editorial issues, whereas Gregorić identified the sources and prepared the *apparatus fontium*, wrote parts of the introduction pertaining to historical and philosophical topics and wrote the synopsis. In the absence of a translation from the Latin original, this very useful element acts as a kind of substitute and provides a detailed thematic insight into all the presented topics. Appended to the synopsis are as many as four separate indices: index of works and their authors cited in Gozze's text

(*index locorum*), subject index and a double author index, from the introductory study and from the text itself. It should be noted that the first version of the transcript is the result of the collaboration with a group of students of the Faculty of Croatian Studies in Zagreb, and the manuscript itself is accessible in digitised form on the Vatican Library website. Testifying to its legibility and clarity, thanks to the skilled hand of the experienced scribe in the service of the Dubrovnik Republic with whom Gozze shared a long collaboration, are the two photographs published at the end of the introduction, showing also the author's marginal annotations.

Similar to the previously published commentaries dedicated to only one part of Aristotle's "Rhetoric", here Gozze deals with a fragment from Aristotle's work, writing a treatise on the rational part of the soul, that is, intellect (*nous*). He justifies his choice in the first passage, as he desired to escape from the city bustle and "arm himself against every trial of fate", stressing naturally his beloved estate in Trsteno, where he retreated to write it in solitude. Solitude was also in partial agreement with the topic of the treatise: Gozze was more than familiar with the currently popular debates on the immortality of the soul, in which Pietro Pomponazzi, author of *De immortalitate animae* written in 1516, engaged with other notable philosophers, and who paid a price for his commitment by being excommunicated by the bishop of his native Mantua, and had his works burnt in public. Gozze was eager to join this debate and submit his own opinion, but given that, on the other hand, he also wished to justify the reputation of a good Catholic, for reason either of the persistent Ragusan state interests in the loyalty to the Holy See, or for reason of his personal ambitions, ultimately, due to these interests, he sacrificed the quest for scientific truth. Finally, he abandoned the idea to publish the text which could undermine his ambitions for achieving a high papal honour, to him of even more relevance because he had not trodden the then usual academic path in his youth. This truly explains why this treatise has remained in manuscript until today.

This is one of the objective and well-argued thoughts submitted by the editors in an excellently written Introduction on pp. 1-54, composed of five parts, starting gradually from the basic details of the author's life and work, across a concise and accurate analysis of these commentaries, to the origin, appearance and journey of the manuscript itself, along with the closing, separate overviews of the author's bibliography and the synopsis of the work. In the biographical note on the author, the editors have given reasons for choosing the standard Croatian version Gučetić as his surname, over which there is some controversy. Considering that he has not left a single work in the language he personally refers to as "Illyrian", how he pronounced his own name remains obscure. That is why the editors opted for the Gučetić version as a form most frequently encountered in the treatises written in Croatian, although featuring on the covers of this book is the Latin form Gozzius. Author's concise biography is supplemented with a survey of his works, nine of which were published during his life, three in Latin and

six in Italian. Also included are the seventeen manuscripts preserved in six codices, five of which are dedicated to Francesco Maria II della Rovere, the last Duke of Urbino before the duchy became part of the Papal State, and one to the second duke's wife, Livia della Rovere.

The central part of the introduction, entitled "On *Breve compendium*" (pp. 10-28), outlines how the debate on the immortality of the soul developed into a most important philosophical question in the Renaissance. It heralded the new natural philosophy of Galileo Galilei and René Descartes with a final shift away from the dominant interpretations of Aristotle's legacy through a theological lens. Gozze did not follow that path, yet methodologically remained within the frameworks of the typical Scholastic debate. The editors account for this conclusion from the philosophical aspect by the fact that, in the majority of chapters, Gozze simply puts forward an argument as a thesis which he later refutes, and also offer a certain philological argumentation, proving that he is not interested in the philological or linguistic issues surrounding the text, nor in the historical context of the work he addresses, nor in its influence in various epochs. Although Renaissance elements have been observed in the text, such as autobiographical remarks and for Scholasticism a rather atypical flamboyant rhetoric style, the editors rightly argue that in terms of content and style Gozze's commentaries belong to the late fifteenth rather than the late sixteenth century, when the text was written. This alone offers causes for serious consideration into a point in the history of the Dubrovnik Republic, because if Nikola Vitov Gozze, as a reputed jurist and politician who was then in the highest government ranks and did not engage in scientific work as a secluded hermit or member of a church order, has been proven lagging behind the leading intellectual centres such as Padua or Bologna, this casts a shadow over the Ragusan social culture in general.

