The Myth of Ragusa: Discourses on Civic Identity in an Adriatic City-State (1350-1600)

By

Lovro Kunčević

A DISSERTATION

in

Medieval Studies

Presented to the Faculties of the Central European University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Medieval Studies

Central European University

(2012)

Supervisor: Gerhard Jaritz

I herby declare that this dissertation contains no materials accepted for any other degrees in any other institutions and and no materials previously written and/or published by another person unless otherwise noted.

Acknowledgments

After all the time that has passed in its making, writing acknowledgements for this study is a serious historical enterprise in itself. Among the many kind people who made it possible a prominent place belongs to my supervisor, Gerhard Jaritz, to whom I am profoundly grateful for unwavering support, a sharp editor's eye and, above all, immense amounts of academic common-sense, distributed gently and wisely. Other people form the Department of Medieval Studies at CEU also played an important role in the genesis of this work. Throughout the years Katalin Szende kept surprising me with her scholarly generosity, while János Bak motivated me through his typical awe-inspiring charisma, known to generations of fellow students. An enormous amount of work has been done by Judith Rasson who managed to make my irreparably pompous style sound like proper academic English, and, on top of it all, did it amazingly fast and with characteristic kindness. Last but far from least, I owe my warmest thanks to Csilla Dobos who ever and again managed to turn cumbersome bureaucratic issues into a pleasant chat among friends.

Another group of people to whom I owe a great debt are my colleagues from the Institute for Historical Sciences of HAZU in Dubrovnik. Endless hours-long debates with Nenad Vekarić helped me clarify a number of issues, especially regarding the Ragusan patriciate, while his wise policy of laissez-faire as a director enabled me to work in ideal conditions. The amazing altruism combined with ruthless effectiveness characteristic of Ivana Lazarević saved me literally months of archival and other work. With her erudition and thoroughness, Nella Lonza remains my most feared reader, for whose imprimaturs I have developed a true addiction. Finally, I owe an enormous debt to Zdenka Janeković-Römer who has followed and shaped this project from its very inception, and whose influence and works are among the principal reasons why I decided to work on Ragusa at all.

My profound gratitude also goes to several institutions and their staff which helped me on my way. The generous funding and support I received from "The European Doctorate in the Social History of Europe and the Mediterranean" enabled me to do extensive research in Venice and London, working with eminent experts such as Gherardo Ortalli and Catherine W. Bracewell. The scholarship from Geisteswissenschaftliches Zentrum Geschichte und Kultur Ostmitteleuropas in Leipzig made it possible for me to get a much clearer picture of the Ragusan tributary status in a comparative perspective. I also owe a great debt to the kind staff of several archives, such as the Museo Civico Correr and the State Archives in Venice, but most of all to the staff of the State Archives in Ragusa, who created the most pleasant working ambience I have ever known.

Last but certainly not the least, I owe a great debt to my many friends, who, not surprisingly, tend to be scholars themselves. Ana and Domagoj Madunić have suffered the entire PhD process graciously, offering generous support which ranged from sophisticated scholarly arguments all the way to gastronomic comforts. Márton Zászkaliczky and Gábor Kármán each provided priceless Central European perspectives: the first on the intricacies of the Hungarian constitutionalism and the other on being a tribute-paying state of the Ottoman Empire. Dóra Bobory, Ana Marinković, Luka Špoljarić, and Trpimir Vedriš have also, each in her or his own way, helped me significantly and I offer them my sincere gratitude. At last, warmest thanks go to my family, members of which are not fully certain what this work is about, but are certainly glad it is over.

Contents

INTRODUCTION

The problem

The goal of this study is to investigate how medieval and Renaissance Ragusans spoke about themselves as a community, developing a set of recognizable, eventually traditional, ways of characterizing their city-state. In other words, it seeks to reconstruct different discourses of collective identity or – in yet other scholarly jargon – different strategies of collective self-representation which emerged in the culture of the Ragusan Republic. In doing so it draws on a broad array of sources, from historiography, literature, diplomatic correspondence all the way to civic ritual and visual monuments. The utterances regarding collective identity found in these sources are analysed within a contextualizing framework which addresses their authors, the specific circumstances of their creation, and the purposes they served.

The chronological scope of this study covers a period from the mid-fourteenth until the early seventeenth century. Of course, like any other historiographical delineation, this one is somewhat arbitrary. The mid-fourteenth century has been chosen as a starting point since it was a period when Ragusa attained factual independence and developed its peculiar aristocratic constitution, both of which had profound impacts on its self-representation. The early seventeenth century has been set as an ending point not only because it marked the beginning of the city's economic and political decline, but also because it attested the profound cultural transformation under the aegis of the Catholic Reformation. The two and half centuries in between were an epoch of unprecedented political importance, economic prosperity, and cultural flourishing for Ragusa – the city's "golden age" – and thus seem a natural focus for this study.[1]

The various utterances made regarding Ragusa during this period can be classified into three major discourses on identity. Defined by specific themes and a characteristic group of common-places (*topoi*), these three discourses are: the discourse on origin, statehood, and frontier. In other words, in the vast majority of cases when Ragusans spoke about their city-state they did one of the following: They either thematized its origin and formative first

[1] One important *caveat* has to be made regarding the chronological label "Renaissance" which appears frequently in this study. It is used in an extremely loose – strictly speaking, even mistaken – manner, to designate the period from the second half of the fourteenth until the early seventeenth century. Far from implying any revolutionary understanding of these two and half centuries, the label is simply a matter of convenience, an attempt to avoid the cumbersome expression "late medieval and Renaissance" which should be used instead.

centuries, reflected on its political independence and republican constitution, or described its perilous position and specific missions on the frontier with Orthodoxy and Islam.

Such a threefold division of identity discourses provides the organizational principle of this study: each of the three chapters is dedicated to one of the major discourses, following its history in roughly chronological order. The first chapter discusses the various utterances concerning the origin of Ragusa, the ways in which the image of the city's foundation changed through time. Since pre-modern historical consciousness saw an origin as an epistemologically privileged moment which revealed *in nuce* all the essential traits of a community, the young Republic took great care to re-fashion its beginnings in order to suit its contemporary concerns. Thus, the chapter reconstructs the creation of the prestigious Classical past for the city and its patrician elite, as well as the attempts to legitimize and glorify its independence and Catholic orthodoxy by projecting them back into the time of the foundation. The second chapter is dedicated to the discourse on statehood, the various historical myths and theoretical propositions regarding the independence and the political system of the city-state. On the one hand, it follows the gradual articulation of the claim that Ragusa was a fully independent *respublica*, a status achieved through a profound redefinition of its constitutional ties with the Hungarian Kingdom and the Ottoman Empire. On the other, it follows the ways in which Ragusans spoke about their aristocratic governance, usually thematized through apologetic references to the prudent rule of the patriciate, the wise institutional system, and the social harmony of the city. The third chapter is dedicated to the discourse on the frontier, investigating how Renaissance authors commented on the fact that their city was situated at the borderlands of religions, empires, even civilisations. It analyses the immensely influential image of Ragusa as Catholic frontiersman facing the Ottoman "infidels" and the Orthodox "schismatics," typically used in the city's diplomacy. However, besides addressing the official panegyric rhetoric, it also reconstructs less celebratory references to the city's behaviour on the frontier, especially the fierce but hushed debate regarding its close cooperation with the Ottomans, characteristic of historiography and literature. The conclusion of this study considers the three civic discourses within their broader ideological context. On the one hand, it investigates how they interacted among themselves in creating the image of the city-state. On the other, it analyses their relationship with discourses on other types of collectivity, whether religious, ethnic, social or familial, which also emerged in the Ragusan self-representation. At the very end, the epilogue seeks to reconstruct the "posthumous" work of Ragusan self-representation, its echoes in modern historiography, literature, and popular culture. In other words, it seeks to address the

remarkable fact that – transformed through an encounter with the ideologies and needs of modern society – many ancient topoi still survive, profoundly influencing our thinking about the Ragusan Republic.

Methodology, sources and previous research

a.) The methodological background

Doubtlessly, one of the greatest novelties in the historiography of the last few decades has been a veritable explosion of studies dealing with identity. Understood as a phenomenon of fundamental importance throughout history and one which permeates most different spheres of human existence – from politics, society, religion to gender, art or literature – "identity" has become one of the central analytical concepts of modern historiography. While deeply indebted to the influential field of research which ensued, this study is at the same time characterized by a profound unease regarding its central tenet – the very concept of identity. Although, admittedly, the word enjoys a salient place in the title of this work, it has been put there primarily as a convenient shortcut, as means to make the text easier to find. In fact, in the analysis presented below, the concept of identity plays a marginal role. It reoccurs with some regularity only in these introductory considerations, while it appears later only few times and is used with great caution, when its meaning is crystal-clear from the context.

What is so deeply problematic about the concept of identity has been persuasively demonstrated by Rogers Brubaker and Frederic Cooper in their seminal article "Beyond Identity." Their argument is quite straightforward: for an analytical concept, identity is hopelessly ambiguous and should be abandoned altogether. More precisely, it is by far too rich with meanings which are not only different but even mutually contradictory -- the most obvious being the tension between "identity" as a fundamental sameness over time and "identity" as a fluid and constantly re-negotiated phenomenon. As Brubaker and Cooper stress, this ambiguousness is largely a consequence of the fact that identity is not only a specialized concept used in scholarship, but also a term massively applied in everyday political rhetoric. Out of its many connotations the most problematic is a reifying tendency, the fact that it suggests identity is something solid, unchanging, sometimes even extant outside of the phenomenon to which it pertains. In order to counter such reifying tendencies most scholars have adopted a strongly "constructivist" jargon, insisting that identities are "fluid", "negotiated," "constructed," "contingent" and so on. Brubaker and Cooper point out, however, that this routinely repeated group of phrases is not a true solution. Not only should a proper analytical tool not need such disclaimers, but, more importantly, even if the author is careful

not to be misled by the semantic wildness of the concept, it is almost inevitable that many of his readers will be. Brubaker and Cooper therefore suggest scholars should abandon the concept of identity altogether and offer a set of alternatives, dividing its broad semantic field between several more precise and useful concepts.[2]

Although the methodology they offer is certainly interesting, this study nonetheless endorses only their critical reflections on the issue. As regards a concrete means of analysis it draws inspiration from another methodological tradition uniquely suited for historical enquiry – the so-called Cambridge School. Especially important for the purposes of this work is the sophisticated methodology which the Cambridge School developed for analysing the individual political "utterance" or "speech act." It is exactly the focus on the acts and their contextualization which was one of the most remarkable innovations of this approach, most famously pioneered by Quentin Skinner and John G. A. Pocock. Namely, similarly to contemporary identity studies, the traditional history of political thought also suffered from a peculiar kind of reification and "essentialism." Its objects of study were "ideas," "doctrines" or "philosophical systems" which all too frequently took on a life of their own, becoming subjects in their own right and detaching themselves completely from the historical context of their emergence.[3] The Cambridge School introduced a remarkable shift of perspective: instead of focusing on abstract "ideas," "doctrines" or "systems," historians began to focus on individual and concrete "utterances," "statements" or "speech acts." Such insistence on the individual act of communication – whether a book, a poem, a speech or something else – bound the political thought to its agents and their historical context in a novel and rewarding way. Although it was Skinner who insisted far more on the analysis of individual linguistic performance, it is Pocock's summary of the new method that seems the most appropriate here:

[2] Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, "Beyond 'Identity'," *Theory and Society* 29 (2000): 1-47, especially 1-21. The alternative clusters of concepts suggested by Brubaker and Cooper, are: identification and categorization; self-understanding and social location; commonality, connectedness, and groupness. For a haphazard history of the concept and illuminating remarks regarding its role in contemporary scholarship see also the important studies: Philip Gleason, "Identifying Identity: A Semantic History," *The Journal of American History* 69 (1983): 910-931; Colin Kidd, "Identity before Identities: Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Historian," in *History and Nation*, ed. Julia Rudolph (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2006), 9-44, especially 20-23. Of course, the reservations about the concept enumerated here do not mean that brilliant work cannot be done by historians using it in a disciplined and cautious way - the works of Colin Kidd are telling proof of that.

[3] Two classical critiques of the traditional approach are: Quentin Skinner, "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas" in James Tully, ed. *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and his Critics* (Cambridge: Polity press, 1988), passim, especially 55, 66; John G. A. Pocock, "Languages and Their Implications: The Transformation of the Study of Political Thought," in: John G. A. Pocock, *Politics, Language and Time* (London: Methuen, 1971), 4-10.

"We therefore suppose a field of study made up of acts of speech, whether oral, scribal or typographical, and of the conditions or contexts in which these acts were performed."[4]

Such a focus on speech acts or utterances and their contextualization seems quite promising for the study of identity. In the same way in which analysis of a political idea has been replaced by the investigation of an utterance regarding politics, one can replace the analysis of the abstract identity with the investigation of an utterance regarding identity (i.e., seeking to characterize an individual or a community). In other words, what is known as "identity construction" is actually just a specific type of speech act. While structurally identical to those analysed in the history of political thought – being a communicative act of an agent within a historical context – it differs from them merely by its specific goal, which consists of an attempt to define, describe, and characterize an individual or a community.[5] Seen in this way, the history of identity consists of the history of what the historical actors *were saying about themselves or others* through various speech acts which are to be approached in a contextual way. Importantly, those acts need not be explicitly verbal, since meaning can also be mediated by other cultural forms besides text and speech -- for instance, by a ritual or a work of art -- which are therefore also considered in this work.[6]

Pursuing further the remarkable analogies between the history of political thought and the history of identity, in this study the various utterances about Ragusa have been analysed through a contextualizing framework inspired by the work of the Cambridge school. The first step of such an approach consists of what might be called ideological contextualization. Each utterance is considered in the light of the prevailing ideological conventions – shared vocabulary, assumptions, common-places and so on – of the Renaissance epoch in general and of the Ragusan tradition in particular. After establishing how the author related to these conventions and thus recovering the precise meaning he wished to convey, the analysis proceeds to the next step. It consists of reconstructing his *intention*: that is, it seeks to answer

[4] Pocock, "The Concept of a Language and the *métier d'historien*: Some Considerations on Practice," in: *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-modern Europe*, ed. Anthony Pagden (Cambridge: CUP, 1987), 20. Skinner's methodological studies have been recently re-published in a slightly modified form as: Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics. Volume I: Regarding Method* (Cambridge: CUP, 2002).

[5] In fact, in many cases political "speech acts" and identity "speech acts" are one and the same, especially when their theme is a community; for instance, describing a community's form of governance, its customs or social structure is an utterance regarding both politics and identity.

[6] Although the vast majority of the works of the Cambridge school have dealt with texts, there are also some exemplary studies of visual monuments, such as two of Skinner's studies on the famous paintings of Ambrogio Lorenzetti (Quentin Skinner, "Ambrogio Lorenzetti and the Portrayal of Virtuous Government," 39-92 in Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics, Volume 2, Renaissance Virtues* (Cambridge: CUP 2002), 39-93; idem, "Ambrogio Lorenzetti on the Power and Glory of Republics," in *Ibid.*, 93-117). See also the studies published as chapters 10-12 in *The History of Concepts. Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Iain Hampsher-Monk, Karin Tilmans and Frank van Vree (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998).

what the author was *doing* by manipulating conventions in the way he did. Clearly, in order to retrieve the authorial intention one has to keep in mind the broadest historical context, reconstructing the complex interaction between the individual utterance and the political, social, and cultural realities of its emergence.[7]

While the basic unit of analysis remains the individual utterance or speech act, this work also seeks to reconstruct the mutual relationships among those utterances, their development in time and the broader intellectual trends which shaped them. In doing so it relies on the concept of "discourse," which designates the traditionally established modes of speaking about Ragusa. More precisely, "discourse" signifies a group of rhetorical conventions regularly used to speak about one of the city-state's features which was seen, for various reasons, as being of special importance.[8] As has been mentioned, this study focuses on three major discourses typical of Renaissance Ragusa: those of origin, statehood, and frontier. With a great deal of caution one could also label them "discourses of identity." Clearly, however, that slippery concept here does not serve as an analytical category nor does it imply an entity which exists beyond the discourses. It simply serves to denote the *goal* of these discourses: to define, describe, and characterize the Ragusan city-state.

At the end one last terminological *caveat* is in order. In this study use has been made of two more concepts which express the same understanding of identity sketched above, but simply serve to accentuate its different aspects. The first is the concept of "self-representation," which expresses well the dynamic and processual nature of the socio-cultural practices analysed here. The second concept is that of "image," which has more static connotations, designating a relatively stable set of typical propositions about Ragusa as a

[7] The two contextualizing steps sketched above correspond to what Quentin Skinner, borrowing from John. L. Austin, called the "locutory" and "illocutory" act. A good basic introduction to Skinner's methodology for analysing speech acts is: James Tully, "The Pen is a Mighty Sword: Quentin Skinner's Analysis of Politics," in *Meaning and Context*, ed. James Tully, especially 7-12. A comprehensive overview of Skinner's methodology in analysing political utterances is the aforementioned first volume of his *Visions of Politics*, especially his texts "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas," "Motives, Intentions and Interpretation" and "Interpretation and the Understanding of Speech Acts," which have been published as chapters 4-6.

[8] Needless to say, the concept of "discourse" is almost as contended as that of identity. This definition has no theoretical pretensions whatsoever and simply attempts to clarify the sense in which the word is used in this study. It does vaguely echo the immensely influential work of Foucault inasmuch as it designates certain ways of talking and thinking, that is, rules which permit some statements to be made while disabling others. Yet in this work the concept designates the specific local traditions of one culture, the traditionally established modes of speaking about the collective in one small community. For the concept of discourse in Foucault's works see, among many other titles: idem, *Archaeology of knowledge* (New York: Pantheon, 1972); idem, *The Order of Things* (New York: Pantheon, 1970). A good introduction to Foucault's understanding of discourse is: Alec McHoul and Wendy Grace, *A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power and the Subject* (London: Routledge, 2002), especially 27-56. On discourse in the humanities and social sciences see: David Howarth, *Discourse* (Buckingham UK: Open University Press, (2000); Teun A. van Dijk, ed., *Discourse as Structure and Process* (London: Sage, 1997).

collective. Admittedly, these concepts are far from being completely unambiguous and theoretically innocent themselves – yet they are much less harmful than the misleading term identity for which they are substituting.

b.) Sources and previous research

Generally speaking, the relevant source material for this study consists of all the documented instances when Ragusans spoke about their city-state. Since Ragusan self-representation happened through diverse cultural forms, this work has to take into account a broad array of different sources such as historiography, literature, diplomatic correspondence, official documents, visual monuments, symbols, and civic rituals. Working on such diverse material brings significant benefits but also perils. On the one hand, it creates the danger of assuming coherence where there was none, of misreading the documents by unconsciously projecting onto them the meanings taken from completely different source material. On the other hand, exactly that uncomfortable diversity of sources guarantees that the conclusions drawn from it will be more representative, since they will be based on more than one type of political, social or cultural practice.

Although careful to take into account the visual sources, it has to be stressed at the very beginning that this is primarily a study of texts. That is due not only to my background as a historian, but also to the fact that the overwhelming majority of utterances regarding the civic identity are to be found in written documents. Such a predominance of written material is largely a consequence of a devastating earthquake in 1667, which destroyed much of the architecture and art of the preceding periods. Therefore, the main sources for this work are the three types of text: historiography, mostly consisting of works in Italian which narrate the city's history from the foundation until the author's time; literature, such as poems, public speeches, and dramas written in Latin, Italian, and Croatian; and, finally, elaborate and well-preserved diplomatic material in Italian and Latin.

While the historiography and literature are fairly usual sources for the studies of identity, diplomatic records are a less standard choice and thus deserve particular mention. In the Ragusan case they consist of two types of documents: first, the government's letters sent abroad to foreign rulers and its own subjects; second, the detailed instructions to the republic's diplomats, which contain full texts of orations to be delivered at foreign courts. Besides the fact that they are excellently preserved and copiously detailed, the especially appealing feature of the Ragusan diplomatic sources is their representativeness. Namely, after being composed by a smaller committee, the letters and instructions were usually read,

modified, and approved by the entire Senate, which guarantees that they reflected the views and values of the political elite of the Republic.[9]

Although medieval and Renaissance Ragusans developed diverse and elaborate images of their community, these images have hitherto not been the object of systematic scholarly attention. In the older historiography they occasionally emerged as "collateral" issues connected to the more classical themes such as the cult of the patron saint, the republic's diplomacy or the stylistic analysis of its representative art. Only recently have studies appeared which tackle the problem of Ragusan self-representation in a more comprehensive manner and through modern methodologies. One relatively early example, published in 1982, is a valuable work by Branko Letić which investigates the patriotic references in the rich Baroque literature of the city-state.[10] Another important example is the recent study of Nella Lonza, which is a comprehensive and insightful analysis of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century public ritual.[11] From another angle, crucial insights into the self-representation of the Republic have been made by Vesna Miović in her research into the city's diplomacy during the Early Modern period.[12] Moreover, a detailed analysis of visual monuments as expressions of the official ideology has been offered by art historians such as Igor Fisković and Stanko Kokole.[13] Finally, and for the theme of this work most importantly, in her research on the Ragusan patriciate Zdenka Janeković-Römer has dealt extensively with the elite ideology, especially the various common-places regarding the city's political system and the virtue of its rulers.[14]

[9] Only some of the numerous fifteenth- and sixteenth-century examples of the Senate delegating the writing of diplomatic documents to smaller bodies such as the Minor Council, the *provisores* or a committee of senators are: Jovan Radonić, ed., *Dubrovačka akta i povelje* [Ragusan Acts and Charters], book 1, tomus 1 (Belgrade: SKA, 1934), 292, 295, 332, 345, 350, 362, 399. Jovan Radonić, ed., *Dubrovačka akta i povelje* [Ragusan Acts and Charters], book 1, tomus 2 (Belgrade: SKA, 1934), 501, 504, 509, 513, 515, 578, 594, 638, 686; Jovan Radonić (ed.), *Dubrovačka akta i povelje* (Ragusan Acts and Charters), book 2, tomus 2 (Belgrade: SKA, 1938), 7, 42, 57, 82, 83. Mentions of such letters and instructions being read and modified by the senate are found in: Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje*, book 1, tomus 1, 295, 362, 399, 401; Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje*, book 1, tomus 2, 654, 655, 702, 715, 758-9, 792-793; *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 2, tomus 2, 42, 43, 59, 81, 83.

[10] Branko Letić, *Rodoljublje u dubrovačkoj književnosti XVII veka* [Patriotism in the Ragusan literature of the Seventeenth Century] (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1982).

[11] Nella Lonza, *Kazalište Vlasti. Ceremonijali državni blagdani Dubrovačke Republike u 17. i 18. stoljeću* [The Theatre of Power: State Ceremony and Feasts of the Dubrovnik Republic in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century] (Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Hrvatska Akademija Znanosti i Umjetnosti (henceforth HAZU), 2009).

[12] Vesna Miović, *Dubrovačka diplomacija u Istambulu* [Ragusan Diplomacy in Istanbul] (Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 2003).

[13] Igor Fisković, "Povijesni biljezi dubrovačkog identiteta" [Historical Signs of Ragusan Identity] *Dubrovnik* 4 (1993): 79-99. See also the studies published in: Igor Fisković, *Reljef renesansnog Dubrovnika* [A Relief in Renaissance Ragusa] (Dubrovnik: Matica Hrvatska, 1993). Among Kokole's studies the most important is: Stanko Kokole, "Cyriacus of Ancona and the Revival of Two Forgotten Ancient Personifications in the Rector's Palace of Dubrovnik," *Renaissance Quarterly* 49 (1996): 225-267.

[14] Zdenka Janeković-Römer, *Okvir slobode* [The Framework of Freedom] (Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijes neznanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 1999), passim, especially 13-56 (henceforth: Janeković, *Okvir*). Another study

Despite their valuable insights, however, none of these works addressed discourses about the city-state as the main topic, since their primary focus was literature, ritual, diplomacy, visual monuments or the patriciate itself. Reconstructing the ways in which Ragusans spoke about their city-state – in a *longue durée* of two and a half centuries – will therefore be a specific contribution of this study.

Finally, another great influence, even inspiration, for this work comes from a highly developed strand of research related not to Ragusa, but to its great model – Venice. It is the rich scholarly tradition of dealing with the fascinating phenomenon called "the myth of Venice." For decades scholars have analysed different images of the *Serenissima*, created both by Venetians themselves and foreign commentators, images which permeated the diverse aspects of culture ensuring for Venice the central place in the (political) imaginary of pre-modern Europe. On the one hand, a number of valuable studies related to the Venetian "myth" offered inspiring research questions and models for tackling the Ragusan source material. On the other, they also provided a number of concrete answers, since the *Serenissima* exerted profound political and cultural influence on Ragusa, whose self-representation can be understood only if that of Venice is taken into account.[15]

The context: Renaissance Ragusa and its patriciate

This study takes as its starting point the mid-fourteenth century, which was a period of immense importance in the history of Ragusa. In 1358, after a resounding military defeat, the Venetian Republic was forced to cede the city, with the rest of Dalmatia, to the Hungarian King Louis the Great. In the power vacuum following the Venetian retreat Ragusa had an important opportunity to negotiate its status with a new and promisingly distant sovereign. Its envoys, hand-picked from among the patrician elite, did their job remarkably well. The city gained extensive privileges guaranteeing complete autonomy with only minimal and mostly symbolic obligations towards its ruler, such as singing of the *laudes* and a small annual tribute.

on diplomatic rhetoric also has to be mentioned: Zdenka Janeković, "Stjecanje Konavala: Antička tradicija i mit u službi diplomacije" [The Acquisition of Konavle: Classical Tradition and Myth in the Service of Diplomacy], in *Konavle u prošlosti, sadašnjost i ibudućnosti. Zbornik radova saznanstvenog skupa* "*Konavle u prošlosti, sadašnjosti i budućnosti" održanog u Cavtatu od 25. do 27. studenog 1996. godine. Svezak 1*, ed. Vladimir Stipetić (Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 1998), 31-44.

[15] The bibliography on the "myth of Venice" is immense and it does not seem necessary to provide it here since the relevant works are cited later in the text when necessary. For now suffice to mention two studies which reflect on the entire branch of research: Gherardo Ortalli, "Il mito di Venezia: mezzo secolodopo," in *L'eredità culturale di Gina Fasoli. Atti del convegno di studi per ilcentenariodellanascita* (1905-2005), ed. Francesca Bocchi and Gian Maria Varanini (Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 2008), 91-106; James S. Grubb, "When Myths Lose Power: Four Decades of Venetian Historiography," *Journal of Modern History* 58 (1986): 43-94.

In other words, after a century and a half of Venetian rule, all of a sudden Ragusa became a *de facto* independent republic.[16]

The city managed to preserve this factual independence for the next several centuries, until it was finally conquered by Napoleon in 1806. The remarkable survival of the small and militarily weak city-state had its price, however. Ragusa was forced to maintain delicate political relationships with the neighbouring great powers, relying on their protection against its adversaries and competitors, among whom most formidable was the Venetian republic. Thus, from the mid-fourteenth until the early sixteenth century – until the fateful battle of Mohács in 1526 – the city relied on the protection of its nominal sovereign, the Hungarian king.[17] The most important and long-lasting political patron of Ragusa was an even more impressive ruler, however, the Ottoman sultan. In the mid-fifteenth century, after the Ottoman conquest of most of its Balkan hinterland, Ragusa became a tribute-payer of the Sublime Porte. Although retaining factual independence, the city obliged itself to "fidelity" and an annual tribute, in return gaining Ottoman protection and immense trading privileges in the empire.[18] Yet the close ties with the Ottoman court did not prevent the small Republic from cherishing excellent relations with the major Christian powers as well, primarily the Spanish Habsburgs and the papacy.[19] In sum, early modern Ragusa skilfully maneuvered among the major European powers, achieving disproportionate political and economic importance due to its peculiar role of mediator between the Christian and Ottoman parts of the Mediterranean.

Much like its former ruler and perennial competitor, Venice, the Ragusan Republic was governed through a system of intertwined councils, access to which was limited to the

[16] For the crucial events of 1358 in Ragusan history, see: Zdenka Janeković-Römer, *Višegradski ugovor. Temelj Dubrovačke republike* [The Treaty of Visegrad. The Foundation of Ragusan Republic] (Zagreb: Golden Marketing, 2003); Branislav M. Nedeljković, "Položaj Dubrovnika prema Ugarskoj (1358-1460)" [The Position of Ragusa towards Hungary (1358-1460)] *Godišnjak Pravnog fakulteta u Sarajevu* 15 (1967): 447-463; Vinko Foretić, "Godina 1358 u povijesti Dubrovnika" [The Year 1358 in the History of Ragusa], in: *Studije i rasprave iz hrvatske povijesti* (Split: Književnikrug Split, Matica Hrvatska Dubrovnik, 2001), 229-254; Dušanka Dinić-Knežević, *Dubrovnik i Ugarska u srednjem veku* [Ragusa and the Hungarian Kingdom in the Middle Ages] (Novi Sad: Filozofski fakultet u Novom Sadu, 1986), 16-21; Milorad Medini, *Dubrovnik Gučetića* [Ragusa of Gučetići] (Begrade: Srpska Akademija Nauka (henceforth SAN), 1953), 61-78; Bariša Krekić, *Dubrovnik in the 14th and 15th centuries: A City between the East and West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972), 40-42; Robin Harris, *Dubrovnik: A History* (London: Saqi, 2003), 62-66.

[17] A standard overview is Dinić-Knežević, *Dubrovnik i Ugarska*. See also: Harris, *Dubrovnik*, 62-76.

[18] Basic overviews of Ottoman-Ragusan relationship for the period of this study are: Ivan Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska u XIV i XV veku* [Ragusa and Turkey in the 14th and 15th Centuries](Belgrade: SAN, 1952); Toma Popović, *Turska i Dubrovnik u XVI veku* [Turkey and Ragusa in the 16th Century] (Belgrade; Srpska književna zadruga, 1973). For a good summary in English: Harris *Dubrovnik*, 77-100; 105-110.

[19] The standard overviews are still: Jorjo Tadić, *Španija i Dubrovnik u XVI veku* [Spain and Ragusa in the 16th Century] (Belgrade: SKA, 1932); Đuro Körbler, "Dubrovačka republika i zapadne evropske države: veze Dubrovnika s Napulem, Sicilijom, Francuskom i Španolskom" [The Ragusan Republic and the States of Western Europe: the Relations of Ragusa with Naples, Sicily, France and Spain] *Rad JAZU* 93 (1916): 165-252. A recent overview in English is: Harris, *Dubrovnik*, 101-105; 110-117.

members of a clearly defined circle of patrician families. The patriciate, a group of influential merchant families whose exclusive right to public office was definitely established in 1332, used the collapse of Venetian authority in order to fully monopolize power in the city. Besides not having to share authority with the Venetian governor, during the second half of the fourteenth century the patriciate also managed to curb the power of another institution which had been influential during the preceding period – the Ragusan Church.[20] The result was the unchallenged political dominance of the patrician elite which, moreover, completely closed itself, refusing to admit new families to its ranks for centuries, from roughly the 1330s until the 1660s. Despite such rigid closedness of the elite – or, perhaps, exactly because of it – Ragusa was one of the most stable republican regimes of pre-modern Europe, enjoying remarkable social and political stability throughout the Early Modern period.

The absolute political dominance of the patriciate led to its ideological hegemony. This fundamental feature of Ragusan political culture can be clearly discerned if one takes a look at the individuals and groups which produced the discourses about the community: all of them either belonged to the patriciate or were closely connected to it. To begin with, the majority of Ragusan historians, rhetoricians, and literati were themselves patricians, for example, N. Ragnina, G. Luccari, A. L. Cerva, I. Gondola, and J. Palmota. A smaller number of authors, most notably the literati such as M. Vetrani, M. Držić, or N. Nale, belonged to the secondary elite of the city, the *popolani*, normally highly supportive of the established order. Finally, a third group of authors who produced discourses on community were the scholars and professionals associated with the patrician circle and sponsored by it. These authors were mostly the salaried officials of the Republic, such as chancellors or teachers (F. Serdonati, Ph. de Diversis), while some of them were supported by individual patricians or noble factions (M. Orbini). Needless to say, members of each group had good reasons to echo the interests of the ruling elite and thus the cultural production usually happened in the deep shadow of politics.[21]

The profound influence of the patrician elite on the city's self-representation can be seen particularly clearly if one considers the origin of many of its important *topoi*. They first appeared in the diplomatic correspondence, conducted by the patrician councils, and only decades or even centuries afterwards emerged also in historiography and literature. In other

[20] On the relationship between the ecclesiastical and secular elite see: Kosta Vojnović, "Crkva i država u dubrovačkoj republici" [The Church and State in Ragusan Republic], *Rad JAZU* 119 (1894): 32-142. Harris, *Dubrovnik*, 223-230; Zdenko Zlatar, *Our Kingdom Come: The Counter-Reformation, the Republic of Dubrovnik, and the Liberation of the Balkan Slavs* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 150-157.

[21] In Venice the situation was similar: the history of its culture is absolutely inconceivable without the central role of the patriciate (Gino Benzoni, "La cultura: contenuti e forme," in *Storia di Venezia*, vol. 4, ed. Gaetano Cozzi and Paolo Prodi (Rome: Enciclopedia Italiana, 1994), 515-588, especially 542-543; 560; 586.

words, since the protagonists of diplomacy and culture were largely the same, one can assume that the patricians transferred the rhetoric familiar to them from the council meetings to their histories, poems, and public speeches. Some of the influential *topoi* which thus "travelled" from diplomacy to historiography and literature were: the idea that Ragusa had never obeyed a foreign lord; the claim that the city defended Christianity from the Ottomans through its wise diplomacy; the insistence on the providential protection of its independence; the specific interpretation of its tributary position towards the Ottomans; the peculiar understanding of its *libertas*.

Besides the ideological hegemony of the patriciate, another salient characteristic of Ragusan political culture was a strong animosity towards public debate, an insistence on maintaining the appearance of harmony. In other words, the central political values were *pax, concordia,* even *unanimitas*: any form of public polemic was therefore considered scandalous and was strongly discouraged.[22] One important consequence of such an attitude was that the vast majority of utterances regarding the community in Renaissance Ragusa had an apologetic intention, seeking to glorify and legitimize the extant social and political order. Another consequence is that it is hard to find openly critical statements, even less open debates, and a historian has to read between the lines skilfully in order to reconstruct understandings different from the official one. In other words, shaped by the ideal of unanimity, the culture of Renaissance Ragusa was one of massive self-censorship, as will be especially clearly demonstrated by the third chapter, dedicated to the contended issue of cooperation with the Ottoman "infidel."

The last important characteristic of Ragusan political culture was its profound traditionalism. For the elite of the Republic the normative dimension of time was, beyond any doubt, the past. The official decrees of the ruling councils are full of references to the wise customs and deeds of the ancestors, which are repeatedly postulated as models for the present. Renaissance Ragusans were great adherents of what Pocock has aptly called "the unnumbered democracy of the dead of antiquity:" that is, a political epistemology which considers that the long preservation of a custom or decree is the best argument for its quality, taking precedence

[22] For a very similar situation in the Venetian tradition which surely influenced Ragusa, see: Angelo Ventura, "Scrittori politici e scritture di governo," in *Storia della cultura veneta,* tomus III-3, *Dal primo Quattrocento al concilio di Trento,* ed. Girolamo Arnaldi and Manlio Pastore Stocchi (Vicenza: Neri Pozza editore, 1981), 513-515; Margaret L. King, *Venetian Humanism in an Age of Patrician Dominance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 92-205, especially 174-205. Intriguing thoughts regarding the governmental secrecy typical of Venice as means of maintaining the image of harmony, are found in Filippo de Vivo, *Information and Communication in Venice: Rethinking Early Modern Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 40-45.

over any other kind of criteria.[23] Arguing from a different, pragmatic, angle, the Ragusan philosopher and patrician N. Gozze insisted that one should avoid changing the old laws since in that case the "spirit" of the citizens "might get used to changing the decrees or ordinances of the ancestors which is immensely dangerous in a state."[24] Whether for epistemological or pragmatic reasons, strong conservatism permeated Ragusan politics and society in general. In the self-representation of the city there are no significant discontinuities, novelties or fashions to be discerned, but, quite the contrary, the same common-places tend to be repeated over remarkably long periods of time.

All these fundamental traits of Ragusan political culture – the patriciate's ideological hegemony, insistence on unanimity and profound traditionalism – left deep traces on the self-representation of the city. As this study will show, Ragusan discourses of identity were characterized by remarkable coherence, even repetitiveness, representing the city-state in ways which were mutually complementary, with only few exceptional discrepancies and contradictions. Equally important, similar claims about the community were made in completely different contexts, from diplomatic correspondence to historiography, ritual, and literature – that is, the various cultural genres echoed the same image of the city-state. Although in Ragusa the collective self-representation never enjoyed such massive state support as in many other communities – most notably Venice – due to all the aforementioned characteristics of its political culture the city did manage to create quite a monumental image of itself. Similarly to the famous "myth of Venice," this image exerted powerful influence not only on the Renaissance audiences, but continues to shape our thinking about the city until the present day. Therefore, with slight discomfort due to a pompous analogy, one could risk saying that the theme of this study is – the "myth of Ragusa."

[23] Although Pocock speaks of custom, not positive law, the peculiar form of historical consciousness he describes can be easily applied also to the written laws of Ragusa (John G. A. Pocok, *The Machiavellian Moment*: *Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton: PUP, 2003**),** 13-24, the quote is from page 19.

[24] Niccolò Vito di Gozzi, *Dello stato delle republiche secondo la mente di Aristotele con esempi moderni; giornate otto* (Venice: Presso Aldo, 1591), 94.

CHAPTER 1: THE DISCOURSE ON ORIGIN

Introduction: The relevance of origin in medieval and Renaissance culture

Characteristic for medieval and Renaissance relationship towards the past was what Marc Bloch aptly called the "idol" or even the "demon of origin." It was an epistemological fascination with the beginnings of phenomena, especially peoples and polities, according to which the origins revealed the crucial characteristics of these communities and thereby also the seeds of their future development. In other words, medieval and Renaissance historiography, but also political culture in general, inherited the belief from Antiquity that the origin was an epistemologically privileged moment. When it came to understanding the past, there was an inequality of moments in time; the true nature of a phenomenon could be grasped primarily, or even exclusively, through the study of its coming into being. [25]

However, the origin was not only a privileged moment in the epistemological, but also in the political sense. In the Renaissance, as in the preceding epochs, the past was seen as having a prescriptive character, as a norm according to which the present should be both judged and adapted. This had profound consequences for the conceptualization of origins. If the past was seen as revealing prescriptive truths and the origin was the epistemologically privileged part of that past, then it was also politically the most relevant, i.e., the most prescriptive. The origin could not only explain, but also prescribe the proper order of things – it was perceived as an *authority*. The way in which the beginnings of a community were represented was thus an ideological issue of prime importance. Not only did the inherited image of the beginnings have serious political weight *per se*, but it repeatedly invited manipulation since numerous contemporary issues could be legitimized by being projected back into the highly prescriptive time of the origin.[26]

[25] Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 25; Antonio Carile, "Origine come categoria storiografica" in *Le origini di Venezia*, Antonio Carile and Giorgio Fedalto (Bologna: Patron, 1978), 19-23. Although the intellectual genealogy of this way of thinking is immensely complex, it surely owed a great deal to Greco-Roman historiography (Robin G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 42-45.)

[26] This is the reason why origin narratives are undeniably among the most tendentious but also most frequently narrated parts of the history of European peoples, kingdoms, and cities. Good general overviews of European origin-writing are: Susan Reynolds, "Medieval *origines gentium* and the community of the realm," *History* 68 (1984), 375-90; Peter Hoppenbrouwers,"Such Stuff as Peoples are Made on: Ethnogenesis and the Construction of Nationhood in Medieval Europe," *The Medieval History Journal* 9 (2006): 195-242; Renato Bordone, "Il passato storico come tempo mitico nel mondo cittadino italiano nel Medioevo," *Società e Storia* 51 (1991): 3-22.

Excellent examples of this way of thinking about origin can be found in the work of one of the most influential thinkers of the Renaissance -- Machiavelli himself. Thus, for instance, writing about the origins of Rome in the *Discorsi*, Machiavelli clearly revealed his belief in the epistemologically privileged status of origin:

> Those who read of the origin of the city of Rome, of its legislators and of its constitution, will not be surprised that in this city such great virtue was maintained for so many centuries, and that later on there came into being the empire into which that republic developed. [27]

Clearly, for Machiavelli, the whole history of Rome was in a way inscribed in its origin, even the conquest of the empire which followed many centuries after the city's foundation. Importantly, the Florentines also subscribed to the belief that origin was politically prescriptive, as is apparent from the following remark, again from the *Discorsi*:

> Here I am concerned with mixed bodies, such as are republics and religious institutions, and in their regard I affirm that those changes make for their conservation which lead them back to their origins. Hence those are better constituted and have a longer life whose institutions make frequent renovations possible….[28]

According to Machiavelli, in order to last over time the republic was to keep its gaze fixed backwards, on its origin. Only by repeatedly re-forming according to the basic principles, revealed by its beginnings could the republican polity hope to achieve a measure of stability in the contingent world ruled by Fortuna.

One thing has to be stressed here: Although Machiavelli was in many regards an unconventional thinker, in accentuating the epistemological and political importance of origin he was simply echoing an ancient and powerful tradition. Pointing out that this way of thinking was present among many Renaissance thinkers and historians, Patricia Labalme summarized it brilliantly:

> In Aristotelian terms, the form of the city was present in its origin, and what followed was simply the realization of that form in time and space, while the preservation of the city was directly related to its adherence to the formative principles on which it was first based.[29]

Speaking of origin myths one should also mention the innovative study by Patrick Geary, *Women at the Beginning: Origin Myths from the Amazons to the Virgin Mary* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

[27] *Discorsi*, book 1, chapter I (I am using the following edition: Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Discourses,* ed. Bernard Crick, trans. Leslie J. Walker and Brian Richardson (London: Penguin books, 2003), 100.)

[28] *Discorsi*, book 3, chapter I. The whole chapter is a fascinating treatment of the same subject (Machiavelli, *The Discourses*, 385)

[29] Patricia H. Labalme, *Bernardo Giustiniani*. *A Venetian of the Quattrocento* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1969), 272.