With a likely aim to circumvent similar dilemmas and issues on behalf of the future readers of his work, Gozze preferred succinct discussion, but not to the disadvantage of determination. Namely, Gozze defended his Averroistic views in Rome in a public debate with the master of the Sacred Apostolic Palace (*magister Sacri Palatii*), official theologian of the Pontifical Household, Dominican Paolo Costabili, whom he could never forgive "for regarding us Dalmatians as barbarians" (str. 19).

The text is of a comparatively small length. Among the cited works, he includes a host of medieval authors, as opposed to a modest number of Gozze's contemporaries (among whom is the eminent Averroist Marcantonio Zimara with the text *Theoremata seu memorabilium propositionum limitationes*, printed in Venice in 1564), along with the edition of Aristotle's texts with Averroes' commentaries published in the printing house of the Giunti family in Venice between 1550 and 1552 as a primary source. This helped the editors in a more precise dating of the manuscript, assuming that he might have started writing his commentaries in the 1580s and had them completed by 1591.

Interesting and useful is the reconstruction of the journey of the manuscript, from the moment when it was gifted to Duke Francesco Maria II della Rovere until its final storage in the Vatican Library. Noteworthy is a small intervention of the papal librarian Stjepan Gradi, who, in honour of the memory of the long gone compatriot, on the title page, beside the author's name, added *Ragusini*, stressing thus his origin at a time when Gozze's work was on the verge of oblivion, because the great earthquakes of the mid- and late seventeenth century tended to silence the echo of the once serene academic discussions.

While preparing the critical edition, the editors have divided the original into chapters and smaller parts (sections), justifying this intervention by their own understanding of Gozze's text. The script is adapted to the original, while the use of punctuation marks has been conveniently modernised. In the modest critical apparatus the editors draw attention to the alterations subsequently made by the author and the scribe respectively. A clear-cut and elegant appearance of Gozze's commentaries owes mostly to the editorial labour, as well as the technical achievements through the use of the currently standard programme package for the preparation of critical editions, *Reledmac*, under public licence of the *LaTeX* project.

This book would adorn the shelves of every devotee of the Renaissance thought, Ragusan spiritual heritage and Latin linguistic culture. Perhaps, in addition to the historical survey of the various approaches to Aristotle's views of the immortality of the soul from medieval times to the Renaissance, here we would also like to find a name or two of the Byzantine authorities (despite the fact that the development of philosophy in the Byzantium greatly departed from the West-European Scholasticism), while to a historian of the Ragusan society the topic itself renders yet another association with the understanding of the "transmigration of the souls" (*metempsychosis*), which as heresy was suppressed by the state theologians of the Dubrovnik Republic in the eighteenth century. However, they both go to prove that the controversies over the immortality of the soul continue to draw attention and may become the topics of future research, to which this work certainly is a welcome encouragement. For the time being, a quote from the end of Gozze's commentary will suffice: *De his hactenus. Finis* ("On this as much. The end.").

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Irena Benyovsky Latin, *Socijalna topografija srednjovjekovnoga Dubrovnika. Transformacija predgrađa u središte grada u mletačkom razdoblju (1205. – 1358.)* [Social Topography of Medieval Dubrovnik. Transformation of the Suburbs into the City Nucleus in the Venetian Period (1205 – 1358)]. Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2024. Pages 386.

The book *Social Topography of Medieval Dubrovnik. Transformation of the Suburbs into the City Nucleus in the Venetian Period (1205 – 1358)*, written by Irena Benyovsky Latin, is a remarkably valuable contribution to the knowledge of spatial and urban development of medieval Dubrovnik in the thirteenth and first half of the fourteenth century, that is, during Venetian rule, offering a much broader insight into the problem of spatial and social development from its earliest days to the full realisation of the medieval city in the fourteenth century. Dubrovnik remained under Venetian rule for as long as 153 years, a period often underestimated in the historiography. In the course of this period the city witnessed some of the key processes in terms of the political and social shaping of the commune, marked by the arguably most salient political event – the closing of the patrician council in 1332. Though less visibly, at least to the modern observer, during that time the city also underwent a physical transformation, controlled growth, and planned development.