Keeping this general ideological context in mind, the following chapter seeks to investigate the ways in which the origin of Ragusa was represented in its Renaissance culture. It clearly confirms the epistemological and normative significance of the image of the city's origin, since most references to it are characterized by the same telling ideological maneuver. This maneuver consisted of attempts to insert into the foundation narrative various attributes and claims which needed to appear as essential and primordial characteristics of Ragusa. On the one hand, this meant creating an origin narrative which would connect Ragusa with prestigious peoples and cities of Antiquity, granting an illustrious "genealogy" to the Renaissance republic. On the other hand, it meant projecting back into the normative "space" of origin a number of contemporary political arrangements which needed legitimacy, that is, whose historical contingency had to be denied by representing them as essential and unchanging features present *ab urbe condita.*

The foundation of Ragusa in medieval tradition

According to the majority of medieval historians, Ragusa owed its beginnings to an accidental meeting of two groups of prestigious refugees during the turbulent early Middle Ages. The first were the citizens of Epidaurus, modern Cavtat, a neighboring Classical center and bishopric, who were seeking a new home after their city had been destroyed in a barbarian attack. The second group were certain Romans who arrived by ship from the other side of the Adriatic and whose precise background was represented differently in various accounts.[30] The majority of medieval historians portrayed the Roman founders as a somewhat amorphous, leaderless group which was either exiled from Rome or fled from it due to an unspecified civil war.[31] According to another version, they were the noble escorts of an exiled Slavic prince,

[30] It should be mentioned that there is one author who attributed the beginnings of Ragusa only to Epidaurians -- the tenth-century Byzantine emperor, Constantine Porphyrogenitus. Since Porphyrogenitus does not mention the Roman founders in his account, which is the oldest known, it is possible they were added to the story only later, in the eleventh or twelfth century (Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, ed. Gy. Moravcsik, tr. R. J. H. Jenkins (Dumbarton Oaks: Center for Byzantine Studies, 1967), 135).

[31] The medieval chroniclers who opted for this version of the story were: the so-called Miletius whose verses on the city's history are probably to be dated to the thirteenth century; his contemporary, Thomas the Archdeacon of Split, author of the important history of Split's church; finally, Johannes Conversini of Ravenna, a teacher in Ragusa who wrote a short history of the city in the 1380s. Miletius' and Thomas' works have been published: Ante Konstantin Matas, *Miletii Versus* (Dubrovnik: J. Flori, 1882); Toma Arhiđakon, *Historia Salonitana: povijest salonitanskih i splitskih prosvećenika* (Historia Salonitana: the History of Bishops of Salona and Split) ed. and trans. Olga Perić (Split: Književni krug, 2003); Archdeacon Thomas of Split, *History of the Bishops of Salona and Split*, ed. Damir Karbić, Mirjana Sokol, and James Ross Sweeney (Budapest: CEU Press, 2006). Conversini's work is preserved in several manuscripts: Archive of Croatian Academy of Arts and Sciences (henceforth: HAZU Archive), Zagreb, manuscript no. II d 55; Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice, Cl. IX Cod. 11, fol. 65r-86r; State Archives of Dubrovnik (henceforth: SAD), Dubrovnik, Rukopisne ostavštine, Zbrika Ernesta Katića (box 16, number 4); finally, the fourth manuscript, which I did not consult, is to be found in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, cod. 6494.

following him in the attempt to reclaim his ancestral kingdom, an invented *regnum Sclavorum* situated in the western Balkans.[32] Regardless of such differences between the accounts, in all of them the founding act was narrated quite unceremoniously, usually through a laconic statement that the two groups built a new settlement on the uninhabited cliffs above the sea. Similarly, their reasons for erecting a new city were only implied, never explicated; clearly, they were refugees needing a safe haven; at most, in some texts the reader is informed that the whole enterprise began at the urging of the Epidaurian "archbishop."

However laconic they are, the medieval foundation accounts nonetheless differ in numerous significant details, depending on the background and goals of their authors. Thus, the thirteenth-century Ragusan chronicler Miletius, clearly seeking to legitimize the Ragusan archbishopric, tendentiously insisted on the important role of the Epidaurian "archbishop" in the founding act. On the other hand, opposing such claims, Miletus' contemporary, Thomas the Archdeacon of Split, quoted documents in his foundation account which (correctly) proved that Classical Epidaurus was only a bishopric under the jurisdiction of Salona, the predecessor of Split's church. Another crucial difference concerned the question of who destroyed Epidaurus. Porphyrogenitus attributed its destruction to Slavs, the twelfth-century chronicler known as the "Diocleian priest" claimed that it was the Saracens, while Thomas the Archdeacon maliciously wrote that it was destroyed by the very Romans who subsequently founded Ragusa together with Epidaurians. The moment of the founding was also far from being clearly established. The only author who dated it precisely was Porphyrogenitus,

[32] This story, which was originally less influential but become standard in Renaissance historiography, appeared for the first time in an enigmatic document, the so-called "Chronicle of the Diocleian Priest" (or "Priest of Duklja"), written by an anonymous author, probably in the twelfth century. The standard edition, used here, is: Ferdo Šišić, ed., *Letopis Popa Dukljanina* [The Chronicle of the Diocleian Priest] [LJPD] (Belgrade: Srpska Kraljevska Akademija, 1928). For the most recent edition with original, albeit highly speculative, suggestions regarding the dating and authorship of the work, see: Tibor Živković, ed. *Gesta Regum Sclavorum*, vols 1-2 (Belgrade: Institute of History Belgrade and Ostrog Monastery, 2009.) Another unconventional hypothesis regarding the dating and authorship has recently also been made by Solange Bujan, "La Chronique du prêtre de Dioclée. Un faux document historique," *Revue des études byzantines* 66 (2008): 5-38. An English summary of older scholarly opinions regarding LJPD is available in: Zdenko Zlatar, *Our Kingdom Come: The Counter-Reformation, the Republic of Dubrovnik, and the Liberation of the Balkan Slavs* (New York: Boulder-Columbia University Press, 1992), 367-374. Parts of Diocleian's text have been translated into English by Paul Stephenson and are available at: http://homepage.mac.com/paulstephenson/trans/lpd1.html (accessed 15 August 2010). For an intriguing analysis of the intertextual relationships between the Diocleian's Chronicle and other earliest texts of Ragusan history, see: Radoslav Katičić, "A*edificaverunt Ragusium et habitaverunt in eo*. Tragom najstarijih dubrovačkih zapisa" [*Aedificaverunt Ragusium et habitaverunt in eo*. Tracing the Oldest Written Monuments of Ragusa], in *Uz početke hrvatskih početaka. Filološke studije o našem najranijem srednjovjekovlju* (Split: Književni krug, 1993), 131–160.

putting it in the mid-fifth century, while other medieval historians offered no exact dating, narrating it sometime during the barbarian invasions or in their immediate aftermath.[33]

Yet, despite all their differences, all these accounts have one thing in common: medieval Ragusa clearly claimed a double origin for itself, Epidaurian and Roman. The story about a foundation from Rome fulfilled several functions. It might have been a kind of etiological story which served to explain the name *Romani* or *Latini*, used in the Middle Ages for the remains of the Roman(ized) population -- characterized by a specific neo-Latin language and Roman culture -- which survived the Slavic migrations and until the fourteenth century continued to play a significant role in Ragusa.[34] Equally, this story may simply have been a fairly typical construct of the period in which numerous cities appropriated Roman founders for the sake of prestige. Finally, due to the strong connection with Rome which it implied, this narrative might have also been used in order to enhance the arguments of the Ragusan archbishopric in its jurisdictional conflict with the neighboring archbishopric of Bar, which lasted from the late eleventh until the mid-thirteenth century.[35]

The claim of being founded by Epidaurian refugees had even greater ideological potential and was thus far more accentuated in Ragusan self-representation. The descent from Epidaurus was relevant already in terms of general prestige. As many other medieval cities which lacked a significant Classical past, Ragusa found it useful to appropriate an important Roman center as its predecessor. Even more importantly, ancient Epidaurus bequeathed a precious institutional heritage -- it was a bishopric with which the Ragusan church claimed continuity by styling itself *ecclesia epidauritana*. The two medieval chroniclers who reproduced the Ragusan version of the founding narrative – Miletius and Conversini – both insist that the refugees from Epidaurus were led by their "archbishop," thus implying that the Classical see was transferred to Ragusa at its very beginning (and, of course, that it was an archbishopric). However, besides the ecclesiastical status, descent from Epidaurus also enabled medieval Ragusa to claim its secular heritage. From the fourteenth century on,

[33] For a concise summary of the dominant interpretation of Porphyrogenitus' text, including his dating of the foundation, see: Katičić, "*Aedificaverunt*," 131-133.
[34] Katičić, "*Aedificaverunt*," 138. For more regarding *Romani* and scholarship on them see the following subchapter "Roman Past, Slavic Present: Discomfort in Ragusan culture."
[35] On this conflict see: Eduard Peričić, *Sclavorum Regnum Grgura Barskog. Ljetopis popa Dukljanina* [The *Sclavorum Regnum* of Grgur of Bar. The Chronicle of the Diocleian Priest] (Zagreb: Kršćanska sadašnjost, 1991), 65-74; Šišić, *Letopis*, 78-82; Josip Lučić, *Povijest Dubrovnika od VII stoljeća do godine 1205* [History of Dubrovnik from the Seventh Century until the Year 1205] (Dubrovnik: Anali Historijskog odjela Centra za znanstveni rad Jugoslavenske akademije u Dubrovniku, 1976), 71-76; Stjepan Krasić, "Dubrovačka nadbiskupija od ustanovljenja do XVI. Stoljeća" [The Ragusan Archbishopric from its Foundation until the Sixteenth out Century]" in Stjepan Krasić, Serafino Razzi, *Povijest dubrovačke metropolije i dubrovačkih nadbiskupa* (Dubrovnik: Biskupski ordinarijat Dubrovnik, 1999), 27-35.

Ragusan diplomats frequently invoked the Epidaurian origin in order to request various surrounding territories which allegedly once belonged to the ancient predecessor of their city. Building on these solid foundations, Renaissance authors further elaborated the Epidaurian origin, transforming it through humanist scholarship and adapting it to the interests of the nascent aristocratic republic – all in all, turning it into one of the greatest myths of old Ragusa.[36]

Importantly, while the claim that the city was founded by Romans seems like a mere tendentious invention, the attribution of its beginnings to the Epidaurian refugees might have some historical basis. Until several decades ago the story about the foundation by refugee Epidaurians – especially its oldest version as narrated by Porphyrogenitus -- had been accepted almost *verbatim* by academic historiography and dated to the early seventh century during the Slavic settlement of the region. However, recent archeological research has made it abundantly clear that an important settlement already existed at the site of Ragusa in Antiquity, much before the destruction of Epidaurus. Therefore the traditional interpretation has been modified; today it is assumed that the two settlements coexisted during late Antiquity and a number of Epidaurian refugees moved to Ragusa – perhaps fortified in Justinian's period – as a safer place after the destruction of their city by Slavs.[37]

Yet, despite its ideological importance, little was known about Classical Epidaurus during the medieval period. As can be seen from the significant differences among the foundation accounts quoted above, elementary things regarding its history were not established, for instance, there was no consensus regarding who destroyed it or when. It seems that in the corpus of texts generally available to medieval authors there were few references to the ancient city. In fact, there were only a few short mentions in the writings of St. Jerome and the letters of Pope Gregory the Great. Gregory's letters, dealing with the conflict of the Epidaurian bishop with his superior, the archbishop of Salona, revealed only that the city still

[36] For the Epidaurian heritage in the Ragusan tradition see: Janeković, *Okvir*, 41-44; Janeković, "Stjecanje Konavala," 31-44.

[37] Since the proverbial *wie es wirklich gewesen ist* is of little importance for my topic this short overview of interpretations of the beginnings of Ragusa should suffice. A good example of the traditional understanding of the origins based on Porphyrogenitus' text is: Lučić, *Povijest Dubrovnika*, 10-19. For an overview of more recent positions see the thematic issue of the magazine *Dubrovnik. Časopis za književnost i znanost* 4 (1997). On the same problem see also: Antun Ničetić, *Nove spoznaje o postanku. Dubrovnika, o njegovu brodarstvu i plovidbi svetog Pavla* [New Conclusions regarding the Genesis of Dubrovnik, its Maritime Affairs and the Shipwreck of St. Paul] (Dubrovnik: Sveučilište u Dubrovniku, 2005); Antun Ničetić, *Povijest dubrovačke luke* [History of the Ragusan Port] (Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 1996); Željko Peković. *Dubrovnik Nastanak i razvoj srednjevjekovnoga grada* [Dubrovnik. The Genesis and Development of the Medieval City] (Split: Muzej hrvatskih arheoloških spomenika-Split, 1998). The best English survey of the earliest history of the city, is: Robin Harris, *Dubrovnik. A History* (London: Saqi Books, 2003), 19-32.

existed in the 590s and that it was a bishopric under Salona's jurisdiction.[38] The works of St. Jerome were no more revealing. In his *vita* of St. Hilarion, Jerome mentioned that this Palestinian hermit visited Dalmatian Epidaurus during his travels and performed two important miracles there, first saving the city from an enormous serpent and then from a tidal wave.[39] Importantly, even those fragmentary references might have not been known to all the medieval chroniclers since they were explicitly mentioned only by the most educated of them, Thomas the Archdeacon.[40] All in all, due to the scarcity of available data, the foundation accounts in medieval historiography remained relatively laconic. As has been mentioned, they mostly consisted of a few sentences narrating the destruction of Epidaurus and the subsequent meeting of two groups of founders who erected the new city.

The period between the fourteenth and late sixteenth century – the focus of this study – brought significant changes in both the content of foundation narratives and the purposes they served. This shift was largely due to a profound change in the socio-politicial context in which Ragusan history writing was produced. In the mid-fourteenth century Venetian rule over Ragusa ceased and the city became *de facto* an independent republic under only nominal sovereignty of the distant Hungarian king. Equally important, this republic was dominated by a clearly defined patrician caste which completely monopolized political power. The new elite not only minimalized foreign influence on the city, but also managed to curb the power of an institution which had enjoyed profound influence in the city during the earlier period – the local church. This had far reaching consequences on history writing, since it ceased to reflect

[38] Paul Ewald and Ludwig Hartmann, ed. *Gregorii I Papae Registrum epistularum*. Tomus 1 (Monumenta Germaniae Historica Epistolae 1) (Berlin: Weidmann, 1891), 168-169; idem, ed. *Gregorii I Papae Registrum epistularum*. Tomus 2 (Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Epistolae 2) (Berlin: Weidmann, 1899), 13; Gregory's letters have also been published in: Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski, *Codex diplomaticus*, tomus I (Zagreb: Štamparija Dragutina Albrechta, 1874), 13, 24-25.

[39] *Vita sancti Hilarionis abbatis* as part of Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, Volumen 23 is available at: http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/02m/0347-0420, Hieronymus, Vita Sancti Hilarionis, MLT.pdf (the relevant part is: pp 51-52) Acessed on 31 July 2010.

[40] Toma Arhiđakon, *Historia Salonitana,* 4-7. It is possible that medieval Ragusan authors intentionally ignored Pope Gregory's letters due to their unpleasant content which proved that the Epidaurian church was only a bishopric in antiquity. On the other hand, the legend about St. Hilarion was surely known in Ragusa. His church is mentioned as early as the Ragusan statute of 1272 and his legend was extensively elaborated in local historiography, albeit only from the fifteenth century onwards. For basic information on his cult and legends connected with it, see: *Liber Statutorum Civitatis Ragusii compositus anno MCCLXXII / Statut grada Dubrovnika sastavljen godine 1272* [The Statute of the City of Ragusa Composed in the year 1272], ed. and trans. Ante Šoljić, Zdravko Šundrica, and Ivo Veselić, intro. Nella Lonza (Dubrovnik: Državni arhiv u Dubrovniku 2002), 230 (III, 54); *Annales*, 11-15; 188-192; Serafino Razzi, *La storia di Raugia* (Lucca: Per Vicentio Busdraghi, 1595), 16; Daniele Farlati, *Illyrici sacri tomus sextus. Ecclesia Ragusina* (Venice: Apud Sebastianum Coleti, 1800), 3-4; Francesco Maria Appendini, *Notizie istorico-critiche sulle antichità storia e letteratura de' Ragusei*, tomus I (Ragusa: Antonio Martecchini, 1802), 68; Lonza, *Kazalište Vlasti*, 232. An interesting echo of the saint's vita is to be found in the baroque drama by Junius Palmotić, *Pavlimir*, in which Hilarion is depicted as the patron saint of the Epidaurian refugees who later built Ragusa: Junije Palmotić, *Pavlimir* (Zagreb: Zagrebačka stvarnost, 1995), 29.

the interests of the Ragusan archbishopric, as it had during the earlier period, instead beginning to serve the political needs of the patrician rulers of the city. The patrician hegemony coincided with, or even contributed to, yet another significant novelty: in the late fifteenth century Ragusa developed its own genuine and comparatively rich tradition of writing history. While most of the earlier medieval foundation accounts were written by foreigners – the only local chronicler was Miletius – from the fifteenth century onwards authors dealing with the city's history were largely Ragusans or at least employees of the patrician government. All of these changes, coupled with the strong influence of new humanistic learning, lead to a thorough redefinition of the traditional image of the Ragusan origin which is the topic of this chapter.

The foundation of Ragusa in Renaissance historiography

The proper local tradition of history writing in Ragusa began sometime in the 1480s, when an anonymous writer, perhaps a local monk, finished his history of the city, the so-called *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*. Written in an annalistic form with entries organized according to the sequence of years, this was the first text to extensively cover the whole history of the city since its foundation. Although published only in the late nineteenth century, the annals were of fundamental importance for the Ragusan historiographic tradition. They were doubtlessly the most widespread of all the city's histories, which is attested by over a dozen preserved manuscript copies dating from the early sixteenth until the nineteenth century. Their strong reception is also confirmed by their influence on the subsequent historiography; the *Annales* were the basis upon which the majority of later Renaissance historians composed their accounts of the city's history.[41]

The *Annales* opened a period of intensive history writing. During roughly the next hundred years, five comprehensive works were composed, either completely dedicated to Ragusan history or at least dealing with it extensively. Three of those histories were published during their authors' lives -- those of S. Razzi (1590), M. Orbini (1601) and J. Luccari (1605) – while the works of L. Tubero and N. Ragnina, pertaining to the first half of the sixteenth

[41] Since the autograph is lost, the *Annales* have been published based on three slightly differing manuscripts in: Natko Nodilo, ed., *Annales Ragusini Anonymi item Nicolai de Ragnina*, Monumenta spectantia historiam Sclavorum meridionalium 14 (Zagreb: Academia scientarum et artium Slavorum meridionalium, 1883), 3-163 (henceforth: *Annales*). Parts of the text originating from different manuscripts have also been published by Vikentij Makušev, *Izsljedovanja ob historičeskih pamjatnikah ni bitopisateljah Dubrovnika* [Studies on the Historical Monuments and Customs of Dubrovnik] (Saint Petersburg: Imperial Academy of Sciences, 1867): 208-213; 305-332; 337-358. On the *Annales* see Nodilo's introduction, on pp. III-X; Natko Nodilo, "Prvi ljetopisci i davna historiografija dubrovačka" [The First Chroniclers and the Ancient Historiography of Ragusa], *Rad JAZU* 65 (1883): 92-128.

century, remained in manuscript until their modern editions. Another genre which contained numerous references to the city's origin was the public speeches, quite popular in Ragusa, delivered on a variety of occasions from patrician funerals to state holidays. While many have certainly been lost, some of them were published as early as the Renaissance, with others surviving only in manuscript copies, such as those by the Ragusan humanist Aelius Lampridius Cervinus or Cerva, one of the protagonists of this chapter. The Classical past of the city also became an important topic of the emerging Ragusan literature, and was described with much patriotic bias, primarily in poetry and drama. Finally, due to the growing international significance of the city, this period produced numerous descriptions of Ragusa, whether in *relazioni*, travelogues or contemporary geographical works, most of which touched upon the city's origin. The result was that quite suddenly, in the second half of the fifteenth century, the scarcity of references to the origin of Ragusa turned into a genuine cacophony of voices reflecting the fact that the origin had become one of the major ideological issues of the flourishing aristocratic republic.[42]

As numerous other segments of Ragusan Renaissance culture, history-writing was also under the firm patrician dominance. To begin with, many historians were patricians themselves: Tubero, Cerva, Ragnina, and Luccari. Others were either closely connected to the aristocracy or directly sponsored by it. As a teacher in public school, the Florentine humanist Serdonati was a paid government official, while the Dominican Razzi, for a while vicar of the Ragusan archbishop, seems to have been io cordial terms with the senate, to which he also dedicated his work. The Ragusan Benedictine Orbini was sponsored by an influential, albeit exiled, patrician, M. Bobali, and clearly propagated the interests of at least one of the two main patrician factions. Such close connections of historians with the establishment, coupled with Ragusan political culture which scorned public display of dissent, resulted in substantial ideological coherence of history writing in general. This applies to the foundation narrative as

[42] Listing even only the most important of these works would be both tedious and unnecessary since they are all enumerated below. Thus, just a short mention of basic overviews should suffice here. For historiography see: Natko Nodilo, "Prvi ljetopisci;" Samuel Puhiera, *O postanku Dubrovnika* [About the Foundation of Ragusa] (Split: author's edition, 1963). For literature: Marin Franičević, *Povijest hrvatske renesansne književnosti* [History of the Croatian Renaissance Literature] (Zagreb: Nakladni Zavod Matice Hrvatske, 1986); Slobodan Prosperov Novak, *Povijest hrvatske književnosti, II. Knjiga: Od humanističkih početaka do Kašićeve ilirske gramatike 1604*., [History of Croatian Literature: From the Humanist Beginnings until Kašić's Illyrian Grammar of 1604] (Zagreb: Antibarbarus, 1997). For public speeches: Relja Seferović, "O retoričkoj kulturi u Dubrovniku Petrićeva vremena" [On the Rhetorical Culture of Ragusa in Petrić's Time"] *Filozofska istraživanja* 119, no. 3 (2010): 431–449; Relja Seferović, "Strani učitelj i domaći povjesničar: Nascimbene Nascimbeni i Serafin Cerva o retorici" [Foreign Teacher and Local Historian: Nascimbene Nascimbeni and Serafin Cerva on Rhetoric] *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 45 (2007): 47-116; For travelogues: Jorjo Tadić, *Promet putnika u starom Dubrovniku* [Traffic of Travellers in Old Ragusa] (Dubrovnik, 1939); Petar Matković, *Putovanja po Balkanskom poluotoku za Srednjega vijeka* [Travels on the Balkan Penninusula in the Middle Ages] (Zagreb, 1878).

well, since the origin of the city, however important, does not seem to have been one of the few contested historical issues, which were themselves usually debated in a hushed and polite manner. Therefore, in addressing the beginnings of Ragusa historians largely agreed in reproducing similar panegyric narratives.[43]

Interestingly, the story as narrated by the Renaissance historians does not seem to have originally been of Ragusan provenience. It appeared for the first time in an enigmatic medieval document, the so-called Chronicle of the Diocleian Priest (*Ljetopis popa Dukljanina*). This puzzling text, a narrative genealogy of rulers of an obviously invented early medieval "Kingdom of the Slavs" (*Regnum Sclavorum*), was probably written in the twelfth century by an anonymous author in Bar, in present-day Montenegro. It was known in Ragusa as early as the thirteenth century, although judging by Miletius' and Conversini's accounts, its version of the city's origins was not accepted.[44] However, with time this changed; both the late fifteenth-century author of the *Annales* and the early sixteenth-century historian Tubero adopted the Diocleian's version of the foundation myth and from their works, albeit in a somewhat modified form, it passed into the Ragusan historiographic canon. The complex reasons due to which this, the so-called "Slavic," narrative became the standard origin story of Renaissance Ragusa will be addressed later in this chapter -- for now, suffice to say that it suited the needs of the city's aristocracy exceedingly well.

According to the "Slavic" narrative, at a certain point in the early Middle Ages -- dated variously by different historians, but mostly to the fifth century – a certain King Radaslavus (Radosav, Radoslavo), ruler of a mythic "Slavic" or "Bosnian" kingdom

[43] Here a cursory mention should be made of the two works by the fifteenth-century humanist Gianmario Filelfo (1426-1480) thematizing the origin of Ragusa – the *Raguseide* and the History of Ragusa – which the author sent to the Senate from Italy in 1475. Having never been to the city, Filelfo does not seem to have bothered to investigate its traditions and therefore he completely missed Ragusa's ideological priorities. From a Ragusan standpoint the major problems with his texts were probably: first, he ignored the Epidaurian tradition, and, second, he insisted on the "Scythian/Sarmatian" (that is, Slavic) origin of Ragusans. As will be shown below, at the same time when he was proclaiming that Ragusans were "Scythians," the senate was forbidding the Slavic language in its councils: Roman descent was an absolute imperative. Regarding the reception of Filelfo's works, the reaction of the Ragusan Senate is highly revealing. At first, after receiving the works, the Senate voted to award him, but soon it revoked that decision – probably after having read the texts (Riccardo Picchio, "L'interprétation humaniste de l'histoire de Raguse de Giovan Mario Filelfo," *Etudes litéraires slavo-romanes* (Studia-Historica et Philologica, VI) (1978): 45). In sum, besides a small reference in Ragnina's chronicle, Filelfo's works remained completely outside of the Ragusan canon so they are not considered here. The texts were published in: Nestore Pelicelli, "Due opere inedite di G. M. Filelfo: La Raguseide e Storia di Ragusa," *Rivista Dalmatica* 5 (1902–03): 5-33, 139–176. On Filelfo see the most recent biography with references to older literature at: http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giovanni-mario-filelfo_(Dizionario-Biografico)/ (accessed 28 January 2012). For Filelfo's conections with Ragusa, where his younger brother had been a chancellor, see: Ivan Božić, "Dubrovački kancelar Ksenofon Filelfo" [The Ragusan Chancellor Xenophon Filelfo], *Zbornik Filozofskog fakulteta u Beogradu* 9, no. 1 (1967): 225-245.

[44] That the Chronicle was known in Ragusa as early as the first half of the thirteenth century is affirmed by the so-called forgeries of Lokrum, whose compilers used the *LJPD* in their work (Šišić, *Letopis*, 185-225).

consisting of Dalmatia and its hinterland, was exiled by his son, who usurped the throne. The exiled king found asylum with the pope in Rome, where he married a patrician woman and started a new family. After a certain period of time, the usurper died childless, leaving the "Slavic" kingdom without a ruler. Deciding to reclaim the throne of his ancestors, the grandson of the exiled king, called Pavlimirus (Polimirus, Pavlimiro, sometimes also Radosav), sailed across the Adriatic escorted by a group of loyal Roman followers. Around this time – again, the precise dating varied -- ancient Epidaurus was destroyed by Saracens, Slavs, Vandals or Goths and its citizens were scattered, seeking a new home. The crucial meeting of the two groups of founders, the Epidaurians and Pavlimir's Romans, and the founding of Ragusa which followed, was narrated in two main ways in Renaissance historiography. According to one group of authors – the anonymous Annalist, Ragnina, Tubero and Razzi – Pavlimirus and his Romans came first and erected a fort, into which the Epidaurian refugees migrated later. According to other historians, such as A. L. Cerva, Orbini, and many seventeenth- and eighteenth-century writers, it was the other way round: Epidaurians were the ones who built the city, while Pavlimir and his escorts joined afterwards, expanding an already-existing settlement.[45]

The way in which Ragusan Renaissance historians narrated this tale clearly reflected the new relationships of power in the city-state; their foundation narratives served the interests of the secular elite, while the ecclesiastical issues faded into the background. In other words,

[45] These events were dated in a variety of ways by Ragusan historians, but since their precise dating is not of prime importance here, only a summary overview should suffice. According to the published version of the Annales and Ragnina's chronicle, the city was founded by Romans in 457 or 458 (*Annales*, 3, with Epidaurians joining in the year 691, *Ibid.*, 7-8; for Ragnina's account, Ibid., 173). Numerous unpublished versions of the Annales and S. Razzi date the erection of Ragusa by Pavlimir to the sixth century, mostly in the year 526 or around 560 (Razzi, *La storia di Raugia*, 8-9; SAD, Memoriae 8, *Brevi notizie sulla fondazione di Ragusa estratte da un antico anonimo (usque a. 1771), fol 57.*, f 1v-2r; SAD, Memoriae 18, *Origine della Città di Ragusa estratta da certe scritture antichissime con agiunta di alcun cose più memorabili costumate in Ragusa, 1507, I. Giorigi ab M.*, 4; SAD, Memoriae 24, *Dell'origine della città di Ragusa. Ms.* f. 1v; SAD, Memoriae 32 *Trattato. Origine di Ragusa. Saec XVI. Ms*, f. 1r). In the late sixteenth century Orbini suggested that the city was founded by the Epidaurians in 267 with Pavlimir's escorts joining them only around 900 (Mauro Orbini, *Il Regno degli Slavi* (Munich: Verlag Otto Sagner, 1985), 182). G. Luccari followed Orbini's dating of the Epidaurian founding but, oddly, did not mention Pavlimir as a founder, only laconically mentioning him later in the text (Luccari, *Copioso ristretto*, 1; for Pavlimir, 5). In the seventeenth century, Giovanni Gondola dated the founding by the Epidaurians and Salonitans to 568, with Pavlimir's escorts immigrating only in the early tenth century. (A copy of Gondola's unpublished history of Ragusa is to be found in: Arhiv HAZU, I c 59/506, with the founding account on 9-10 and 28-31. Although it is wrongly entitled *Resti Junius Chroniche di Ragusa* – a text to which it is very similar – already the editor of Resti's history, N. Nodilo, correctly assumed that these are Gondola's annals which were used extensively by Resti to compose his early eighteenth-century chronicle (*Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii item Joannis Gundulae*, ed. Natko Nodilo, MSHSM tomus 25 (Zagreb: JAZU, 1893), pp. XIII-XVII). A. L. Cerva and Tubero did not offer the precise year of founding, but from their texts it is clear that they thought it happened during the time of barbarian invasions between the fifth and seventh centuries. Lastly, there was an old tradition dating the founding to the year 626, as is mentioned in one fifteenth-century manuscript kept in the National and University Library in Zagreb (NSK, R 3918, *Zbornik Gučetićev*, "Chronichetta (626-1484)", f. 113v; the same year appears also in a more recent, seventeenth-century, manuscript: NSK, R 3359 *Miscellanea Rhacusii charactere Bosniaco exarata*, f. 1r.)

under the patrician dominance the origin and status of the city's Church, central in the medieval foundation accounts, had apparently become a minor issue. In fact, only two Renaissance historians, L.C. Tubero and S. Razzi, dedicated any attention to the ecclesiastical status of the new city when narrating its beginnings. Even they spared barely two sentences, narrating how the Epidaurian bishop migrated to the new city and the pope exempted him from Salona's jurisdiction at Pavlimirus' behest.[46] N. Ragnina and A. L. Cerva mentioned the Epidaurian archbishop, Johannes, in their foundation accounts, inheriting him from the medieval tradition (Miletius), but did it only once and clearly *en passant*, without referring at all to the ecclesiastical institutions of the new city.[47] Finally, and most tellingly, several authors not only failed to mention any ecclesiastical figure or institution in their foundation narratives, but also in general never bothered to explain the origin of the city's Church in their histories. Thus, in the immensely influential *Annales* one discovers[learns?] that Ragusa is an archbishopric only when the annalist mentions the beginning of the building of the *palazzo di Arcivescovato* – which, importantly, was not even news on its own, but simply a part of another tale about relics buried under the new building.[48] Similarly, in the histories of Orbini and Luccari, the Ragusan archbishop suddenly pops up around the year 1000, without any explanation, appearing as an actor in negotiations with Venice, in which he had indeed participated historically.[49] All in all, although the Ragusan Renaissance historiography was far from strictly secular in its topics – for instance, the various versions of the *Annales* and Ragnina's chronicle abound with references to relics, saints, and miracles – what symptomatically disappears from the historical horizon is the ecclesiastical establishment and its ideological needs.[50]

In contrast, the ideological needs of the secular elite were the central concern. As this chapter will show, from the fifteenth century the Ragusan patriciate and its apologists used the "Slavic" narrative in order to address several key issues. The first was creating a suitable

[46] Importantly, both were ecclesiastical dignitaries: the first was a Benedictine abbot and the second a vicar of the Ragusan archbishop (Ludovicus Tubero Dalmata Abbas, *Commentarii de temporibus suis*, ed. Vlado Rezar (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2001), 90 (henceforth: Tubero, *Commentarii*); largely following Tubero, Razzi, *Storia*, 10. It should also be mentioned that Razzi wrote the only preserved Renaissance history of the Ragusan Church (published in: Krasić-Razzi, *Povijest dubrovačke metropolije*, 107-168). Another similar work, *Vitae Ragusinorium Pontificum*, written in the second half of the sixteenth century by the Benedictine Eusebius Caboga has been lost (Krasić-Razzi, *Povijest dubrovačke metropolije*, 16-17).

[47] In fact, Cerva mentioned him in only one of his several foundation accounts: Darinka Nevenić-Grabovac, "Ilija Lamprice Crijević, krunisani pesnik. Posmrtni govor svojem ujaku Juniju Sorkočeviću [Ilija Lamprice Crijević, Crowned Poet. Funeral Oration to His Unce Junije Sorkočević]" *Živa antika* 27 (1977): 252 (henceforth: Crijević, "Posmrtni govor Juniju Sorkočeviću"); for Ragnina see: *Annales*, 173.

[48] *Annales*, 19. The archbishop himself appears soon and plays a minor role in the tale.

[49] Orbini, *Il Regno*, 186; Luccari, *Copioso ristretto*, 12-13.

[50] On the accounts of the founding of the Ragusan (arch)bishopric until the eighteenth century see also: Krasić, *Povijest dubrovačke metropolije,* 17-20.

Classical predecessor for the flourishing Renaissance city-state. This led to a drastic redefinition of the image of ancient Epidaurus as well as to rethinking the ways in which its link with modern Ragusa was represented. The second major issue was increasing the prestige and legitimizing the rule of the patrician elite which had recently monopolized political power. This was achieved by changing the traditional protagonists of the founding and inscribing the patriciate into the very foundations of Ragusan history. The third issue was reconciling the traditional claim of Roman origins of Ragusa and its elite with their undeniable contemporary Slavic culture. They were harmonized through an insistence on the alleged Slavic culture of the founders, an insistence which was possible largely due to the peculiarities of the Diocleian's narrative. Finally, the last issue was finding firm and deep historical roots for two crucial features of Renaissance Ragusa: its political independence and its uncompromising Catholicism. Both were represented as essential and timeless attributes of the city-state by being projected into the normative moment of foundation.

Before proceeding to the analysis of these specific issues, however, one important remark has to be made regarding the structure of this chapter. Clearly, the Ragusan origin discourse was far from being an idiosyncratic and isolated phenomenon; many other urban communities faced the same ideological challenges and devised similar responses to them. Therefore, a comparative approach to the problem seems justified, even necessary. However, for the sake of clarity – as will be shown, the development of the Ragusan discourse on origin was truly labyrinthine – such comparative reflection is relegated to the very end of this chapter. The conclusion consists of an attempt to broaden the perspective by comparing the Ragusan origin discourse with those of other cities, primarily Split, Florence, and Venice, all of which shared a similar culture and a similar basic problem – the lack of a significant Classical past.

Creating an illustrious predecessor: Changes in Epidaurus' image

Although Ragusa claimed descent from two Classical cities, Rome and Epidaurus, these claims were far from being of equal importance. References to Roman founders and their illustrious homeland always remained somewhat vague and laconic, while the image of ancient Epidaurus and the nature of its connection with modern Ragusa were ideological issues of prime importance. This was already the case during the Middle Ages when the Epidaurian origin was propagated by the Ragusan Church, which sought legitimacy by claiming continuity with the bishopric of the Classical city. With the establishment of patrician hegemony in the mid-fourteenth century, the Epidaurian descent of Ragusa lost none

of its importance. However, both the image of the ancient city and the ways in which it was used underwent profound transformations which reflected the needs of the new patrician elite.

The patriciate could build on venerable traditions. The close connection between Ragusa and Epidaurus in the Ragusan historical memory is revealed already by onomastics. From the medieval period until the very fall of the Republic in 1808, the small neighboring settlement of Cavtat, located at the site of old Epidaurus, was called by symptomatic names: *Civitas antiqua, Urbs vetus, Civitas vetus, Città vecchia*, and others. Besides such names which suggested close connections between the two cities, "old" and "new", there were also those which implied far more -- their identification. Thus, Cavtat was called *Ragusium vetus, Civitas vetus Ragusina, Ragusa vecchia* or *stari grad Dubrovnik* (in Croatian: "the old city Dubrovnik").[51] However, Ragusa's name, and thereby also identity, was not only projected onto its Classical neighbor. The same also happened in the opposite direction: Ragusa became Epidaurus. This is visible in the frequently repeated explanation according to which Epidaurus is simply an older name for modern Ragusa, an explanation which fails to distinguish the two historical settlements, instead suggesting that there is *one* city with two names. Thus, for example, as early as the twelfth century the Chronicle of Diocletian Priest spoke of *Epitaurum, quod nunc dicitur Ragusium*, while the late fifteenth-century travel writer Felix Faber mentioned the modern city he visited as "Epidaurus, which is commonly called Ragusa."[52] The idea that Epidaurus and Ragusa were one city with two names gained such prominence that a sixteenth-century humanist, Paladius Fusko, felt compelled to point out that it was a

[51] Ferdo Šišić, "O Hrvatskoj Kraljici Margareti" [About the Croatian Queen Margareta], *Dubrovnik* 1 (1930): 5; Ante Marinović, "O postanku i historijskom razvitku Cavtata [On the Genesis and Historical Development of Cavtat]" *Vojnoistorijski glasnik* 1 (1971): 116-118; Janeković, "Stjecanje Konavala," 34-35.

[52] Šišić, *Letopis*, 306; Stjepan Krasić, "Opis hrvatske jadranske obale u putopisima švicarskog dominikanca Feliksa Fabrija (Schmida) iz 1480. i 1483/1484 godine" [A Description of the Croatian Adriatic Coast in the Travelogues of Swiss Dominican Felix Fabri (Schmid)] *Anali Zavoda za povijesne Znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 39 (2001): 165, 185. In fact, the earliest historical mention of Ragusa might have had the same meaning of identifying the two settlements. It consists of a cryptic note in a seventh- or eighth-century cosmography which states *Epidaurum id est Ragusium*. Whether this was meant to imply sameness or simply spatial proximity of the two settlements is uncertain (for more see: Slobodan Čače, "Kozmografija' Anonima Ravenjanina i počeci Dubrovnika" [The *Cosmography* of Anonymous from Ravenna and the Beginnings of Dubrovnik] *Dubrovnik* 4 (1997): 84–97.) Beginning with the fifteenth century the claim that Epidaurus is another name for Ragusa became a veritable commonplace, repeated by the Ragusan humanists such as de Diversis and eventually reaching as far as Marinus Barletius, J. Bodin, and Philippus Ferrarius (Filip de Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika* [Description of the Glorious City of Ragusa], ed. and trans. Zdenka Janeković-Römer (Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 2004), 137, 139, 149; an excerpt regarding Ragusa from Barletius' *De uita et gestis Scanderbegi* (1508) is available online: http://www.ffzg.hr/klafil/croala/cgi-bin/getobject.pl?c.30:4.laud (accessed 25 September 2010); Jean Bodin, *De republica libri sex* (Paris: Apud Iacobvm Dv-pvys, 1586), 222; Philippus Ferrarius, *Lexicon Geographicum, Universi Orbis Oppida, Urbes, Regiones, Provinciae, Regna, Emporia, Academiae, Metropoles, Fontes, Flumina, & Maria Antiquis Recentibusque Nominibus appellata, suisque distantiis descripta recensentur* (London: Ex officina Rogeri Danielis, 1657), 188.

"common mistake," warning that these were in fact two different settlements some 40 *stadii* distant from each other.[53]

The patrician government further propagated this traditionally close connection of Ragusa and Epidaurus, which oscillated between claims of descent and total identification. A striking example of how tendentious the ruling elite could get in representing this relationship is found in the speech which Ragusan diplomats were supposed to deliver in front of the Ottoman sultan, Murat II, in 1430. Attempting to prove that the western part of the neighboring Konavle region, including the site of Epidaurus itself, belonged to Ragusa, the ambassadors were to say:

> as is well known to everyone, in ancient times, roughly some eight hundred years ago, our Ragusa was removed from the place in which it had stood for a thousand years and was built in another place, on a dry cliff almost completely surrounded by the sea, some six miles distant from the original place where it had been…[54]

Even the grammar of this sentence is revealing. Although it speaks about two settlements which belonged to different epochs, bore different names, and were several miles distant from each other, the patrician government used only one subject – "Ragusa." It was "Ragusa" that stood at the place of ancient Epidaurus "for a thousand years" and was later only "removed" to be "built in another place," a few miles distant from its original location. In other words, according to the patrician government, Ragusa was not simply the heir of Epidaurus. It was the *very same city*, which only moved in space, in fact, migrated.

The context in which this statement appears reveals the most important ideological function of Epidaurian origin in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century; it was used as an argument in Ragusan diplomacy. As early as 1358 it made its diplomatic debut during negotiations about the status of the city with its new sovereign, the Hungarian King Louis of Anjou. Ragusan ambassadors were instructed to ask for the grant of several neighboring areas

[53] Paladije Fusko, *Opis obale Ilirika* [Description of the Shore of Illyricum], ed. and trans. Bruna Kuntić-Makvić. (Zagreb: Latina et Graeca, 1990), 104-106. For a similar warning that *Epidaurus rigorose loquendo non est Ragusa*, uttered as late as the seventeenth century by the Italian theologian and orientalist Dominicus Macer, see: Seraphinus Maria Cerva, *Prolegomena in Sacram metropoim Ragusinam. Editio princeps,* ed. Relja Seferović (Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 2008), 247.

[54] The instruction of Ragusan ambasssadors is dated with 13 September 1430: *...come notissimo e a zascuno, anticho tempo gia e ottocento anni o circha, Ragusa nostra del loco dove avanti era stata anni mille e piu fo removesta et hedificata in uno altro logo, sopra uno saxo arido, quasi intorno circumdata dal mare, lutano dal primo logo dove era circha sei miglia...* SAD, *Lettere e commissioni di Levante*, vol. 10, f. 211v. For this reference I am profoundly grateful to Professor Bariša Krekić. For the context in which such curious rhetoric appeared see Ćiro Truhelka, "Konavoski rat (1430-1433)" [The Konavle War (1430-1433] *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Bosni i Hercegovini* 29 (1917): 179-184.; Pavo Živković, "Ustupanje Konavala Dubrovčanima [The Concession of Konavle to Ragusans]," in *Konavle u prošlosti, sadašnjosti i budućnosti*, vol. 1, 77-99.

explaining that they belonged to "our original territory, which we had of Epidaurus."[55] Similar statements became part of the standard diplomatic rhetoric of the period. Thus, in 1407, Ragusan diplomats again tried to gain the region of Konavle from the Hungarian King, explaining that it is "of our patrimony, that is, of the city of our origin, Epidaurus," while in 1411 they made the same demand invoking the "*fama* of the ancient city of our predecessors."[56] In all of these examples, the new "user" of the foundation narrative and the new purposes for which it served are immediately apparent. Instead of invoking the ecclesiastical heritage of Epidaurus, as the Ragusan Church had traditionally done, the patrician government began to insist on secular continuity with the ancient city. More precisely, it invoked a -- conveniently vaguely -- defined district of Classical Epidaurus in order to claim various neighbouring territories, insisting on the assumption that they had belonged to the old city and therefore should be returned to Ragusa as the rightful heir.[57]

However, besides being used for novel diplomatic purposes, during the fifteenth century the Epidaurian heritage underwent an even more important transformation. The image of the ancient city itself was profoundly altered according to the needs of the patrician elite and the new humanistic sensibility.[58] The reshaping of ancient Epidaurus began with a spectacular discovery: the Classical predecessor of Ragusa was the birthplace of a pagan god. As the humanist Philippus de Diversis mentions in his description of the city written in the early 1440s, it was the Ragusan chancellor, Nicolaus de la Ciria (in office 1437-1440), who

[55] … *prima region nostra che auessemo de Pitaura*. Antonije Vučetić, "Spomenici dubrovački [Ragusan Monuments]" *Srđ* V/9 (1906): 460.

[56] Josip Gelcich and Lájos Thalloczy, ed., *Diplomatarium relationum reipublicae ragusanae cum regno Hungariae.* (Budapest: Kiadja a m. Tud. Akadémia Tört. Bizottsága, 1887), 174, 202. On this rhetoric, see: Janeković, "Stjecanje Konavala," 31-45; Bernard Stulli, "Dubrovačke odredbe o Konavlima (I) [Ragusan Decrees Regarding Konavle] (I))" in: Bernard Stulli, *Studije iz povijesti Dubrovnika* (Zagreb: Konzor, 2001), 293-294.

[57] A similar argument was later adopted by Ragusan historians who, moreover, frequently pointed out one tangible piece of evidence that Konavle had belonged to the district of ancient Epidaurus – the remains of the large ancient acquaduct which supplied the old city with water. The first to mention this "miraculuous work" as proof of Ragusan right to the territory was Tubero (Ludovicus Cerva Tubero "Commentariolus de origine & incremento urbis Rhacusanae," 19-20 in: *Commentariolus Ludovici Cervarii Tuberonis De origine & incremento Urbis Rhacusanae eiusdemque ditionis descriptione auctore Nicolao Joannis de Bona, et Stephani Gradi antiquitatum Rhacusanarum brevis diatriba. His accedit de illustribus Familiis, quae Rhacusae extant ad amplissimum Senatum elegia Didaci Pyrrhi. Cum notis et supplementis* (Dubrovnik: Typis Andreae Trevisanis, 1790). Similar assertions are also to be found in: Razzi, *La Storia di Ragusa*, 155-156; Nicolaus Bona, "Descriptio ditionis Rhacusanae," 28 in *Commentariouls Ludovici Cervarii*; Resti, *Chronica*, 15, 218).

[58] On humanism in Ragusa see: Ivan Božić, "Pojava humanizma u Dubrovniku" [The emergence of Humanism in Ragusa], I*storijski pregled* 2, no. 1 (1955): 6-18; Nikica Kolumbić, "Dubrovački humanisti u okviru hrvatskog humanizma" [Ragusan Humanists in the Context of Croatian Humanism] *Dubrovnik: časopis za književnost i znanost* 4 (1995): 129-137. See also other articles in this issue of the journal *Dubrovnik*, which is dedicated to humanism in Ragusa. Good overviews of Dalmatian humanism in major European languages are: Il'ja Goleniščev, *Il Rinascimento italiano e le letterature slave dei secoli XV e XVI*, tr. Sante Graciotti and Jitka Křesálková (Milan: Pubblicazioni della Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, 1973), 33–151; Marianna D. Birnbaum, *Humanists in a Shattered World* (Columbus: Slavica Publishers, 1985).

"had learned in his literary studies that Aesculapius had his origin at Epidaurus, which is now called Ragusa." The erudite chancellor, de Diversis continues, insisted that the figure of the Greek god of medicine should be carved on the building of the new Rector's palace and even composed a metrical epitaph to be fixed on the wall near his sculpture.[59] It seems that the patrician government welcomed this initiative enthusiastically. A relief of Aesculapius seated in his laboratory was carved into one of the capitals in the front loggia of the Rector's palace where it still stands today. On the adjacent wall is Ciria's inscription explaining that the sculpture depicts Aesculapius, lauding his accomplishments and proclaiming – typically, without any reservations -- that he was "born in Ragusa" (*Ragusii genitus*).[60]

Despite such a promising beginning, this claim had meagre success. It was never widely accepted, especially not outside Ragusa, since it all too obviously rested upon a confusion of two very different cities of the same name. One of them was Dalmatian and the other was a far more significant Greek Epidaurus which, indeed, was considered the birthplace of Aesculapius and was the famous center of his cult during Antiquity. Historically it seems that those two settlements had nothing in common besides the name, and even that was a coincidence, since the name of the Dalmatian city was probably of Illyrian, not Greek, origin.[61] Whether the identification of Ragusan and Peloponnesian Epidaurus, implied by Ciria's "discovery," was a mistake or an attempt at a tendentious glorification of Ragusa is hard to say since it is unclear what source he based this assumption on. What is clear, however, is that even the contemporaries doubted it, warning that Ragusa's predecessor was not the famous Classical city, which was quite obviously situated in Greece, not Dalmatia. For example, this identification was explicitly rejected by the travel writer Felix Fabri in the 1480s and soon afterwards also by the immensely influential Venetian historian Marcantonio Sabellico.[62]

[59] de Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada*, 149.

[60] For the text of the inscription see: Tamara Gović, *Epigrafski spomenici u Dubrovniku* [Epigraphic Monuments in Ragusa] (Dubrovnik: Biskupski ordinarijat Dubrovnik, 2004), 73. Although Ciria's authorship of the inscription is indisputable, in the literature one still finds the erroneous old claim that the author was Cyriacus of Ancona. For more on this erroneous attribution see: Ante Šoljić, "O ranoj renesansi u Dubrovniku [On the Early Renaissance in Ragusa]," *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 40 (2002): 134. For an art historical analysis of Aesculapius' capitel and older literature see: Renata Novak Klemenčič, "Kiparski ukras Kneževa dvora u Dubrovniku u 15. stoljeću – nekoliko priloga" [Sculptural Decoration of the Rector's palace in Ragusa – Several Contributions], PPUD 39 (2001-2002): 270-276; 289-292.

[61] Grga Novak, "Questiones Epidauritanae," *Rad JAZU* 13 (1965): 120. In fact there were three Classical cities of the same name. Besides the Dalmatian one two others were located in Greece: in Argolis on the Saronic Gulf, the centre of Aesculapius' cult, and in Lakonia, a smaller city. Modern Albanian Durrës (Latin *Dyrrachium*) was also sometimes confused with those cities due to the similarity of its Greek name Epidamnos.

[62] However, while Sabellico simply rejects this identification, mentioning that there were several cities named Epidaurus in Antiquity, Fabri also mistakenly claims that the center of Aesculapius' cult was in fact Albanian Durrës (Epidamnos). (For Fabri see: Krasić, "Opis hrvatske jadranske obale," 185-186; for Sabellico: Marcus

Nevertheless, lasting legacies of Ciria's "discovery" were occasional references to the special connection between the Dalmatian and Greek Epidaurus, as well as between the Dalmatian Epidaurus and Aesculapius himself. Thus, obviously aware that they could not "borrow" the prestigious past of the Greek city, several Ragusan authors suggested that, due to the similarity of names, Ragusa's predecessor must have been the colony of the famous polis.[63] Even more frequent were the laconic claims that the Dalmatian Epidaurus was the center of Aesculapius' cult, usually made without further explanation and without mentioning the famous Greek centre of worship.[64] Interestingly, it seems that this idea eventually entered the popular tradition. As the eighteenth-century antiquarian, A. M. Appendini reports, many Ragusans told him that the capital with the relief of Aesculapius on the Rector's palace – the one erected at Ciria's bequest -- was brought to Ragusa from the ruins of the god's temple in the neighbouring Epidaurus.[65]

Besides celebrating Ragusa's predecessor as the birthplace of Aesculapius, the ambitious building program initiated by the Ragusan government in the mid-fifteenth century was also imbued with another, more important, message regarding the city's origin. During the 1440s, the patrician government installed several revealing inscriptions on key-points in the city, which are still *in situ*. The first, commemorating the building of the new Rector's

---

Antonius Coccius Sabellicus, *M. Antonii Cocii Sabellici opera omnia* (Basle: per Ioannem Heruagium, 1560), 445). Without explicitly rejecting the identification of the Greek city with Ragusa's predecessor, in his influential *Supplementum Chronicarum*, published in 1483, Giacomo Filippo Forèsti also distinguished between three cities with similar names: Dyracchium, sometimes called "Epidaurum," the Greek "Epidaurum" in Acheia, and "Epidaurus" in Dalmatia. Importantly, he also added that the city in Acheia was famous for Aesculapius' temple, quoting Pliny the Elder as his source (Plin. *Nat. Hist.* 4.9.). Forèsti's text is available at: http://www.ffzg.hr/klafil/croala/cgi-bin/getobject.pl?c.21:1.laud.4153 (accessed 20 September 2010). Despite these clear distinctions in widely read works, as late as the seventeenth century one could still find European authors warning against confusing the Dalmatian Epidaurus with the two Greek cities of the same name. For example: Tadić, *Promet*, 263; Johannes Ludovicus Gothofredus, *Archontologia cosmica, sive imperiorum, regnorum, principatuum, rerumque publicarum omnium per totum terrarum orbem commentarii luculentissimi* (Frankfurt: Jennisius, 1628), 623.

[63] The first to make such a claim was the humanist A. L. Cerva, who was also the first Ragusan to clearly distinguish between the two cities. The same idea was repeated by later authors such as the eighteenth-century F. M. Appendini (Crijević "Oratio funebris za Junija Sorga," 192; Nevenić Grabovac, "Poema Ilije Crijevića *De Epidauro*," 256; Appendini, *Notizie*, tomus I, 30-36).

[64] Vinko Pribojević, *O porijeklu i zgodama Slavena* [On the origin and the deeds of the Slavs], ed. Grga Novak (Split: Književni krug, 1991), 139; Georgius Baglivi, *De praxi medica ad priscam observandi rationem revocanda, libri dvo* (London: Anisson & Joann, 1699), 579**;** Mirko Tomasović, "Pohvalnice Dubrovniku [The Lauds of Ragusa]" *Dubrovnik* 1 (1992): 130-131. Such claims reappeared periodically until the twentieth century: Vlaho Novaković, *Cavtat i Konavle* [Cavtat and Konavle] (Cavtat: starinarsko društvo "Epidaurum", 1954), 6; Vladimir Bazala, *Pregled povijesti zdravstvene kulture Dubrovačke republike* [An Overview of the Health Culture of Ragusan Republic] (Zagreb: Dubrovački horizonti, 1972), 9). As has been mentioned, there is absolutely no evidence that the cult of Aesculapius enjoyed special status in the Dalmatian Epidaurus (Novak, *Povijest Dubrovnika*, 20; Novak, "Questiones Epidauritanae," 116-117).

[65] Appendini, *Notizie*, vol. I, 30-31. The same was reported in the mid-nineteenth century by R. Eitelberger von Edelberg, *Die mittelalterlichen Kunstdenkmale Dalmatiens in Arbe, Zara, Trau, Spalato und Ragusa* (Vienna, 1861), 268-269.

palace, is situated in the loggia; the second, bearing a moralizing political message, is carved on the statue in the palace's atrium; the third is fixed to the then-newly-built public fountain, commemorating its erection by the Neapolitan architect Onofrio della Cava. Two of these inscriptions – the one in the palace's loggia and that on the fountain – explicitly point to the city's Epidaurian origin, referring to Ragusa as the "Epidaurian Ragusan" city. The third one, in the courtyard of the Rector's palace, also makes strong allusions to Antiquity; the text is partially borrowed from Cicero and the language is "unmistakably reminiscent of Roman legal documents in the style of the *Leges duodecim tabularum*."[66] However, the form of those inscriptions is even more important than the content. All three are probably the earliest extant examples of true *all'antica* style in epigraphy, radical even for the standards of contemporary Italy in the style and letter forms, which are modelled on the classical *capitalis monumentalis quadrata*. In short, they are as perfect copies of Roman inscriptions as could be made in the mid-fifteenth century. The intention behind such radical archaizing is clear; the patrician government sought to represent its republic and itself as heirs and continuors of Classical Rome. The basis of such a claim might have been the alleged Roman founders of the medieval tradition, but due to the explicit mentions of Epidaurus in two inscriptions, it seems that the *Romanitas* of Ragusa was seen as stemming primarily from the neighbouring Classical city.[67]

Importantly, the Rector's palace might contain yet another, albeit somewhat later, allusion to the Classical roots of Ragusa. On the reliefs of the palace's portal – probably installed during the restoration of the building in the 1470s -- there is a depiction of two naked figures, male and female, hugging each other, with a small winged child at their side. These

[66] Stanko Kokole, "Cyriacus of Ancona and the Revival of Two Forgotten Ancient Personifications in the Rector's Palace of Dubrovnik," *Renaissance Quarterly* 49 (1996): 235-236. See also: Stanko Kokole, "Ciriaco d'Ancona v Dubrovniku: Renesančna epigrafika, arheologija in obujanje antike v humanističnem okolju mestne državice sredi petnajstega stoletja" [Cyriacus of Ancona in Ragusa: Renaissance Epigraphic, Archeology and the Waking of Antiquity in the Humanistic Context of the City-State in the Middle of the Fifteenth Century] *Arheološki vestnik* 41 (1990): 663-698.

[67] For the text of these inscriptions and the context of their erection see: Kokole, "Cyriacus of Ancona," 237-243; Gović, *Epigrafski spomenici*, 59, 71-72 The text of the two longer inscriptions is also available on line in a valuable database *Croatiae auctores Latini* (*Croala*): http://www.ffzg.hr/klafil/croala/ (accessed 25 September 2010). The authorship of these three inscriptions together with their classicizing epigraphic style can be safely attributed to the famous humanist and antiquarian Cyriacus of Ancona, who visited the city twice in the 1440s. (Kokole, "Cyriacus of Ancona," 238; 244-247; Šoljić, "O ranoj renesansi," 138). The text of the two inscriptions -- on the fountain and in the loggia -- written in Cyriacus' own hand has been recently dicovered by Šoljić in the official copy of the Ragsuan statutes. Cyriacus also dedicated several generic laudatory lines to Ragusa as the descendant of Epidaurus in his speech, *Anconitana Illyricaque laus et Anconitanorum Raguseorumque foedus*, delivered on the occasion of the trade agreement between the two cities in 1440 (The text was published in: Giuseppe Praga, "Ciriaco de Pizzicolli e Marino de Resti," *Archivio storico per la Dalmazia* 7 (1932): 262-280. The text is also available on line in the above-mentioned database: http://www.ffzg.hr/klafil/croala/cgi-bin/getobject.pl?c.10:1.laud.1815 (accessed 20 September 2010).

figures have been recognized by most experts as Mars and Venus with Eros (Cupid). According to the widely accepted interpretation, Venus and the disarmed (*sic*) Mars stand as an allegory for the triumph of Love over War. The divine couple could also have an additional meaning, being an allusion to their mythological daughter, Harmony, whose presence is signaled by the nearby relief of *putti* playing musical instruments, a standard personification of *Harmonia*.[68] However, besides bearing such general political messages, the relief of Mars and Venus could also be referring to a specific myth connected with Ragusa's Epidaurian past. As an allusion to Harmony it could be referring to the story about the Greek hero, Cadmus, and his wife, Harmony, who, according to a Dalmatian tradition, after long exile in Illyricum, finally were buried in the Konavli region – that is, in proximity to ancient Epidaurus.[69] Finally, this relief could be yet another attempt to signal the Roman origins of Ragusa. Mars and Venus might be depicting the traditional mythical "parents" of the Roman people as they frequently did in Classical art. According to a venerable tradition, Venus was the mother of Aeneas and the alleged ancestor of the Julio-Claudian imperial dynasty (*gens Iulia*), while Mars was the father of Romulus and thus the ancestor of Roman people in general.[70]

All the aforementioned references to Roman Antiquity in public architecture, reveal the direction in which the image of Epidaurus was to develop in the late fifteenth and sixteenth century; it was represented as a Roman city and thereby as a principal source for the *Romanitas* of Ragusa itself. Interestingly, the strengthening image of Epidaurus as a Roman city might have influenced another major building project of the period besides the Rector's palace – the peculiar reconstruction of Cavtat in the late fifteenth century. As N. Grujić

[68] Igor Fisković, "O značenju i porijeklu reljefa na portalu Kneževa dvora [On the Meaning and Origin of the Reliefs on the Portal of the Rector's Palace]," in Igor Fisković, *Reljef Renesansnog Dubrovnika* [Renaissance Reliefs in Dubrovnik] (Dubrovnik: Matica Hrvatska Dubrovnik, 1993), 148-156, especially, 150-151. Instructive regarding the relief is also: Stanko Kokole, "Venera i Mars na portalu Kneževog dvora. O porijeklu prvog mitološkog prizora "all'antica" u kiparstvu ranorenesansnog Dubrovnika [Venus and Mars on the Portal of the Rector's Palace. On the origin of the First Mythological Depiction "all antica" in the Sculpture of Renaissance Ragusa]" in: *Likovna kultura Dubrovnika 15 i 16 stoljeća*, [The Artistic Culture of Dubrovnik in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century] ed. Igor Fisković (Zagreb: Muzejsko-galerijski centar, 1991), 121-126.

[69] This intriguing suggestion was made by J. Belamarić and accepted by some historians: Joško Belamarić, "Sveti Vlaho i dubrovačka obitelj svetaca zaštitnika" [St. Blaise and the Ragusan Family of Patron Saints], *Dubrovnik.* 5 (1994): 38; Janeković, "Stjecanje Konavala", 37-38. However, this interpretation is somewhat weakened by the fact that the story of Cadmus and Harmonia does not otherwise appear in Renaissance elaborations of Epidaurus' ancient past, achieving some importance only in the eighteenth century (for example, Appendini, *Notizie,* vol. I, 10-11). On Cadmus and Harmonia in the Ragusan tradition, see: Novak, "Questiones Epidauritanae," 114-115. For the connections between Cadmus and Harmonia and Illyricum in Classical literature see: Radoslav Katičić, *Illyricum Mythologicum* [Zagreb: Antibarbarus, 1995], 84-89; 211-303). Interestingly, as early as the thirteenth-century Thomas the Archdeacon briefy mentioned that Epidaurus was Cadmo's city in which, according to a tale, a serpent lived (Toma Arhiđakon, *Historia Salonitana,* 4.) An elaborate analysis of Thomas' account is Nenad Ivić, *Domišljanje prošlosti* [Rethinking the Past] (Zagreb: Zavod za znanost o književnosti, 1992).

[70] For this interpretation: Fisković, "O porijeklu i značenju," 150; Kokole, "Venera i Mars na portalu Kneževog dvora," 122; Belamarić, "Sveti vlaho i dubrovačka obitelj," 38; Janeković, "Stjecanje Konavala," 37-38.

suggested, it is possible that Ragusan government rebuilt the small city, located on the site of ancient Epidaurus, with the idea of recreating, or at least alluding to, an idealized Classical settlement. That could certainly explain few significant deviations from the usual urbanistic practices of the Ragusan republic. For instance, the non-standard plot size in Cavtat might have been caused by an attempt to reproduce the city plan of Classical Epidaurus, with which the Renaissance plots coincide. Moreover, the uncommon types of houses, which, albeit situated in an urban context, were modelled after rustic villas, equipped with large gardens and oriented towards the sea, could be reflecting the Renaissance conceptions of Classical *otium.* Although conclusive evidence is lacking, one can speculate that through such peculiar urbanistic solutions the patriciate tried to accentuate the Classical past of Ragusa's predecessor which otherwise so inconveniently lacked imposing Roman ruins.[71]

However, the most elaborate Renaissance articulation of Epidaurus' Roman past is to be found in the works of one author whose name will appear frequently in the following pages -- the Ragusan arch-humanist Aelius L. Cervinus or Cerva (1460-1521). A scion of an important patrician family, Cerva was educated in Ragusa, Ferrara, and, most importantly, Rome. During his Roman years he was a member of the famous Humanist Academy of Pomponius Laetus, where he was even crowned as a *poeta laureatus* for his Latin poetry. After returning to Ragusa he worked as a teacher in the state school and was also a frequent speaker on public occasions, mostly patrician funerals or state holidays. In his numerous orations, epistles, and poems Cerva created a completely novel image of Ragusa's Classical past based on solid humanist scholarship and shaped by profound fascination with the Roman world.[72]

[71] Nada Grujić, "Cavtat rinascimentale. Rievocazione dell'Epidauro antica" in *Homo Adriaticus, identità culturale e autocoscienza attraverso i secoli,* ed. Nadia Falaschini, Sante Graciotti and Sergio Sconocchia (Reggio Emilia: Edizioni Diabasis, 1998), 251-261. Except for the remains of the aqueduct, located miles from the city, the architectural traces of ancient Epidaurus were quite scarce. On what apparently were state sponsored, or at least supervised, archaeological excavations in Cavtat in the late seventeenth century, see Ivana Burđelez, "Prinos kulturnoj povijesti Cavtata [A Contribution to the Cultural History of Cavtat]" in: *Konavle u prošlosti, sadašnjosti i budućnosti,* tomus I, 139-141).

[72] The standard modern Croatian version of his name – which would probably scandalize him - is Ilija Crijević. On Cerva's biography and works see: Stanislav Škunca *Aelius Lampridius Cervinus Poeta Ragusinus (Saec. XV)* (Rome: Edizioni francescane, 1971); Franjo Rački "Iz djela E. L. Crievića Dubrovčanina" [From the Opus of E.L. Criević the Ragusan] *Starine* 4 (1872): 155-200; Vladimir Vratović and Anto Lešić, "Crijević, Ilija" in: *Hrvatski biografski leksikon,* vol. 2, ed. Aleksandar Stipčević (Zagreb: Jugoslavenski Leksikografski zavod "Miroslav Krleža," 1989), 716-719; Đuro Körbler, "Iz mladih dana triju humanista Dubrovčana 15. vijeka (Karlo Pavov Pucić, Ilija Lampričin Crijević i Damjan Paskojev Benešić)" (From the Early Days of Three Ragusan Humanists of the 15th Century [Karlo Pavov Pucić, Ilija Lampričin Crijević and Damjan Paskojev Benešić])," *Rad JAZU* 206 (1915): 218-252.

Fundamental for Cerva's vision of the Epidaurian past was what he once enthusiastically called the "most glorious page" (*pagina celeberrima*).[73] In fact much less than a page, it was barely a sentence from Pliny's *Historia naturalis*, in which, listing the cities of Roman Dalmatia, the ancient scholar remarked: "the colony of Epidaurum is distant from the river Naron 100 miles" (*a Narone amne C p. abest Epidaurum colonia*). What was crucial for Cerva and his humanist peers was in fact just one word – *colonia*.[74] The relevance of Epidaurus being a Roman colony is best revealed by the comparison between the two types of Roman settlement, *colonia* and *municipium*, which Cerva made in one of his public speeches. While the *municipium* accepted "new men" and "locals," a *colonia* "could not have been without Roman citizens, institutions and mores."[75] In other words, as a Roman colony Epidaurus was settled by full-fledged *cives Romani* and was a small copy of Rome in its customs, form of governance, and culture in general. Cerva clearly articulated the consequences this had for contemporary Ragusa: "If therefore Epidaurus was, so are we a Roman colony, since we originate from Epidaurus and Romans."[76] As a matter of fact, according to Cerva, Ragusa was "twice" Roman since the other group of its founders, Pavlimir's escorts, also came from Rome. Therefore in one of his works he addressed the city as "the true offspring and truer colony, *twice* the descendant of Quirites [e.g., Romans]."[77]

Perhaps due to his fascination with Epidaurus, in Cerva's works one finds for the first time a specific version of the city's foundation in which the Epidaurians are represented as its most important protagonists. According to the hitherto dominant tradition, Ragusa was founded by Pavlimir's followers with Epidaurians migrating to it later. Cerva, however, suggested a different ordering of events which became influential in later historiography: it was Epidaurians who were the first to build the city and Pavlimir's escorts arrived afterwards.

---

[73] Darinka Nevenić Grabovac, "Poema Ilije Crijevića *De Epidauro*," 256. Another mention of Pliny's sentence is: Crijević, "Posmrtni govor Juniju Sorkočeviću," 252.

[74] Pliny, *Historia naturalis*, III, 144. The quotations are from the English translation and the Latin original, both available on the Internet. For the Latin version see: http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/L/Roman/Texts/Pliny_the_Elder/3*.html For the English version:http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0137%3Abook%3D3%3Achapter%3D26 (both accessed 26 January 2012). The earliest mention of Epidaurus as *colonia* in the Dalmatian context is to be found in the work of the Šibenik humanist Juraj Šišgorić *De situ Illyriae et civitate Sibenici*, finished in 1487, caput VII. It is unclear whether Cerva knew Šišgorić's work since it was not published until the nineteenth century. Two other early mentions of Epidaurus as a Roman colony are: Tubero, *Commentarii*, 88; Fusko, *Opis obale Ilirika*, 104.

[75] This point was elaborated in Cerva's funeral speech for Martul Zamagna (Škunca, "*Ex Cervini oratione in obitum Martuli Zamagnae*" in: Škunca, *Aelius Lampridius Cervinus*, 181 (henceforth: Škunca, "*Ex Cervini oratione in obitum Martuli Zamagnae*"). A manuscript copy of that speech with many fewer errors than in Škunca's transcription is to be found in the Library of the Franciscan Monastery in Ragusa as Manuscript no. 243, *Orationes Latinae civium Rhagusinorum Rhacusii habitae*, 137-146.

[76] Škunca, "*Ex Cervini oratione in obitum Martuli Zamagnae*," 181.

[77] Crijević, "Posmrtni govor Juniju Sorkočeviću," 252.

While sometimes writing that they came soon (*mox*) after the founding, in other instances he insists that the city had been built by Epidaurians long before (*multo antea*) the Romans arrived. Importantly, in both cases he was careful to point out that Pavlimir's Romans simply "enlarged" (*auxisse*) the city, not built it.[78] The reasons for Cerva's preference orEpidaurian origin are not fully clear, but might lie in his humanist background. Attributing the foundation to Epidaurians perhaps provided a clearer and historically more plausible link to Roman Antiquity than attributing it to Pavlimir's Romans who, as a fairly transparent medieval legend, symptomatically never received more than a passing mention in Cerva's works.[79]

Cerva's understanding of Epidaurus' history and its relationship to modern Ragusa is most clearly revealed in his historical poem *De Epidauro*, which describes the destruction of the ancient city by the Saracen fleet.[80] This event, usually accorded a single sentence in historiography, was extensively elaborated by Cerva, who went as far as to describe it in terms of providential history. God's purpose behind the destruction of Epidaurus is revealed through a dialogue between the personified Epidaurus and a divine being, which, albeit referred to by Juppiter's attribute *Tonans*, is clearly the Christian god. Aware of its imminent destruction, Epidaurus begs for mercy, explaining its merits, which Cerva uses to offer a glorfying description of Ragusa's predecessor. Needless to say, he again insists on it being a Roman colony but, interestingly, seems to suggest that originally it was an "Illyrian" settlement.[81] Namely, Epidaurus pleads to be spared since it long ago abandoned Illyrian barbarisms and, adopting the good customs of the *Quirites*, became the true offspring of Rome. Equally importantly, Epidaurus was obviously a Christian city since it implores God to have mercy on "those who worship Christ."[82] In his response to the lamenting city, God reveals his plan, prophesying that it will soon "come back to life in a more splendid place." Then he continues to describe its destruction and the construction of Ragusa in a set of revealing metaphors, all of which clearly imply a translation of identity between the two

[78] These two versions can be seen in: Škunca, "Ex Cervini oratione in obitum Martuli Zamagnae," 182; Ilija Crijević, "Oratio funebris humaniste Ilije Crijevića dubrovačkom pesniku Ivanu (Dživu) Gučetiću" [The Funeral Oration of the Humanist Ilije Crijevića for the Ragusan Poet Ivan (Dživo) Gučetić] *Živa Antika* 24 (1974): 353.
[79] In fact, in his speech to Martul Zamagna, Cerva explicitly criticized the anonymous author of the *Annales* for claiming that the city was founded by Pavlimir's Romans (Škunca, "*Ex Cervini oratione in obitum Martuli Zamagnae*," 182).
[80] The poem was written in 1505 and, judging by its foreword, soon afterwards recited in front of the senate during the state holiday of the Forty Martyrs. Cerva hoped for the senate's help with publishing it, but for unclear reasons it remained in manuscript (Darinka Nevenić Grabovac, "Poema Ilije Crijevića *De Epidauro,*" 251; Konstantin Jireček, "Beiträge zur ragusanischen Literaturgeschichte," *Archiv für slavische Philologie* 21 (1889), 445-446).
[81] On Epidaurus as a Roman city see: Nevenić Grabovac, "Poema Ilije Crijevića *De Epidauro,*" 254; 262-263. For scarce references to its Illyrian origin: Ibid., 262, 268, 272. It is unclear how Cerva meant to reconcile this with the claim that Epidaurus was a Greek colony made in some of his other works.
[82] Ibid., 264-265; for the mention of St Hilarion, Ibid., 256.

settlements. Thus, Epidaurus is compared to a snake throwing away its old skin, a phoenix rising from the ashes, and a tree which, torn from the soil with its roots, becomes green again in another place.[83] Interestingly, when speaking of the ancient city's end, Cerva did not fail to score an additional point. The future destruction of Epidaurus is described in terms reminiscent of martyrdom, since God promises that he will join its inhabitants killed by the heathen with his "martyrs" and that they will deserve "the laurel wreath earned in blood."[84] Unfortunately, since the preserved manuscript of *De Epidauro* lacks the ending, it is impossible to say whether the poem also described the construction of Ragusa by Epidaurian refugees. Soon after the dialogue between God and Epidaurus, the text ends abruptly with a description of Epidaurian nobles preparing to defend their city from the Saracen attack.[85]

Cerva's works represented the final stage in the gradual transformation of Epidaurus' image, characteristic of fifteenth-century Ragusan culture: later historians, largely occupied with other issues, mostly repeated his findings. Thus, after Cerva it became a commonplace to point out that Classical Epidaurus was a Roman *colonia* and thereby a source of the "firmness of spirit" of the patriciate and Ragusan "love of liberty" in general.[86] Moreover, it might have been due to Cerva's influence that the identifications of Dalmatian and Greek Epidaurus became rarec. Although otherwise very eager to glorify his city, he was the first among Ragusans to differentiate clearly between the Peloponesian Epidaurus and the Dalmatian one, albeit suggesting that Ragusa's predecessor was the colony of the Greek *polis* (besides also being a Roman *colonia*, of course).[87] Finally, perhaps the most lasting legacy of Cerva's work was his specific version of the foundation narrative according to which the city was built by Epidaurians with Pavlimir's Romans migrating into it only later. This way of ordering the events gradually became standard in the historiography beginning in the late sixteenth century and remaining so until the very end of the Republic.[88]

[83] Ibid., 266-269.
[84] Ibid., 268-9.
[85] The poem's twentieth-century editor assumes that it was finished, but that the extant manuscript copy was not completed for some reason (Ibid., 248-9).
[86] For example: Tubero, *Commentarii*, 88; Razzi, *La storia di Raugia*, 8; Luccari, *Copioso ristretto*, 1; Resti, *Chronica*, 2. In the eighteenth century there was another surge of enthusiasm regarding the political legacy of Epidaurus since a Roman inscription was found in Cavtat in which the ancient city was mentioned as a *respublica* (see M. Sorgo's notes in *Commentariolus Ludovici Cervarii Tuberonis De origine & incremento Urbis Rhacusanae*, 53-54; a few decades later his cousin, Antun Sorgo, even wrote about the florishing *république épidaurienne*: Antoine. Sorgo, *Origine et chute de l'ancienne Republique de Raguse* (Paris: imprimerie de Madame Porthmann, 1820), 4-5).
[87] Crijević, "Posmrtni govor Juniju Sorkočeviću," 252. Another allusion to Dalmatian Epidaurus being a colony of the Greek one is to be found in his speech to N. Gozze (Rački, "Iz djela E. L. Crijevića," 195.)
[88] Orbini, *Il Regno*, 180-182; Resti, *Chronica*, 14-16, 25-26; S. Cerva, *Prolegomena*, 270-271; Appendini, *Notizie*, tomus 1, 71-80. The same version of the foundation was also adopted by G. Gondola in his unpublished *Annali* (HAZU Archive, I c 59/506, pp. 9-12, 28-31). Admittedly, it is hard to be sure whether this narrative

All in all, in the period from the late fourteenth until the early sixteenth century both the image of Epidaurus and the ideological purposes it served underwent a profound transformation. While in the earlier period the ancient city served primarily as a source of historical legitimacy for the Ragusan Church, beginning with the late fourteenth century it was turned into a predecessor of the secular city-state. Together with the new cultural movement of humanism this change of purpose had a lasting impact on the image of Ragusa's predecessor. The Epidaurus of the medieval chronicles was a somewhat featureless Christian city, an (arch)bishopric and a place of miracles by St. Hilarion. On the other hand, Epidaurus, as represented in the public inscriptions and sculpture of the Rector's palace, received an additional, Classical and pagan, dimension. It was presented as a place of worship, even the birthplace of an important heathen god, Aesculapius, and perhaps also a burial place of important heroes of Antiquity, Cadmus and Harmonia. Even more importantly, it was a Roman city, thus enabling the young Republic to participate in the prestigious political legacy of the Classical world. Finally, at the close of the fifteenth century, Epidaurus emerged in Cerva's works as a Roman *colonia* whose providential destruction and rebirth provided Ragusa with an even stronger link to the greatest rulers and conquerors of Antiquity.[89]

The origins of the city and the origins of the patriciate

Besides leading to the transformation of the ancient Epidaurus, the newly acquired patrician dominance also led to another, even more important, change in the foundation narrative – the transformation of the founders themselves. The Epidaurian and Roman refugees, anonymous in earlier medieval historiography, underwent a symptomatic transformation; they were turned into the ancestors of the Ragusan nobility. In other words, a number of patrician houses projected themselves into the very beginnings of the community, claiming descent from the founders of the city. Attested for the first time in the late fourteenth century, such claims

structure is due to Cerva since these authors do not quote him explicitly – yet, undeniably, this idea appears for the first time in his works.

[89] It should be mentioned that, beginning with the late sixteenth century, Ragusan historians began appropriating the heritage of yet another neighboring city besides Epidaurus – Classical Salona. They were building on the recently discovered Porphyrogenitus's account of the Ragusan foundation, which indeed listed a number of Salonitans as having migrated to the newly founded city. While the earlier authors, Ragnina and Orbini, just mentioned Salonitans, re-telling Porphyrogenitus' account, Luccari was the first to make a strong point of Salonitan immigration, narrating it as a separate event and claiming that Ragusa therefore originated from Epidaurus and Salona, *due Città nobilissime di Dalmatia & ambidue colonie Romane* (*Annales*, 188; Orbini, 81; Luccari, 1). Luccari was followed by many later historians until the fall of the Republic (for instance: Stephanus Gradi, "*Antiquitatum Rhacusanarum brevis diatriba*," 33 in *Commentariolus Ludovici Cervarii Tuberonis*; Resti, *Chronica*, 2; Cerva, *Prolegomena*, 245-247; Appendini, *Notizie*, 84; Sorgo, *Origine et chute*, 6)

gradually became true commonplaces of Ragusan Renaissance culture, appearing in many diverse contexts such as diplomacy, historiography, law books, and literature.

One characteristic feature of Ragusan society surely gave a strong impetus to such refashioning of noble origins; the city's patriciate was one of the most rigidly closed and inaccessible elites of late medieval and early modern Europe.[90] In the first half of the fourteenth century – the "closing" of the council is usually dated to 1332 -- a group of influential families completely monopolized public offices. After that it was literally impossible, despite wealth or merit, for anyone of commoner origins or even a noble foreigner settling in the city, to enter the governmental bodies. Moreover, strict endogamy was enforced among the patricians as early as the fourteenth century, and from 1462 it was legally prescribed that nobles who married plebeian spouses automatically lost their noble status together with their offspring. In other words, by the fifteenth century the Ragusan patriciate had effectively turned itself into a caste. For more than three hundred years – from 1332 until after the disastrous earthquake of 1667, which brought the nobility to the verge of biological extinction – no new family gained access to the ranks of the privileged.[91]

Thus, descent was of crucial importance. It drew an uncrossable line between the elite and their subjects, who otherwise, especially with the passage of time, came to differ in nothing else: not language nor wealth nor education. This factual line of division, based on the arbitrary fact of birth conferring the right to public office, had to be strengthened and legitimized by a mythical one. The difference between the social layers had to stem from the same source as the privileged position did -- from one's origin. Consequently, the mythic origin of the nobility came to serve as an important means through which the distance of the rulers from the ruled was accentuated and the power of the aristocracy legitimized.

The way in which the patriciate sought to construct its connection to the founders is revealed most clearly by one specific type of document: the lists of Ragusan noble families, which, albeit not the earliest instance of such claims, should be addressed first. Preserved as

[90] Janeković, *Okvir*, 69-70; Zdenka Janeković-Römer, *Rod i Grad. Dubrovačka obitelj od XIII do XV stoljeća* (Kindred and City: the Ragusan Family from the Thirteenth to the Fifteenth Century) (Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, Zavod za hrvatsku povijest FF-a u Zagrebu, 1994), 59, 64-65, 70.

[91] On the "closing" of the Ragusan councils and the patrician monopoly of power, see: Janeković, *Okvir*, 48-73; For a comparative analysis, see Bariša Krekić, "Developed Autonomy: the Patricians in Dubrovnik and Dalmatian Cities," in *Dubrovnik: A Mediterranean Urban Society, 1300-1600*, II, 185-215; Tomislav Raukar, *Hrvatsko Srednjovjekovlje. Prostor, ljudi, ideje* [Croatian Middle Ages. Space, People, Ideas] (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, Zavod za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskog Fakulteta u Zagrebu, 1997), 188-190; 196-201. On the patrician endogamy see also: Ana Marinković, "Social and Territorial Endogamy in the Ragusan Republic: Matrimonial Dispenses during the Pontificates of Paul II and Sixtus IV (1464-1484)," in *The Long Arm of Papal Authority: Late Medieval Christian Peripheries and Their Communication with the Holy See*, ed. Gerhard Jaritz, Torsten Bo Jørgensen and Kirsi Salonen (Bergen-Budapest-Krems: CEU Press & Medium Aevum Quotidianum, 2005), 135-156.

parts of different histories of the city starting with the Anonymous *Annales*, the lists were originally separate documents composed sometime in the fifteenth century, if not even earlier.[92] They are extremely revealing when it comes to the ways in which the nobility represented its ancient past since they offer an alphabetic overview of patrician families together with the alleged origin of each of them. The descent traditions of the patriciate preserved in them contain a number of historically plausible claims, such as origin from the Balkan hinterland, but also mention some more exotic places of provenance like England, France or Spain. However, there are also a number of patrician houses whose names are followed by remarks such as *d'Epidauro* or *da Roma, venuti con Re Radoslavo.* This group of families, claiming descent from the founders, encompassed roughly one-fifth of the patriciate; in the oldest lists preserved in the *Annales* and Ragnina's chronicle this group consists of around 30 families out of the total of 150. Although clearly a minority, it is hard to disregard this group since it included some of the most illustrious names of late medieval Ragusa such as the Croce, Menze, Giorgi, Bobali, and Resti. [93]

Despite the fact that the true origin of most of the noble houses cannot be reconstructed due to a lack of documents, such claims are nevertheless to be viewed with a high degree of skepticism. The alleged descent of several houses -- most importantly the

[92] For a revealing analysis of the lists and a suggestion that they were based upon much older documents, perhaps the lost fourteenth-century patrician genealogies by Matteo Darsa, see Nenad Vekarić, *Dubrovački vlasteoski rodovi, 1: korijeni, struktura i kretanje vlasteoskih rodova kroz stoljeća* [Ragusan Noble Families, I: Roots, Structure, and Changes of Noble Families through Centuries] (Dubrovnik-Zagreb: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 2011), 45-48 (I have to express my profound gratitude to N. Vekarić for allowing me to see the manuscript). See also older works: Milan Rešetar, "Popis dubrovačkijeh vlasteoskijeh porodica" (A List of Ragusan Noble Families), *Glasnik dubrovačkog učenog društva "Sveti Vlaho"* 1 (1929): 1-11; Milorad Medini, *Starine Dubrovačke* (Dubrovnik's Antiquities) (Dubrovnik: author's publication, 1935), 91-122. Although many versions of the *Annales* list bear clear signs of later modifications, it seems plausible to assume that the preserved copies reflect relatively faithfully the fifteenth- or even fourteenth-century original. Namely, most of the numerous versions have largely identical contents, thus pointing to the faithful transimssion of the original text. For similar documents and noble origin in general in Venetian tradition, see: Dorit Raines, *L'invention du mythe aristocratique: l'image de soi du patriciat vénitien au temps de la Sérénissime* (Venice: Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti, 2006), 369-551.

[93] A short note on the dating of such claims: It is certain that roughly one fifth of the patrician families had appropriated Roman and Epidaurian descent by the second half of the fifteenth century when the original list in the *Annales* was probably composed. Yet, speculating a bit, one could suggest an even earlier *terminus post quam non* for such claims. Namely, in the lists there are several extinct noble houses which also allegedly descended from either Epdiaurians or Romans. A number of them, such as Ursi, Serso, Beno, Magalessio, and Juda, had died out by the first decades of the fourteenth century. Assuming that the claims in the *Annales*' list are not a construction of later composers and copists but that they indeed reflect the traditions of those families, one could suggest that some members of the patriciate claimed to have descended from the founders as early as the beginning of the fourteenth century. This analysis is indebted to the similar reasoning in Vekarić, *Dubrovački vlasteoski rodovi*, chapter 1; Živković, *Gesta Regum Sclavorum*, tomus II, pp. 238. One caveat has to be made, however. There are few instances which might suggest that the origin claims of the extinct houses were indeed changed by later composers or copists. Thus, for instance, the family Volcasso, which died out in the late fourteenth century, appears in the *Annales* listas simply *de Bosna*, while in Ragnina's it is mentioned as *da Roma venuti con Radoslav Bello* (*Annales*, 161; 186).