The question of the first Ragusan nucleus and the integration of the new inhabited areas – although touched upon by many researchers in the studies of various architectural and urban complexes – has still not been systematically examined through the critical use of all the types of sources. The most important step in that direction was made by Lukša Beritić back in 1958, who, however, relied mainly on the written sources. The pioneering contributions to the topic, primarily that of Milan Prelog, and partially of Lukša Beritić, were focused on the essential role of the two provisions codified in the Statute of Dubrovnik (that from 1272 related to the planned development of the suburb, along with that from 1296, designed to regulate the renovation of the later *sexterium* of St Nicholas/Prijeko after the fire), whereas the period of urban development that directly preceded these recorded regulations remained neglected by scholarly research.

Historiography of the spatial development of Dubrovnik, with respect to the high level of control on behalf of the relevant administrative bodies, was characterised by a tenacious assumption that the planned form of the city mirrored its ordered social system. The methodological approach of the study by Irena Benyovsky Latin uses this hypothesis as the foundation for considerations of spatial development. The title alone suggests that the focus rests on the social context of spatial development, while the subtitle points to the important context of political governance. Insights into the early poleogenesis of Dubrovnik, dispersed in numerous publications, often led to contradictory conclusions. Many authors, aware of insufficient research (archaeological as well as comparative) into the early history of Dubrovnik, merely published the findings of archaeological excavations or individual source analyses, and by so doing probably

contributed more than the premature syntheses did. This book falls among the rare studies of early Dubrovnik whose indiscriminatory approach takes into consideration all the available sources, approaching the subject without the previously formulated conclusions, and thereby providing solid foundations for further research.

Apart from referring to all the previous (and often contradictory) hypotheses, this study makes a significant methodological step forward by applying combined methods of social topography and urban morphology. The methods of social topography, that is, the analysis of the distribution of activities and property ownership of social groups in the urban space, the author has already applied in the cases of several medieval Dalmatian cities (notably Trogir), so that the aggregation of her previous studies on Dubrovnik represents a much-awaited mature urban historical insight. The intertwining of social topography with the methods of urban morphology (identification of spatial patterns in urban fabric), along with the implementation of the key method of spatial syntax as their connection, adds to the complexity of this investigation, providing a specific methodological pattern for the study of medieval urban development. This kind of approach largely relies on the analysis of the social agency in the city's expansion (families and social groups from 'below', as well as the city authorities in various formations from 'above'), which is detailed in the second part of the book. Essential for understanding of the applied research approach is the introductory chapter, which outlines the mentioned methodological patterns, tracing their introduction to the study of Dubrovnik urban planning in older historiography.

Regardless of the fact that the book focuses on the suburbs, that is, the spaces shaped north of the oldest urban nucleus and of their closest extensions, the city is viewed as a whole, of which the suburbs are an organic part. Here, it should be noted that the very differentiation of the first extensions of the *urbs* (as dependent agglomerations along the perimeter of the earliest city fortifications) from the suburbs (as nuclei from which the new city quarters developed, and which generated a planned expansion of the city), is an immeasurable contribution to the conceptualisation of the early urban development.

The first part of the book, titled "Transformacija predgrađa u središte grada od pretkomunalnoga doba do kraja mletačke vlasti" [Transformation of the Suburbs into the City Nucleus from the Pre-Communal Period to the End of Venetian Rule], is devoted to the analysis of the suburbs through the method of urban morphology, which is interwoven with numerous references to the previous insights into the development of Dubrovnik from the earliest settlement to that of the pre-communal and early communal period, that is, before and after the two pivotal urban regulations. By analysing the orientations in the street network preserved in the current urban fabric, in collaboration with architect Ivana Haničar Buljan, the author identifies the streets of identical directions, revealing thus the contours of several successive stages of the

settlement's early development, exhibited in a synthetic map with designated street directions and spans. Through precise analysis, the author correlates written sources (mainly contemporary notarial documents, along with the narrative sources of later date) with the results of the archaeological research conducted over the last couple of decades, as well as with the results of the spatial analysis of the preserved urban fabric, and thus identifies the directions and spans of the streets in the area of the earliest urban extensions (close to the city walls) and the extensions created and regulated during the thirteenth century (suburbs). Based precisely on comparative analysis of the direction and span of the early street network, the reconstruction of the phases of urban development is suggested: the results of street direction analysis revealed congruences, which may be grouped into the development phases of the earliest extensions and later suburbs, while the results of the street span analysis, that is, (dis)continuity in their stretching, show a plausible succession of agglomerations of several suburban nuclei. This interdisciplinary method has helped identify the regularities which testify to ordered orthogonal planning which considerably preceded the well-known regulation from the Statute of 1272, i.e., already in the stage of joining the fort on Laus (Kaštio) with the castrum in the port, but also (and even more importantly!) in the later, pre-communal development of the city.

The methodological approach which combines the fields of urban history, archaeology, and spatial analysis of urban complexes has proved crucial for making such an important step forward in the understanding of the earliest spatial development of the city of Dubrovnik, while some of the unsolved issues remain to be elucidated by further interdisciplinary collaborations. Yet what represents a reliable foundation for further research, as well as other research into the medieval history of Dubrovnik, is the correlation of the spatial expansion of the city with the social and political processes. Lastly, yet another important methodological step forward deserves to be underlined: instead of the chronologically-determined study of the "development" of later forms from the former, this approach enables a far more natural perspective for the study of urban forms which have virtually vanished, that is, which have been preserved only in the remains (such as the "layout" of the street network). Applied perspective is here reversed: earlier forms are sought in the older, relying on the knowledge on social processes which led to respective spatial transformations. Therefore, this study provides a missing link for a more comprehensive and in-depth approach to the research of the city's early communal stage, and eventually the earliest poleogenesis of Dubrovnik, i.e., its Byzantine origins. The second part, entitled "Socijalna topografija predgrađa" [Social Topography of the Suburbs], provides a meticulous analysis of the spatial location of several patrician blocks in the suburban area south of the Placa, but also in the area north of the Placa, as the analysis extends to the church and communal estates formed on that location in the mentioned period. The analysis of the suburban

area includes a selection of fourteen estates of the most prominent Ragusan families: spatial organisation of these estates, based on the sources which describe merely the immediate block boundaries, has been determined only relatively, with a tentatively established absolute location on a somewhat less detailed level. Crystallised in this chapter is the combined approach of the spatial and social analysis, where through continuities (and discontinuities), facilitated by the tolerant attitude of the Venetian authorities towards Ragusan nobility, the location and transformation of the patrician blocks is traced. Through a closely knit data network on selected individuals and buildings, the author recognises the reflections of the neighbourly (spatial) relations in the family and business (social) ties. Further study of this material should lead to the alignment of the contoured block situations to the basic grid of urban development (delineated in the first part of the book), whereupon the early patrician blocks would be given their absolute location.

The third part of the book, titled "Izvori za socijalnu topografiju srednjovjekovnoga Dubrovnika" [Sources for the Social Topography of Medieval Dubrovnik], offers an extensive overview of the genre-diversified written and visual sources, which include the publishing of several hitherto unknown representations of Dubrovnik from the European archives. In addition to the overview, the author brings a historiographic and methodological reflection: narrative sources (mainly annals and chronicles) are compared, with an aim of establishing a reliable methodology for their use, while a detailed insight into the archival series of the city administration and notary office reveals their relevance in the study of the aspects of social topography. Seen from that angle, these sources do not only represent a pool of more or less reliable data, but also a kind of a scene, a "backdrop idea" of the city in its past and present, against which medieval Ragusans developed their city. Such an image, regardless of the "historical accuracy" of the data it is built upon, provides a vivid image of the city as viewed and created by its citizens and their contemporaries, that is, offers a more precise picture of the city's social and not only physical space.

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Niko Kapetanić, *Politička povijest Konavala od VIII. do kraja XV. stoljeća/Political History of Konavle from the 8th until the End of the 15th Century*. Dubrovnik: Društvo prijatelja dubrovačke starine, 2024. Pages 110.

In his research of the equilibrium between the mountain crust and its underlying mantle Ruđer Bošković envisioned this relationship as "the Earth that breathes". The principles of Bošković's isostasy may be applied to the study of early historical periods in which, apart from written sources, we lean on archaeology, and in more recent times on genetics as well. As a true connoisseur of Konavle and its past, Niko Kapetanić has produced yet another challenging scientific monograph of this area. In his numerous books and articles—which deal with diverse topics, extending geographically from the Church of St Blaise on the island of Sušac to the border at Prevlaka—the focus of his attention rests mainly on the Konavle themes, reaching from the antiquity to the modern period. It was not until he had rounded off his studies on Konavle's localities, forts, lineages, and borders that he embarked on medieval Konavle, for he knew well that the surface crust could not be understood without the underlying mantle upon which it stands. His restorational and archaeological experience has prepared him for the writing of this book, because without supplemental knowledge of archaeological material, to which he has devoted himself from his scientific beginnings, the study of the earliest history of Konavle is impossible.