Menze, Croce, and Giorgi families – from Pavlimirus' followers can be dismissed immediately as tendentious fabrication since the story about the Slavic prince has no historical basis.[94] It is harder to be as dismissive regarding the houses which claimed the historically more plausible descent from Epidaurians, such as the Bobali, Resti, and Bassegli. Indeed, in theory it is possible that a number of families descended from the first settlers of Ragusa and preserved the memory of their origin for almost a millennium. However, rather than assume such millennial continuities, it seems more plausible to see such claims – or at least most of them – as later glorifying constructions similar to the more obviously fabricated Roman descent of other houses. This is confirmed by the example of two families allegedly originating from Epidaurus, whose more humble true origin can be reconstructed with a degree of certainty. Thus, it is highly probable that the Volço family in fact originated from the neigboring region of Herzegovina. Similarly, although all the lists unanimously state that they are Epdiaurians, the influential Resti family originally might have been a branch of the Pecorario, who doubtlessly migrated to Ragusa from the Balkanic hinterland.[95]

Moreover, the fact that many similar claims were tendentious fabrications seeking to connect noble families with the founders can be grasped just from the lists themselves. It is symptomatic that in the lists one finds several families after whose names follow two different, sometimes even contradictory, claims of origin. Thus, for example, the entry for the Bobali in the *Annales* list is: *d'Epidauro, antichi de Bobani de Vlachia*, while the one for Giorgi is: *di Cattaro, antichi di Roma.*[96] The most likely explanation for such dual claims of origin is that

[94] Z. Janeković pointed out that such claims might have been just a vague memory of the Roman origin of some houses (Janeković, *Okvir*, 43). For speculative attempts to find a vague historical nucleus behind at least some parts of the story and reconstruct the sources for it: Medini, *Starine*, 248-250; Vladimir Košćak, "Od Epidaura do Dubrovnika" [From Epidaurum to Dubrovnik], *Dubrovnik* 4 (1997): 28-30; Tibor Živković, "Legenda o Pavlimiru Belu" [The Legend of Pavlimir Belo] *Istorijski Časopis* 50 (2004): 9 – 32; Tibor Živković, *Gesta Regum Sclavorum*, vol. II, 227-243.

[95] Vekarić, *Dubrovački vlasteoski rodovi* entries for the "Resti" and "Volço" families. On the whole problem see also: Janeković, *Okvir*, 45. In a thought-provoking article Stjepan Ćosić argued that the claims of Epidaurian origin in the lists should not be understood as meaning that these families actually came from ancient Epidaurus, but that the composers of the lists simply wanted to point out their origin from the Konavle region, using the archaizing toponym Epidaurus for the medieval settlement of Cavtat. While this might be true for the later, eighteenth-century, lists it is definitely not the case for the ones in the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century chronicles. The only time when Ragusan historians mention immigration from Epidaurus is exactly the founding act or its immediate aftermath (usually the year 691) and therefore the Epdiaurian origin in the lists clearly refers to this event. Even more importantly, any doubt regarding what was meant by Epidaurus is removed by the numerous explicit Renaissance mentions of nobility descending from the inhabitants of ancient Epidaurus. Manysuch references – for example, the 1391 charter of the Sankovići brothers, a law from 1442 regarding the Ragusan canons or works by A. L. Cerva – are extensively analyzed in the text below (Stjepan Ćosić, "Dubrovački plemićki i građanski rodovi konavoskog porijekla [Ragusan Noble and Bourgeois Families of Konavle Descent]," in *Konavle u prošlosti*, vol. I, 47-73).

[96] *Annales*, 149, 155.

the humbler one reflects the older and historically plausible family tradition (that is, an origin fromneighboring areas) while the other is a more recent attempt at appropriating a prestigious descent from the founders. A visible example of such a shift towards a more illustrious origin is the Bassegli family, which in the *Annales* is mentioned as originating from the territory of Kotor while the slightly younger list of Ragnina repeats this claim but also adds – *d'Epidauro*. [97] The desire to attribute Epidaurian or Roman origin to certain houses occasionally led to interesting contradictions – not between a historically plausible and a mythic origin, but between the two mythic origins. Thus, in one unpublished sixteenth-century list the Menze family is mentioned as originating *both* from Epidaurians and Pavlimir's Romans: *d'Eppid. Venuto* (sic) *con Rè Bello.*[98] Similar confusion can also be seen in several sixteenth-century references to the origin of the Saraca family. In the *Annales'* and in Ragnina's lists they are mentioned as having come from either Chelmo or Kotor; the late sixteenth-century list of S. Razzi refers to them as Epidaurians, while a contemporary poet, Didacus Pyrrhus, celebrated the family as escorts of Prince Pavlimir.[99]

The tendentious refashioning of noble origins is even more apparent when one takes into account other documents such as poetry or public speeches. It seems that attributing descent from the founders – at the same time disregarding the family's traditional claim of origin – became a standard form of political flattery in Renaissance Ragusa. This is clearly visible in the works ofE. L. Cerva, whose drastic twisting of noble genealogies was apparently suffered by the patrician elite without any complaints. Thus, in one of his public speeches Cerva altered probably the best-known of all patrician descent claims – that of the Gozze family – whose alleged arrival in the year 743 from the Balkan hinterland was narrated by all the chroniclers since it supposedly led to the separation of the nobility from the rest of the population. Ignoring this well-known story and the Vlach origin attributed to the family, Cerva proclaimed that the Gozze clan had belonged to the patriciate "since the foundation of Ragusa" and that "as almost everything else which is aristocratic in this province, it grew out of the Roman seed."[100] In his poem *De Epidauro,* addressed in more detail above, he went

[97] *Ibid.*, 149, 182.
[98] This might either be the consequence of a mistake, or more probably, of excessive benevolence by the list's composer (SAD, Memoriae 8, *Brevi notizie sulla fondazione di Ragusa,* f. 54 r.) According to the published version of the *Annales* list they originated from Pavlimir's Romans (*Annales*, 157.)
[99] *Annales,* 160, 185. Razzi, La *storia di Raugia*, 2; Didacus Pyrrhus, "*De origine domus Saracae apud Rhacusanos ad Joannem Saracam*," in: Urbanus Appendini, ed., *Carmina (accedunt selecta illustrium Ragusinorum poemata), pars prima* (Ragusa: Typis Martecchinianis, 1811), 215-219.
[100] Darinka Nevenić Grabovac, "*Oratio funebris* humaniste Ilije Crijevića dubrovačkom pesniku Ivanu (Dživu) Gučetiću," 353. In the same vein, Cerva completely redefined another well-known origin story – that of the Sorgo family, who, according to tradition came from Albania. Cerva proclaimed that they were descendants of the Roman family Sergii instead (Crijević, "Posmrtni govor Juniju Sorkočeviću," 253).

even further than that. Disregarding numerous well-known family traditions – even including his own – he proclaimed that literally all the extant patrician houses descended from the nobility of ancient Epidaurus.[101]

All of these examples reveal an important ideological tendency of late medieval and Renaissance Ragusa. Origin from the founders was traditionally claimed by a number of patrician houses, occasionally attributed to others, and in some instances extended to the nobility as a whole. The frequency and obvious importance of such claims raise the question: Why was an origin from the founders of the city so desirable? What was the purpose behind the transformation of the nobility into descendants of Epidaurians and Romans?

To begin with, the claim that the patriciate descended from the founders was used as a tendentious argument in the diplomacy of the Republic. In fact, this is the context in which it appeared for the first time: In a particular charter issued to Ragusa in 1391 by the brothers Sankovići, two warlords from the hinterland. Granting the neighboring region of Konavle to Ragusa, the Sankovići proclaimed that they had learned that "the old city of Ragusa had been situated in Cavtat" and that Konavle had belonged to it. After Epidaurus had been deserted, the territory of Konavle was unjustly seized by the neighboring lords, while: "...the [Epidaurian] citizens went to a strong place and built the city of Dubrovnik which exists still today, honorable and free through God's grace, *from which people of the ancient city were born and descended the nobles of the city of Dubrovnik.*"[102] [Italics mine.]

Clearly, the Sankovići were echoing what they had heard from the Ragusans themselves; it is even possible that the very text was composed by Ragusans and only confirmed by the two magnates. Fashioning themselves as descendants of Epidaurians, Ragusan patricians claimed the neighboring territories that had allegedly once belonged to the ancient city as their rightful inheritance. Such appropriation of Epidaurian descent by the patriciate was clearly useful when it came to the Republic's territorial pretensions. Instead of the vague continuity of a general population, which one could claim on the basis of the traditional foundation narrative, it established a direct genealogical link, and thus direct

[101] Nevenić Grabovac, "Poema Ilije Crijevića *De Epidauro*," 270. On Cerva's embellishments of noble genealogies see also Janeković, *Okvir*, 47. Similar gloryfing generalization regarding the descent of the nobility can be found in the work of Francesco Serdonati, who explained the wise mores and liberty of Ragusa by claiming that they were inherited from the ancient Epidaurians, the ancestors of the nobility. See Praefatio (unpaginated, pp. II) in: Francesco Serdonati, *Francisci Serdonati Florentini orationes duae habitae Rhacusii, altera in funere Chrysostomi Caluini Archiepiscopi in aede Diuae Mariae* (Camerino: Apud Haeredes Antonij Gioiosi, & Hieronymum Stringarium, 1578) (henceforth: Serdonati, *Orationes duae*).

[102] Ljuba Stojanović, *Stare srpske povelje i pisma* [Old Serbian Charters and Letters], book I vol.1 (Belgrade: SKA, 1929), 124. For an analysis of this document and its context, see: Siniša Mišić, "Povelja Beljaka i Radiča Sankovića Dubrovniku" [The Charter of Beljak and Radič Sanković to Ragusa], *Stari srpski arhiv* 7 (2008): 113-127.

inheritance, between the citizens of the ancient city and the rulers of the medieval one. When read with the Sankovići charter in mind, all the aforementioned typical claims of late medieval Ragusan diplomacy about Epidaurus as the "city of our predecessors," the "city of our origin" or "our patrimony" acquire new meaning. It is possible that the collective referred to in them was not the Ragusan population in general, as it seems at first, but *only* the patriciate, which turned itself into a guarantor of continuity with the ancient city.

Besides legitimizing territorial pretensions, however, the claim of descent from the city's founders was also used for another important purpose – to justify the patriciate's monopoly of power. This is revealed by an important law from 1442, proclaiming that henceforth only nobles can hold the office of cathedral canon. This decree, which ensured strict patrician control of the local church, contained a telling justification. It was a "reasonable thing" that only the patricians should be allowed the position of canons "*because they were the founders of our city* [italics mine] and of the above-mentioned church and have always born and until today bear the fatigues and burdens of this city and republic."[103] The patriciate's exclusive right to office is justified here in terms reminiscent of the transmission of private property. The city was built by the ancestors of the patricians, had been ruled by them ever since, and therefore it was "reasonable" that their descendants should rule it at present. In fact, the source and the nature of power over the *respublica* do not appear to have been substantially different from that over Konavle. Both were patrician patrimony or, putting it somewhat clumsily, a kind of collective private property of the nobility inherited from their ancestors, the founders.[104]

The alleged descent from the founders had yet another function; it was an important source of prestige since it enabled the extensive manipulation of noble genealogies. More precisely, by projecting the origin of noble families into the distant and little-known past, this construct made it far easier to create an illustrious origin for them. Thus, the Epidaurian or Roman roots of some families were used to create the genealogical connection with

[103] *.... perho sono stati fondatori de questa nostra citade et della prefata chiesia et sempre hano sostignuto et alla giornata sostegneno li affani et facione dela citade et dela re publica…* Branislav M. Nedeljković, ed., *Liber Viridis* Zbornik za istoriju, jezik i književnost srpskog naroda, department 3 book 23 (Belgrade: Srpska Akademija Nauka i Umetnosti, 1984), 286.

[104] A similar patrician self-understaning is visible in a diplomatic instruction from 1583 in which the Senate stated that its envoy should work so that *siamo conservati nel posseso et giurisdition nostra, che habbiamo ab urbe condita (sic), per la conservation et salute nostra (sic)* (Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 2, tomus 2, 449). Such a sense of private property over public institutions – that is, the state – is also revealed by the standard vocabulary of the governing bodies which endlessly referred to "our city," "our republic," and "our signoria." For some intriguing Venetian analogies see: Alberto Tenenti, "Il senso dello Stato," in *Storia di Venezia dalle origini alla caduta della Serenissima*, vol. IV. *Il Rinascimento. Politica e cultura*, ed. Alberto Tenenti and Ugo Tucci (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1996), 311-44.

prestigious personalities or families of Antiquity. For example, in a poem celebrating the descent of the Menze family from Pavlimir's Romans, the late sixteenth-century poet Didacus Pyrrhus further elaborated on their illustrious origin by stating that the founder of the clan was related to no less than the great Caesar himself.[105] Similarly, building on their alleged Epidaurian descent, sixteenth-century authors developed a prestigious Classical genealogy for the powerful Bobali clan, whose ancestors were turned into a branch of the famous Fabian family (*Fabii, gens Fabia*) which had settled in Epidaurus.[106] In the cases of several other families, origin from the founders was used to give them a prominent role in the beginnings of Ragusa itself. Thus, the Croce clan apparently had less international ambition than the Menze or the Bobali, but instead aimed at domestic audiences. Insisting that both the grandfather and father of Prince Pavlimir married women from their family during their exile in Rome, they claimed to be related to the very founder of the city.[107] Similarly, the Saraca family aimed for the prestigious second place among the founders, proclaiming that their ancestor was a *dux* who assumed leadership after Pavlimir's death and, even more importantly, encouraged the Roman and Epidaurian refugees to begin building Ragusa.[108]

Yet if the descent from the founders could be used to elevate the prestige of some houses, it could also serve to denigrate others or, more precisely, to divide the patriciate itself. In an unpublished version of the *Annales* the otherwise standard list of noble families is followed by several highly unstandard sentences which distinguish sharply between the houses originating from the founders and those who came to Ragusa only later. The anonymous author begins by remarking that not all the noble houses were created at the same time: some of them were admitted for their merit, being the nobles of other places, while many others were admitted to fill the ranks of the patriciate after the plagues. However, only those who lived in *Castel di Lave* – the name traditionally used for Ragusa immediately after the foundation – and in the neighboring fortresses settled by Epidaurians, were "the true

[105] Didacus Pyrrhus, "De origine domus Mensiae apud Rhacusanos," in: Appendini, *Carmina*, 226-227.
[106] This was based upon veritable etymological acrobatics. Namely, the word for "beans" was in the root of both family names: the name *Fabii* supposedly came from the Latin word *fabis* while the Bobali came from the Slavic synonym, *bob*. In their eagerness to please the powerful clan, several authors concluded this meant that it was the same family as the Classical one (for example: Gianbattista Della Porta, *Phytognomonica Io. Baptistae Portae Neap. Octo libris contenta* (Naples: Apud Horatium Saluianum, 1588), 4; Didacus Pyrrhus, *De illustribus familiis quae hodie Rhacusae exstant* (Venice: Aldus, 1582), 14.
[107] This claim is most extensively elaborated in an unpublished version of the *Annales*: HAZU Archive, Zagreb, I b 84/534, *Ragusa di città origine e molte cose successe da poi in quella ann. 1569*, 2. Most other historians mention that the Croce family was related through the female line to the ninth-century "Bosnian" queen Mara who, according to Ragusan tradition, built a church in the city and died in it, having become a nun (*Annales*, 16-17; 195; Tubero, *Commentarii*, 90). That connection might have been due to common family ties with Pavlimirus since, as Luccari mentions, Queen Mara was considered to have originated from this mythic ruler (Luccari, *Copioso ristretto*, 5).
[108] Didacus Pyrrhus, "De origine domus Saracae," 215-218.

nobility" (*la vera Nobiltà*). In other words, the "true nobility" were only the founders of the city who, as the text points out, lived a simple and virtuous life dedicated to the common good. According to the anonymous author, one of the main reasons for the present moral decline of Ragusa, in which "charity, justice and any goodness" are lacking, is "the coming of new families from other countries into the order of patricians."[109] Of course, this document reveals an attitude that was highly uncharacteristic for Ragusan political culture, which was normally not prone to public expressions of dissent. Yet this makes it even more valuable since it might reveal one of those carefully hidden divisions – or, as Vekarić so aptly puts it, "invisible cleavages" – within the patriciate which are increasingly coming to light in recent scholarship.[110]

Finally, probably the most important thing bequeathed to the patriciate by its alleged descent from the founders was the prestigious Roman blood. The patricians were represented as descentants of ancient Romans and thereby also as heirs to their political virtue. Probably the single most important goal of all Cerva's speeches and poems dedicated to Ragusa was to prove that, as he once put it, almost "everything aristocratic in this province... grew out of the Roman seed."[111] Both Cerva and F. Serdonati proclaimed that the great political achievements of the patriciate, such as the alleged millenial independence of Ragusa, originated from the political virtue and good *mores* which the patricians inherited from their Roman ancestors.[112] Interestingly, it seems that the *Romanitas* of the patriciate was propagated not only in the historical and literary texts but also signalled through social practices. When explaining why the sermons in the city's churches were usually given in Slavic, S. Razzi accentuated that only

[109] SAD, *Memoriae* 24, *Dell'origine della città di Ragusa,* f. 22v. This curious paragraph is to be found in an eighteenth-century copy of a version of the *Annales* which was probably written in the first decades of the sixteenth century (judging by references to Hungarian sovereignty, such as on f. 16r). The same paragraph is repeated in another eighteenth-century manuscript of the *Annales*, otherwise also textually close to the *Memoriae* 24: NSK, R 3544 *Cronaca di Ragusa (825-1715)*, 100v. Unfortunately, this paragraph is hard to date precisely. It might have belonged to the sixteenth-century version of the *Annales* or it might have been added by some later copyist in the seventeenth or eighteenth century, reflecting the increasingly aristocratic and exclusivistic mentality of that period.

[110] Regarding the recent research on factions in the patriciate: Nenad Vekarić, *Nevidljive pukotine: dubrovački vlasteoski klanovi* [Invisible Cleavages: The Clans of Ragusan Patriciate] (Zagreb-Dubrovnik: HAZU, Zavod za povijesne znanosti u Dubrovniku, 2009); Stjepan Ćosić and Nenad Vekarić, *Dubrovačka vlastela između roda i države: Salamankezi i Sorbonezi* [The Ragusan Patriciate between the Kindred and the State: the Salamankezi and Sorbonezi] (Zagreb-Dubrovnik: HAZU, Zavod za povijesne znanosti u Dubrovniku), 2005.

[111] Darinka Nevenić Grabovac, "*Oratio funebris* humaniste Ilije Crijevića dubrovačkom pesniku Ivanu (Dživu) Gundulića," 353; Cerva states a very similar thing also in his speech for Junije Sorgo (Crijević, "Posmrtni govor Juniju Sorkočeviću", 253).

[112] Škunca, "*Ex Cervini oratione in obitum Martuli Zamagnae*," 182; Serdonati, *Orationes duae*, II. A similar reference to the Roman virtue of the founders is also to be found in: Palmotić, *Pavlimir*, 24.

in the cathedral were they always in Italian and this was done in order to demonstrate that the patricians were "mostly descended from Roman and Italian blood."[113]

All in all, in numerous late Medieval references to the foundation of Ragusa one can detect a specific ideological manoevre: the origins of the nobility were closely intertwined with the origin of the city itself. This was achieved by redefining the traditional understanding of the link between Ragusa and its Classical predecessors, Epidaurus and Rome. The somewhat vague continuty of population between Ragusa and its predecessors implied by medieval tradition was drastically altered by turning the hitherto anonymous founders into the ancestors of the nobility. The result was that the patriciate became the principal guarantor of continuity with the Classical past: Ragusa was the heir of Epidaurus and Rome primarily *because* of its nobility, which was connected to those two cities by the firmest of bonds, those of blood. Thus effectively monopolizing the Epidaurian and Roman heritage, the patriciate transformed itself into a source of numerous ideological benefits which followed from its Ragusan predecessors. Whether it was about the wise Roman *mores* of Ragusa or its territorial pretensions over Konavle, different issues such as these were explained and legitimized by invoking the Romano-Epdiaurian descent of the patriciate. In a nutshell, the noble bloodlines were the precious threads that connected Ragusa to the Classical past, serving as conduits through which its heritage reached the present.

Moreover, the "colonization" of the origin myth by the ancestors of the patriciate clearly reflected the new power relationships in the city, especially the fact that the patriciate replaced the Ragusan Church as the main creator and user of "identity" discourses. Symptomatically, in the older accounts of Ragusan historiography (e.g., Miletius and Conversini) it was the archbishop, called Johannes, who played the central role in the founding since, as both chroniclers explicitly point out, the city was erected at his initiative.[114] On the other hand, later historians either barely mentioned the archbishop or did not mention him at all, despite the fact that most of them knew the older historiography. Beyond any doubt, this silence was not accidental and the reasoning behind it is clear: The prestigious place in the beginnings of the community once held by the archbishop was now taken by new protagonists, the ancestors of the nobility.

[113] Razzi, *La storia di Raugia*, pp. 133. The surprising reference to the Italian origin of the Ragusan patriciate is probably due to the fact that Razzi himself was Italian and thus naturally equated Roman and Italian descent. To the best of my knowledge this is the only such claim in Ragusan Renaissance documents. For more on the relation between the Romanized populations of Dalmatian cities and the Italian and Slavic cultures and identities see the "Epilogue" of this work.

[114] Matas, *Miletii Versus*, 9-10; for Conversini's account of the archbishop's role see either of the two manuscripts: HAZU Archive, manuscript II d 55, pp. 55; SAD, Rukopisne ostavštine, Zbirka Ernesta Katića (box 16, number 4), f. 43r.

Roman past, Slavic present: Discomfort in Ragusan culture

Although the alleged Roman origins of the city and its patriciate undeniably brought numerous ideological benefits, at the same time they left their proponents with a great deal of explaining to do. According to a venerable tradition, the founders were Roman, yet their patrician descendants and rulers of the modern city were obviously Slavic, sometimes unable to master even the simplest Latin. The same held true of the city as a whole. If Ragusa was indeed a Roman colony and, as Cerva insisted, "twice the offspring of *Quirites*," then one had to think of a good explanation for its Slavic culture and the undeniable Slavic origin of the majority of the population. Therefore an important ideological issue in Ragusan Renaissance culture was the attempt to reconcile the tension, even contradiction, between the proclaimed mythic origin and the contemporary culture of the city.

The problem was not wholly ideological, however, since during the medieval period Ragusa indeed underwent a profound cultural transformation. The Slavic character of the city was, in fact, a comparatively recent development, since throughout the greater part of the Middle Ages Ragusa had a culture which, albeit definitely not Roman in the strict sense, at least had strong roots in the Classical Roman world. As in many other Dalmatian cities, the original medieval population of Ragusa belonged to a specific "ethnic" group called *Romani* or *Latini*, the remnants of the ancient Roman(ized) population of Dalmatia who had continued to live there after the arrival of Slavs. This population, characterized by its peculiar Romance language (henceforth: Ragusan Romance) and cultural traditions inherited from Antiquity, was gradually turned into a minority by the persistent immigration into the city from its overwhelmingly Slavic surroundings. The turning point when Slavic became the dominant language in Ragusa was probably the fourteenth century, characterized by a series of devastating plague epidemics which profoundly altered the city's demographic structure. The ancient Ragusan Romance, however, survived until the second half of the fifteenth century, maintained as a distinctive feature of the city's elite. Referred to as *lingua ragusea* or *latina ragusea*, it was one of the traditional official languages of the patrician administration, besides Latin and Italian, and was used mostly in court proceedings. In 1472 a traditionalist faction of the patriciate even succeeded in proclaiming it the only official language of the governing councils, forbidding the use of Italian and Slavic. Yet this was obviously a futile

attempt, since by the beginning of the sixteenth century references to *latina ragusea*, even as only a specialized language of administration, disappear completely.[115]

The surprisingly long survival of Ragusan Romance was probably not only due to the traditionalism of the patriciate, but also to another important reason: An ancient tradition which ascribed Roman origin to its speakers. This was a consequence of medieval etymologizing inspired by their misleading name, *Romani*. Used to designate both the inhabitants of Rome itself and the Romanized populations of Dalmatia from the early Middle Ages, this name had led to legends tracing the descent of Dalmatian *Romani* to the city of Rome.[116] It is thus likely that by supporting *latina ragusea* the patricians sought to represent themselves not only as heirs of the original *Romani* elite of Ragusa, but also to appropriate the prestigious Roman origin which the medieval tradition attributed to them.

Probably influenced by that tradition, A. L. Cerva made abundant ideological use of the *Romani* heritage of Ragusa. Besides Pliny's aforementioned testimony that Epidaurus was a Roman colony, the city's old Romance language was for Cerva yet another indisputable proof of the Roman origin of Ragusa and its elite. After stressing once again that "not once but twice were Romans the ancestors of our stock" he pointed out:

[115] The immensely complex question concerning the "Slavicization" of Ragusa is far beyond the scope of this work. Therefore, just two short remarks should be made: first, the fourteenth century is absolutely the latest (or most cautious) dating; secondly, the notion of "Slavicization" does not designate national consciousness in the modern sense of the word, but simply the tangible and concrete expansion of Slavic language and culture among all the social strata including the elite. For the whole issue see: Irmgard Mahnken, *Dubrovački patricijat u XIV veku* [Ragusan Patriciate in the Fourteenth Century, vol. 1 (Beograd: SANU i Naučno delo, 1960.), 53-88; Krekić, "On the Latino-Slavic Cultural Symbiosis," 321-332; Konstantin Jireček, *Die Romanen in den Städten Dalmatiens während des Mittelalters* (Vienna: Kais. Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1901); Vekarić, *Dubrovački vlasteoski rodovi*, chapter 1. For a broader Dalmatian context and more linguistic analysis see: Irmgard Mahnken, "Slavisch und Romanisch im mittelalterlichen Dubrovnik," *Zeitschrift für Balkanologie* (1963): 60-72; Matteo Giulio Bartoli, *Il Dalmatico* (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 2000), passim, especially 148-9; Vesna Jakić-Cestarić, "Etnički odnosi u srednjevjekovnom Zadru prema analizi osobnih imena" [The Ethnic Situation in Medieval Zadar Based on the Analysis of Personal Names] *Radovi Instituta Jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti u Zadru* 19 (1972): 99-166; Vesna Jakić-Cestarić, "Nastajanje hrvatskoga (čakavskog) Splita i Trogira u svjetlu antroponima XI stoljeća" [The Genesis of Croatian (Čakavian) Split and Trogir in the Light of Antroponims of the Eleventh Century] *Hrvatski dijalektološki zbornik* 5 (1981): 93-112; Žarko Muljačić, *Das Dalmatische, Studien zu einer untergangenen Sprache*, Quellen und Beiträge zur kroatischen Kulturgeschichte 10 (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2000).

[116] Katičić, "Aedificaverunt," 138. This legend appears in the tenth-century *De Administrando imperio*: "The Emperor Diocletian was much enamored of the country of Dalmatia, and so he brought folk with their families from Rome and settled them in the same country of Dalmatia, and they were called 'Romani' from their having been removed from Rome, and this title attaches to them until this day." (Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, 123.) On Porphyrogenitus' understanding of Dalmatian *Romani* in general see: Ivan Đurić, "Romejski jezik i romejski govor Konstantina VII Porfirogenita" [The Romeian Language and Romeian Speech of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus] *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta*, 24-25 (1986): 109-134. Vlada Stanković, "Idejna načela Konstantina Porfirogenita i dalmatinski Romani" [The Ideological Principles of Constantine Porphyrogenitus and the Dalmatian *Romani*] *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 38 (1999-2000): 67-85; Milenko Lončar, "Dalmatinske etimologije Konstantina Porfirogeneta [Dalmatian Etymologies of Constantine Porphyrogenitus]" *Folia onomastica Croatica* 11 (2002): 149-174.

> Nor does our native and peculiar Scythic [Slavic] language disagree with this origin, for until today certain remains and traces of Roman language (*romani sermonis*) exist among us, and, according to the memory of our fathers, all of our ancestors both publicly and privately spoke the Roman language, which is now completely forgotten; I remember, when I was a boy, that some old men used to conduct legal cases in the Roman language which was then called Ragusan (*tunc rhacusea dicebatur*)…[117]

Although obviously speaking of Ragusan Romance, not of Latin, Cerva calls it the "Roman language" (*sermo romanus, lingua romana*) without any disclaimer or further explanation. He was doubtlessly aware that it was not the same language as Latin, but nonetheless never clearly distinguished between the two nor explicated his understanding of the genesis and history of *latina ragusea.* All the references to this language in Cerva's works served the same purpose – it was invoked as tangible proof of the Roman descent of Ragusa, and, especially, the patrician caste.

Yet the contemporary Slavic culture of the city could not be denied and Cerva himself had to admit that Ragusans spoke a "Scythian" language which was "native and peculiar." Elsewhere he also proclaimed Ragusa "the capital of Illyricum" (*caput Illyrici*), which he described in half-laudatory tones as the largest and most populous of all the "provinces."[118] Moreover, despite his preference for the Epidaurian founders, he could not ignore the story about Prince Pavlimir, already standard in Ragusa in his time, and thus even grudgingly acknowledged that Slavs played a certain part in the beginnings of Ragusa.[119] However, most of the time Cerva opposed the Roman past and the Slavic present of Ragusa in the strongest of terms, always opting for the Roman origin. At moments he could sound quite radical, as in his poem *Super comoedia veteri et satyra, et nova, cum Plauti apologia*, which contains a passionate plea for the restitution of the Classical Roman culture of the city. Although conceding that Ragusans are "not used to Latin languages" [!], Cerva exclaimed that they will "utterly eradicate the Illyrian screeching" (*stribiliginem illuricam*, e.g., the Slavic language) and emerge as a true "colony of Romulus… not unworthy of the Roman ancestors." Again identifying *latina ragusea* and Latin, he continued by urging his compatriots to "introduce

[117] *Neque vero Scythicus sermo, nobis uernaculus atque peculiaris, huic origini repugnat. Nam adhuc reliquiae quaedam et vestigia Romani sermonis apud nos estant et patrum memoria omnes nostri progenitores et publice et privatim Romana lingua, quae nunc penitus obsolevit, loquaebantur. Et me puero memini nonnullos senes Romana lingua, quae tunc Rhacusaea dicebatur, causas actitare solitos, quibus indiciis constat nostrum genus in Romanos proculdubio esse referendum* (Škunca, "*Ex Cervini oratione in obitum Martuli Zamagnae*," 182 [my translation]).

[118] Crijević, "Posmrtni govor Juniju Sorkočeviću," 251-252. Cerva clearly used the Illyrian name to designate all Slavs, since he proclaimed that "Illyria" stretches from Muscovy to the Adriatic.

[119] Crijević, "Posmrtni govor Juniju Sorkočeviću," 252.

again the original language … which recently [!] died out, perished, and let Plautus restitute to Epidaurus what the monstrous Scythian [e.g., Slav] has taken away."[120] It seems that Cerva occasionally even went from words to deeds, actively opposing the penetration of the Slavic language into the public sphere. Judging by his undated letter to a certain Ragusan abbot, he was scandalized by the installation of a Slavic inscription in the *curia* – in either the council-hall or courtroom – and insisted that it be removed. The issue ended in front of the senate, which apparently decided in Cerva's favor since there are no traces of such a Renaissance Slavic inscription in Ragusa.[121]

The question is, however, to what extent was such a deprecating attitude towards the Slavic language representative of Ragusan Renaissance culture in general. In other words, the question is whether Cerva was a genuine spokesman for Ragusan tradition, articulating the ideas shared by his patrician peers, or whether his "Roman" disdain for all things Slavic was an idiosyncratic phenomenon whose roots lay elsewhere. The latter was most probably the case; one should not forget that he was educated in the Roman academy of Pomponius Laetus, an institution characterized by utter fascination with Antiquity and the ambition to restore the life of the ancient forefathers in the most literal way. It is quite probable that Cerva's rejection of contemporary Slavic culture in favor of renewed Roman Antiquity owed a great deal to this group, whose members adopted Latin names, celebrated the ancient *Palilia*, the feast of the foundation of Rome, referred to their leader as *pontifex maximus*, and even cultivated their gardens according to Roman manuals.[122]

Of course, there is no doubt that Cerva hit a soft spot; the Renaissance patriciate certainly fancied rediscovering its Roman roots. Besides producing and sponsoring numerous historical works which proclaimed Ragusa's Roman origin, the patricians apparently also attempted to signal the city's peculiar descent through specific politics of language. The clearest example of such politics is the aforementioned attempt from 1472 to preserve the ancient Ragusan Romance. However, even after the ancient vernacular died out and Slavic became the standard language of literature and quotidian life, the official languages of government remained exclusively Latin and Italian. Of course, this might have been due to

[120] Rački, "Iz djela E. L. Crijevića," 171. Cerva probably mentioned Plautus since he was one of the Classical authors he knew best and had written about.

[121] Stanislav Škunca, "Humanist Ilija Crijević u kontekstu jezične situacije u Dubrovniku XV. i XVI. st. [The Humanist Ilija Crijević in the Context of the Linguistic Situation in Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century Ragusa]," in *Regiones paeninsulae balcanicae et proximi orientis. Aspekte der Geschichte und Kultur. Festschrift für Basilius S. Pandžić,* ed. Elisabeth von Erdmann-Pandžić (Bamberg: Fach Slavische Philologie der Universität Bamberg, 1988), 271-284.

[122] On Laetus' Roman Academy see: John F. D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome: Humanists and Churchmen on the Eve of the Reformation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 91-102.

simple traditionalism and the pragmatic reasoning that the unstandardized Slavic was not fit for official business. However, such linguistic practice undeniably also sent a symbolic message, as is attested by an unpublished sixteenth-century *relazione* of Ragusa. After stating that the city originated from Epidaurus, which was a colony of the Romans, the anonymous composer points out that "the Latin language was introduced from Epidaurus" and explains that this is the reason why Ragusa uses it in all its official business even "today."[123] Another similar practice was pointed out by Krekić; although their families had spoken Slavic as their maternal language for generations, the Renaissance nobles nevertheless never wrote their names in official documents inside the city in other than their Latin or Italian form.[124] All in all, when these linguistic practices are considered together with the abundant written claims of Roman origin – perhaps also with the visual allusions to *Romanitas* on the Rector's palace – it is clear that the Ragusan patriciate used its mythic origin to draw much needed lines between itself and its subjects. Simply put, it represented itself as a Roman elite in a Slavic city.[125]

Nevertheless, this is very far from Cerva's radicalism regarding Slavic culture. Even more so since the patricians were sloppy, even contradictory, in proclaiming their origins and "ethnic" affiliation. Namely, Cerva's period was exactly the time when vernacular Slavic poetry emerged, written largely by members of the nobility, as well as the time when the patrician councils themselves began referring to Slavic as *lingua nostra*, *idioma nostrum* or *idioma maternum*.[126] In a few decades, moreover, a strong sense of belonging to a linguistically and culturally defined community of "Slavs," "Illyrians" or "Croats" emerged in the city's vernacular poetry and historiography, both under the patriciate's aegis. With time this trend only grew stronger, turning Ragusa into one of the centers of early modern pan-Slavism; it culminated in the passionately pan-Slavic literature of the early seventeenth century, again propagated by members of the important noble families, such as I. Gondola (Gundulić) and J. Palmotta (Palmotić).[127]

[123] The sentence is somehwat confused, but the sense is clear: "Il Principio della Città di Ragusa, e detta Città de Epidauro secondo Plinio della natural Historia fù posta due o tre uolte colonia de Romani, et da qual parlar Latino fù introdotto de Epidauro e che oggidi la Città di Ragusa si serue di quel parlar Latino in tutti i Magistrati, processi, sententie scriuono in Latino, et cosi il Consiglio Maggiore di Pregadi, et il minore, et tutte le parti leggi e statuti suoi sono scritti in essa lingua [solo?] scriuono le lettere uolgarmente" (British Library, London, Royal 14 A. XIII, Relazioni of Venetian and other ambassadors, &c., circ. 1555-1586. *Discorso di Ragusa*, f. 719r).
[124] Krekić, "On the Latino-Slavic Cultural Symbiosis," 325.
[125] For the *Romanitas* of the patriciate and its cherishing of Ragusan Romance language, see: Janeković, *Okvir*, 42-48; 343-344.
[126] Krekić, "On the Latino-Slavic Cultural Symbiosis," 327.
[127] For Ragusan Baroque Panslavism, its literary elaborations and political implications, see: Zdenko Zlatar, *Our Kingdom Come, The Counter-Reformation, the Republic of Dubrovnik, and the Liberation of the Balkan Slavs* (New York: East European Monographs, 1992), especially 425-454; Zdenko Zlatar, *The Slavic Epic: Gundulic's Osman* (New York: Peter Lang, 1995); Rafo Bogišić, "Hrvatski barokni slavizam" [Croatian Baroque Slavism],

That Slavic culture was becoming part of a patrician ethos already in Cerva's epoch is clearly demonstrated by the works of two important historians who were approximately his contemporaries. One was the anonymous author of the immensely influential *Annales*, probably written in the 1480s, and the other was Cerva's relative, Ludovicus Cerva Tubero (1459–1527), author of the extensive *Commentaria de temporibus suis*.[128] The anonymous annalist, Cerva, and Tubero all shared the same basic narrative about the foundation of the city by Pavlimir's followers and Epidaurians, taken from the medieval chronicle of the Diocleian priest. As has been mentioned above, this story introduced the Slavic element into the very beginnings of Ragusa. Prince Pavlimir was the ruler of the mythic "Kingdom of the Slavs," and, as a descendant of exiled Slavic kings and Roman noblewomen, was half-Slav himself. While Cerva acknowledged this Slavic element in the beginnings of the city only grudgingly, the Annalist and Tubero sought to accentuate it even further by modifying the Diocleian's narrative. Thus, while the original story clearly speaks of Pavlimir's escorts as Romans (*Romani*) only, Tubero turned them into half-Slavs and half-Romans, analogously to their leader. These first settlers of Ragusa "were Romans, that is, born in Rome, but by origin from Illyricum… their ancestors found asylum in Rome together with Radoslav [Pavlimir's exiled grandfather] as refugees from their homeland."[129] The Anonymous author of the *Annales* adopted a different strategy, but had the same goal. While Pavlimir's escorts remained Romans as in the Diocleian's original, the Slavs entered the beginnings of Ragusa from another angle. According to the *Annales*, Pavlimir settled in Ragusa the sons of the Slavic barons who had invited him to retake the throne of the ancestral kingdom.[130] In sum, whether Ragusa was settled by the sons of Pavlimir's Slavic subjects together with his Roman escorts (the *Annales*), or by Romans who were themselves half-Slavs (Tubero), in both cases the Slavic element was firmly established in the foundation narrative. In other words, in the

in *Zrcalo duhovno: književne studije* [Mirror of the Spirit: Literary Studies] (Zagreb: Hrvatska sveučilišna naklada, 1997), 133-164.

[128] On Tubero see: Vlado Rezar, "Dubrovački humanistički historiograf Ludovik Crijević Tuberon" [The Ragusan Humanist Historiographer Ludovik Crijević Tuberon], *Anali zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 37 (1999): 47-94**.**

[129] Tubero, *Commentarii*, 88. A very similar remark is also to be found in the work of the eighteenth-century Seraphinus M. Cerva (Cerva, *Prolegomena*, 270).

[130] *Annales*, 3-4. In different versions of the *Annales* Pavlimir's reasons are explained differently: in some the Slavs are settled in the new city as guards and in others as a guarantee of their families' loyalty in his reconquest of their kingdom. Most of the unpublished versions of the *Annales*, however, mention that sons of the Bosnian lords remained in the new city as hostages: SAD, Memoriae 8, *Brevi notizie sulla fondazione di Ragusa*, f. 2r; SAD, Memoriae 18 *Origine della Città di Ragusa estratta da certe scritture antichissime con agiunta di alcun cose più memorabili costumate in Ragusa, 1507, I. Giorigi ab M.*, 4; HAZU Archive, I b 84/534, *Ragusa di città origine*, 4; Memoriae 24 *Dell origine della città di Ragusa. Ms.* f. 1v; Memoriae 32 *Trattato. Origine di Ragusa. Saec. 16. ms.* f 1v. This last manuscript even explains the name of the new city, *Ragusi*, with the fact that it "gathered" (*radunare*) both Romans and Bosnians: *Ragusi per esser radunate giente tanto bosnese como anchora delli Romani* (Ibid., f. 2r-2v).

Annalist's and Tubero's works the contemporary Slavic culture was rendered unproblematic by being projected into the very beginnings of Ragusa. Simply put, since the foundation the city and its aristocracy had been *both* Roman and Slavic.[131]

How far Ragusan authors were ready to go in "Slavicizing" the origin of Ragusa is revealed by the works of the influential patrician dramatist and poet Junije Palmota (1607-1657). In his play *Pavlimir,* describing the foundation of Ragusa, Palmota followed Tubero in claiming that the prince's followers were half-Slavic and half-Roman, much like their leader himself. Moreover, the initial tensions between the Epidaurians and Pavlimir's followers are resolved through a collective wedding between them, symbolizing the union of two "ethnicities" and cultures. In general, without ever addressing the transition from one to the other, throughout the play Palmota generously praised both the Roman origin and the Slavic present of Ragusa which stands "above all the other Slavic cities."[132] Even more interesting is another of Palmota's dramas, entitled *Captislava.* In it the Classical Epidaurus underwent a drastic transformation which would surely have upset A. L. Cerva -- it became a Slavic city. Palmota represented Epidaurus as a center of an invented Slavic empire ruled by King Krunoslav, who, although he conquered enormous territories did not ask for tribute from the defeated peoples, but only "kindly" requested that they speak the Slavic language.[133]

To sum up, in Ragusa the ancient tradition of the patriciate's Roman origin coexisted with a growing sense of belonging to a linguistically and culturally defined community of "Slavs", "Dalmatians" or "Illyrians." While in A. L. Cerva's works the Roman origin and the Slavic present were contrasted in the sharpest of terms, other Renaissance historians and literati sought to harmonize them by projecting the Slavic culture of the city back in time, into

[131] For a similar understanding of the "Slavic" narrative, see: Šišić, "O Margareti," 11; Josip Lučić, "Podaci o doseljenju Slavena u staroj dubrovačkoj historiografiji" [Mentions of Slavic Migration in Old Ragusan Historiography], in *Etnogeneza Hrvata*, ed. Neven Budak (Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice Hrvatske and Zavod za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 1995), 81-82. This strategy of explaining the Slavic culture of Ragusa by a-historically attributing it to the founders of the city was also influential in later Renaissance historiography. It reappears in all the versions of *Annales* until the early nineteenth century, as well as in the works of N. Ragnina and S. Razzi. Ragnina, *Annali,* 173; Razzi, *La storia di Raugia*, 8. N. Budak warns that besides giving the Slavs a prominent place in the foundation, this myth also "relieved" them from the guilt of having destroyed the ancient Epidaurus – the old city was, according to both the LJPD and *Annales* destroyed by the Saracens, not the Slavs as in Porphyrogenitus' account. See: Neven Budak, "Tumačenje podrijetla i najstarije povijesti Hrvata u djelima srednjovjekovnih pisaca" [Interpretating the Origin and the Earliest History of the Croats in the Works of Medieval Authors], in *Etnogeneza Hrvata*, 76. Finally, it should be added that the Slavicization of Ragusa was normally not mentioned in Renaissance historical works. Even on those rare occasions when it was addressed, it was refered to laconically and without the lamenting pathos of A. L. Cerva. Thus, Luccari just briefly mentioned that, due to the immigration of Slavs from the city's surroundings, the eleventh and twelfth centuries witnessed the disappearance of *lingua Romana, che gli antichi nostri dalla nascita della Città ritennero... et s'introdusse la Slaua* (Luccari, *Copioso ristretto,* 15-16.)