Konavle has long been neglected in historiography, or rather ignored, as Kapetanić puts it, but thanks to his endeavours this has changed to the better. Therefore, in the form of this monograph we finally have a genuine synthesis of medieval Konavle. Published bilingually in an appealing graphic layout and font, with illustrative maps which adorn all his books, is the only and foundational monograph on pre-modern Konavle. The writing of this synthesis combines the author's comparative archaeological, historical and restorational knowledge acquired both in the field and in the archives. Similar to his previous books and contributions, Kapetanić draws all his insights from the analysis of the historical material sources, starting from Ranke's fundamental principle *wie es eigentlich gewesen*.

The author has divided the book into eight sections, guided by the principle of the central government that ruled over Konavle. Yet that is merely a timeframe, since this political framework is not crucial in the history of Konavle, for in this fertile valley overlooked by the mountains life developed in the rhythm of its own "longue durée" and under its own elite. Therefore, Kapetanić's book evolves around the local people of Konavle and not their formal, distant lords. The book starts with the thesis that as a historical-political entity Konavle consistently preserves its political and economic character regardless of the historical transformations, that the continuity of space and population is transmitted through generations, and that radical historical changes do not exist; simply put, demographic processes notwithstanding, the Konavlians have

always been Konavlians. Outlined in the introduction is the geographical description of the area, abounding in water and fertile land, favourable conditions for livestock farming, and the strategical importance of the region situated in the vicinity of Rhizon, seat of the Illyrian state, and later, in the Middle Ages, between two strong urban centres—Dubrovnik and Kotor. In historical records they appear alongside the ancient Epidaurum, which the Romans raised to the status of colony and whose ager they expanded as far as Trebinje (*Asanum*); the landscape was dotted with agricultural estates (*villae rusticae*), roads, fields, and mills, in which the sixteen-mile-long aqueduct from today's Vodovađa to Cavtat represented the backbone of the entire space, and after which the whole area was named (Konavle from Latin *canalis*). Byzantine emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus was the first to record the name Kanali (*Καναλή*) in the tenth century—reminiscent of *konal* or *kono*, the term still used in the region today—as the name of the entire archontia, thus confirming the continuity of Roman heritage in the region.

Kapetanić dedicates a whole chapter to this emperor and his historiographical circle. By doing so, he demystifies the mythology of the Byzantine court which ascribes the arrival of the Croats and Serbs to Emperor Heraclius (610 – 641), in whose time, however, we know with certainty today, the Avars were at the height of power, while the mentioned Croats and Serbs were still well behind the Carpathians. The author clearly demonstrates the importance of the works of the Byzantine imperial circle (Porphyrogenitus' *De administrando imperio*, along with *Vita Basilii* and *De Cerimoniis*) for the political history of the Adriatic and wider coastal Sclavinias—including Konavle and Konavlians which the emperor used synonymously for archontia and for the people—and on the other hand, also reveals how misleading they can be regarding their ethnic history. Porphyrogenitus rightly states that Epidaurum was destroyed by the Avars, from which its citizens fled to Dubrovnik and Durrës, yet Kapetanić convincingly argues that, given the circumstances, we cannot speak of the old population vanishing nor of the arrival of newcomers. After the destruction in the early seventh century, the Avars soon withdrew to Pannonia, the only area that could provide enough food for them, which is why their remains cannot be traced south of the Sava River. Despite losing the urban centre, Konavlians continued with their lives; in the book the author shows that their history is endogenous, self-referential and focused on the old, original crystal core which was to be strengthened by the Slavic newcomers. A histogenesis of this kind must have witnessed a decline; rural elite replaced that of the city; powerful and self-conscious nobility assumed responsibility. This culturally lagging Roman-Illyrian space was subject to slow yet massive Slavicisation a century and a half prior to the organised arrival and settlement of the Croats and Serbs, which began in the late eighth century when the Croats conquered the ring of the Avars in Pannonia, after which they migrated southwards upon Frankish initiative.