[132] Palmotić, *Pavlimir*, 2. For the Slavic origins of Pavlimir's followers: *Ibid.*, 84.

[133] *Djela Gjona Gjora Palmotića* [The Works of Gjon Gjoro Palmotić], *Stari pisci hrvatski*, book 13, part 2 (Zagreb: JAZU, 1883), 161-162.

the normative moment of the foundation. However, the Slavic culture was not the only attribute of modern Ragusa which was "essentialized" through the ideological maneuver of inscribing it in the origin of the community. As the following section will show, Ragusan authors did something similar with two even more important issues, the very fundaments of their Republic: its Catholic religion and its political independence.

Projecting independence and Christian religion into the founding moment

When narrating the city's foundation, most Ragusan historians were visibly concerned with showing that since its very beginnings Ragusa had been a Christian city and, even more importantly, an independent state. However, while proving its Christian origin was relatively easy -- as will be shown below -- proving that its original inhabitants owed allegiance to no foreign lord was much harder. The problem lay exactly in the broadly accepted story about Prince Pavlimir. Although it was adopted because it served so well in explaining the Slavic culture of the city and its elite, this narrative contained one highly uncomfortable implication regarding Ragusan *libertas.*

This was only natural since it originally appeared in the work of the Diocleian priest, an author who was far from eager to serve Ragusan ideological needs. In fact, this reputedly twelfth-century chronicler was probably an enemy of both the Ragusan Church and the commune, writing to legitimize the aspirations of his institution, the archbishopric of Bar, and his secular rulers, the dukes of Diocleia.[134] While he denigrated the claims of the Ragusan Church to the status of archbishopric through an elaborate tale about the synod on *planities Dalmae*, he undermined the Ragusan commune's claims to self-governance exactly through his peculiar version of the foundation myth.[135] As has been mentioned above, the Diocleian apparently changed the traditional Ragusan narrative of Epidaurian and Roman founding by turning the Romans into followers of the mythic Prince Pavlimir. The full implications of this alteration are revealed when two things are kept in mind: First, that the Diocleian's chronicle

[134] That Diocleian was quite a tendentious author, a partisan both of his Baran Church as well as of his Diocleian dynasty, is hard to deny. For an interesting and convincing examination of his motives and goals in the whole of the LJPD, see: Vladimir Mošin ed., *Ljetopis Popa Dukljanina* (Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja) (Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska, 1950), 26-28; along these lines also, Eduard Peričić, *Sclavorum Regnum Grgura Barskog. Ljetopis popa Dukljanina* (Sclavorum Regnum of Grgur of Bar. The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja) (Zagreb: Kršćanska sadašnjost, 1991), 217-242.

[135] Regarding the legendary synod on *planities Dalmae,* endlessly debated in historiography, see the important works by Ludwig Steindorff, "Tumačenja riječi *Dalmatia* u srednjovjekovnoj historiografiji. Istovremeno o saboru na *planities Dalmae*" [Interpreting the Word *Dalmatia* in Medieval Historiography. At the Same Time Concerning the Synod on *planities Dalmae*) in *Etnogeneza Hrvata*, ed. Neven Budak, 155-156; Ludwig Steindorff, "Reichseinteilung und Kirchenorganisation im Bilde der Chronik des Priesters von Dioclea," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 93 (1985): 279-324.

is in fact an extensive mythic genealogy of the rulers of what in his time was the principality of Dioclea; second, that this genealogy was uninterrupted, reaching from the early Middle Ages *until the Diocleian's very days.* In other words, according to the Diocleian, the descendants of Pavlimir – the founder of Ragusa – still lived as the rulers of what was left of the Diocleian state. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries this dynasty tried, probably even several times, to conquer Ragusa, which at times remained the only neighboring maritime town outside its power. The story, as given in the *LJPD*, provided their possible claims with legitimacy derived from *ius antiquum*. Moreover, according to the *LJPD* Ragusa was not only built by the ancestors of Diocleian rulers but was also ruled by them even after its foundation. This was confirmed by the story about the anarchy following Pavlimir's abrupt death, during which, as the Diocleian points out, only a small part of the kingdom acknowledged the rule of his posthumously born son, the province of Tribunia and, significantly, Ragusa itself.[136]

Although in the Renaissance, when the Pavlimir's narrative became standard in Ragusan historiography, medieval Diocleia was but a vague memory, the story's uncomfortable implication remained: Ragusa was not originally an independent city, but was built and ruled by a dynasty from its Balkan hinterland. Ragusan historians were well aware of this, as is revealed by their treatment of the story. Although they repeated the Diocleian's narrative, they did it with small but significant modifications which completely changed the meaning. Thus, according to the *Annales*, Pavlimir, quite simply, died *without* an heir. Not only that the annalist did not mention his posthumously born son at all, but he also clearly spelled out the consequences of the situation after his death, writing that Ragusa "remained on its own" and that "there was no heir to whom the heredity of the kingdom belonged."[137] In the mid-sixteenth century, N. Ragnina created a more complex narrative with, however, essentially the same outcome. He did mention Pavlimir's posthumously born son, but claimed that in the ensuing anarchy Ragusans "remained in their liberty," which was eventually acknowledged by a certain King Stefano, Pavlimir's great-grandson and restorer of the kingdom. As if this was not enough, at the end Ragnina resorted to a solution similar to that of the *Annales*, claiming that King Stefano left no legitimate offspring.[138] On the other hand, Ludovicus Cerva Tubero adopted a different, more elegant, strategy. After the founding, Pavlimir allegedly established the "senate," composed of his followers and Epidaurians, to

[136] Šišić, *Letopis*, 323.
[137] *Annales*, 4. The Annalist again insists on Ragusan independence on: *Ibid.*, 5-6.
[138] *Annales*, 176-178.

which he "entrusted the rule over the city." From Tubero's text it is clear that Ragusa continued to rule itself independently after the foundation, losing its liberty only centuries later by unwisely inviting a Venetian governor.[139] The same strategy was adopted by J. Palmotta in his aforementioned play *Pavlimir.* After the prince "gave" the city to his followers, Palmota has him spelling out clearly the consequences of that act: "When I come from Slavic lands/ with my beloved/ receive me honorably/as a citizen, not a king [!]."[140]

In short, despite their different strategies all these authors shared the same goal, pointing out that immediately after it came into existence Ragusa was left on its own, not owing allegiance to anyone. Constructing this moment of original liberty was crucial since Ragusan independence was usually legitimized through (pseudo)historical arguments, that is, by claiming that "Ragusans *always* lived in liberty."[141] With the original collapse of external authority -- narrated, importantly, as an integral part of the foundation – the mythic history of Ragusa as a free state began, characteristic of Renaissance historiography. It was a tendentious narrative of continuous independence in which all the episodes of foreign rule, if not ignored altogether, were systematically re-interpreted as alliances or even mere commercial agreements.[142]

While "anchoring" Ragusan independence in the origin of the city required some effort, Ragusan historians had a much easier task in proving another crucial point – that the city was Christian since its very beginnings. According to all the foundation accounts, the Epidaurian founders were Christian, which was also confirmed by the well-known letters of Pope Gregory the Great, mentioning the Epidaurian bishop in the late sixth century. The same was true also for the Roman founders, who not only came from the center of the Christian world but also, according to most accounts, brought precious relics with them. Due to all of this, Ragusan historians could point out that: "the foundations of this state were laid by Christian hands," and that since its very foundation "it always, without any stain, has

[139] Tubero, *Commentarii*, 90-93. This solution was followed by Razzi, *La storia di Raugia,* 10.
[140] Palmotić, *Pavlimir,* 134. For historians such as A. L. Cerva or M. Orbini, who claimed Pavlimir did not found Ragusa but simply enlarged the city, the whole problem did not exist: Ragusa had been "born free," built by the refugees from Epidaurus (and Salona in Orbini's case). For an intriguing Venetian analogy – the tendentious claim that Venice was founded by its rival, and later subject-city, Padua, see: Gherardo Ortalli, "Venezia allo specchio," 205-206 in: *La diversa visuale. Il fenomeno Venezia osservato dagli altri,* ed. Uwe Israel (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2008); Vittorio Lazzarini, "Il preteso documento della fondazione di Venezia e la cronaca del medico Jacopo Dondi," *Atti dell'Instituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti* 75 (1915-1916): 1263-1281.
[141] This is a quotation from: Orbini, *Il Regno,* 185.
[142] The dramatic Renaissance re-writing of Ragusan history with goals of demonstrating the city's continuous independence is addressed in the next chapter.

preserved itself in the Christian religion and always showed obedience to the Holy Church."[143]

Differently than in affirming the original independence of Ragusa, in proving its Christian origins the myth of Pavlimir was actually quite useful. Ragusan authors exploited the figure of the founder prince and his connection with Rome, modifying the Diocleian's tale in order to further accentuate the original orthodoxy of their city. Most historians insisted on the close relationship of Pavlimir and his exiled ancestors with the pope, who sheltered and provided them with the means to live in Rome. Moreover, according to some authors, the pope was instrumental in Pavlimir's attempt to reclaim the Kingdom of the Slavs, since the prince decided to go only after having consulted the Holy Father.[144] Most importantly, Pavlimir and his exiled royal ancestors were "captains" of papal troops in Rome or even "general captains of the Catholic Church."[145] Significantly, none of this is to be found in the Diocleian's chronicle which treats the long exile of Slavic kings in Rome in quite a laconic manner. In Ragusan elaborations of the tale, however, the founder king was turned into a champion of Catholicism who embarked on his mission following the advice of pope himself. Moreover, as early as the LJPD Pavlimir was represented as a pious ruler, which was only enhanced in Ragusan tradition by claims that he supplied the city with numerous relics and founded the church of his patrons, St. Sergius and Bacchus.[146]

Conclusion: The Ragusan discourse on origins in comparative perspective

In an attempt to present the labyrinthine development of the Ragusan foundation myth with clarity, this chapter has hitherto neglected one crucial thing -- the comparative perspective. The conclusion seeks to remedy that not only by summarizing the most important findings, but also reflecting on them in a broader context, by comparing the Ragusan origin discourse with those of other polities. The main comparisons are three cities, Split, Florence, and

[143] The first quotation is from: Crijević, "Posmrtni govor Juniju Sorkočeviću," 252. The second is from: Nicolo di Nale, *Dialogo sopra la sfera del Mondo* (Venice: Apresso Francesco Ziletti, 1579), 2.

[144] The papal advice is mentioned in: SAD, Memoriae 18, *Origine della Città di Ragusa,* pp. 4; Memoriae 24 *Dell origine della città di Ragusa. Ms.* f. 1 v. Pavlimir's exceptional piety was especially accentuated by the late sxiteenth-century historian Eusebius Caboga, a fragment of whose lost work is quoted by S. Cerva, *Prolegomena,* 273.

[145] *Annales*, 3-4; 170. Pavlimir and his ancestors are represented as bearers of the title of *Capitano generale della Chiesa Cattolica, Capitano della Giesia* or *Capitano delle armi Romane* in: SAD, Memoriae 18 *Origine della Città di Ragusa,* 2-3; SAD, Memoriae 24 *Dell origine della città di Ragusa. Ms.* f. 1 v. As late as the early nineteenth century F. M. Appendini insisted that Pavlimir was *Generale della Truppa Romana* (Appendini, *Notizie*, tomus I, 75).

[146] *Annales*, 3, 173. According to other accounts, the earliest church in the city was dedicated to St. Stephen the Protomartyr (Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, 135; following him also Orbini, 181.)

Venice, which not only had similar cultures and political traditions as Ragusa, but also shared one important feature with it -- the lack of a significant Classical past.

It seems best to start by restating the main premise of this chapter: in late medieval and Renaissance political culture the image of origin had immense political relevance. According to a venerable tradition with roots both in the Bible and Roman Antiquity, the origin was a historical moment of special significance, revealing more clearly than any other part of the past the true nature of a certain phenomenon. As such, the image of origin was a natural object of political manipulation and probably no other moment in the history of European cities, peoples or polities was represented as tendentiously as their beginnings. When it came to the writing of origins, the basic ideological maneuver was always the same. In order to legitimize certain political, religious or cultural features of the community – such as independence, a specific form of government, ecclesiastical institutions, and so on – medieval and Renaissance polities incorporated them into their origin narratives. In other words, these features were represented as having come into being together with the community itself and, usually, as having remained present continuously ever since. In such a way they were "essentialized," appearing not as reversible and contingent results of past development, but as fundamental and timeless attributes of a community, its true nature revealed in the epistemologically privileged moment of origin.

When considered in a comparative light, the fundamental Ragusan origin narrative about the founding by the Epidaurian refugees appears to be fairly typical of the medieval Adriatic. The foundation stories of several cities in the region – all of which, importantly, lacked Classical pasts -- conformed to the same general pattern. They sought to appropriate the prestige and institutional heritage of neighboring Roman centers by claiming foundation by their citizens. Thus, Ragusa insisted it was built by Epidaurians, Split by citizens of the Classical metropolis of Salona, and Venice by the refugees from important Roman cities on *Terraferma*, such as Aquileia or Padua. The essential narrative structure of all these foundation myths was the same. After the destruction of an important Classical city in the turmoil of barbarian invasions, the citizens, led by the ecclesiastical head and/or the secular aristocracy, bringing significant institutional heritage, migrated to a neighboring safe place where they erected a new settlement.[147]

[147] Valuable reflections on how continuity with Classical centers was conceptualized in medieval Split and Zadar are to be found in: Trpimir Vedriš, "Martyrs, Relics, and Bishops: Representations of the City in Dalmatian Translation Legends," *Hortus Artium Medievalium* 12 (2006): 175-186.

The translation of heritage from Classical centers to new settlements was made easier by one crucial detail which all these foundation narratives had in common. The new cities were built on what could be called "virgin soil," uninhabited places which were either completely without history of their own (the Venetian lagoon islands or the Ragusan cliffs above the sea) or at least without any urban tradition (Diocletian's deserted palace, in the case of Split). The fact that the new settlements were built on such receptive, identity-less soil, made it possible for claims of continuity with their Classical predecessors to be articulated in the strongest of terms. Thus, Venetian historians insisted that the "second" Venice – the new settlements on the lagoon – inherited not only all the ecclesiastical and secular jurisdictions of the ancient mainland *Venetia*, but also its very name and even its past (for example, the Trojan origin and the Church's apostolic foundation by St. Mark).[148] The Ragusan example is even more striking. The Epidaurian founders brought with them not only prestige and institutional heritage, but, in an unclear way, also the very identity of their ancient homeland. Ragusa was not a "second" Epidaurus; without any explanation or disclaimer whatsoever, it frequently literally *was* Epidaurus, while Epidaurus was the "old Ragusa." Ragusa could claim identification with its Classical predecessor more emphatically than Venice largely due to the very different medieval histories of the cities from which they allegedly originated. During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, Epidaurus (Cavtat) was an insignificant village under Ragusan rule, which made it fairly easy for its overlord to "borrow" its Classical past. On the other hand, many of Venice's predecessors, most notably Aquileia and Padua, recovered and developed into important urban and ecclesiastical centers in their own right, powerful communities who were far from eager to let Venice parasitize on their ancient roots.[149]

[148] Antonio Carile, "Le origini di Venezia nella tradizione storiografica," in *Storia della cultura veneta*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini al Trecento*, ed. Girolamo, Arnaldi, Gianfranco Folena, and Marino Berengo (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1978), 135- 166, especially, 145-6, 153, 160; Carile, "Origine come categoria storiografica," passim, especially, 55-56, 58, 76-81, 111-114. Of course, there are obvious differences between the Venetian and Ragusan cases. For a start, in the Venetian case the population of a whole ancient province migrated creating numerous settlements on the new territory, while in Ragusan case only the inhabitants of two cities (Epidaurus and Rome) migrated founding a third one. Moreover, the settlers of the lagoons came from different regions and it took a while for Venetian historians to integrate their separate histories and identities into a unified and coherent origin narrative. However, the important similarities between the two origin stories remain. Not only that the ideological mechanism – transmission of ancient heritage through migration – was essentially the same, but in the Venetian case the narrative also finally led to the construction of a single city, the one on the Rialto.

[149] Another thing to be kept in mind is that such links with prestigious communities of Antiquity were frequently multiplied, leaving Renaissance cities with increasingly complex "genealogies." Thus, as is visible from the examples above, after several centuries of elaborations of its foundation myth, Ragusa ended with a rich ancient ancestry. According to the oldest version of the foundation story, it was founded only by Epidaurians, who were soon joined by Romans, with the late sixteenth century historians adding also the citizens of Salona. The result was a somewhat clumsy foundation story in which one had to narrate plausibly the meeting and interaction of all these different groups of founders. Venice had a similar, but even more complex, problem: there were several

The connection/identification with Epidaurus was crucial to Ragusan self-representation since, besides the general prestige derived from Classical roots, it also brought something far more concrete – an important institutional heritage. During the medieval period the Ragusan archbishopric built its legitimacy on the claim that it was the legal heir of the Epidaurian Church, represented as a bishopric, or more tendentiously, as an archbishopric. However, the foundation by Epidaurians brought to Ragusa not only the ecclesiastical, but also the secular heritage of the Classical city. With the establishment of the aristocratic republic, the idea of the continuity of secular jurisdiction with the ancient predecessor gained prominence, marginalizing the hitherto dominant insistence on the continuity of ecclesiastical institutions. Thus, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Ragusan diplomats began to request dominion over various neighboring territories, claiming they had belonged to the district of Classical Epidaurus and should therefore be returned to the contemporary aristocratic republic as its legal heir.

Such legitimization of territorial pretensions by invoking the secular jurisdictions of Classical predecessors was relatively common among other cities as well. For instance, this kind of argument appeared as early as the mid-thirteenth century in Thomas the Archdeacon's history of Split's Church. Narrating the events following immediately after the founding of Split, Thomas wrote that refugees from Salona, on the basis of ancient right, requested from the Byzantine emperors the territories which had belonged to their former city.[150] However, probably the most striking example of the same logic is to be found in the rhetoric of early fifteenth-century Florence. Insisting on the heritage of the Roman founders of the city, the so-called "civic humanists" proclaimed that Florence had a natural right to dominate the whole of Italy. The most famous of them, Leonardo Bruni, went even further, claiming that, as Romans reborn, the Florentines had the right to "dominion over the whole world." Explicating fully the consequences of this imperialist rhetoric, Bruni proclaimed that due to their illustrious origin all the wars Florentines fought were necessarily just, since they were fought either in defense of liberty or to regain territories which belonged to Florence by "a certain hereditary right."[151]

origin groups in the patriciate – for instance, from Heraclea, Equilo or Altino-Torcello – whose migration and settlement stories had to be united in a coherent and politically correct narrative, acceptable for all. On such attempts in the Venetian tradition see the illuminating work of Raines, *L'invention du mythe aristocratique*, especially 40-48; 373-378.

[150] Toma Arhiđakon, *Historia Salonitana*, 44-45.

[151] Hans Baron, *From Petrarch to Leonardo Bruni: Studies in Humanistic and Political Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 244. For the idea of civic humanists that, as the descendant of Rome, Florence had the right to rule over Italy and the world, see: Mikael Hörnqvist, *Machiavelli and Empire* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), 53-57.

Besides using the Epidaurian origin in such a novel way, the Ragusan patriciate also redefined the image of the Classical city in order to better suit the needs of the new aristocratic republic. With the help of humanist scholarship, Epidaurus was transformed from the somewhat featureless (arch)bishopric of medieval accounts into a city with a considerable Classical pedigree. After a futile attempt to identify it with the famous Greek Epidaurus – thus "borrowing" the past of the famous *polis*, primarily the status of Aesculapius' birthplace – Ragusa's predecessor ended in a more modest role as a center of Aesculapius' cult and a colony of its famous namesake. Even more importantly, in the public architecture and inscriptions of the mid-fifteenth century Epidaurus began to be represented as a Roman city, thus implying that Ragusa was an heir to the republican traditions and virtue of the Classical world. The trend of accentuating the *Romanitas* of Ragusa's predecessor culminated several decades later with A. L. Cerva's works. Building on a short remark in Pliny the Elder, Cerva portrayed Epidaurus as a Roman *colonia*, settled by Roman citizens who transplanted the customs, culture, and traditions of their prestigious fatherland. Needless to say, such a transformation was not only a matter of gaining generic prestige, but had a clear political message: The Roman and republican Epidaurus was a fitting predecessor to the Renaissance aristocratic republic.

Importantly, beginning in the late fifteenth century, the other group of founders, the Romans, was also reshaped according to the ideological needs of the present. In order to explain the discrepancy between the proclaimed Roman origin of the city and its elite on the one hand, and their contemporary Slavic culture on the other, a number of authors adopted the foundation narrative from the medieval chronicle of the Diocleian priest. It enabled them to engage in yet another variant of "essentializing," this time of Slavic culture, since the Diocleian's tale left ample opportunities for introducing the Slavic element into the city's beginnings. For a start, Ragusan authors could accentuate the fact, already present in the Diocleian's text, that the founder himself, Prince Pavlimir, was half-Slavic. Even more importantly, many of them further affirmed the Slavic origins of Ragusa by proclaiming that Pavlimir's Roman followers were half-Slavs themselves, that is, the descendants of Slavic aristocrats who had followed Pavlimir's grandfather into his Roman exile.

As these examples reveal, when a community spoke about its founders, it actually spoke about itself; characterizing the founders was an excellent opportunity to create a self-portrait which could be inscribed in the normative medium of the origin myth. Similar examples of sometimes drastic transformations of the founders according to the changing needs of the present can also be found outside Ragusa. Perhaps the most striking are the rapid

transformations of the Roman founders of Florence during the fifteenth century. The question essentially was whether one sought to inscribe monarchy or republic in the very foundations of Florentine history. The transformations of the Romans began in the late fourteenth century, when the medieval tradition according to which the city was founded by Julius Caesar began causing discomfort in the increasingly militant republican culture of the city-state. Therefore, Caesar – now seen as a destroyer of Roman republican liberty – was "erased" from the foundation myth and the beginnings of the city were attributed to the veterans of Sulla's army, that is, to Romans during the period of their republican greatness.[152] Soon, however, the connotations and heritage of Roman founders were again turned upside down. In the late fifteenth century, during the increasingly princely Medici regime, Florence symptomatically rediscovered its monarchic roots. The claim appeared that it was not founded by Sulla's veterans but by the second triumvirate, led by the greatest of future Roman emperors, Octavian Augustus.[153]

Besides the republican traditions and Slavic culture, Ragusan historians projected two more attributes of the contemporary city-state into its mythic beginnings: political independence and the Christian religion. Regarding the city's independence, they were clearly at pains to erase the unpleasant consequences of the Diocleian's foundation narrative according to which Ragusa owed its existence to a dynasty from the Balkan hinterland. Trying to show that the city was free from the beginning, they modified the Diocleian's tale, either claiming that Prince Pavlimir died without an heir soon after the founding or that he granted full independence to the new settlement. An equally important ideological goal was to prove that Ragusa had been a Christian city since its foundation, built by adherents of the true faith from which it never wavered afterwards. In this context Prince Pavlimir was quite useful: the Christian roots of the city were accentuated through an insistence on his connections with the papacy, his role as the leader of ecclesiastical troops, the relics he brought, and the church of

[152] For the condemnation of Ceasar and glorification of Brutus and Cassius see the classic statement: Hans Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny* (Princeton: PUP, 1955), 38-43; 45. For the change from Caesar to Sulla's veterans see: Ibid., 49-52. For Salutati's contribution to the reinterpretation of Florence's origins: Ronald Witt, *Hercules at the Crossroads: The Life, Works, and Thought of Coluccio Salutati* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1983), 246–52. On the Florentine foundation myth see also: Nicolai Rubinstein, "The Beginnings of Political Thought in Florence. A Study in Mediaeval Historiography" *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942): 198-227.

[153] Giovanni Cipriani, *Il mito etrusco nel rinascimento fiorentino* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1980), 31-32; Nicolai Rubinstein, "Il Poliziano e la questione delle origini di Firenze" in *Il Poliziano e il suo tempo, Atti del IV convegno internazionale di studi sul Rinascimento* (Florence: Sansoni, 1957), 101-110. The other mythic founders of Florence, the Etruscans, suffered a similar fate. While the "civic humanists" represented them as having lived in a confederation of republican city-states, during the Medici period, not surprisingly, they became a people ruled by strong and absolutist kings (Cipriani, *Il mito etrusco*, first two chapters, especially 23-24; 108-109).

St. Sergius and Bacchus he erected in Ragusa. Since independence (*libertas*, *libertà*) and the Christian religion were themselves the *foci* of major identity discourses in Ragusan Renaissance culture – to be analyzed in subsequent chapters – inscribing them into the origin narrative was crucial. Besides revealing their fundamental nature, such inscribing also provided a starting point for the glorifying (pseudo)historical narratives relating the city's continuous independence and unwavering loyalty to Catholicism, both of which figured prominently in the Ragusan political tradition.

As with many other issues, it seems that Venice was the direct model for Ragusan self-fashioning in this regard. The fundamental claim of Venetian historiography from the eleventh century was that the city had been free since its foundation and that it had kept this liberty ever since. The "original liberty" (*libertà originaria*) of Venice was constructed through a story about the founding by free men on the uninhabited lagoons, the soil over which no one had ever exercised political jurisdiction and over which even the nominal sovereignty of the Roman Empire had disappeared due to the barbarian invasions.[154] Equally, the refugees to the lagoons were represented as devout Christians fleeing the archetypal enemy of the true faith, Attila the Hun (or the Langobards in another version), and included the bishops of several Classical cities as well as the patriarch of Aquileia himself. Attempting to further accentuate the Christian roots of Venice, some of its apologists made a heterodox, even heretical, claim. Building on the fact that the traditional date of the city's founding coincided with the feast of the Annunciation, they suggested an analogy between the conception of Christ and the conception of Venice, represented as a new kind of Christian republic suited to the new era that had begun with the Incarnation. Importantly, in both Venice and Ragusa such insistence on a Christian origin seems to have served as compensation for the lack of a significant Classical past. If they could not compete with Rome's, or even Padua's, ancient history, the two Adriatic republics could at least claim that they had never been pagan, having kept the purity of the Christian faith since their very beginnings.[155]

[154] Carile, "Le origini di Venezia," passim, especially, 150-152; 163; Carile, "Origine come categoria storiografica," passim, especially 63, 66; Ortalli, "Venezia allo specchio," 206-207; Mario De Biasi, "Leggenda e storia nelle origini di Venezia," *Ateneo Veneto* 23 (1985): 78-81. For the related stereotype of the "virginity" of Venetian liberty: David Rosand, *The Myths of Venice. The Figuration of the State* (Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 36-38.

[155] Rosand, *The Myths of Venice*, 12-13, 36; Carile, "Origine come categoria storiografica," 116-117; Labalme, *Bernardo Giustiniani*, 267; André J.-M. Loechel "Le rappresentazioni della communità" in: *Storia di Venezia dale origini alla caduta. Il Rinascimento: politica e cultura*, ed. Alberto Tenenti and Ugo Tucci (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1996), 608-611.

The last characteristic feature of contemporary Ragusa which the apologists projected into the founding moment was the city's elite -- its patriciate. In Renaissance historiography the prestigious role of the foundation's protagonist, attributed to the archbishop in the medieval tradition, was given to the ancestors of the nobility, who thus became the "authors" of the urban community. Clearly, this entailed the serious refashioning of noble descent traditions: from at least the fifteenth century a number of noble houses rejected their old family traditions, replacing them with claims of descent from either Epidaurians or Pavlimir's Romans. They had good reasons to do so, since as descendants of the founders the patricians could reap numerous ideological benefits. For a start, they could articulate their relationship with the state they governed in most peculiar terms. Since their ancestors had built the city and maintained it ever since, the *respublica* was represented as a kind of collective private property of their descendants, who alone had the right to rule it. Moreover, the claim of descent from the founders transformed the patriciate into Ragusa's principal link with a Roman past, a guarantor of continuity through which the prestigious heritage of the Classical world reached the present. Thus, the patriciate became the source of two important ideological benefits which followed from an alleged Classical origin: on one hand, general prestige due to inherited Roman virtue and wise *mores*, and, on the other, a claim to neighboring territories represented as the district of the ancient Epidaurus. By turning into descendants of Epidaurians and Romans, the patricians also generated ample opportunity to fashion impressive genealogies for themselves, claiming connections with great persons and families of the Classical world or, at least, with important persons of the local Ragusan tradition. Last but not least, descent from the very founders served not only to elevate some, but also to denigrate others. There are traces, albeit scarce, of the idea that only the noble houses descending from Epidaurians and Romans were to be considered "true nobility," while others who arrived later were the reason for the loss of the original virtue and moral decay of the city.

The analogies for such self-representation of the Ragusan patriciate are plentiful since numerous late medieval and Renaissance elites intertwined their origin narratives with the origin narratives of the communites they ruled. For instance, a similar claim is to be found quite early in the neighboring Dalmatian city of Split, where Ragusans might have even borrowed it. In Split, the descent of the nobility from the founders was so important that it was proclaimed by the preamble of the city's statutes, codified in 1312. The basic idea that the city owed its existence to the nobility was expressed clearly since the foundation account literally mentioned no other social group whatsoever. It was only *Salonae principes, comites, barones, milites et alij nobiles dictae ciuitatis Salonae* who had fled the destruction of their

city by barbarians and eventually settled in the empty palace of Diocletian on the site of the future Split. After thus establishing the noble monopoly on origin, the statute's preamble proclaimed that "from these citizens of Salona in later times were born, with God's help, the nobles of Split" and continued by comparing the nobility of their origin with that of the Venetians and Paduans, descendants of the prestigious Trojans.[156]

Venice is an even more interesting analogy. In Venetian tradition the claim of descent from the founders had two related ideological functions which, albeit less clearly, can also be seen in Ragusa. Such descent was seen as somehow bequeathing a particularly strong claim to power, and, consequently, as dividing the nobility by origin into two groups with different levels of prestige, even legitimacy. Importantly, in Venice this idea was far more clearly articulated and thus also more politically divisive than in Ragusa. Sometime in the late thirteenth century, after the *Serrata*, the earliest lists were composed of patrician families who were allegedly the first to settle Rialto, the future place of Venice. By the fourteenth century these lists had taken a standard form, enumerating twelve families of the most prestigious earliest group of founders and another twelve families who supposedly came soon afterwards.[157] Originally a historical "document" and means of strengthening social prestige, with time this list became an important tool in the political struggles between the two main patrician factions. One consisted of the so-called *case vecchie* ("old houses") or *longhi* ("long ones"), the group of ancient patrician families which had dominated the Venetian politics during the earlier period but whose power was fading by the 1300s. The other faction were the so-called *case nuove* ("new houses") or *curti* ("short ones"), a group of families which had joined the patriciate mostly in the thirteenth century, but managed to expand their influence to such a degree that they monopolized the ducal office from 1382 until 1612.[158] During the fifteenth century the disenfranchised *longhi* used the list of the first settlers in order to legitimize their aspiration to power, primarily to the ducal position, turning this document into

[156] Antun Cvitanić, ed., *Statut grada Splita* [The Statute of the City of Split] (Split: Književni krug, 1998), 338. For the broad historical context, see: Ivo Babić, "Mit o podrijetlu u Statutu grada Splita" [The Origin Myth in the Statute of the City of Split], in *Dioklecijan i Split,* ed. Frane Bulić, Nenad Cambi and Ivo Babić (Split: Slobodna. Dalmacija, 2005), 183 -221. A similar text is found in the contemporary chronicle of the Split historian, Micha Madii de Barbezanis (Nikola Disopra, Cvito Fisković, Jure Franičević Pločar, Vedran Gligo, Živko Jeličić, ed. Hrvoje Morović and Vladimir Rismondo, *Legende i Kronike* [Legends and Chronicles] (Split: Književni krug – Čakavski sabor, 1977), 171.

[157] Raines, *L'invention du mythe aristocratique,* 428-434. In the first versions of the lists the number of families was smaller, but soon standardized to 24, that is, two times twelve, clearly a symbolic number with Biblical connotations. Raines also shows how the composers of the lists took care to include equally the representatives of all the different origin groups within the elite: the patrician houses coming from Heraclea, Equilo, Altino-Torcello, and elsewhere.

[158] Ibid., 398-399.

a politically highly sensitive issue and causing it to be "almost forbidden."[159] In the sixteenth century, however, the list lost most of its divisive potential and came to serve the interests of the Venetian patriciate as a whole, confirming its traditional claim to be the oldest aristocracy in Europe. Although the dominant families, the *curti*, profited from this document only indirectly, they also found it useful since it elevated the prestige of the entire elite before its European peers.[160] Needless to say, not only the function but also the content of the list changed over time. Depending on their influence and the goals of the list's composers, different families were included and excluded, even "moved" between the first and second group of pioneers – revealing, as in the Ragusan case, a continuous manipulation of noble origins.[161]

In conclusion, one could say that the foundation myths of Renaissance cities were narratives crowded with implications. The ideological importance of the Ragusan discourse onorigin can be grasped when one considers all the contemporary issues which it served to legitimize. As this chapter has sought to show, most different issues were inscribed into the city's origin: territorial aspirations, political independence, ecclesiastical status, Christian religion, Slavic culture, and the ancestors of the elite. In fact, most of the fundamental ideological issues which otherwise occupied the Republic's apologists already appear here, at least *in nuce.*

Two of these issues particularly need to be kept in mind since their elaborations in the discourse on origins also played important roles in other major discourses of Ragusan identity. The first issue was the insistence on the Christian roots of Ragusa, which was an important motif in the discourse on the city as the frontiersman of Christianity/Catholicism, situated on the border with Islam and Orthodoxy. The foundation by Christians gave further historical legitimacy to this way of representing Ragusa, serving as a starting point for a dramatic narrative of continuous faithfulness to the papacy and heroic defence of the true faith. The second fundamental issue addressed in the foundation myth was the original liberty of Ragusa, the political independence which it had allegedly enjoyed since its beginnings. Again, the foundation myth provided a solid historical basis for a tendentious narrative of uninterrupted millennial independence, the "virginity" (*verginità*) of Ragusan liberty, which served to

[159] Ibid., 439-442. On electorial clashes between the two factions see also: Robert Finlay, *Politics in Renaissance Venice* (London: Ernest Benn, 1980), 93-96.
[160] Raines, *L'invention du mythe aristocratique*, 448-449.
[161] Ibid., 444-448. One should add that it was not always fully clear what exactly the *differentia specifica* was between these 24 houses and the rest of the nobility. While in the earlier period they were usually seen as the first settlers of Rialto, in the Sixteenth century they were understood as either the families who had settled the lagoons before the edification of Venice or simply as the oldest families descended from tribunes, high Roman and Byzantine officials (Ibid., 443).

legitimize the self-rule of the small republic. When all of this is taken into account, it becomes clear that the discourse on origin serves as an ideal "gateway" to Ragusan discourses on identity, pointing to the two other major identity discourses which this work will address: that of liberty and that of frontier.

CHAPTER 2: THE DISCOURSE ON STATEHOOD

Introduction: The patriciate and its *libertas*

Besides the origin of Ragusa, another fundamental theme of Renaissance culture was its separate statehood, the self-governance of the city in both internal and external affairs. In other words, whenever Ragusan authors spoke about their community the independence of the city and its republican constitution were among the most frequent motifs. Clearly, these were topics of immense political relevance and articulating them was therefore profoundly shaped by the interests of the patrician elite. Their relevance can also be discerned from the fact that they were without doubt the most frequently addressed elements of collective identity. While the references to the city's origin, however important, remained largely limited to historiography and public speeches, references to statehood permeated all spheres of the Republic's self-representation – from diplomacy, historiography, literature all the way to public ritual and representative art.

Of course, in the period with which this study is concerned – the fourteenth to sixteenth century – the modern concept of state(hood) was just being articulated in the political thought of Western Europe.[162] Besides the occasional mentions of *lo stato/status,* it functioned in the political discourses of Renaissance Ragusa through the use of related concepts such as *respublica, communitas, dominium, signoria,* and others.[163] However, the

[162] With roots in medieval scholasticism and striking anticipation in the Italian Renaissance, especially in Machiavelli's thought, it finally crystallized in the mid-sixteenth century in the work of legal humanists in France and England. The "Conclusion" by Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of the Modern Political Thought,* vol. 2 (Cambridge: CUP, 1978), 349-358 is an immensely influential analysis of the topic. See also: *idem*, "From the State of Princes to the Person of the State" in idem, *Visions of Politics,* vol. 2 (Cambridge: CUP, 2002), 368-413. Another classic, useful for the Italian context and important for Ragusa, is: Federico Chabod, "Esiste uno Stato del Rinascimento?" in Federico Chabod, *Scritti sul Rinascimento* (Turin: Einaudi, 1967), 593-604. The origins of the concept are investigatred by: Alan Harding, "The Origins of the Concept of the State," *History of Political Thought* 15 (1994): 57-72; Annabel Brett, "Scholastic Political Thought and the Modern Concept of the State," in *Rethinking the Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, ed. Annabel Brett and James Tully (Cambridge: CUP, 2006), 349-358.

[163] In Ragusan documents the term *lo stato* usually had two meanings which also characterized it elsewhere before its modern connotations crystallized. Most frequently, it designated the territory ruled by the city, the space under its jurisdiction. Alternatively, it designated a specific form of government or, more broadly, the prerogatives and position (Latin: *status*) of its rulers. The principal difference between these meanings and the modern concept of the "state" was that they did not conceive of a "state" "as an agent distinguishable at once from rulers and ruled" (Skinner, "From the State," 378). Ragusans, due to their rigid aristocratic governance, surely had additional trouble in conceptualizing the state as an agent that existed independently of those who exercised its authority; namely, in Ragusa the state apparatus was a hereditary monopoly of a closed patrician

closest to designating statehood in the modern sense was a concept of paramount importance not only in Ragusan tradition, but in republican thought in general – the concept of "liberty" (*libertas, libertà, sloboda*). From the re-emergence of republican ideology in the medieval Italian cities, "liberty" had two fundamental meanings which it kept in the Renaissance period. The first was independence, the situation in which a community manages its public affairs on its own, not subject to the will of an external authority. The second was life under a republican constitution, a form of government in which public affairs are conducted through magistrates elected and controlled by the citizenry, with supreme authority residing in collectively created law.[164] The topic of this chapter is how these two main meanings of liberty were applied and adapted to peculiar Ragusan circumstances during the crucial three hundred years when the city gradually transformed from a Venetian satellite to a fully independent aristocratic republic.

Although independence and collective governance were issues of central importance to republican thought, elaborated by centuries philosophical of and legal reflection, in the Ragusan context they did not provoke much theorizing. Namely, due to its peculiar political culture, Ragusa never produced a significant corpus of specialized texts of political philosophy. Albeit at moments quite elaborate, political thought was not concentrated in explicitly theoretical works, but was dispersed through different types of documents, primarily historiography, orations, and diplomatic material.[165] One important reason for this lack of explicit theorizing was a deeply rooted preference for historical instead of philosophical argumentation. When faced with a problem pertaining to political thought, most Ragusan authors tended to address it not through explicit theoretical reasoning, but through didactic and moralizing historical narratives. Issues as different as the Republic's independence or the aristocratic monopoly on power were usually explained not by invoking the common-places of republican theory, but through a set of well-known stories from the city's past which served as a quasi-empirical illustration of their utility and legitimacy.

group – in a sense the patriciate *was* the state. (For examples of *lo stato* in a territorial sense: Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 1, tomus 2, 518, 544; *Ibid.,* book 3, tomus 1, 33, 94, 104, 125, 165; for examples of *lo stato* designating a constitutional form or the position of rulers: Ibid., book 2, tomus 2, 99; di Gozzi, *Dello Stato*, 99, 177, 307, 429, 434).

[164] Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: CUP, 1978), *passim*, 6-7; Nicolai Rubinstein, "Florentina Libertas," *Rinascimento*, n.s., 26 (1986): 3-26; William J., Bouwsma, "Liberty in Renaissance and Reformation," in *The Origins of Modern Freedom in the West*, ed. R. Davis (Stanford: University of Stanford Press, 1995), 215-216.

[165] For a similar Venetian case see: Ventura, "Scrittori politici e scritture di governo," 513-515; 553-560; Lucette Valensi, *The Birth of the Despot. Venice and the Sublime Porte.* trans. Arthur Denner (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 12-13; 16; William J. Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defense of Republican Liberty: Renaissance Values in the Age of the Counter-Reformation*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 52-53.

Another important reason for the scarcity of philosophical reflections on politics in Ragusan culture was that the discourses on public affairs were usually characterized by a strongly apologetic, even panegyric, tone. The mentions of *libertas* or *respublica* rarely served critical or polemical purposes, but mostly consisted of glorifying references to the cherished independence and the wise constitution of the city-state.[166] Due to all these reasons, most of the reflections on the city's statehood are to be found in historiography, diplomacy, and literature, cloaked in (pseudo)historical language with the goal of legitimizing and glorifying the present state of affairs. In other words, Ragusa used the rich vocabulary of republican ideology less to produce original political theory than to create a panegyrical and tendentious self-portrait.

This chapter is structured in a roughly chronological order, following the changes in the representations of Ragusan statehood from the second half of the fourteenth until the beginning of the seventeenth century. The first part follows the gradual redefinition of the city's relationship with its distant sovereign, the Hungarian king, during the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Although this relationship was originally an unambiguous acknowledgement of Hungarain sovereignty, Ragusan diplomats and historians represented it as a freely made contract between two essentially equal partners, laying the foundations for the later independence of the city. The second part of this chapter deals with probably the most problematic political relationship of Ragusan history in general – the city's position as a tributary state of the Ottoman Empire. It follows the ways in which Ragusans tried to obfuscate, justify, and redefine this immensely compromising political relationship from its establishment in the mid-fifteenth century. The third part of this chapter deals with a specific crisis of legitimacy which characterized Ragusa after the mid-sixteenth century. Namely, the city had unilaterally seceded from the Hungarian Kingdom after its collapse in 1526 and therefore its self-proclaimed independence rested on dubious legal foundations. In an attempt to ground that independence on both historical precedents and divine sanction, the Republics' apologists redefined the entire history of Ragusa, suggesting not only that the city had always been free but that its liberty was defended by providence. The fourth part of this chapter deals with the various conceptualizations of the other basic aspect of Ragusan statehood – its republican form of government. More precisely, it analyses various references to the political system of Ragusa, the virtue of its patrician rulers, and the social harmony, even consensus,

[166] For a similar diagnosis concerning the tone of Venetian political thought see Ventura, "Scrittori politici e scritture di governo," 513-515. For the Venetian ideal of *unanimitas*, similar to Ragusan insistence on harmony, see the classic analyses in: King, *The Venetian Humanism*, 92-205; Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defence*, 70-71.

which such a system allegedly produced. Finally, the fifth part of the chapter considers the Ragusan discourse on statehood in a broader context of other similar ideologies. On the one hand, it compares Ragusan discourse with the emblematic Florentine republicanism, while on the other it demonstrates the profound indebtedness of Ragusan ideology to the city's great teacher, but also enemy, Venice.

The first articulations of independence: Ragusa and the Hungarian Kingdom

The most obvious starting point for the history of Ragusan liberty discourse is the year 1358, which was a crucial moment in the city's attainment of independence. In February of that year, after a crushing defeat, the Venetian republic ceded Ragusa and most of its other Dalmatian possessions to the victorious Hungarian King Louis of Anjou. Since Ragusa, unlike other Dalmatian cities, had never been under the rule of Hungarian kings, it lacked the medieval charter which could serve as a model for its status. Therefore, Ragusans had the valuable opportunity to negotiate with their new sovereign – and they did it exceedingly well. At the royal court in Visegrád they managed to ensure a number of unique privileges for their city, far more extensive than those of their Dalmatian neighbours. With the so-called Visegrád charter, issued by King Louis on 27 May 1358, Ragusa gained complete autonomy with only minimal and mostly symbolic obligations towards its ruler, such as the singing of lauds, displaying the kingdom's symbols, and paying a small annual tribute of 500 ducats. In short, in 1358 Ragusa quite suddenly turned from a Venetian colony into a *de facto* independent republic only nominally acknowledging a distant Hungarian sovereign.[167]

For the next century and half, until the fateful battle of Mohacs in 1526, Ragusa remained under the nominal rule of the Hungarian kings, who generally lacked the strength to extend their authority to the far south of the kingdom. Such a state of affairs suited Ragusa quite well, since it enjoyed the protection of a significant ruler whose help could be invoked in moments of crisis, but who at the same time could not meddle in the everyday governance of the city. In theory, Hungarian protection meant an obligation to defend Ragusa militarily, but effectively it amounted to diplomatic support, which was valuable in itself when it came to intimidating aggressive neighbours of the city or supporting its requests in front of other

[167] For the events and significance of 1358 see: Zdenka Janeković-Römer, *Višegradski ugovor. Temelj Dubrovačke republike* [The Treaty of Visegrád. The Foundation of the Ragusan Republic] (Zagreb: Golden Marketing, 2003); Branislav M. Nedeljković, "Položaj Dubrovnika prema Ugarskoj (1358-1460)" [The Position of Ragusa towards Hungary] *Godišnjak Pravnog fakulteta u Sarajevu* 15 (1967): 447-463; Vinko Foretić, "Godina 1358 u povijesti Dubrovnika" [The Year 1358 in the History of Ragusa], in: *Studije i rasprave iz hrvatske povijesti* (Split: Književni krug Split, Matica Hrvatska Dubrovnik, 2001), 229-254; Dinić Knežević, *Dubrovnik i Ugarska u srednjem veku*, 16-21; Medini Milorad, *Dubrovnik Gučetića* [Ragusa of Gučetići] (Beograd: SAN, 1953) 61-78; Harris Robin, *Dubrovnik: A History* (London: Saqi, 2003), 62-66.

European rulers. Making the whole arrangement even more appealing was the fact that Ragusa had to give comparatively little in return. Besides the tribute and symbolic acknowledgements, the most important benefit which it supplied to its rulers was a steady flow of strategic information from Southeastern Europe, especially concerning the rapidly expanding Ottoman Empire. All things considered, one could say that for the roughly one and a half century of Hungarian rule Ragusa had an ideal sovereign – able to protect it, but unable to rule it.

The trouble was, however, that such a pleasant state of affairs existed only *de facto*. As the Visegrád charter made crystal clear, despite the broad privileges of Ragusa, its legal status was essentially no different from that of any other Dalmatian town. Reflecting the absolutist ambitions of the victorious King Louis, the charter unambiguously proclaimed that the city belonged to the Hungarian monarch by hereditary right as part of the Dalmatian Kingdom. Equally, the charter made it clear that the city's inhabitants were the king's subjects, sworn to perpetual loyalty to him and his successors. Moreover, it left no doubt that the extensive privileges Ragusa received were a consequence of royal mercy, a grant which followed after the city's envoys, "humbly and on their knees," asked to be accepted under the king's "dominion, jurisdiction and full power."[168] Importantly, such an understanding of the Ragusan status was not only expounded in the Visegrád charter. It was also clearly implied by the usual vocabulary and tone of all the royal letters directed to the city. From the mid-fourteenth all the way to the early sixteenth century the Hungarian Kings routinely addressed the Ragusans as their "faithful," referred to Ragusa as "our city," and lauded its "devotion," "obedience," and "eagerness to serve."[169]

It is no wonder, therefore, that the major ideological issue in late medieval Ragusa was redefining the city's relationship with the Hungarian Kingdom in order to provide a sound legal basis for its factual independence. Of course, this is far from saying that Ragusans openly problematized the city's constitutional status in front of their sovereign. Quite the contrary, their diplomacy was usually characterized by a politically correct and unassuming rhetoric. Representing themselves as his majesty's "subjects" (*subditi*) and "faithful" (*fideles*), Ragusans referred to the king as their "natural lord" (*dominus naturalis*), and constantly professed their perpetual loyalty and readiness to serve. In other words, while the relationship

[168] *... ad subiciendum eandem* (.i.e. Ragusa) *nostro dominio iurisdicioni et potestati pleno iure petentes et provoluti genibus nostre excelencie humiliter suplicantes...* (Janeković, *Višegradski ugovor*, 12). For the entire Latin text of the charter see: Ibid., 11-15.

[169] Such references are to be found in literally all of the letters of Hungarian kings directed to Ragusa. They are published in an extensive collection: Gelcich and Thalloczy, ed., *Diplomatarium.*

with the distant king remained within its usual pleasant margins, there was no need to question the city's status and such conventional rhetoric served the Ragusans perfectly well. However, as the following chapter will show, there were several politically delicate moments when the patriciate considered it necessary to face their ruler with quite a heterodox interpretation of Ragusa's constitutional position, very different from the one expounded by the Visegrád charter. Importantly, the goal of such reinterpretations of the Hungarian-Ragusan relationship – eventually adopted and elaborated by the city's historiography – was not to emancipate Ragusa fully from the kingdom, affirming it as a *de iure* independent state. In fact, by accepting the nominal Hungarian sovereignty, the patriciate was after something more subtle than secession. It sought to legalize the city's factual position in which it was able to invoke the powerful protection of the Hungarian Kingdom, at the same time not having to give in return more than symbolic acknowledgements of an increasingly vaguely defined submission. If that was to be achieved, however, one had to make a highly subversive political claim: One had to represent Ragusan self-governance, its *libertas*, not as a result of a privilege granted by the king, but as something inherent in the urban community itself. Such an understanding of Ragusa as a community whose liberty was fundamentally independent from any superior political authority was the crucial ideological development of the Hungarian period and thus one of the main themes of this section.

Ragusans began questioning their city's relationship to the royal sovereign during a prolonged period of political instability – in fact, a series of crises – which followed the death of Louis the Great in 1382. The first of these crises was the unstable rule of Louis' daughter, Mary, in the 1380s, characterized by a permanent struggle for legitimacy, noble rebellions, even kidnappings and assassinations of royal persons (i.e., Queen Elisabeth and King Charles of Durazzo). The second crisis was the conflict between King Sigismund of Luxemburg and Ladislas of Naples, a pretender to the royal title, which deeply divided the kingdom in the first decade of the 1400s. Finally the third, and from Ragusan standpoint the most dramatic crisis, was the rapid Venetian expansion in Dalmatia after 1409, which after a decade of sporadic war ended with the *Serenissima*'s reconquest of all of its previous possessions except Ragusa.[170]

[170] On Sigismund's period in Ragusa see: Zrinka Pešorda Vardić, "The Crown, the King and the City: Dubrovnik, Hungary and the Dynastic Controversy, 1382-1390" *Dubrovnik Annals* 10 (2006): 7-29; Dušanka Dinić-Knežević, *Dubrovnik i Ugarska*, 72-105; Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika*, tomus 1, 166-178; Zsuzsa Teke, "Zsigmond és Raguza: Egy ötvenéves kapcsolat," [Sigismund and Ragusa: a fifty year long relationship] *Historia* 31 (2009): 17-19. More general overviews are: Katalin Szende, "Between Hatred and Affection: Towns and Sigismund in Hungary and in the Empire," in *Sigismund von Luxemburg:ein Kaiser in Europa*, ed. Michel Pauly and Francois Reinert (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 2006), 199-210; Franjo Šanjek, ed.,

The gradual re-conceptualisation of Ragusa's constitutional position, characteristic of these turbulent decades, began with a subtle but important change in the vocabulary used to describe the relationship of the city towards its royal sovereign. During the first decades of Hungarian rule, in their diplomatic correspondence with King Louis, the Ragusans represented themselves as "the faithful and subjects of your royal majesty," "your faithful and subjects," and repeatedly referred to "your city of Ragusa."[171] However, in the turbulent period following Louis' death, expressions of subjection and loyalty emerged in Ragusan diplomatic letters directed to an abstract entity, the "Holy Crown" of Hungary (*sacra corona regni Hungariae*). Thus, Ragusans began to proclaim they were "subjected to the Crown of Hungary," "faithful to the Crown," while their city "belonged to God and to Your [King's] Crown."[172] The shift in rhetoric is clear immediately. While in the earlier period Ragusan expressions of loyalty and submission were directed to a concrete person, the king, now they were increasingly focused on a legal and political abstraction of the *sacra corona.*

Importantly, such rhetoric was not a Ragusan peculiarity. A clear distinction between *rex* and *corona* had existed in Hungarian constitutional thought since the thirteenth century, designating the difference between the incumbent and the office, the real person of the king and an abstract set of rights and duties stemming from the kingship.[173] Although it was politically acceptable and widely used, this distinction also had serious subversive potential,

---

Povijest Hrvata. Knjiga Prva. *Srednji vijek* [The History of the Croats. Book One. Middle Ages], (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 2003), 321-336.

[171] Several typical examples: *Diplomatarium*, 12, 13, 17, 24, 50, 75, 61, 64.

[172] For these examples, see: Ibid., 136, 207, 218. Other similar examples from the first two decades of the fifteenth century are: Ibid., 119, 120, 122, 129, 178, 197, 216, 233, 243, 285, 314. Unfortunately, it is impossible to establish with absolute precision the moment when such vocabulary appeared since the diplomatic letters and instructions of the Ragusan government for the period between 1383 and 1403 are lost. The vocabulary focusing on the *corona* must have emerged sometime during these two decades since it was normally not present in the diplomatic sources until 1383 and is quite common in those after 1403. The only two exceptions to this are two Ragusan letters from 1359 and 1360, in which, quite surprisingly, the motif of obedience and fidelity to the *corona* appears: Jorjo Tadić, ed., *Pisma i uputstva Dubrovačke Republike I* [The Letters and Instructions of the Ragusan Republic] (Beograd: SKA, 1935), 12; *Diplomatarium*, 16. This might confirm J. Bak's suggestion that the *corona* vocabulary reached Hungray via the Dalmatian cities, more strongly exposed to the influence of revived Roman law (János M. Bak, *Königtum und Stände in Ungarn im 14.-16. Jahrhundert*, (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1973), 23, note 88; 29, note 14.)

[173] László Péter, "The Holy Crown of Hungary, Visible and Invisible," *Slavonic and East European Review* 81, no. 3 (2003): 442-443. Péter rightly warns agains the claim that *corona* stood for an abstact state authority, which is mistaken since there was no concept of state in this period. For the history of the Holy Crown also see the classic work: Ferenc Eckhart, *A szentkorona-eszme története* [The history of the Doctrine of the Holy Crown] (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1941). Recently, the role of *sacra corona* in early modern Hungarian discourses on identity has been addressed in: Kees Teszelszky, "A Holy Crown for a Nation. The Symbolic Meaning of the Holy Crown of Hungary and the Construction of the Idea of a Nation" in *Building the Past/Konstruktion der eigenen Vergangenheit*, ed. Rudolf Suntrup Rudolf and Jan R. Veenstra, Medieval to Early Modern Culture/Kultureller Wandel vom Mittelalter zur Frühen Neuzeit, vol. 7 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2006), 247-259; Kees Teszelszky, *Az ismeretlen korona* [The unknown Crown] (Pannonhalma: Bencés Kiadó, 2009). I am profoundly grateful to Márton Zászkaliczky for his skillful guidance through the labyrinth of Hungarian constitutionalism.

being an extremely convenient tool when one sought to diminish or question royal authority. Thus, the Hungarian high nobility managed to impose it on Sigismund of Luxemburg, who had to swear in his election oath of 1387 that he would always take into consideration the good and the honour of the "Crown" and cancel all the alliances he had made *contra sacram coronam regni Ungarie*.[174] The subversive potential of the *corona* doctrine is demonstrated even more clearly by the fact that it was the official rhetoric of the noble rebels against Sigismund in 1401. While they kept the king in captivity, the rebels conducted state business *auctoritate sacre corone* and even made a seal with the inscription *Sigillum Sacre Corone Regni Hungarie*.[175] The usefulness of such rhetoric both in 1387 and in 1401 is quite clear. The aristocrats found it convenient to postulate *corona,* a legal abstraction, as a separate bearer of sovereignty and focus of loyalty, independent of the concrete person of the king. Equally conveniently, as an abstract set of duties and rights pertaining to the kingship, *corona* designated a group of fundamental political norms which were again independent from the individual king, prescribing the legitimate exercise of his power. The most important point was, however, that the "Holy Crown" was not only independent of the king, but also *above* him. Legally, the *corona* was the true bearer of the sovereignty and, normatively, the rights and duties pertaining to it took precedence over the will of the individual king. Therefore, the usual way of limiting royal power in medieval Hungary, even legitimizing outright rebellion, was to claim to act in the name of the *corona,* as a faithful subject of the "Crown," whose obligations the individual king had misunderstood, neglected or betrayed. Simply put, in 1387, and especially in 1401, the *corona* doctrine enabled the elite(s) of the kingdom not only to tell the king what he should do, but even to rule while ignoring his will, legitimizing such encroachments by invoking the "authority," "honour" or the "obligations" of the "Crown."

When all of this is taken into account, it becomes clear that the emergence of the *corona* vocabulary in Ragusan diplomacy of the same period was far from politically harmless. Although they began using this vocabulary even earlier, Ragusans developed its subversive potential to its full extent only in the second decade of the fifteenth century, during the rapid Venetian reconquest of Dalmatia. More precisely, they explicated their peculiar interpretation of the city's relationship towards the Hungarian kingdom in 1413, prompted by the alarming rumours that King Sigismund considered ceding Ragusa to Venice as part of the peace treaty. The instruction to the Ragusan envoys to Sigismund from May of that year contains an elaborate argument against such a decision, relying heavily on a strict distinction

[174] Bak, *Königtum und Stände*, 27-29.
[175] Bak, *Königtum und Stände*, 34; Peter, "The Holy Crown," 444.

between *rex* and *corona*. Thus, if the king mentioned ceding Ragusa, the envoys were to remind him:

> Our most illustrious Lord... the city of Ragusa belongs to God and Your Crown. Your Illustriousness knows that it is free and that the sacred memory of Your Father [King Louis the Great] embraced it under the Crown of Hungary with certain graces, privileges and oath sworn with the whole of Hungary to protect and defend it from all.[176]

The envoys were to continue by enumerating examples of Ragusan fidelity throughout the turbulent past decades, and then quite bluntly warn their sovereign what he could not do:

> because all of that, our illustrious Lord, and because of the glory of Your Crown and [Your] oaths and promises and because of our constancy, Your Illustriousness cannot abandon nor renounce us but is obliged to protect us as a member of the Crown (*membro della Corona*).[177]

Were the envoys to understand that Sigismund still intended to cede the city to Venice regardless of their arguments, they were instructed to explicate even more clearly the nature of the king's obligation to protect Ragusa:

> Our most Illustrious Lord, we protest before God, the whole world and Your Highness, we protest before the Crown of Hungary, before the clergy and the nobility of whole Hungary, [stating] that we do not liberate your Crown from the obligation to protect us against all, but your majesty is leaving us against our wishes and without our consent, without our guilt or reason.[178]

However, the most surprising thing was yet to follow. After such fierce protest the envoys were supposed to – "at any cost" – obtain a charter from the king, with these contents:

> We, Sigismund, King by the Grace of God, etc. Since the Ragusans, faithful to our Crown, have not agreed to be abandoned or renounced by us in any way, not liberating us from the obligation of our Crown to protect them against all, we state that against their will we leave them free and as free men in their full liberty with their city of Dubrovnik and its district. [179]

[176] *Serenissimo signor nostro.... la citade de Ragusa e de Dio e dela vostra corona. La vostra serenidade sa, che quella e libera, la qual sacra memoria del vostro padre la recevi ala corona d Ungaria con certe gratie, privilegii et sacramenti con tuta Hungaria a mantegnirne et defender de ogni zente* (*Diplomatarium*, 218).

[177] *Per tanto sereniss. sign. nostro et per la gloria dela vostra corona et per promissione e zuramenti et per debito delle nsotre constantie la vostra serenitade non ne po lassar ne allienar; anzi tenuta a defender nui como membro dela corona* (Ibid., 218-219).

[178] *Serenissimo signor nostro, nui reclamemo a Dio, a tuto el mondo et ala vostra Maiesta, reclamemo ala corona de Hungaria, a prelati, baroni de Hungaria tuta, che nui non liberemo la vostra corona de quello che ella e tenuta a diffenderne de ogni zente, ma la vostra Maiesta contra nostro voler et contra ogni nostro consentir, senza nostra colpa e casone ne lassa* (Ibid., 219).

[179] *Nuy Sigismondo per la Dio grazia etc. Conzo sia che li Ragusini, fideli dela nostra corona, non consentiva che nui li abandonissemo over alienissimo per alguno modo, non ne liberando de quello che la nostra corona e tenuta a quelli de defender de ogni zente, confessemo che contra lor voler li lassemo liberi et como liberi homini in la soa piena libertade con la soa citade de Ragusii et distreto* (*Diplomatarium*, 219). For an interpretation of this instruction see also: Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika do 1808.*, tome 1, 318.

These few sentences contain, albeit in an unsystematic and summary form, a completely novel interpretation of Ragusa's position within the Kingdom of Hungary. To begin with, in all of these examples, as well as in the rest of the letter, faithfulness is owed *exclusively* to the "Crown," never to Sigismund personally. Equally, it is clearly spelled out that the city belongs to "God" and Sigismund's "Crown," i.e., not to Sigismund personally. After having thus accentuated that their constitutional ties were with the "Crown" and only through it with the king himself, the Ragusans proceeded to the next step – not only strongly separating the two, but literally using the "Crown" *against* the king. The crucial point in their argumentation, repeated several times, was that Sigismund could not "renounce" or "abandon" the city since his "Crown" was "obliged" to protect it. With such formulations the Ragusans implicitly but clearly made two crucial points: First, they accentuated that the "Crown's" obligation to protect them took absolute precedence over Sigismund's will; second, they postulated themselves as the final interpreters of the nature of that obligation. The result of such a manoeuvre was a rewarding ideological position. Invoking the obligation of the "Crown," the Ragusans were able to legitimately tell their sovereign what he could and could not do.[180]

However, the rhetoric of the Crown was only the first line of defence for the Ragusans in 1413. The second line is revealed if one takes a closer look at the way in which the envoys spoke about the king's inability to cede the city. They repeatedly reminded their sovereign that he could not "renounce or abandon" them since they "have not agreed" to be renounced and did not "liberate" his "Crown" from the obligation to protect them. Clearly, the nature of the Hungarian-Ragusan relationship could only be changed through the consent of *both sides*, not through the unilateral act of the king. Simply put, Sigismund could "renounce" the city only if the Ragusans *agreed* to it. This already hinted at the new constitutional self-definition

[180] Although the vocabulary of *corona* continued to linger in Ragusan diplomacy until the end of Hungarian sovereignty, its subversive potential never appeared as clearly as in the 1413 instruction (for later examples of similar rhetoric see: *Diplomatarium*, 431, 437, 466, 470, 472, 481, 497, 509 542, 543, 644, 646, 663). Another interesting point regarding the 1413 instruction is that, denying Sigismund's right to cede the city, in one place the Ragusans describe themselves as a "member of the Crown" (*membro della corona*). As Eckhart pointed out, this peculiar expression -- atypical of fifteenth-century Hungary -- is probably not a sign of corporativist understanding of the "Holy Crown" as a *corpus* composed of king (*caput*) and nobility (*membra*). Instead *corona* here had a purely territorial meaning and thus the expression did exactly what Ragusans needed it to do – it accentuated the inalienability of the city from the other territories of the kingdom (Eckhart, *Szentkorona*, 193-196). In other words, the Ragusans seem to have anticipated the increasingly territorial use of *corona* appearing in the sixteenth-century, when Habsburg monarchs were repeatedly urged to reconquer and reincorporate the territories lost to the Ottomans with the "Crown" (Péter, "The Holy Crown,"452-453). After 1413 the expression "member of the Crown" re-emerged a few times in the Ragusan diplomacy of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but its meaning was quite vague and close to the more widespread expression *membrum regni*. On this peculiar expression see: Bak, *Königtum und Stände*, 77-78; Péter, "The Holy Crown," 448-452; especially note 141. The rare examples in which the expression appeared in Ragusan diplomacy are: *Diplomatarium*, 236, 330, 562, 663.

of Ragusa, which was to appear in its full glory if Sigismund persisted in ceding the city against its wishes. In that case, the envoys were to repeat that the Ragusans did not liberate the king from his obligation to protect them, "but your majesty *is leaving* us against our wishes and without our consent, without our guilt or reason." The crucial point here is that the king's decision to cede Ragusa did not result in it becoming a Venetian possession, but simply meant that the king "is leaving" (*lassa*) the city and that it was henceforth to be in "full liberty" (*in la soa piena libertade*). In other words, while Sigismund clearly could not dispose of Ragusa as he liked, he could by his actions destroy its legal ties with the Hungarian Kingdom, turning it into an independent republic.

Although Sigismund was probably never faced with this surprising reinterpretation of Ragusa's status -- the rumours about ceding it to Venice proved unfounded -- this does not diminish the significance of the 1413 instruction.[181] A claim appears in this text for the first time which was to be of fundamental importance in Ragusan diplomacy and historiography in the Renaissance: the Hungarian-Ragusan relationship is represented as a *contract of two at least potentially independent states*. The insistence that Ragusa could change its legal status only if Ragusans "liberated" the king from his obligation of protection already had a strongly contractual tone; it demonstrated that the relationship between the city and its ruler could be lawfully changed only through *mutual consent*. Even more revealing was the scenario which was supposed to follow if Sigismund attempted to unilaterally cede the city without Ragusan consent. In that case the legal ties between the city and the Hungarian Kingdom would cease to exist altogether and Ragusa would become an independent republic. That is, as any contract, this relationship was valid only as long as *both sides* fulfilled their obligations: if Sigismund failed to perform his duty to protect them, the Ragusans did not have to perform their duty to obey him.[182]

[181] As the Venetian documents make clear, at that time Ragusa was not especially high on the Serenissima's list of desired acquisitions (Šime Ljubić, "O odnošajih medju Dubrovčani i Mletčani za ugar.-hrv. vladanja u Dubrovniku" [On the relations between the Ragusans and the Venetians during the Hungarian-Croatian rule over Ragusa] *Rad JAZU* 17 (1871): 29-30, 34.

[182] For a classic account of the contractualistic streak of medieval politcal thought to which this Ragusan interpretation is clearly indebted see: Otto von Gierke, *Political Theories of the Middle Ages,* trans. Frederick William Maitland (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1922), 34-47, especially 44. See also, however, the critical remarks in: Harro Höpfl and Martyn P. Thompson, "The History of Contract as a Motif in Political Thought," *The American Historical Review* 84, no. 4 (1979): 919-944, especially 927-928. That such a contractualist understanding of royal power was present in other Dalmatian milieus is demonstrated by the instruction which the government of Split issued to its envoys to King Sigismund in 1388. Describing the terrible harrassments that the city suffered from the neighbouring potentates who had rebelled against Sigismund, the envoys were to insist on Split's faithfulness to the Hungarian Crown [sic]. After warning the king that he was entrusted to protect them "according to the divine will," they were to ask for his help once again. If the king refused, they were supposed to request a charter from both him and the most influential nobles of the realm allowing them to "take care of their position themselves, without fearing the accusation of treason." Tadija

Such an understanding of the Hungarian-Ragusan relationship probably rested upon a peculiar interpretation of the Visegrád treaty and the events of 1358 which emerged in the first half of the fifteenth century and soon became a true commonplace in Ragusan political culture. It appears for the first time in a letter of the city's government to King Sigismund, written in March 1426, as a response to the king's inquiry whether the Ragusans wanted to be included in the peace treaty that he was just negotiating with the Venetian republic. The Ragusan answer was a tendentious combination of declamations of loyalty and assertions of independence, already visible in the first sentence, which praised Sigismund for desiring "that we stay in faithfulness to Your Illustriousness and in our freedom." Claiming they could not comment on the peace treaty since they did not know its contents, the Ragusans continued in the same subversive-submissive tone:

> One thing, however, we do know: since we have placed ourselves *of our own will* under the protection of King Louis of blessed memory, *we have chosen and established him*, and also his successors to the Holy Crown of Hungary as our natural Lords, and have sworn to the same [Louis] undivided fidelity and have preserved it and intend to preserve it in the future for your Highness and the heirs to the Kingdom.[183]

After this surprising account of the events of 1358, the Ragusans asked to be included in the peace treaty, urging Sigismund to continue considering "the preservation and enlargement of our freedom and of our faithfulness in the lap and at the feet of His Illustriousness." At the end of the letter they once more invoked the twin motif of freedom and faithfulness, characteristic of the whole text. This time, however, they put these two concepts in an interesting mutual relationship:

> Thus we humbly beg your Illustriousness to remember, think and dispose of us, your faithful and servants, in such a way that *faithful freedom* as much as *free faithfulness*... we could preserve perpetually, and live and die loyal at heart at the feet of Your Majesty and of the Holy Kingdom of Hungary.[184]

The basic implication of the letter is clearly spelled out here: the faithfulness of the Ragusans towards their sovereign is not only perpetual, but also "free." It is "free" due to a

---

Smičiklas, ed., *Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*, tomus 17 (Zagreb: JAZU, 1981), 152-154; Grga Novak, *Povijest Splita* I. [History of Split], (Split: Matica Hrvatska, 1957), 199-200.) This intriguing analogy to the Ragusan instruction of 1413 was noticed by Pešorda (Pešorda, "Kruna, kralj i grad," 34.)

[183] *Hoc unum tamen scimus, quod quando de nostra spontanea voluntate nos dedimus ad manus et sub proteccione felicis recordacionis regis Ludovici, ipsum sumpsimus et statuimus, similiter et successores eiusdem in sacro Hungarie diademate, nostros domines naturales, eidemque immaculatas fidelitates promisimus atque servavimus et in posterum servaturi sumus vestre serenitati et successoribus in regno* (*Diplomatarium*, 314).

[184] *Quare serenitatem vestram humiliter supplicamus, quod de nobis, servitoribus et fidelibus suis, ita cogitare, ita disponere ac reminisci dignetur, quod tam fidelem libertatem, quam liberam fidelitatem ...in eternum servare possimus, et ad pedes maiestatis vestre et sacri regni Hungarie fideli corde vivere atque mori* (Ibid., 315).

peculiar interpretation of the events of 1358 which the letter expounds. According to the author, the senate, in 1358 Ragusa was not a part of King Louis' war booty, a city which had no choice but to submit to its new overlord by obeying the decrees of Hungarian-Venetian peace treaty. After more than half a century the circumstances and protagonists of the acknowledgement of Hungarian sovereignty had changed in a most convenient way. The crucial point made in this letter was that the Ragusans themselves freely initiated the city's entry into the Kingdom of Hungary. They allegedly placed themselves, "of their own will," under the protection of the king, "choosing" him and his heirs as their "natural Lords" and swearing fidelity to them. Although historically mistaken and obviously tendentious, such an account of 1358 was rendered relatively credible by a few facts which seemed to suggest that Ragusa truly was the protagonist in acknowledging Hungarian sovereignty. Namely, the Hungarian army had never entered the city; the last Venetian governor was sent away by the Ragusans themselves and, most importantly, unlike the rest of Dalmatia, Ragusa had negotiated its status with King Louis.[185] Thus, through a suggestive use of these facts, in the official Ragusan interpretation the meaning of 1358 was turned upside down; instead of signifying submission to a new ruler, the events of that year came to signify an *affirmation* of the city's liberty. Clearly, this pseudo-historical account changed the legal status of Ragusa within the kingdom in one stroke. If it submitted of its own will, then Ragusa was not a conquered city under the absolute power of the Hungarian kings, but a free community whose integration into the kingdom could be interpreted in the terms that the Ragusans liked best – those of a contract.

It is no wonder therefore that such a tendentious account of 1358 was repeated *ad nauseam* in Renaissance Ragusa. It soon emerged in the public speech which Philippus de Diversis, teacher in the public school, held when the city celebrated the coronation of Albert of Habsburg as king of Hungary in 1438. De Diversis pointed out that after King Louis and the Venetians had made peace in 1358:

> this city... was left without a shepherd, safety and refuge, and [therefore] your ancestors, led by great wisdom, *chose for their lord* this mighty king, becoming the tribute-payers to him and his heirs.[186]

[185] For a detailed account of the events of 1358, see: Janeković, *Višegradski ugovor,* passim especially, 64-89.

[186] *…haec civitas…sine pastore et absque securitatis et refugii baculo foret destituta vestri antecessores optimo consilio ducti regem illum potentissimum in dominum eligeret seseque tributarios ipsius et suorum successorum constituere.* Filip de Diversis, *Dubrovački govori u slavu ugarskih kraljeva Sigismunda i Alberta*, [Ragusan Orations in Honor of the Hungarian Kings Sigismund and Albert] ed. Zdenka Janeković-Römer (Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 2001), 116. De Diversis made a smilar claim also in his description of Ragusa (Filip de Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika*, trans. Zdenka Janeković-Römer (Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 2004), 180).

One could hardly say that Ragusa was left "without a shepherd" in 1358, since the candidate for that function was more than obvious. Nonetheless, de Diversis needed this formulation in order to present the Ragusans as authors of their own destiny, as the ones who "chose" Hungarian rule. A similar thought was repeated in the first genuine history of Ragusa, the anonymous *Annales,* written in the early 1480s. After mentioning that defeated Venice had to cede Ragusa to Louis the Great, the annalist clearly began to choose his words with extreme care:

> And it happened in Ragusa that they *of their own will* gave themselves under the Crown of King Louis; and from that moment they are carrying his Hungarian standard. And the Ragusans gave *as a gift* every year 500 ducats.[187]

The author of the *Annales* went one step further than de Diversis. Not only had Ragusa chosen Hungarian sovereignty, but the annual tribute – in fact, a clear sign of submission – became a "gift," something given freely and without obligation. Attempting to further diminish the meaning of the tribute, some later versions of the *Annales* even added that the Ragusans gave these ducats "without any obligation, but only because of their kindness!"[188] A similar strategy of explaining Hungarian-Ragusan relationship also appears in Ragnina's history and in one unpublished version of *Annales*, both pertaining to the first half of the sixteenth century. Again, it was allegedly the Ragusans who freely chose Hungarian sovereignty, but here the annual tribute was explicitly interpreted as the price of military protection and thus the contractual element of the relationship, the exchange of fidelity/tribute for protection, was clearly visible. According to Ragnina, "in order to better maintain themselves in freedom," the Ragusans promised to be faithful to Louis and pay the tribute, but he "had to take care of their liberty and defend them from their enemies." Similarly, according to the *Annales*, they undertook these obligations so that "the Crown of Hungary is obliged to defend the city of Ragusa," and even do it, as was pedantically noted, "at its own expense."[189] How far Ragusan historians eventually went in reinterpreting the events of 1358 is nicely demonstrated by Luccari, who reduced them to a mere business transaction. In his late sixteenth-century history of Ragusa he represented them as a purely economic matter: the

[187] *Fu a Ragusa (che) de su volontà propria se hanno dato sotto la Corona de Re Lausc; et di quella hora portano suo standardo ongaresco. Et Ragusei hanno dato per un dono ogni anno ducati 500* (*Annales,* 41).
[188] *Annales*, 41; SAD, Memorie 18, *Origine della Città di Ragusa*, 68.
[189] For Ragnina's text see *Annales,* 230; for the unpublished version of the *Annales*, see: SAD, Memoriae 24. *Dell origine della città di Ragusa,* f. 16 v; a similar text also appears in: NSK, R 3544, *Cronaca di Ragusa (825-1715)*, f. 87r). A similar narrative to Ragnina's is also to be found in Razzi's late sixteenth-century history, but without such a clear connection between the tribute and Hungarian protection (Razzi, *Storia.*, 43).

Ragusans allegedly agreed to pay 500 ducats to the Hungarian kings simply to be exempted from customs and be able to trade freely in their kingdom![190]

It is surely not a coincidence that exactly in the period when such an interpretation of the city's status emerged, Ragusans began calling their community by a new and suggestive name – "republic" (*respublica, republica*). Replacing the older expression "commune" (*communitas, communità*), this term originally emerged in the 1380s in the internal communication of Ragusans, but from the 1430s the patrician government began to use it in diplomacy as well. Gradually, it was also adopted by the European rulers and by the mid-sixteenth century it became a standard way of addressing Ragusa.[191] The word itself had quite ambivalent, even polyvalent significations, of which the Ragusans were surely aware. During the Middle Ages, when the ancient usage was followed, the term *respublica* simply designated any lawfully constituted regime, whether monarchic or republican in the narrower sense.[192] Although it kept this general meaning in the later period, in humanist political discourse it also began to designate a specific type of government conducted through collective bodies composed of members of the community, a political system frequently interpreted as an alternative, even opposition, to the rule of one man, whether monarchy or tyranny.[193] This is surely one of the points which the Ragusans meant when they used it to describe their polity: adopting the new humanist vocabulary of politics they simply wanted to point out that the city was ruled by councils composed of the patricians. That the term was not particularly subversive is confirmed by the fact that Hungarian rulers themselves occasionally applied it to the city, which they surely would have not done if it undermined their

[190] Luccari, *Copioso ristretto,* 137. For the Ragusan interpretations of 1358 see also Janeković, *Višegradski ugovor*, 127-131.

[191] For the first internal mention of Ragusa as *res publica* in one decree of the Minor Council from 1385, see: Mihajlo Dinić, ed., *Odluke veća Dubrovačke Republike*, tome 2 (Beograd: SANU, 1964), 120. For this reference I am grateful to Zdenka Janeković-Römer. The earliest, hitherto unnoticed, mention of Ragusa as *respublica* by a foreign ruler is in a letter of Pope Eugene IV from 1443 (*Diplomatarium,* 449). On the appearance and spread of the term in diplomacy, see: Ilija Mitić, "Kada se Dubrovnik počeo nazivati Republikom"[When Ragusa started to call Itself a Republic], *Pomorski zbornik* 25 (1987): 488-491; Ivan Božić, "Ekonomski i društveni razvitak Dubrovnika u XIV.-XV. veku" [The Economic and Social Development of Ragusa in Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries] *Istorijski glasnik* 1 (1948/1949): 27-28; Janeković, *Okvir slobode*, 88-89.

[192] Quentin Skinner, "The Vocabulary of Renaissance Republicanism: A Cultural Longue-durée?" in: *Language and Images of Renaissance Italy*, ed. Alison Brown (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 108. Thus, in the medieval period the term was occasionally applied to the Hungarian Kingdom (Bak, *Königtum und Stände*, 28). For various meanings of this word in the late Middle Ages, see: Wolfgang Mager, "Res publica chez les juristes, théologiens et philosophes à la fin du Moyen Âge: sur l'élaboration d'une notion-clé de la théorie politique moderne," in: *Théologie et droit dans la science politique de l'État modern* (Rome: Ecole Française de Rome, 1991), 229-239.

[193] Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: CUP, 1978), passim, especially, 41-48, 53-54; 144-52; 152-189.

sovereignty over Ragusa in any way.[194] Yet describing one's community as a *respublica* in the fifteenth century was far from completely harmless. Namely, besides designating a specific form of government, the term also connoted a wise constitution and political sovereignty – after all, Classical Rome, the model state in Renaissance thought, was itself a "republic." Such connotations were probably the reason why Venice, the veteran of republicanism, for centuries systematically refused to apply this title to its former colony, addressing Ragusa only as a "community" (*communità*) or "city" (*città*).[195]

Besides designating their city with such a polyvalent term which – as they surely knew -- could have meant everything or nothing, the Ragusans of the mid-fifteenth century also accentuated their self-governance through a number of symbolic practices. Thus, it is telling that during the 1440s the self-proclaimed "republic" minted coins which, instead of bearing the customary name of the city, displayed another word – *libertas*.[196] Even more important for Ragusan self-representation was a series of privileges which the city gained from the Hungarian kings of the period. Thus, in 1456 Ladislas Posthumous issued three charters to Ragusa, showering it with symbolic prerogatives which suggested a highly autonomous and prestigious constitutional status. The king elevated the Ragusan rector to the title of *archirector*, granted the city the right to mint golden coins, gave it a new coat of arms, and, finally, allowed it to seal documents with red wax. In fact, out of all these privileges Ragusa

[194] In fact, in 1454 the Hungarian king, Ladislas Posthumous, was among the first rulers to address Ragusa in such a way (Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 1, tomus 2, 564). Nonetheless, one has the impression that the Hungarian kings preferred to keep calling the city by the traditional terms *communitas* or, simply, *civitas*, since there are only a few instances of them using the term republic (i.e., three letters by Ladislas the Posthumous and one by Mathias Corvinus): *Diplomatarium,* 593, 637; Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje* book 1, tomus 2, 564, 600-602. For examples of Ragusa as a *communitas* or, more rarely, a *civitas* in the letters of Hungarian kings, see: *Diplomatarium*, 455, 550, 614, 621, 634, 649, 650, 685; Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje*, book 1, tomus 2, 656, 666, 667, 674, 700, 734, 788. For fifteenth-century examples in which Ragusans called themselves *respublica* to Hungarian kings or Croatian bans, see: *Diplomatarium*, 351, 365, 381, 436, 461, 469, 470, 473, 474, 504, 519, 581, 584, 600.

[195] One relatively late episode illustrates this Venetian attitude very well. In 1766 a scandal broke out in the ducal administration since an official letter from 1763 was found in which the Dalmatian city was addressed as a "republic." After consulting the handbook of intitulation, the officials discovered that one copy clearly stated Ragusa was given only the titles of "community" or "city", while in the other – to their great surprise – these titles were crossed out in ink. This led to no less than an official investigation by the *Inquisitori di Stato*, who, despite interrogating numerous witnesses, failed to discover anything except yet another letter, this time from 1756, in which Ragusa was *con egual disordine* again called republic. For the documents concerning this case see: Archivio di Stato di Venezia (henceforth: ASV), *Inquisitori di stato*, busta 208, no. 34; ASV, *Inquisitori di stato*, busta 1219, "Processi e carte politiche 1753-1766", no. 135. This scandal was probably the result of decades-long work of Trajan Lalić, the unofficial Ragusan representative in Venice. For Lalić see: Ilija Mitić, "Za Serenissimu – Dubrovnik samo komuna nikad republika" [For Serenissima – Ragusa was only a commune, never a Republic] *Dubrovnik* 5 (1976): 65-69; Ilija Mitić, "Trajan Lalić – jedan od zaslužnih podanika Dubrovačke republike" [Trajan Lalić – one of the Meritorious Subjects of the Ragusan Republic] *Dubrovački horizonti* 16-17 (1976-1977): 119-122.