While writing about ninth-century events that had taken place after the mentioned migrations, Porphyrogenitus positions the Konavle archontia in the same rank as the other six political entities: Croatia, Pagania, Zahumlje, Travunija, Dioclea and Serbia. Constituting the nucleus of Konavle is the dominant county (*župa*) of the same name, which under the protection of Byzantine authority expanded to the neighbouring counties from Žrnovnica in the west to Dračevica in the east; Konavle makes its entry into written history with a stretched out border from Ombla to Kotor, and as the author vividly shows, in terms of territory and significance it was equal to the other Adriatic Sclavinias. Kapetanić emphasises Porphyrogenitus' crucial information according to which, during the reign of the powerful Basilius I of Macedonia in 870/871, the Konavlians together with Croats, Serbs, people of Zahumlje and Travunija took part in the siege of the Saracen city of Bari, in which, apart from the imperial fleet, ally forces of the Frankish emperor Ludwig II and Pope Adrian II also participated. While writing about Konavle, Porphyrogenitus cites five of its "inhabited cities", whereby Travunija/Trebinje and Vrm are unquestionably on the territory of Travunija, whereas Risan as constituent part of the Dračevica county belongs to the Konavle archontia. Kapetanić reads Porphyrogenitus' Lukavete (Λουκάβεται) as Zastolje, below Dunave, geographical and political centre of Konavle, where in the early fifteenth century a location known as Lukanj dol (Lukan dol, Lukavi dol) has been recorded, while Zetlivi (Ζετλήβη), according to Kapetanić, is on the site or in the vicinity of the ruins of the Roman Epidaurum (Cvetlivi, Cetlivi *ergo* Captat).

In the next chapters the author traces "Konavle as part of Travunija (after 950 until 1042/43)" and later Dioclea from 1042/43 to around 1150. That is the time of the Priest of Dioclea, who in his Chronicle (*Ljetopis*) mentions three counties of Konavle: Konavle, Žrnovnica and Dračevica, placing the entire space from Herzegovina to Durrës, with Konavle in the middle, within Red Croatia. After the fall of Dioclea, from around 1150 till after 1180, Konavle was again under Byzantine rule, more precisely under Manuel I Comnenus, who was the last of all Byzantine emperors to play an integrative role, though only on the territory of the south Adriatic Sclavinias, from Zahumlje to the east. Emerging in this period is the great name of Konavle's history, Devesije (Deveš), first ruler whom we know by name, and who as count restored "the second Konavle archontia", and who in his grant from 1164 titles himself as *dominus* of Konavle and Žrnovnica. After the emperor's death in 1180, Rascia ruled over Konavle until 1373, which the author divides into two periods: until the death of Tsar Dušan in 1355, and after him, when his state disintegrated into separate parts, in which the local lords came to exercise true authority, thus also ruling over Konavle until the mentioned 1373. Yet Rascian rulers were far from the Adriatic, and according to the author, they tended to appear as "second-instance" administration while the Konavlians governed their county independently. Testifying to this is the case of Count Čnomir of Konavle, ruling the territory between Dubrovnik and Molunat, wedged between the Ragusans and Rascian king Uroš I, who in

the war waged from 1252 to 1254 raided Dubrovnik twice, pillaging and plundering it. Kapetanić analyses Črnomir's letter to the count of Dubrovnik, from which we learn that the Ragusans fought back and seized seven Konavlians, that Črnomir was determined to improve the relations and avoid further abductions, which the author interprets as a high level of Konavle's autonomy because the resolution of the dispute was sought locally, in the field and without the king's arbitration. The first half of the fourteenth century was marked by a new governor of Konavle, *župan* Poznan Purčić (*Poznanus de Purchia*), who, between 1306 and 1344, in the conflicts between Croatian magnates, Bosnian *ban*, and Serbian kings, changed sides four times, which is an eloquent testimony of the instability of medieval Konavle and the fact that such a situation could not have lasted indefinitely.

Despite the varying historical relationships of the Konavle counts with the central authorities, all of these proved marginal when compared to the interplay between Konavle and Dubrovnik, which, in author's opinion, were destined to each other from the very beginning. Fully aware of the economic, strategic and symbolic potential of Konavle, where their ancient Epidaurum lies—their *Civitas Vetus*, *Ragusa Vecchia* or Cavtat—in its approach to Konavle, Dubrovnik implemented, as the author states, a patient, "creeping" tactic. With Konavlians the Ragusans agreed on growing perennial cultures, primarily vineyards; they sowed wheat, kept livestock, pigs, oxen and bees, and registered leased land as their property, implementing a strategy that has already proved successful—by mid-fourteenth century in such a way they appropriated from the Konavlians the whole of Breno, today's Župa dubrovačka.

After Dušan's death, his successor Emperor Stefan Uroš V the Weak (1355 – 1371) granted Konavle as a fief to Vojislav Vojinović, count of Hum, and thus opened a new chapter in Konavle's history characterised by two local lords: the mentioned Vojinović and Nikola Altomanović. Đurđe I Balšić (1362 – 1378), restorer of old Dioclea under the name of Zeta, took advantage of the declining Rascian rule and from 1373 to 1377 governed Konavle through Radić, kephale of both Konavle and Dračevica county. The author surveys the dynamic historical developments of the end of the fourteenth century, which strengthened the consolidated Angevin Dubrovnik. The death of Bosnian King Tvrtko I in 1391 was followed by a period of instability, during which the Bosnian nobility divided Konavle among themselves: Radinovići imposed themselves as the lords of the western part with Cavtat, and Sandalj Hranić of the eastern one. In 1419, heirless and in an open war with Radinovići, Sandalj sold to the Ragusans his eastern part from Popovići to Point Oštro for 36,000 perpers or 12,000 ducats. In 1426, from Radoslav Pavlović Radinović the Ragusans purchased the remaining western part, under the same terms as the eastern.

Having acquired Konavle, the Ragusans returned home, while Konavle through the powerful and developed, and most importantly, independent Dubrovnik, joined the Western, Catholic civilisational circle. On the other hand, through the acquisition of Konavle, the Ragusans consolidated their Republic at a point when, having purchased

Dalmatia in 1409, Venice was approaching from the west, and the Ottomans from the east. Although the book provides a clear insight into the fact that the Konavlians, from the beginning of the archontia, persistently preserved and eventually succeeded in the preservation of their character and autonomy, the shadow of the weakened, decaying Byzantium and its historical and church derivatives contributed to political instability, short-term changes of political governors, and the cultural and spiritual poverty on the periphery of the Christendom, threatened by the heresy of *bogumili* and paganism.

The author dedicates the closing chapter to the organisation of *Knežija* (county) under Ragusan authority which proclaimed Konavle its feudal possession. *Župan* was replaced by a Ragusan count (*conte*) seated in Pridvorje, who was to remain there until the fall of the Republic in 1808. Consistent in the implementation of its colonial model, Ragusan government first decided in 1419 to deprive the Konavlians in the eastern part of land and status, turning them into serfs. After a fierce revolt in 1423, the government made a concession by allowing 66 petty nobles (*vlasteličići*) to keep their houses and cattle pens, and to continue to work the land they had formerly cultivated, whereas the land of their serfs was expropriated. Fertile land in this part the Ragusans divided into 37 "tenths", each consisting of ten parts, and each part consisting of four quarters. Having bought Pavlović's part in 1427, the Ragusans smoothly established their possession and divided it into 38 "tenths", leaving nothing to the local petty nobility. This major privatisation shift, to which the author dedicated an entire book titled *Konavle u XV. stoljeću* (*Konavle in the Fifteenth Century*, Gruda, 2011), left an abundance of documentary material and suddenly "illuminated Knežija with a thousand spotlights", as the author vividly observes. The land division, clearly presented in the appended maps in both books, thus provides an insight into their owners and, equally important, into more than 3,300 toponyms in the historical sources. From that period until the end of the Republic, historical material regarding Konavle is overflowing, awaiting to be tackled by other researchers as well.

In the book the author stresses that the majority of present-day municipalities in the Republic of Croatia have a history and name that date back to a couple of centuries, whereas that of Konavle dates to the Roman times. This book is extraordinarily important since it brings a study of a developed archontia or Sclavinia which has preserved a part of its original features to the present day, while the syntheses of Pagania, later Marania, Zahumlje and Travunia are yet to be completed. Unlike the mentioned territories, Konavle is a unique ideally-typed historical model of archontia or Sclavinia which has survived through historical change. Therefore, this book serves as a step forward and an exemplary approach to the research of medieval eastern Adriatic, with the ultimate goal of providing a broad insight into our presence in the region through similar comprehensive monographs.

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