[196] Antonije Benussi, "Jedan nepoznati dubrovački novac. Prilog dubrovačkoj numizmatici" [An Unknown Example of Ragusan Coinage. A Contribution to Ragusan Numismatics] *Zbornik iz dubrovačke prošlosti: Milanu Rešetaru o 70-oj godišnjici života prijatelji i učenici*, ed. Vladimir Ćorović et al. (Dubrovnik, 1931), 73.

actively used only one, but the most significant. From 1456 it sealed its official documents with red wax, which was a prerogative usually only belonging to independent rulers, but also granted to some of the free royal towns in contemporary Hungary.[197] Ragusan autonomy was again symbolically acknowledged in 1466, when Matthias Corvinus granted the rector the right to have a sword carried in front of him. In this context the sword was a sign of *ius gladii* – the right to absolve from or condemn to death – and in the symbolic vocabulary of the epoch this privilege signalled that the ruler had renounced supreme jurisdiction in favour of the community.[198]

It is within the broad ideological context sketched above that one should interpret an important visual monument erected by the patrician government in this period – the so-called column of Orlando. This massive stone block, which bore a deep relief of Roland, Charlemagne's famous paladin, depicted with a drawn sword and shield, was set up at the city's main square in 1419.[199] Such a monument was unusual for Dalmatia, even for the Mediterranean in general, since most similar statues of Roland (*Rolandsäule*) are to be found on the territories belonging to the Holy Roman Empire, especially in the northern regions. Although the meaning of northern *Rolandsäulen* is still a matter of debate, the dominant opinion is that they symbolized urban autonomy. More precisely, they stood for the claim that the self-governance of a city originated from a privilege granted by Charlemagne or, at least, by one of his imperial heirs (the so-called *Kaiserrecht*).[200] If one "translates" this traditional

[197] For the text of Ladislas' privileges see Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje* book 1, tomus 2, 588-602 (one should add that in two of these charters Ragusa is addressed as a *respublica*). For the red seal and its meaning, see: Milan Rešetar, *Dubrovačka numizmatika* [Ragusan Numismatics] vol. 1 (Beograd: Srpska kraljevska akademija nauka i umetnosti, 1924), 558; Gregor Čremošnik, "Dubrovački pečati srednjeg vijeka" [Ragusan Medieval Seals], *Anali Historijskog instituta JAZU u Dubrovniku* IV-V (1956): 34. For an example of seals with the red wax in the Hungarian royal town, see: András Kubinyi, "Buda város pecséthasználatának alakulása," *Tanulmányok Budapest Múltjából* 14 (1961): footnote 252. I am grateftul to Katalin Szende for this reference.

[198] For Matthias' charter see: *Diplomatarium*, 626-627. On the meaning of this privilege see Lonza, *Kazalište vlasti*, 69.

[199] The new monumental column (*carrus*) replaced the older one which was probably made of wood and perhaps also bore a depiction of Roland. On Orlando see: Ilija Mitić, "Orlandov stup" [Orlando's Column], *Anali Historijskog instituta JAZU u Dubrovniku* 10/11 (1966): 233-254; Igor Fisković, "Skulptura u urbanističkom usavršavanju renesansnog Dubrovnika" [Sculpture in the Urbanistic Embellishments of renaissance Ragusa] in: *Reljef renesansnog Dubrovnika* [A Relief ofRenaissance Dubrovnik] (Dubrovnik: Matica Hrvatska, 1993), 91-95; Giuseppe Gelcich, *Dello sviluppo civile di Ragusa* (Ragusa, 1884), 49-52; Janeković, *Okvir slobode*, 382-383; Bernardica Pavlović, "Roland's Column in Dubrovnik: His Role, His Changes and His Permanence," in *Orlandovi europski putevi* [Roland's European Paths], ed. Adrijana Kremenjaš-Daničić (Dubrovnik: Europski dom Dubrovnik, 2006), 420-426.

[200] Dietlinde Munzel-Everling Taunusstein, "Kaiserrecht und Rolandfiguren - ein weiterer Beitrag zur Rolandforschung," *Forum Historiae Iuris* (1997): sections 13, 55-63; available at: http://fhi.rg.mpg.de/articles/9709munzel-everling.htm (accessed on 10 December 2010); *Lexikon des Mittelalters*: entry "Kaiserrecht;" entry "Rolandfigur, -säule." For an extensive overview of the research and secondary literature on Roland's statues: Dieter Pötschke, "Roland und Recht. Ursprung und rechtliche Bedeutung insbesondere der märkischen Rolandstandbilder," 44-132 in *Rolande, Kaiser und Recht. Zur Rechtsgeschichte des Harzraums und seiner*

meaning of Roland's statues into the somewhat different political context of the Hungarian Kingdom, the Ragusan Orlando should be seen as signifying that the city enjoyed autonomy which had been granted by the supreme political authority, the king of Hungary. While this might have been its politically correct connotation, judging by the contemporary attempts at redefining Ragusa's status it seems that the royal privilege was not what the patriciate wanted to accentuate with this monument. More likely, the patricians were after the other two traditional connotations of *Rolandsäulen*: broad urban autonomy and the ruler's obligation to protect it. That Orlando was a symbol of autonomy is confirmed by the fact that it was also called *columna regiminis* and that the statue held a sword which probably signified supreme jurisdiction. Moreover, in the public life of the city the column served a series of functions all of which suggested urban self-governance. It was a place where the governmental decrees were proclaimed, the state flag raised on ceremonial occasions, public speeches made, and criminals exposed in various punitive rituals.[201] However, erected at the height of the alarming Venetian reconquest of Dalmatia, the column was obviously also meant as a symbol of the powerful protection which the city enjoyed. This is suggested by the unusual choice of Roland's column, a culturally distant symbol, which, due to its oddity was an even clearer allusion to Ragusa's formidable sovereign -- King Sigismund of Luxemburg, himself an emperor-elect coming from a family well-known for propagating the cult of Charlemagne.[202] All in all, Orlando's column was a symbol which aptly summarized the main ideological concerns of early fifteenth-century Ragusa, signalling that it was a city with broad self-governance which was protected by one of the most powerful rulers of the period.

To sum up, the first decades of the fifteenth century were a period in which Ragusans began to redefine their relationship towards the Hungarian Kingdom, laying the foundations of what was to eventually become the ideology of a fully independent republic. However, far from proclaiming their independence, in this period the patricians were after a more subtle ideological goal. They sought to legitimize such an interpretation of the city's constitutional status, which would enable them to continue enjoying factual independence at the same time being able to invoke the powerful protection of their nominal Hungarian sovereign. In other words, the patriciate sought to legalize the current position of the city which, however, rested

Umgebung, ed. Dieter Pötschke (Berlin: Lukas Verlag, 1999). For the meaning of Roland's columns see also the contributions by Dietlinde Munzel-Everling and Gudrun Wittek in the same volume.

[201] For a mid-fifteenth century description of the purposes for which Orlando was used, see: de Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika*, 95, 177. On the same topic see also: Mitić, "Orlandov stup," 247-251; Nella Lonza, "La giustizia in scena: punizione e spazio pubblico nella Repubblica di Ragusa," *Acta Histriae* 10, no. 1 (2002), 168.

[202] Munzel-Everling, "Kaiserrecht und Rolandfiguren," sections 34-35; 60-62; Dieter Pötschke, "Rolandovi kipovi u Europi," [Roland's Statues in Europe] in *Orlandovi europski putevi*, 210.

on fragile legal grounds since Ragusa's status was defined by the Visegrád charter in absolutist rhetoric. The core of the problem was that this charter, albeit guaranteeing broad privileges, at the same time clearly proclaimed that the city's autonomy was a result of royal grant – and as such it was revocable and dependent on the sovereign's will. One strategy for avoiding this unpleasant implication consisted of describing the city's relationship with its ruler through the vocabulary of the *sacra corona*, the Holy Crown of Hungary. Claiming that their constitutional ties were with the abstract entity of the "Crown," represented as the true bearer of sovereignty, the Ragusans were able to inscribe the status they desired into the normative legal fiction of the *corona*, thereby fixing it beyond the reach of the concrete king(s). However, an even more influential strategy for legalizing the city's self-governance was historical, focusing on the very root of the problem -- the Visegrád charter itself. Seeking to prove that Ragusan liberty was independent from the king's will, the city's apologists began to tendentiously misrepresent the circumstances, motives, and protagonists of the acknowledgement of Hungarian sovereignty in 1358. What was historically a necessary submission to a vastly superior king became a freely initiated and conditional agreement by which the Ragusans "elected" Louis of Anjou to be their ruler. Representing the events of 1358 in such a way enabled the Ragusans to interpret the relationship between their city and its ruler not in terms of submission, even conquest, but in terms of *contract*. Although one side was acknowledged as inferior and owed fidelity, whereas the other was superior and owed protection, from the Ragusan perspective this relationship was clearly contractual. It was entered into *freely*, it could be changed only through *mutual* consent, and it could be broken legitimately if *either side* failed to fulfil its obligation. Such a reinterpretation of 1358 had one highly subversive implication which was articulated with increasing clarity as the fifteenth century went by: Ragusa was, at least potentially, *a fully independent state.*

A most embarrassing relationship: Ragusa as an Ottoman tributary state

Exactly as it articulated such elaborate justification for its factual independence, Ragusa was faced with a new and far more serious threat to its liberty than the Hungarian king – the Ottoman Empire. From the first decades of the fifteenth century the Ottomans rapidly expanded in the Balkan hinterland of the city, turning the neighbouring magnates into their vassals and conquering areas of vital importance for Ragusan trade. Despite the growing Ottoman pressure, the patrician government long avoided opening official diplomatic contacts with the "infidel." It was finally forced to send an official embassy to the Sublime Porte in 1430, trying to gain the sultan's support during the disastrous war with one of his vassals, the

neighbouring duke, Radoslav Pavlović. As a result of this mission, the sultan issued the first charter (*ahdname*) to the city, allowing Ragusans to trade freely in his dominions with no obligation in return. However, in the next two charters -- from 1442 and 1458 – the Sublime Porte was far more demanding. Although the sultan explicitly proclaimed that the Ragusans would remain "in their laws and their liberties," guaranteeing not to interfere in the city's self-government, these documents nonetheless contained two politically delicate provisions: the city had to promise to be "faithful" to the sultan and to send him an annual tribute. In other words, albeit continuing to acknowledge Hungarian sovereignty, in the mid-fifteenth century Ragusa became a tributary state of the Ottoman Empire.

Although this arrangement was largely imposed upon the city, which feared a direct Ottoman assault, in the long run it turned out to be quite profitable. In return for a somewhat vague "fidelity," annual tribute, and occasional military support (e.g., supplying information, strategic resources or skilled labour), Ragusa kept its factual independence, gaining the sultan's protection and privileged access to the lucrative markets of the empire. Due to its usefulness to both sides, this arrangement proved surprisingly long-lasting. With one short interruption in the seventeenth century, the city remained an Ottoman tributary continuously from 1458 until the very fall of the Republic in the Napoleonic era.[203]

All of this, of course, left the Ragusans with a great deal of explaining to do. Exactly in the period when the first assertions of the city's independence emerged, it had to enter into a relationship which looked suspiciously like submission to a new overlord who, worse still, was an "infidel" monarch. Thus, from the mid-fifteenth century Ragusans were faced with the problem of reconciling their increasingly explicit claims to independence with being a tribute-payer to a Muslim empire. One should keep in mind, moreover, that such an ideological defence of *libertas* had to be articulated for two quite different audiences: Ottoman and Christian. As concerned the Ottomans, Ragusan diplomats had quite a demanding task since the tribute and "fidelity" the city promised had a clear meaning in the Islamic legal tradition. According to Islamic law, all tribute-paying states were considered to have acknowledged the supreme rule of the sultan and become integral parts of his "divinely-protected possessions" (*memālik-i mahrūse*), with the population turning into Ottoman subjects (*dhimmī* or, more

[203] Basic overviews of the Ottoman-Ragusan relationship are: Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska u XIV i XV veku*; Popović, *Turska i Dubrovnik u XVI veku*; Vuk Vinaver, *Dubrovnik i Turska u osamnaestom veku* [Ragusa and Turkey in the Eighteenth Century] (Belgrade: Naučno delo, 1960); Vesna Miović-Perić, *Na razmeđu: osmansko-dubrovačka granica (1667.-1806.)* [On the Frontier: the Ottoman-Ragusan Border, 1667-1806] (Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti Hrvatske akademije, 1997); idem, *Dubrovačka diplomacija u Istambulu*.

generally, *re'āyā*).[204] As this chapter will show, such an interpretation was unacceptable to the Ragusan government, which persistently struggled against it, attempting to legitimize a drastically different understanding of the city's status at the Sublime Porte. When it came to representing the tributary status to Western audiences, the situation was equally problematic, just in a different way. Not only was the liberty of the city at stake but, perhaps even more, its Christian loyalties. Namely, in the Renaissance epoch, when crusading ideals were still quite powerful, making a treaty with an infidel state, even enjoying an obviously profitable relationship with it, was politically quite dangerous.[205] For a merchant-city like Ragusa it could have meant not only gaining an extremely bad international reputation, but also suffering concrete economic losses. As a small community which traded all over the Mediterranean, Ragusans were strongly dependent upon the goodwill of foreign rulers, including local authorities, and thus could not allow themselves to be seen as subjects and collaborators of the greatest infidel state.

All in all, the crucial ideological task of Ragusan apologists, beginning from the second half of the fifteenth century, was finding ways to trivialize, obfuscate, and justify their city's close connection with the Ottoman Empire. During the next three and a half centuries they devised several ideological strategies for this purpose, drastically reinterpreting this delicate relationship in order to show that it compromised neither the cherished "liberty" nor the Christian loyalties of their city. Before proceeding to the analysis of these strategies one more important question has to be addressed: What made it possible for Ragusans to reinterpret their relationship with the Sublime Porte in so many ways, adapting its representations to vastly different purposes and audiences?

The first important reason was that the basic documents regulating Ottoman-Ragusan relationship -- the sultan's *ahdnames* -- were surprisingly deficient when it came to precisely defining the city's political status towards the empire. As N. Biegman has stressed, their political part always remained remarkably short in comparison to those of other tributary

[204] For the Ottoman understanding of Ragusa's status, see: Nicolaas H. Biegman, *The Turco-Ragusan Relationship* (The Hague: Mouton, 1967); Zdenko Zlatar, *Between the Double Eagle and the Crescent* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1992), 26-30; Miović, *Dubrovačka diplomacija u Istambulu*, 15-20. For more details about the Ottoman legal doctrine regarding tribute-paying states in general, see the important work: Viorel Panaite, *The Ottoman Law of War and Peace. The Ottoman Empire and Tribute Payers* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 2000), passim, especially. 77-84; 127-136; 461-466.

[205] For the idea of *impium foedus*: Giulio Vismara, *Impium foedus: le origini della respublica christiana* (Milan: A. Giuffre, 1974); Tomaž Mastnak, *Crusading Peace: Christendom, the Muslim World and Western Political Order* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 108-113; 149-151. For a huge scandal and propaganda war following the Ottoman-French alliance of the 1530s see: Géraud Poumarède, "Justifier l'injustifiable: l'alliance turque au miroir de la chrétienté (XVIe–XVIIe siècles)," *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* 3 (1997): 217–246.

states, addressing the fundamentals of Ragusa's status through no more than a few laconic phrases. Moreover, the *ahdnames* were conspicuously silent on a number of crucial issues such as foreign policy, military cooperation, and the election of the ruler, all of which were strictly regulated in the case of other tributaries, thereby implying their "constitutional" position towards the sultan.[206] Besides such striking brevity and silences, what also enabled extremely different interpretations of Ragusan status was that even when the *ahdnames* did explicitly thematize the city's position towards the empire it was done through a relatively vague and benevolent vocabulary. The only clear references to the sultan's sovereignty consisted of occasional mentions of Ragusan "fidelity", "obedience" or "submission" and statements that the city would be "under the mighty protection of my Empire" or "in a state of safety and protection."[207] The comparative harmlessness of these formulations can be grasped if they are compared with those in the *ahdnames* of Transylvania, usually seen as a tributary state with a highly autonomous position. Transylvanian *ahdnames* contained formulations absolutely inconceivable for their Ragusan counterparts. For instance, they explicitly stated that the province was a part of the sultan's "divinely protected possessions," that it was "subjected to our Empire" or that the land "is given by our mercy" to the newly elected prince.[208] All of this is, of course, not to say that on the Ottoman side there was in principle any doubt regarding the sultan's supreme rule over Ragusa. Even the apparently benign formulations of Ragusan *ahdnames* -- for instance, the references to "protection" (*emn ve emān* or *himāyet*) – had clear implications of Ottoman sovereignty, even absolute rule, when interpreted in the context of Islamic law.[209] The point is, however, that those implications were never spelled out in the *ahdnames*, enabling Ragusans to interpret these fundamental texts in the most harmless way possible.

It seems that the vagueness of the *ahdnames* in defining the status of Ragusa occasionally caused confusion even on the Ottoman side.[210] Namely, when it came to

[206] For Biegman's remarks on the *ahdname*, see: Biegman, *The Turco-Ragusan Relationship,* 51-53.
[207] These examples are taken from two typical achdnames, those of Selim I (1513) and Murat III (1575) (Vesna Miović, *Dubrovačka Republika u spisima osmanskih sultana* [Ragusan Republic in the Documents of the Ottoman Sultans] (Dubrovnik: Državni arhiv u Dubrovniku, 2005), 13; Biegman, *Turco-Ragusan Relationship*, 56-57.)
[208] Sándor Papp, *Die Verleihungs-, Bekräftigungs- und Vertragsurkunden der Osmanen für Ungarn und Siebenbürgen*, Schriften der Balkan-Kommission tome 42 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2003), 193, 221, 256. The English translations are mine.
[209] Panaite, *The Ottoman Law of War and Peace*, 197.
[210] This confusion among the Ottoman bureaucrats was probably further deepened by several additional unique privileges the city enjoyed; for instance, Ragusan merchants were traditionally allowed to ride horses or carry weapons, which was otherwise not allowed to the Christian subjects of the sultan. Examples in: Miović, *Dubrovačka republika u spisima osmanskih sultana*, 169, 183. On the whole issue see also: Biegman, *The Turco-Ragusan relationship,* 84-85.

determining the precise legal standing of the city and its population, other Ottoman documents were sometimes even more ambiguous than the *ahdnames,* occasionally even falling into blatant contradictions. For instance, Ragusa was sometimes explicitly included among the sultan's "divinely-protected possessions," which meant that it was seen as an integral part of the empire. However, on other occasions it was clearly distinguished from them, implying that the city was a foreign state.[211] Similarly, Ottoman officials usually referred to Ragusans as the sultan's subjects (*dhimmī* or *re'āyā*). Yet occasionally they explicitly distinguished between Ragusans and the inhabitants of *Dār al-Islām* or numbered Ragusans among foreign "Franks" – which in both cases suggested that they were not under the rule of the sultan.[212]

It should be stressed that the conspicuous silences and the vague wording of the *ahdnames* were probably the result of Ragusan diplomatic efforts. There are indications that in the earliest phase of the Ragusan-Ottoman relationship, when the standard formulations of the *ahdnames* were being established, the city's government insisted on such a vague and ambivalent vocabulary. Thus, as early as 1442, the envoys sent to negotiate at the Sublime Porte were told that the city was ready to give an annual tribute, but, importantly, "as a sign of respect (*honor*), not as *kharāj*."[213] It seems that the Ragusans did manage to persuade the Ottomans to use such euphemistic terminology, at least for a while. The tribute – in Islamic tradition (*kharāj*), a clear sign of submission – was indeed in the Ottoman documents until the late 1460s referred to as a "gift" (*dar*).[214] The Ragusan government clearly tried to soften the most compromising part of the arrangement, the tribute, by labelling it a "gift" or a "sign of respect," that is, by representing it as something which did not connote submission, but was given freely and without obligation. Similar attempts at relativizing the tributary status can also be detected in the peculiar way in which the early *ahdnames* characterized the relationship between the city and the empire. In the important *ahdnames* of 1442 and 1458 it was described both surprisingly briefly and vaguely, merely as arranging "the true faith and genuine love" between the sultan and the patriciate.[215] Although the Sublime Porte soon

[211] Ibid., 35.
[212] For an elaborate discussion of such instances see: Ibid., 33-34, 48.
[213] The precise exprssion in the Italian text of the instruction is: *per honor et non per harazo*. On the 1442 negotiations, see: Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska,* 91-92.
[214] In the archaic Slavic of the earliest Ottoman charters the word used was *dar*. Examples are to be found in: Ljuba Stojanović, *Stare srpske povelje i pisma* [Old Serbian Charters and Letters], vol. 1, no. 2 (Beograd-Sremski Karlovci: SKA, 1934), 234, 239, 240, 242, 245; Branislav M. Nedeljković, "Dubrovačko-turski ugovor od 23. oktobra 1458. godine" [The Ragusan-Ottoman Treaty of the 23 of October 1458] *Zbornik Filozofskog Fakulteta* 9, no. 1 (1970): 371, 384, 390-91
[215] The Slavic text of these two documents mentions *pravu veru i ljubov namesnu*. They were published by: Stanojević, *Stare srpske povelje i pisma*, I/2, 233; Nedeljković, "Ugovor," 390.

became less cautious with words – for instance, by the 1470s the tribute came to be called *kharāj*[216] – during the early modern period the city's status continued to be described through a relatively harmless vocabulary. This was doubtlessly the result of constant diplomatic vigilance of the Ragusan government which, as shall be shown below, not only occasionally protested about the formulations of Ottoman documents, but always chose the wording regarding the tributary status with extreme caution.

Besides the ambivalences of the *ahdnames*, another factor which facilitated the vastly differing interpretations of Ragusa's status was the following fact of paramount importance: the relationship between the Ottomans and the Republic was established over a civilisational border, between two sides which had totally different legal and political cultures. In other words, the already non-revealing documents which defined that relationship were interpreted from completely different legal and political perspectives. While the Ottomans understood them in the context of the Hanafite school of Islamic law, Ragusans understood them in the context of Western political thought, accentuating, not surprisingly, the more contractualistic elements. Although aware of the Ottoman understanding of crucial concepts connected to the tributary status, Ragusans interpreted them exclusively within the context of their own political tradition. As is revealed by the examples which follow, such *re-contextualization* became the basic ideological manoeuvre whenever Ragusans had to interpret their tributary status. In front of the Ottomans it was done with a great deal of caution, accompanied with bribes and humble declamations of loyalty, while in front of the Christian audiences, unfamiliar with Ottoman traditions, it was done far more blatantly. Nonetheless, in both cases the essential procedure remained the same; the Ragusans used the fact that the two sides spoke different languages of politics in order to ensure that many unpleasant meanings conveniently got "lost in translation."[217]

Although numerous examples of such ideological manoeuvres are mentioned later in the text, some illustrations are needed for clarity already at this point. Probably the most revealing example is the concept of tribute itself. While in the Islamic law the payment of

[216] In fact, the term the Ottomans used was not the original Arabic term *kharāj*, but its Slavic transliteration, *harač.* The examples of Ottomans calling the tribute *harač* during the 1470s and 1480s are to be found in: Stojanović, *Stare srpske povelje i pisma*, I/2, 246, 249, 254, 255, 256, 260, 264, 267, 269, 271. Moreover, by the 1470s the sultan began to issue "commands" to Ragusans addressing them as his "servants" (for "servants," see: Stojanović, *Stare srpske povelje i pisma*, I/2, 251, 255, 268, 265; for "commands," see: Ibid., 251, 252 , 254, 255, 257, 258, 267, 274.)

[217] For more on the Ragusan (ab)uses of the profound civilisational difference from the Ottomans, see: Lovro Kunčević, "The Janus-Faced Sovereignty: the International Status of the Early Modern Ragusan Republic"' in *The Tributary States of the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Gábor Kármán and Lovro Kunčević (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming).

kharāj automatically signified acknowledging the supreme rule of its recipient, in the Western tradition *tributum/tributo* was a conventional diplomatic tool which did not necessarily imply submission, but could have been given for other reasons as well. It could be paid for the possession of certain territories, as a price of economic privileges, a military alliance or peace itself, none of which conferred inferior legal status on its payer (although it usually did hurt his prestige). Not surprisingly, as will be amply demonstrated below, it was this Western understanding of tribute that the Ragusans adopted when interpreting the meaning of their annual payment to the Ottomans, thereby denying the sultan's sovereignty over their Republic.[218]

Similar "softening" was also applied to other politically compromising concepts traditionally used to describe tributary status in both Ottoman and Ragusan documents: "fidelity" (*sadākat/fedeltà*), "servitude" (*ubūdiyyet/servitù*), "obedience" (*itāat/obedienza*), and "protection" (*emn ve emān* or *himāyet/prottetione*). While in the Islamic law these concepts had clear connotations of submission, in Western diplomatic jargon – especially its extremely humble Ragusan variant – their meaning was much less compromising.[219] From the Western perspective they could be understood merely as rhetorically ornate expressions of diplomatic goodwill which undoubtedly implied a certain inferiority of the giver but not his political allegiance. That exactly was the way the Ragusan government used them, applying them massively and indiscriminately not only to the Sublime Porte, but in communication with *any* relatively important foreign government. Thus, in almost every letter to a major Christian prince the senate proclaimed its "fidelity," "obedience" or "servitude," humbly invoking his "protection." That is to say, words similar to the politically compromising concepts typical of Ottoman documents were in fact already part of the traditionally humble Ragusan diplomatic jargon and were routinely used to describe the city's relationship with *all* the important princes. Thus, when they emerged in the communication with the Porte or were used to describe the city's relationship with the sultan to a third party, their meaning was not particularly repressive – at least from the Ragusan perspective. To state it more abstractly, the

[218] For the connotations of *kharāj* in Islamic law and the possibility that the Christian side interpreted it in a different way see: Panaite, *The Ottoman Law*, 205-207; Biegman, *The Turco-Ragusan relationship*, 32. The Ragusan interpretation was rendered even more believable by the fact that Ragusans traditionally paid a number of politically "harmless" tributes for the possession of parts of their territories and various privileges abroad - and therefore it was only natural that they attempted to represent *harac* as something similar. On some of the tributes the city paid, see: Mihajlo Dinić, "Dubrovački tributi: Mogoriš, Svetodmitarski i Konavoski dohodak, Provižun braće Vlatkovića" [Ragusan Tributes: the Mogoriš, the Tribute for St. Demetrius and Konavle, the Provižun of Brothers Vlatković] *Glas SAN* 168 (1935): 203-257.

[219] These concepts were normally used by the Ottoman chancellery to define the relationship of tributary princes with the Porte. Panaite, *The Ottoman Law*, 197. They sometimes also appear in the *ahdname* issued to foreign states such as Venice or Poland due to the Ottoman legal fiction of the sultan's universal rule.

Ragusan government consistently used these concepts in a way which clearly suggested that they were to be interpreted not within the framework of Islamic law, anyhow utterly alien to the Republic's legal tradition, but within the completely different context of Christian diplomatic rhetoric. The result of such re-contextualization was extremely convenient; what was originally an assertion of Ottoman sovereignty became a harmless diplomatic phrase.[220]

Of course, with the passing of time such chronic "misunderstanding" between Ragusa and Istanbul became increasingly obvious. However, all the obscurities and ambivalences regarding the tributary status cherished by Ragusans were tolerated by the Sublime Porte since they actually suited the Ottoman interests as well. The reason lay in the important function which Ragusa performed for the empire. For centuries the small city-state served as one of the main mediators between the Ottoman commonwealth and Christian Europe. Not only did it transfer massive amounts of information and goods between them, but it occasionally also served as an agent of the Sublime Porte in the Christian world, performing "insider" tasks otherwise beyond the reach of Istanbul.[221] Such functions required not only the factual independence of the city -- preserved by the extremely generous *ahdnames* – but also required that Christian princes perceive it as an independent and neutral state. The strong ties between the city and the Porte had to be obscured since it was hard to imagine that Christian rulers would have been ready to grant the Ragusans broad economic privileges, complete freedom of movement, even the right to export strategic resources were they seen as mere Ottoman subjects. The Sublime Porte could afford such a generous arrangement since, if need arose, it had effective informal means of controlling the city. Namely, Ragusa was completely at the mercy of the vastly superior Ottoman Empire, which not only completely surrounded it from the land side from the 1480s, but also controlled the Balkan hinterland crucial for its trade.

With all the aforementioned in mind, one can proceed to the analysis of what was probably the most delicate task of Ragusan diplomacy: representing the city's close ties with the Ottomans to Christian Europe. The profound discomfort connected to this issue can be seen from the fact that during the late fifteenth and the early sixteenth century Ragusans devised no less than three different rhetorical strategies in order to trivialize, obfuscate or

[220] When it came to such "convenient" translations the most problematic concept was clearly that of "subjection/submission," which also occasionally appeared in Ottoman documents. Yet even here there are examples of it being used as a non-obliging flattering phrase towards Western rulers. For example, the Ragusan ambassador to the pope in 1570 stated that his city never wavered in its fidelity towards the Holy See but "was always most obedient and subject to it" (*anzi che sempre g'è stata obedientissima et soggetta*) (DAD, *Lettere di Ponente* 1 (1566-1570) f. 224r).

[221] Thus, for instance, in 1499, the Ottomans used Ragusa to deliver their military aid to Milan, trying to keep it at war with France (Popović, *Turska i Dubrovnik*, 23-24.)

justify their tributary status. The first and simplest was silence, an attempt to hide the whole arrangement from the Christian public. Such an approach was apparently taken as early as March 1458, when the Ragusans were negotiating with Mechmed II what was to become the most important *ahdname*, a model for all the later ones. After having agreed on the instructions to its negotiators with the Ottomans, the senate decided that the envoys to the new Hungarian king, Matthias Corvinus, were to be sent, intriguingly, without any "addition." It is not hard to guess what that "addition" should have been; probably the senate decided not to notify the king about its decision to once more turn Ragusa into a tributary state.[222] Although it is hard to be certain since most of Ragusan diplomatic material between the 1460s and the 1490s has been lost, it seems that this kind of silence was typical for the city's diplomacy of the period. This can be inferred from the preserved correspondence from the 1490s, in which Ragusa kept silent regarding its tributary status, representing itself as nothing but a poor Catholic city bravely defying the Ottoman menace.[223] Such tendentious silence is also confirmed by the laudatory and compassionate rhetoric of Christian rulers towards the city during the second half of the fifteenth century. For instance, in their communications with Ragusa, the Hungarian kings did not once mention the tribute it paid to the Ottomans or its connection to the Sublime Porte in general. Quite the contrary, they persistently lauded the city's faithfulness [sic] and insisted on its great merits for the Hungarian Kingdom and the Catholic religion, both of which it allegedly defended from the neighbouring "tyrant."[224] Other Christian rulers, such as the pope or the king of Naples, also echoed what was clearly the standard Ragusan rhetoric of the period. If they mentioned Ragusa's relationship with Ottomans at all, they always depicted it in the most catastrophic of terms as the confrontation of a small Christian city with an aggressive infidel empire.[225]

[222] Namely, in 1447 the tributary relationship, established by the *ahdname* of 1442 was cancelled, to be restored only in 1458. On the senate's decision in March 1458 and these negotiations in general, see: Nedeljković, "Dubrovačko-turski ugovor od 23. oktobra 1458. godine," 372, passim.

[223] For instance: Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 1, tomus 2, 802, 819; *Diplomatarium*, 642, 646, 661.

[224] For instance *Diplomatarium*, 620, 626, 634, 635, 636-637, 641, 650.

[225] For the kings of Naples, see: Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 1, tomus 2, 662, 748-749, 778. For the papacy: Augustino Theiner, *Vetera monumenta Slavorum Meridionalium historiam illustrantia*, tomus 1 (Zagreb: Academia Scientarum et Artium Slavorum Meridionalium, 1863), 504; 515-516. Of course, the fact that Christian rulers did not mention tributary status when corresponding with Ragusa does not mean they were not aware that the city had close contacts with the Ottomans. In fact, although normally avoiding it, Ragusans themselves occasionally admitted their ties with the Sublime Porte to the Christian powers (see, for instance: Vićentije Makušev, *Istorijski spomenici južnih Slovena i okolnih naroda* [Historical Monuments of the South Slavs and Other Peoples], tome 2 (Belgrade: Štamparija Kraljevine Srbije, 1882), 55, 56). Moreover, even if Ragusans tried to hide their relationship with the "infidels," their Venetian rivals were eager to publicize it. They did it, for example, to the Hungarian king in 1466; although not mentioning the city's tributary status, the *Serenissima*'s diplomats insisted that the Ragusans had helped the Ottomans in their recent war against Venice (Iván Nagy, Albert Nyáry ed., *Magyar diplomacziai emlékek Mátyás király korából 1458-1490*, tomus 2 [Hungarian Diplomatic Documents from the Age of King Matthias 1458-1490] (Budapest: A M. Tud. Akadémia,

If the first line of Ragusa's defence was silence about the tributary status, the second was representing it as a completely harmless arrangement. While diplomacy preferred silence, attempts at trivializing the city's relationship with Ottomans appeared in historiography and in the reports of travellers, who clearly repeated what they had been told by the Ragusans themselves. Apparently the most widespread strategy of downplaying the significance of the tributary status was representing it as a purely economic arrangement which had nothing to do with politics. Thus, in the 1480s, the first genuine historian of the city, the so-called Anonymous Annalist, explained the beginnings of the tributary status in the following way: "The Ragusans began paying a tribute of 500 ducats to the great Turk, Baiasit bey (sic!), *in order to be able to trade in his country*."[226] Similar "economic" explanations of the tribute were repeated by the majority of later historians, who further revealed their desire to trivialize the treaties with the Ottomans by rarely dedicating more than a few suspiciously casual sentences to them.[227] Another similar strategy of downplaying the relationship with the Ottomans was interpreting the tribute as the price of peace with the Sublime Porte, a way of ensuring its non-aggression. This strategy is found, for instance, in the travelogue of Count Johannes Solms, who visited Dubrovnik in 1483: "In that city the municipality is for itself and is governed by itself, does not recognise any lord, but pays an annual tribute to the King of Hungary, and does the same with the Turks in order to *be at peace with them*."[228] In sum, whether representing the tribute as the price of economic privileges or non-aggression, in both cases the Ragusans did essentially the same thing -- they applied the ideological manoeuvre of tendentious re-contextualization mentioned above. That is, ignoring the connotations of submission which the tribute had in Islamic law, they interpreted it in the context of Western

1877), 19-20). Regardless of such isolated examples, two general points can safely be made: first, during the late fifteenth century Ragusans normally avoided mentioning the tributary status in their diplomacy with Western powers; second, although increasingly aware of the city's ties with the Ottomans, contemporary Christian princes probably had a relatively vague idea of their nature and extent.

[226] *Annales*, 54. The Annalist mistakenly dated this event to 1416, apparently believing the sultan at that time was Bayyezid I.

[227] Some examples are: *Annales*, 248; Razzi, *Storia*, 55 (although, following Tubero, he gives a much harsher characterization of the Ragusa's status on p. 60]; Resti, *Chronica*, 147, 153; Johann Christian von Engel, *Geschichte des Freystaates Ragusa* (Vienna: Anton Doll, 1807), 141. Although repeating this kind of explanation, some versions of the *Annales* simultaneously display a clear unease with the whole arrangement, as if their authors felt it meant renouncing liberty for the sake of economic gain; see: SAD, *Memoriae* 24 Dell origine della città di Ragusa. Ms. f 20v; SAD, Memoriae 8, *Brevi notizie sulla fondazione di Ragusa estratte da un antico anonimo (usque a. 1771)*, f 33v, f 41r.

[228] Petar Matković, "Putovanja po Balkanskom poluotoku za Srednjega vijeka" [Travels on the Balkan Penninsula during the Middle Ages] *Rad JAZU* 42 (1878): 122; Tadić, *Promet putnika*, 185. A similar explanation appears in Luccari, *Copioso ristretto*, 88, 95. Some authors mentiuoned both trade and non-agression as the reasons for paying the tribute, for instance: Francesco Suriano, *Il Trattato di terra santa e dell'oriente di frate Francesco Suriano missionario e viaggiatore del scolo XV.* Girolamo Golubovich, ed., (Milan: Tipografia editrice artigianelli, 1900), 251; Appendini, *Notizie*, tome 1, 295-296.

political traditions, thus transforming it into a harmless diplomatic practice between the two neighbouring states.

Such a reinterpretation of the Ottoman tribute, together with the aforementioned redefinition of the relationship with the Hungarian Kingdom, made possible perhaps the most important novelty of the late fifteenth century: the emergence of the first clear claims that Ragusa was a fully independent state. An excellent example is the travelogue of Count Solms, which quite unequivocally states that the city "does not recognize *any* lord," albeit mentioning the Hungarian and Ottoman tributes it paid. Similar statements also appear in the works of other contemporary travel writers. Thus, Arnold Harff (visited in 1499) describes Ragusa as "its own master," despite both tributes, while Georges Lengherand (visited in 1485) remarks in the same vein: "The city *is not subjected to anyone* except that it pays tribute to the Turks and to the King of Hungary."[229] The frequency and similarity of such remarks suggests that they were what the travellers had heard from Ragusans themselves -- who were ready to admit that they paid tribute to both the Hungarian king and the Ottoman sultan, but not that these tributes implied submission.[230] Since the travel-writers usually did not specify what they were told regarding the meaning of these tributes, it is hard to be certain how Ragusans relativized them. While the Ottoman tribute was probably redefined through the customary claim that it was a price of economic privileges, non-aggression, or both, the Hungarian one was most likely rendered politically harmless along the lines sketched earlier in this chapter. It was represented either as a payment for contractually defined protection or even as a mere "gift" (in fact, one travel writer, P. Casola, does refer to it as *dono*).[231] Regardless of such finer

[229] On Harff, see: Tadić, *Promet putnika*, 192; Matković, *Putovanja po Balkanskom poluotoku*, 125-127. Lengerhand's description was quoted from: Tadić, *Promet putnika u starom Dubrovniku*, 188. For similar, albeit later, descriptions of Dubrovnik as an independent state paying tribute as the price of peace, see: Tadić, *Promet putnika*, 202; Matković, *Putovanja po Balkanskom poluotoku*, 121-123.

[230] For other fifteenth-century travelogues in which Ragusa was represented as an independent state despite the tributes it paid, see: Anna Laura Momigliano Lepschy, ed., *Viaggio in Terrasanta di Santo Brasca (1480) con l'Itinerario di Gabriele Capodilista (1458)* (Milan: Longanesi & C, 1966), 58; Alda Rossebastiano and Simona Fenoglio, ed., *Viaggio in Oriente di un nobile del Quattrocento, Il pellegrinaggio di Miliaduse d'Este* (Turin: UTET, 2005), 61; Vikentij Makušev, "Nekoliko novih izvora za historiju južnih Slovena" [Several New Documents for the History of the South Slavs] *Rad JAZU* 5 (1868): 166-167; Felix Faber is the only travel writer of the period who explicitly points out that the Ragusans acknowledged the Hungarian King "as their lord," but immediately weakened the statement by saying they are "buying liberty" from him with a great deal of gold (Krasić: "Opis hrvatske jadranske obale," 186). In the same vein, many sixteenth- and seventeenth-century travel writers mentioned Ragusan tribute(s), at the same time accentuating that the city was free. Some examples are: Simeon Ljubić ed., *Commissiones et relationes venetae.* tomus II (annorum 1525-1553) MSHSM vol. 8. (Zagreb: Academia scientarum et artium slavorum meridionalium, 1877), 249; Melchior Seydlitz, *Gründtliche Beschriebung der Wallfart nach dem heiligen Lande* (Görlitz, 1591), 153; Giuseppe Rosaccio, *Viaggio da Venetia, a Costantinopoli, Per Mare e per Terra, insieme a quello di Terra Santa* (Venice: Giacomo Franco, 1598), 21-23. A number of similar statements are also to be found in the travelers' reports collected in: Tadić, *Promet putnika*, 185, 186, 188, 191, 192, 202.

[231] Makušev, "Nekoliko novih izvora," 167.

points, what seems certain is that the late fifteenth-century Ragusans began openly claiming that their city was a *de iure* independent state. However, they still did it only in the informal communication with foreigners, while their diplomatic rhetoric towards Christian Europe remained largely unchanged: they acknowledged the nominal sovereignty of the Hungarian kings, and hid or downplayed their relationship with the sultan.

The third and most influential strategy of explaining tributary status to the West was quite surprising. It consisted of admitting, even accentuating, Ragusa's close ties with the Ottomans, but at the same time insisting that they were of great use to Christianity. Although this strategy, which remained fundamental until the fall of the Republic, will be addressed in the next chapter dedicated to Ragusan discourse on the frontier, it should be briefly presented here as well. Since roughly the first decades of the sixteenth century, Ragusan diplomats at Western courts were instructed to admit – if possible "with tears in the eyes" – that the city was indeed paying an "enormous" annual tribute to the sultan. Immediately afterwards they were to make a crucial point, however: Ragusans paid that tribute not simply to preserve their city situated in the "jaws of the infidel" (*fauci de Infideli*), but even more since it enabled them to perform a series of tasks of utmost importance for the Christian faith. The Ragusan claim was that exactly due to its tributary status the city was capable of spying on the Ottomans and redeeming Christian slaves from captivity, thus significantly contributing to the joint efforts of the *Respublica Christiana* against the "infidel." Moreover, as a tributary state Ragusa was able to do something even more valuable: it could play a crucial role in preserving, even enlarging, the remaining Christian communities in the Ottoman territories. Ragusan diplomats stressed the allegedly unique privileges of their city which enabled it to support churches in infidel lands, publicly celebrate mass there, and provide legal protection to the Christian populations under Ottoman rule. In sum, Ragusans were represented as the frontiersmen of the *respublica Christiana* who voluntarily sacrificed themselves by agreeing to pay tribute in order to defend the remnants of the true religion in the Balkans.

All of this, however, does not mean that Ragusan diplomats admitted that the tributary status in any way compromised the cherished independence of their city-state. In fact, this strategy incorporated the older one which explained the tribute as the price of Ottoman non-aggression and/or Ragusan privileges in the empire. The difference between them lay in a profound change of accent. Instead of trivializing the tribute by claiming it was a minor business or a diplomatic issue, Ragusans began representing its purpose in most dramatic terms. It remained the price of Ottoman non-aggression, yet now that non-aggression meant the survival of a devout Christian city in the "jaws of the infidel." It remained the price of

privileges, yet these privileges were no longer economic, but religious, enabling the Ragusans to perform the crucial mission of preserving Christianity in the Ottoman Empire.

Importantly, these three strategies of explaining the tributary status were only the earliest signs of deep discomfort regarding the ties with the "infidel," which haunted the culture of early modern Ragusa. The highly profitable relationship with the Ottomans which the city enjoyed, together with its servile attitude and the occasional assistance it provided against the Christian states, all provoked a great deal of thought, even hushed debate, among the Ragusan elite. While the official discourse, exemplified by diplomacy and public speeches, trumpeted the city's great service to Christendom and the patriciate's wise conduct towards the "infidel," in less formal contexts a quite different picture of the Ottoman-Ragusan relationship emerged. Although historiography and literature frequently shared in the widespread panegyric tone, one occasionally finds in them much bleaker assessments of the tributary status, ranging from pessimistic resignation all the way to outright condemnation. Importantly, in such instances the central issue was less whether the tributary status compromised Ragusan *libertas*, and far more whether it was acceptable for a Christian city to cooperate with the "infidel" as closely as Ragusa did. For this reason the numerous Renaissance reflections on the justifiability of tributary status and its moral repercussions will be addressed in the following chapter, dedicated to the Ragusan discourse on the frontier. At the moment, suffice it to say that this kind of hushed criticism and deep discomfort provided the background for the official celebratory rhetoric which portrayed Ragusa as a courageous defender of the Christian faith.

However, the elaborate rhetoric with which Ragusa justified its ties with the Ottomans to the West was only half of the delicate task which the tributary status required of the city's diplomacy. An equally demanding mission was representing the relationship with the sultan in front of the Ottomans themselves, reconciling the cherished independence of the city with the need to satisfy these powerful neighbours who frequently felt that Ragusa was merely another of the empire's provinces. What surely helped the Ragusans in this demanding task was the aforementioned pragmatic attitude of the Porte, an understanding that Ragusa had to be perceived as an independent state if it were to fulfil the important task of mediator between the empire and Christian Europe.

Yet, despite all the pragmatism of the Ottoman administration, in the diplomacy towards the powerful neighbour the Ragusans were far from enthusiastic about debating the finer constitutional points of their status. For most of the time they were perfectly happy not to tackle that thorny issue at all, preferring to obfuscate it with the non-obliging humble

phrases. Thus, in front of Ottoman dignitaries they typically represented themselves as "the oldest and most devoted tribute-payers" or "the most faithful tributaries and servants of the Gate of Happiness" who had for centuries "served the Ottoman dynasty" praying "God grant long life and victories to his Highness."[232] Although this rhetoric was characterized by an extremely humble tone, a closer look makes it clear that it relied heavily on the tendentious re-contextualization mentioned above. It in fact contained nothing really prejudicial to the liberty of Ragusa, at least from the Western perspective. Choosing its wording carefully, the city's diplomacy consistently described the relationship between Ragusa and the sultan with the vague and non-obliging term "protection." Similarly, the diplomats never went beyond the general phrases about "fidelity" and "obedience" to the sultan, clearly avoiding more compromising words such as "submission." Finally, the Ragusans were usually described by relatively non-compromising terms such as "tributaries" or "servants," while the words "vassals" or "subjects" were systematically avoided.[233]For centuries such a combination of vagueness and ambivalence served Ragusan needs exceedingly well, remaining the basic rhetoric towards the Ottomans until the fall of the Republic in 1808. There were, however, rare instances in which the Ragusans deemed it necessary to open the delicate topic of the city's status, explicating their peculiar interpretation of the tributary relationship before the dignitaries of the Porte. Usually this happened in situations of profound crisis when it was estimated that contradicting the Ottomans was better than letting them act based on how they understood the city's status. Ragusan diplomats resorted to such uncharacteristic bluntness in dramatic moments when, for example, they had to resist Ottoman attempts to extort enormous sums or annex a part of the city's territory. However, even then the Ragusan diplomacy kept its traditionally servile tone. When explicated, the politically subversive discourse was usually surrounded by humble phrases about undying loyalty and readiness to serve as well as followed by a bribe.

Before proceeding to the specific Ragusan interpretation of the tributary status at the Ottoman court, one important *caveat* has to be made. Due to the aforementioned fact that most diplomatic material for the second half of the fifteenth century has been lost, this

[232] Literally any letter to the Ottoman court or instruction to diplomats sent there contained a version of such phrases. They have been excellently preserved in the archival series DAD, Lettere di Levante, a smaller part of which has been published by J. Radonić as a series *Dubrovačka akta i povelje* [Ragusan Acts and Decrees]. An excellent recent study of Ragusan-Ottoman relations is the already mentioned Miović, *Dubrovačka diplomacija.*

[233] A telling example of how the Ragusan government carefully guarded the boundaries of diplomatic rhetoric is to be found in 1605, when the senate warned its ambassadors that the word slaves (*schiavi*) with which they were addressed by the Grand Vizier should be avoided at any cost and that the senate was greatly offended and surprised "since one could say tributaries (*tributari*) or at most servants (*servi*)." (DAD, Lettere di Levante 41 (1604-1608) f. 107r-107v, letter of 30 December 1605).

interpretation can be reconstructed only on the basis of later documents from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Yet it seems plausible to assume that similar argumentation existed from the very beginnings of the tributary status in the mid-fifteenth century. As will be shown below, the Ragusan interpretation of their tributary status in front of the Ottomans was strikingly similar to the older interpretation of the city's status within the Hungarian Kingdom. It thus seems likely that, faced with a new and politically compromising situation, the proverbially conservative Ragusans simply reached out for an old and well-established ideological model.

Probably the most elaborate exposition of the Ragusan position is to be found in a very late document, a letter of the Ragusan senate to its ambassadors in Istanbul from 1677. The senate was reacting to a certain memorandum which the ambassadors had composed and distributed at the Ottoman court in order to promote the Ragusan viewpoint in a dispute with the grand vizier, who had demanded an enormous sum of money. The problem was that in the memorandum the diplomats not only interpreted the city's tributary status in a way unacceptable to the senate, but also described it using some of the usually carefully avoided words. Criticizing its diplomats point by point in its letter, the Ragusan government left a valuable explication of the "official" understanding of the city's tributary status, which is worth quoting *in extenso*:

> At the very beginning of your memorandum you assert that long ago we submitted freely to Sultan Orhan, who gave us and left us the free possession of our city. This assertion is more than prejudicial to our liberty because we never submitted to the Gran Signore, but simply recommended ourselves to his protection with the offer of an annual tribute (*raccomandatisi alla sua prottetione con offerta d'un annuo tributo*). Equally (so), the aforementioned sultan Orhan did not give us the free possession of our city, whose liberty was left to us by our ancestors and not given to us by any prince whatsoever...
>
> In the next chapter you state that all of this [the treaty with Orhan] was confirmed by all of his successors. They, however, have never sought more nor confirmed to us anything but the privileges of *ahdname* in which there is not a word about us subjecting to the sultan, nor of him leaving us free our city. Those words presume that the city was in his possession, which is not true. It is very different to say - as the *ahdname* does say - that we can freely govern and to say that he left us free our city…
>
> Finally, you conclude the document by saying that we are the most sincere tributaries and subjects. We are still amazed at you having inserted this word subjects (*sudditi*), a word so inimical to our liberty which we enjoy by the mercy of God before the whole world. There is a great difference between

> being a subject and being a tributary. Many and even great princes are tributaries of other princes, but most definitely not their subjects.[234]

The crucial point of the senate's elaboration – in which the Ragusan understanding was most at odds with the Ottoman one – was a firm insistence that the city was not under the rule of the sultan. As the senate accentuated, the Ragusans had "never submitted to Gran Signore," they were not his "subjects," the Republic's "liberty" was inherited from the ancestors and "not given to us by any prince whatsoever." Addressing the delicate moment in which the tributary status was established, both the ambassadors and the senate opted for a well-known Ragusan myth about Sultan Orhan (1281-1361), the second ruler of the nascent Ottoman Empire. According to this frequently repeated story, the prudent Ragusan patriciate had realized the future grandeur of the Ottoman Empire already in the fourteenth century and made a treaty with Sultan Orhan when the Ottomans were just a mediocre power in far-away Asia Minor. The political goal behind the legend is clear. It sought to show that the relationship with the Ottomans was negotiated with a distant sultan who was unable to coerce Ragusa to do anything, thus accentuating that the tributary status was a result of absolutely free Ragusan choice.[235] Indeed, speaking of the beginnings of the tributary relationship the senate clearly picked its words carefully, stating that Ragusans had simply "recommended themselves," offering an annual tribute. The delicate question of the tribute's meaning was in turn solved by introducing one distinction which was crucial for Ragusa's political tradition -- a "great difference" between the status of "subjects" and that of "tributaries."

This fundamental distinction rested on yet another blatant case of tendentious re-contextualization: the maximally benevolent Ragusan interpretation of the meaning of the tribute paid to the Ottomans. Similarly to the harmless ways in which they represented it to Western audiences -- as a payment for economic privilege or non-aggression -- at the Ottoman court Ragusan diplomats claimed that the tribute was paid exclusively for military

[234] Jovan Radonić, ed., *Dubrovačka akta i povelje* [Ragusan Acts and Charters], book 3, tomus 2 (Belgrade: SKA, 1939), 890-891.

[235] It should be stressed, however, that the earliest examples of this story emerged only in the sixteenth century and it is thus not sure whether it existed from the very beginnings of the tributary relationship. Some of the examples of this story are: DAD, Lettere di Levante 37 (1590-1592), f. 9r; Ante Liepopili, "Dopisi Marojice Kaboge vladi dubrovačkoj," [Dispatches of Marojica Caboga to the Ragusan Government] *Glasnik dubrovačkog učenog društva "Sveti Vlaho"* 1 (1929): 127. According to another, less frequent, version of the story, Ragusan ambassadors originally brought only "gifts" and tribute was a later addition (see, for instance, the instruction to the ambassadors to Selim II in 1566: Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 2, tomus 2, 141). This story also appears in Ragusan historiography, descriptions of the city, and occasionally even in poetry (typical examples are: Resti, pp. 153; Appendini, *Notizie*, tomus 1, 295; von Engel, *Geschichte des Freystaates Ragusa*, 141; Simeon Ljubić ed., *Commissiones et relationes venetae.* tomus III (annorum 1553-1571), MSHSM vol. 11. (Zagreb: JAZU, 1880), 77; Jaketa Palmotić, *Dubrovnik ponovljen i Didone* [Ragusa Restored and Didone], ed. Stijepo Skurla (Ragusa, 1874-1875), 60, 250).

protection by the Porte. This understanding emerged clearly in 1605 during an embassy to Istanbul which came asking for protection from drastic Venetian harassments. After a certain vizier told the Ragusans that they should wait a while for the sultan's protection, the ambassador responded uncharacteristically bluntly:

> If you want us to wait in this ruin and dissolution of our state, let his Highness also wait for the tribute from our *Signori;* tribute which we pay not because the sultan gave us or sold us our city and its territory, nor because he conquered us with arms, but exclusively in order that he defends us with his invincible hand in situations like this. [236]

This is an immensely clear (re)statement of the basic Ragusan ideological position towards the Porte: the city had never been conquered and thus did not pay the tribute in order to keep its territory or autonomy but merely to enjoy the military protection of the empire. However, claiming that the tribute was just a payment for protection was not the most provocative thing the Ragusan ambassador did in this passage. Even more subversively, he accentuated its *conditional* nature: if the sultan did not fulfil his duty of protection, the Ragusans did not have to fulfil their duty of tribute. Such an interpretation of the Ottoman-Ragusan relationship, insisting on strict reciprocity and mutually conditioned obligations, was again clearly incompatible with Islamic law, according to which tributary status was a result of the unilateral act of the sultan, a privilege granted by his mercy. If the Ragusans could legitimately refuse to pay tribute if the sultan did not protect them then their status was based upon a mutually binding agreement between the two sides – upon a contract. This is yet another example of typical Ragusan re-contextualization, of how the gap between the political cultures was used in order to soften and modify compromising concepts via convenient "translation." In a nut-shell, if for the Ottomans the *ahdname* was a privilege, for Ragusans it was a contract (*patto*).

That Ragusans interpreted their tributary status in the spirit of the Western contractualistic tradition is confirmed by the 1590 instruction to the ambassadors in Istanbul, in which the senate touched upon a delicate question: What is the final legitimate response if the sultan fails to fulfil his obligations? The circumstances provoked such radical thinking since the diplomats had to resist the Ottoman idea of turning part of Ragusan territory into a

[236] The quotation is from a letter of Ragusan ambasadors from Istanbul, dated 9 December 1605: *Se la vole che noi aspetiamo in questa rovina e disolutione del stato, aspeti ancora la M. del G. S-re il tributo da nri SS-ri: pagatole non perche c'habbia dato o venduto la Città o il territorio ne sogiogatoci a quelo con l'arme, ma solamente perche siamo difesi dal invitissimo suo bracio nelle simile ocorentie.* (DAD, Arhiv Bassegli, box 7, B 3/1 *Corrispondenza delli Signori Senatori di Ragusa Marco Bassegli, Jacomo Bobali Sorgo, Valentino Giorgi, Proculi Relativa a una loro ambasciata a Constantinopoli dal 21 Giugno 1604 fino al Luglio 1606.,* 103r)

sanjak. Claiming that such a move was illegitimate, they were to warn the grand vizier that alienating part of the Republic's territory would mean that the sultan was breaking his vow from the *ahdname* in which he guaranteed the unhindered possession of the entire Ragusan district. Then they were supposed to make a point which, from the Ottoman perspective, must have been equal to treason:

> it is not a custom of great rulers to break their own laws and to disregard the contracts (*patti*) which were made and confirmed with the most solemn oaths, because in doing so they would first offend God, and second they *would give legitimate cause to their allies (conferederati) to retreat from their protection…* [237]

Although formulated as a general point, the message was clear. If the sultan broke his oath and forfeited his obligation of protection, the Ragusans – his "allies" (sic) -- could *legitimately withdraw from the tributary relationship* with the Sublime Porte. The tributary status of the city is here quite unambiguously represented not as a result of sultan's privilege, but as a contract between Ragusa and the empire. Consequently, it was a reciprocal relationship which could be revoked by *either* of the involved sides if the other did not respect its contractual obligation.

At a closer look, many of these arguments on the nature of the Ottoman-Ragusan relationship have a familiar ring. In fact, the interpretation of tributary status sketched here is remarkably similar to the way in which Ragusans had represented their relationship with the Hungarian king. In both cases they insisted on the following crucial points: first, that the city had not been conquered, but had entered the relationship freely; second, that this relationship was not determined by the ruler's privilege, but by contractual agreement; third, that it involved a conditional and revocable exchange of tribute for protection. One can detect a certain ideological model here, originally created in order to trivialize Hungarian rule and later applied to the even more compromising relationship with the Ottoman Empire.

At the end one should stress that despite causing immense trouble for the apologists of the city's liberty, tributary status also had one good consequence for Ragusan independence. Namely, it was largely due to the new Ottoman patronage that Ragusa severed its constitutional ties with the Hungarian Kingdom, which were weakening in any case. One reason was that in relying on the powerful Ottoman protection Ragusans had less need for

[237] The quotation is from the senate's letter to ambassadors in Istanbul from 12 July 1590: *...non essendo uffitio nè constume delli Gran Signori preuaricare le leggi loro, et disprezzar i patti fatti et confermati con sollennissimi giuramenti perche quando facessero contra li patti, et giuramenti prima offenderebbeno Iddio, et l'anime loro, e poi darebbeno legitima causa alli loro confederati di ritirarsi dall loro protettione...*DAD Lettere di Levante 37 (1590-1592) f. 89r.

another political patron. Even more importantly, the Ottomans were not enthusiastic about the city's connection with their Christian enemies, so at first Ragusa hid its ties with the Hungarians and soon cancelled them altogether. This process and its ideological elaborations in Ragusan culture are the topic of the next section, but anticipating a bit one can say that their outcome was quite striking. Since Ragusans rejected the Hungarian sovereignty and never admitted the Ottoman one, in the first half of the sixteenth century the city began to represent itself openly and systematically as a fully independent state.

"The liberty given by God:" Ragusa as a fully independent republic

It was in the chaotic aftermath of the battle of Mohacs – the catastrophic Hungarian defeat at Ottoman hands in 1526 -- that Ragusa finally broke its ancient constitutional ties with the Hungarian Kingdom. This battle, in which King Louis II was killed, led to a prolonged struggle between two pretenders to the Hungarian royal title, Ferdinand of Habsburg and John Zàpolya, which lasted until 1540 and fatally weakened the kingdom. From a safe distance Ragusa observed a series of foreign interventions, wars, and truces between the two contenders both of whom repeatedly demanded that the city acknowledge their sovereignty. Neither of them ever really got it, and both met the same diplomatic tactic. Although showered with vague promises, even occasional declamations of loyalty, neither of them managed to obtain the crucial sign of submission – the tribute the city traditionally owed Hungarian kings.[238]

In other words, in the turbulent years following Mohacs Ragusa unilaterally seceded from the Hungarian Kingdom. This serious decision does not seem to have been premeditated, however. Most likely, the Ragusans originally intended only to postpone acknowledging either of the pretenders until a clear victor emerged. Yet as the conflict dragged on for years, it became increasingly evident that the city did not have to pick a new sovereign at all -- that both candidates could be persuaded, however grudgingly, not to push the issue. The demands of the Ottoman-supported Zàpolya, put forth aggressively in 1531 by his plenipotentiary, Alvise Gritti, were neutralized with vague promises, a generous bribe, and an agreement not to raise the issue for the next three years. Luckily for the Ragusans, exactly as that period neared an end, in 1534, Gritti was murdered and with him the whole issue apparently faded

[238] For this period in Hungary see: Laszlo Kontler, *Millenium in Central Europe. A History of Hungary* (Budapest: Atlantisz Publishing House, 1999), 137-150. On the significance of 1526 in Ragusan history, see: Vinko Foretić, "Dubrovnik u doba Marina Držića" [Ragusa in the Age of Marin Držić] in: *Studije i rasprave iz hrvatske povijesti* (Split: Književni krug Split, Matica Hrvatska Dubrovnik, 2001), 301-321.

away.[239] A much greater problem was the other pretender, Ferdinand of Habsburg, who was not only the king of Bohemia and archduke of Austria, but also a brother of an even more formidable ruler, Emperor Charles V. It took more than two decades of endless Ragusan promises and excuses to finally tire Ferdinand out, making him understand the city would not yield to his persistent demands for fealty.

In the first few years after 1526, relations between King Ferdinand and Ragusa were still quite cordial. The Ragusans provided valuable assistance to his espionage efforts in the Balkans and repeatedly expressed their loyalty to his agent in the city – in fact, a spy posing as a merchant – promising that they would soon send the embassy with the customary tribute.[240] By the early 1530s, however, Ferdinand seems to have understood Ragusa's delaying tactic and his demands for official acknowledgement grew ever harsher in tone. He expressed puzzlement with their improper behaviour as early as 1532; in 1534 he openly accused them of hitherto sending only "empty words;" and in March, 1535, he finally gave them an ultimatum, warning the city to fulfil all his demands within a month.[241]

Thus, in May, 1535, the Ragusans finally sent an ambassador to Ferdinand with an instruction which is as close as they ever got to openly refusing to acknowledge his sovereignty. As the instruction reveals, the senate had opted for its usual diplomatic tactic, combining humble declamations of devotion with attempts to provoke pity. Insisting on the "loyalty" and "reverence" of Ragusa, the ambassador was also instructed to try to awaken "certain compassion and pain" in the king and even beg for his mercy "with tears in the eyes." His oration was to begin with a long description of the evils that had befallen the city in recent years, such as the terrible plague, and culminate with a fascinating description of Ragusan situation in general:

> Holy majesty! Our city is situated in a stony place, sterile and dry, from which we cannot get enough food for two months of the year in order to feed our subjects and inhabitants. Situated in the jaws of the infidels, for the conservation of liberty and Christian name, [our city] annually pays an

[239] For the situation with Gritti see: Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika*, tomus 2, 16-19, 20-21. The instruction to the Ragusan envoy to Gritti from 1531 is preserved in: SAD, *Secreta Rogatorum* 1, f. 4v-5v, from the back side of the codex. One sentence from the introduction nicely illustrates the senate's strategy towards the Ottoman-backed pretender. Feigning surprise for being reminded of a tribute it paid less than a decade ago, the senators notified their envoy that Gritti told the Ragusan ambassadors in Istanbul *che noi havemo soluto pagar uno certo censo alla corona del regno di Hungaria, rechiedendoli lo vogliamo achora pagar a Re Joanne* [Zapolyai] *quale dice esser stato legitimamente messo Re in ditto Regno di Ungaria dal Gran Signore* (*Ibid.* 4v). On the outcome of this mission and Gritti's promise that the issue of acknowledging Zaployai will not be raised for three years, see: Ibid., 6r, from the back side of the codex.

[240] For Ferdinand's correspondence with his agent as well as his letters to Ragusa see: *Monumenta Habsburgica Regni Croatiae Dalmatiae Slavoniae,* volumen I (1526-1530), ed. Emilij Laszowski, MSHSM vol 35. Zagreb: JAZU 1914), 147, 149-150, 162-164, 169-170, 180, 203; Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika*, 11-15.

[241] Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 2, tomus 1, 286; 359-360; 361.

> enormous tribute to the Turkish Gran Signore, which tribute is too heavy not only for our city, but it would be a burden to any great prince to pay such a sum of money every year. And we can truly state that it is a divine and miraculous thing that for all the past years for which the city was paying this tribute, it was able to pay it, despite of not having any income or yield due to the aforementioned sterility. But the omnipotent God, who provides for everything, knowing our good hearts and inability to pay such a huge tribute, infused a great affection in the hearts of our subjects and a desire to conserve this city under the banner of Christ.... so that everyone enthusiastically works in his craft... going around the world, over the sea and land, without any rest whatsoever, working hard to earn something... for the common benefit in order to pay the aforementioned tribute.[242]

The ambassador was to continue lamenting the terrible position of Ragusa, surrounded by infidels who constantly plotted against it, at the same time accentuating that Ragusans suffered all these hardships "not so much for the conservation of our private goods, as much as in the name of the whole Christian republic."[243] When he finally got to the point of all this verbosity, one quite surprising thing became apparent. Such a lengthy description of Ragusa's catastrophic situation served only as an explanation for the city's delay in sending the embassy to Ferdinand, not as an excuse for failing to pay the tribute and acknowledge his sovereignty. In fact, these things were to be mentioned only if Ferdinand himself asked about that "honorific giving (sic!) which was of old given to the Hungarian Kings." In that case the envoy was to imply that asking for tribute was deeply unfair, even immoral, since:

> ...his Majesty surely understands the infelicity and the misery of our city, which deserves help, and therefore can see that we are not able to comply with that. And in case his Majesty would request such a thing, it would be a desire leading to the destruction of the city. Since we think that his Majesty would much prefer to exalt our city than to oppress it, we therefore tearfully implore him to take into account our faithfulness and devotion more than any other thing [i.e. the tribute][244]

Due to the lack of sources it is unsure how the king responded to these elaborate excuses, but judging by his later conduct it seems he did not renounce his claim to sovereignty over Ragusa.[245] Nonetheless, this embassy marked the culmination of the conflict over the tribute since it was soon overshadowed by an even greater diplomatic scandal connected to

[242] Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje* book 2, tomus 1, 374.
[243] Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje* book 2, tomus 1, 375; on this see also Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika,* book 2, 26-27.
[244] Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 2, tomus 1, 375-376. This type of apologizing by insisting on the infidel threat was one of the favorite arguments of Ragusan diplomacy, as will be shown in the next chapter.
[245] Moreover, the contemporary chronicle of Ragnina briefly mentions that the ambassador "did not manage to achieve anything" (*Annales*, 285).

two Ragusan patricians, the Buccignolo brothers. These supporters of Ferdinand had fled the city to avoid punishment for espionage on his behalf, as well as for the theft of public money, which led the king to exert serious and prolonged diplomatic pressure on Ragusa, demanding amnesty for them. However, the pre-eminence of the "Buccignoli affair," which haunted Ragusan diplomacy from the 1530s all the way to the 1550s, did not mean that the issue of Ferdinand's sovereignty disappeared completely. It reoccurred periodically, but the most Ferdindand received were ambivalent statements such as that Ragusa had been and still was "confederated" with the Holy Crown or vague promises that the city would show its devotion "once these mists disperse and the weather gets nicer."[246] It was only after more than twenty years of such diplomatic games – even with two unsuccessful conspiracies against the city probably under his sponsorship – that Ferdinand finally, in 1548, understood that his pressure was to no avail and gave up demanding any kind of formal acknowledgement from Ragusa.[247]

By then, however, the question of the city's new status had already been decided, at least from the Ragusan perspective. Exactly during the prolonged crisis with Ferdinand, the patrician government began openly proclaiming its independence in the strongly public sphere of self-representation – diplomacy. In fact, the addressee of the earliest of such proclamations was no one else but Ferdinand himself. In 1539 the senate instructed its diplomats to tell him the following if he were to offer his mediation with the exiled Buccignoli: "...it is not our intention to argue about that since we have the *broadest jurisdiction given to us by God* to reward our good vassals and punish the bad ones among our subjects." [248] Although addressing the ruler who bore the title of king of Hungary, the senate nonetheless made two

[246] Thus, in 1536 the government instructed its ambassador to tell Ferdinand it was surprised that his majesty could write such harsh letters *contra ditto regimento fidelissimo, devotissimo e quale e sempre stato confoederato di Sua Maesta e suoi antecessori.* (SAD, Lettere di Levante, 21 (1535-1538), f 66r). A bit later the envoys were instructed to say: *che el stato di Raugia da piu centenai d'anni in qua sempre gli e stato confederato della Sacra Corona di Ungaria et devotissimo di quella* (Ibid., f.66v). For vague promises of future loyalty see: Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika*, tomus 2, 29.

[247] An excellent source for Ferdinand's attitude towards Ragusa are the reports of Aluigi Giurasio, a Ragusan diplomat who was sent to Augsburg to Emperor Charles V in 1547-1548, where he discovered a plot against Ragusa under Ferdinand's patronage. Giurasio reported that Ferdinand himself, although badly disposed towards the city, would have already ceased to request the tribute from Ragusa were it not for the Buccignoli, who kept the issue alive in their own interest (SAD, *Isprave i akti s pečatom* 16, bundle (svezak) 16, no. 466-24/I, undated letter of Giurasio). In the final report on his mission Giurasio stressed that Charles V repeatedly tried to persuade his brother, Ferdinand, to cease requesting tribute from Ragusa and sponsoring conspiracies against it, since it meant risking a breach of peace with the Ottomans. It seems that exactly the fear of Ottoman reaction made Ferdinand finally give up his plans against Ragusa sometime around 1548 (for the relevant part of Giurasio's report see: SAD, *Lamenti politici* 6, Processvs secreti Minoris Consilii. Dal 1547-1563, 41v-42r.). On the whole issue, see also: Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika,* tomus 2, 32. Interestingly, Ragusans continued to sing *laudes* to the Hungarian Kings in the cathedral on major religious feasts until the end of the Republic (Foretić, "O Marinu Držiću," 50).

[248] *Per non essere nostra intentione de litigare sopracio per avere amplissima giurisdizione a noi da dio data, de rimunerare le nostri vassali buoni e castigare le tristi quali se ritrovano fra li subditi nostri* (SAD, *Lettere di levante* 22, f. 39v, letter to the ambassadors to King Ferdinand of Habsburg, undated, from April 1539).

crucial points. The first was that the jurisdiction of the Ragusan patriciate was the "broadest" (*amplissima*) and the second was that it was given by God. Speaking of *amplissima giurisdizione*, the senators probably meant to say it encompassed all the usual prerogatives of a secular government, including the right of capital punishment (*ius gladii*). Insisting that this jurisdiction was "given by God," they clearly echoed the traditional formula *Dei gratia,* implying that the patriciate's power did not originate from any superior earthly authority, but had the highest possible transcendental source and legitimacy.

Importantly, this statement was not an isolated case, but part of a general trend, clearly a premeditated change of rhetoric. Very soon, in 1541, the patrician government announced its sovereignty in equally unambiguous terms to its own subjects. In an angry decree trying to force the Ragusan captains to deliver grain to the under-supplied city, the senate thundered:

> Since we are *by divine grace* the lords and patrons of this city and its whole territory, having the *broadest jurisdiction* to command every and each of our subjects and vassals, and to reward the good and faithful compatriots while punishing, correcting and fining the disobedient ones...[249]

The following year, in 1542, the senate made a similar statement to the city's powerful neighbour and former ruler, the Venetian Republic. During one of the endless quarrels regarding the presence of an armed Ragusan ship in the Adriatic – a prerogative Venice claimed for itself – the patricians wrote to the doge that they had sent out the armed vessel "in virtue of that liberty in which God has put us in this place."[250] Similar statements continued to reappear in Ragusan diplomacy after the 1540s.[251] In a certain way they represented a culmination of a process which had began more than a hundred years earlier with the gradual redefinition of the city's relationship with the Hungarian Crown. Throughout the fifteenth century, Ragusan authors, with increasing explicitness, portrayed their city as an independent state – now the very same claim was made in the clearest and bluntest way possible.

Nor were such unequivocal assertions of independence limited to diplomacy only. The "liberty" of Ragusa also became an important motif of Renaissance literature and historiography. Thus, in this same period, in a poem celebrating the Ragusan fleet, the well-

[249] *Essendo noi per la divina gratia Signori e Padroni di questa citta e di tutto lo territorio suo et havendo amplissima giurisditione di commandar a tutti e senguli subditi e vassali nostri e di premiare li buoni e fideli compatriota, castigare corregere et onerar li disubedienti, e quelli non osservando li comandamenti nostri.* (SAD, *Lettere di levante* 22, f. 211 v. Letter of 18 January 1541).
[250] *..in virtu di quella liberta nella quale Dio ce ha posti in questo luogho* (SAD, *Lettere di levante* 23, f. 11r).
[251] Two good later examples are: Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 2, tomus 2, 99; Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 3, tomus 1, 112.

known playwright Mavro Vetrani (Vetranović) (1482-1576) proclaimed: "That is the glory, that is the pride,/ of virtuous Ragusa,/ from East to West,/ which rules itself in freedom." The liberty of the city gained such prominence that it appeared in the contemporary lauds of Ragusa, written by Dalmatian poets such as Hanibal Lučić (1485-1553), who praised the city: "You are free and abounding, know it well / and different from all those that surround you." A few decades later, beginning his description of Ragusa, the historian Orbini was on the same track: "the city of Dubrovnik, of Slavic name and language, is the most serene and the only free city, not only in Dalmatia but in the whole of Illyricum." Probably the most powerful expression of this motif, however, is to be found in the famous early seventeenth-century epic *Osman,* written by the Ragusan patrician I. Gondola. After accentuating the city's perilous position between the "angry dragon" (Ottomans) and the "furious lion" (Venice), Gondola addressed Ragusa in the following way: "Your neighbours are slaves / Heavy forces dominate them all / only your lordship sits alone / on the throne of liberty."[252]

It is immediately apparent that many of these examples share one specific figure of speech – contrast. Ragusa is "different" from those that "surround" it (Lucić); it is the "only free" city of the whole Illyricum (Orbini); it sits alone on the throne of liberty while its neighbours are "slaves" (Gondola). These are only some examples of a general tendency in Ragusan literature and historiography to speak of the city's liberty through comparisons with neighbouring populations which were under the rule of foreigners, that is, Venetians, Habsburgs, and Ottomans. The purpose of such an approach is apparent: juxtaposed with this dark background, Ragusan "liberty" emerged in an even more magnificent light. Occasionally these patriotically coloured contrasts between Ragusa and its surroundings could take an openly deprecating, even contemptuous, tone. Thus, in a seventeenth-century satire against the neighbouring island of Korčula, ruled by Venice, the Ragusan poet Paskoje Primi was anything but gentle: "Envy is maliciously killing you / Malice chokes you even worse / Because we are better off free / Than you who are slaves."[253]

[252] For Vetranović, see: *Pjesme Mavra Vetranića Čavčića,* [The Poems of Mavro Vetranić Čavčić] Stari pisci hrvatski, 3, ed. Vatroslav Jagić and Augist Kaznačić (Zagreb: JAZU, 1871), 225-226; Vinko Foretić, "Politički pogledi Mavra Vetranovića" [Political Views of Mavro Vetranović], in idem, *Studije i rasprave iz hrvatske povijesti* (Split: Književni krug Split, Matica Hrvatska Dubrovnik, 2001), 321-333. For Lucić see: *Pjesme Petra Hektorovića i Hanibala Lucića* [The Poems of Petar Hektorović and Hanibal Lucić] Stari pisci hrvatski 6, ed. Sebastijan Žepić. (Zagreb: JAZU, 1874), 261; Jakša Ravlić, "Politički pogledi H. Lucića" [Political Views of H. Lucić], *Historijski pregled* 2 (1954): 29. For Orbini, see: Orbini, *Regno degli Sclaui*, 180. For Gondola, see: Ivan Gundulić, *Osman,* ed. Slobodan P. Novak and Antun Pavešković (Zagreb: Nakladni Zavod Matice Hrvatske, 1991), 147.

[253] Fran Kurelac, ed., *Runje i pahuljice pjesni podrugljive i pastirske ponajveć dubrovačke* [Rags and Snowflakes: Satirical and Pastoral Poems, mostly from Ragusa] (Zagreb, 1866-68), 63.

Yet despite such proud assertions of independence in literature, historiography, and diplomacy, the fact was that the celebrated Ragusan "liberty" was of quite dubious legitimacy. Although the transition from the nominal sovereignty of the Hungarian king to full independence was relatively smooth and not particularly scandalous, it nonetheless remained unilateral and therefore without a firm legal basis. On the one hand, the affirmation of Ragusa's new status was facilitated by the fact that the city had already been *de facto* independent for more than a century and that there was nothing really new to be explained in its governmental practices. Most clearly, its independent diplomacy was well-known and beyond questioning at the European courts. On the other hand, however, the city's secession was never legalized by any of the bearers of the Hungarian royal title and thus its self-proclaimed independence required a good explanation in the eyes of Early Modern Europe, ever more sensitive to the issues of sovereignty.

The solution adopted for this problem was, typically for Ragusan political culture, a historical myth; the past of the city was drastically redefined in order to provide its independence with magnificent historical foundations. Simply put, the Ragusans began claiming that the full independence of their republic was completely natural and legitimate since Ragusa had in fact been an independent state throughout its whole history. As has been pointed out in the previous chapter, Renaissance authors accentuated that the city had been "born" free, built by free founders, and had enjoyed independence in the first centuries of its existence. Writing its subsequent history they were careful to point out that this original liberty had never been truly lost, but had lasted – at most, with few irrelevant interruptions – continuously until the present day.

Naturally, such agenda required serious reinterpretation and embellishment of the city's past, in fact characterized by numerous episodes of foreign domination. One quite simple strategy used in achieving this ambitious goal was silence, not mentioning the periods of foreign rule at all. In this way the centuries of Byzantine sovereignty were dismissed at a stroke, turning the early Middle Ages into a period of uninterrupted independence.[254] The other, more influential, strategy of redefining Ragusa's history consisted of misrepresenting the episodes of foreign rule in order to show that they had not meant a genuine loss of liberty.

[254] In the rare instances when the ancient political ties with Byzantium were mentioned at all they were represented as an "alliance" between the city and the empire or as some kind of undefined "protection" (for instance, see Luccari, *Copioso ristretto,* 22). Vague hints at Byzantine sovereignty are to be found in Razzi (for instance, Razzi, *Storia,* 38) and more clearly in the work of Resti, who wrote in the eighteenth century when far more data on the history of the ancient empire was available (for Resti's circumspect remarks, see: Resti, *Chronica*, 19, 32, 37, 57-58, 65, 69-70). Resti is also the first Ragusan historian to admit, however vaguely, several short medieval instances of Norman supreme rule, otherwise ignored in the city historiography (Ibid., 56, 58, 64-65)

This strategy was applied to the better-known instances of foreign domination which could not be ignored since they were remembered either in the city's own tradition or in the historiography of its neighbours.[255] Such "neuralgic points" of Ragusan historical memory encompassed relations with three powerful states which continued to be highly relevant in the politics of early modern Ragusa. Most problematically, one had to explain several episodes of Venetian rule, which began with the year 1000 and reccurred periodically until 1358; then one had to explainthe crucial year 1358, when the city had acknowledged Hungarian sovereignty; finally, there were the always discomforting fifteenth-century treaties with the Ottomans, which continued to haunt the discourse on Ragusan *libertas* although their political significance was consistently denied or minimized.[256]

Ragusan historiography usually removed the embarrassing implications of these episodes through an insistence on two points. The first was that the relationship with the foreign power was initiated by the Ragusans themselves, out of their free will, and thus was not a result of conquest. The second was that the arrangement which followed did not imply submission, but was politically harmless: a mere business agreement, treaty of protection or, in the worst case, a kind of co-rule of foreigners together with the local patriciate. This approach is clearly visible in the way in which Ragusan historians narrated the acknowledgement of Venetian rule in the early thirteenth century. It was a moment of great importance since it marked the beginning of a long period of the Serenissima's sovereignty, which effectively ended only in 1358.[257] Ragusan authors insisted that patriciate itself had invited the Venetians and helped them establish their authority in the city because that was a way to overthrow the domestic tyrant, Damiano Juda. Similarly, almost all the historians accentuated that afterwards the Venetian counts ruled together with the patriciate or, even, that they were nothing but symbolic figureheads of the government. Thus, Ragnina described in detail the constitutional mechanisms which limited the count's power; Razzi mentioned

[255] The most compromising – and historically correct – mentions of Ragusan subjection were preserved in Venetian historiography. A few notable examples include: Ester Pastorello, ed., *Andreae Danduli chronica per extensum descripta,* Rerum italicarum scriptores, tomus 12, part 1 (Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli, 1942), 199, 281, 293, 304; Roberto Cessi and Fanny Bennato, ed., *Venetiarum historia vulgo Petro Iustiniano Iustiniani filio adiudicata* (Venice: Deputazione di storia patria per le Venezie, 1964), 68, 120, 143, 155, 164, 282; Antonio Sabellico, *M. Antonii Cocii Sabellici opera omnia,* tomus 2 (Basle, per Ioannem Heruagium, 1560), 654, 733, 1123-1126.

[256] Besides the text that follows, for Ragusan reinterpretations of Venetian and Hungarian rule see also: Vinko Foretić, "Godina 1358 u povijesti Dubrovnika" [The Year 1358 in the History of Ragusa], in *Studije i rasprave iz hrvatske povijesti* (Split: Književni krug Split, Matica Hrvatska Dubrovnik, 2001), 251-253; Janeković, *Višegradski ugovor,* 123-131.

[257] Some examples of this story in historiography are: *Annales,* 33; 220-221; Razzi, *La storia*, 38-39; G. Luccari, *Copioso ristretto*, 40-41; Tubero, *Commentarii*, 91-93; Orbini, *Regno degli Sclaui*, 187-189; Resti, *Chronica,* 70-74.

that he was to be merely "the first in the senate" with all the "laws and decrees" remaining in Ragusan hands; and Orbini unequivocally stated that "nothing could have been done without the knowledge and the order of the senate."[258] The same strategy is visible when Ragusan authors narrated the acknowledgement of Hungarian sovereignty in 1358. As was shown earlier in this chapter, they ignored the blatant fact that the city was part of the Hungarian spoils of war, instead claiming that the Ragusans themselves initiated a treaty with King Louis. Moreover, they also ignored the clear letter of the Visegrád charter – although its copies were carefully kept in the city archives – representing the new political relationship as one of contractual protection between two essentially independent states. Finally, a similar ideological pattern is noticeable when Ragusan historians wrote about the origins of the city's tributary relationship with the Ottoman Empire. As has been mentioned, here the first line of defence was an attempt to trivialize the issue; quite revealingly, Ragusan authors dedicated far less space to the beginnings of this crucial and still-valid arrangement than they did to the long-gone episodes with Venice and the Hungarian Kingdom. However, even from the suspiciously laconic references it is clear that the Ragusans had freely sent an embassy to the sultan and negotiated a treaty which did not involve submission but simply an exchange of tribute for free trade or peace.[259]

After more than a hundred years of such reinterpretations, at the close of the sixteenth century, Mauro Orbini could make a strikingly inaccurate claim that "Ragusans have always lived free."[260] Although even the earlier historians would have probably found this statement agreeable, such a blunt remark was made possible by a clear increase in the tendentiousness of Ragusan historiography during the sixteenth century. Namely, the earliest historians – the anonymous Annalist and Ragnina – despite interpreting all the other episodes of foreign rule in the aforementioned trivializing manner, nonetheless admitted one instance of genuine conquest of the city. For unclear reasons, both of them explicitly mentioned a period of Venetian sovereignty in the twelfth century, an otherwise irrelevant episode which took place historically between 1125 and 1165, but was in Ragusan tradition dated 1122 to 1142.[261]

[258] Annales, 221; Razzi, 39; Orbini, *Regno degli Sclaui*, 189. For more on the important story about Damiano Juda, see: Janeković, *Okvir*, 75-76: Kunčević, "O dubrovačkoj *libertas*," 41-43.
[259] Several good examples are: *Annales*, 54, 248; SAD, Memorie 18, *Origine della Città di Ragusa*, 80; Razzi, *Storia*, 55; Lucari, *Copioso ristretto*, 88, 127, 143. The crucial point that a tributary relationship was a free choice of the Ragusans was made even more forcefully through the aforementioned legend about the original treaty with Sultan Orhan in the fourteenth century. In a few histories, however, one can find a more somber assessment of the tributary relationship, for instance: Tubero, *Commentarii*, 97-98; SAD, Memoriae 8 *Brevi notizie sulla fondazione di Ragusa*, f 41r.
[260] Orbini, *Regno degli Sclaui*, 185.
[261] In an uncharacteristically blunt way, Ragnina stated the Venetians *presero Ragusa sotto il suo dominio* while the Annalist simply remarked *fu primo Conte, menato de Venetia*, continuing that the Venetians ruled tyranically

Soon, however, this episode was reinterpreted along the same lines as all the others, revealing the growing tendency to remove any trace of foreign dominion from the city's past. First some early sixteenth-century versions of the *Annales* began claiming that the Venetian counts were called by Ragusans themselves, and then, in his 1595 history, S. Razzi added that they were invited with the condition that they should not to change anything "without the agreement of the majority of the council."[262] An even more tendentious representation of the city's history appears in the work of Razzi's contemporary, M. Orbini. While the previous historians – however briefly and tendentiously – at least mentioned the compromising relationhips with the Hungarian king and sultan, Orbini marginalized them completely, dismissing the Hungarian sovereignty in half-sentence as an "alliance" (*confederatione*) and not mentioning the city's tributary status at all.[263] Orbini acknowledged only one single instance in which foreigners had certain influence on Ragusan self-governance: the well-known story about Damiano Juda, after which Venetian governors (*comites*) came to the city. However, according to Orbini even this exceptional episode did not really mean a loss of liberty which, as he repeatedly stressed, Ragusans had enjoyed continuously throughout their history.[264] An identical agenda is visible in the work of another contemporary historian, G. Luccari, who represented the relationship with Hungary as nothing but "friendship" (*amicitia*) and that with the Ottomans merely as "peace" (*pace*) or undefined "agreements and privileges" (*patti e gratie*).[265] When it came to Venice, not only that Luccari did not mention its twelfth-century sovereignty over Ragusa at all, but he even changed the story about Damiano Juda in a revealing way. Clearly wishing to remove even the slightest reason for

(*Annales*, 29; 213-214). For this historical episode, see: Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika* 1, 29. Interestingly, the key works of Venetian historiography – such as Dandolo or Sabellico -- do not mention this episode, although they note all the other instances of Venetian conquest of the city (e.g., 1000, 1171, 1205, 1232, 1252).

[262] Razzi, *Storia*, 133. Regarding the *Annales*, good examples are two versions probably originating from the early sixteenth century since both mention that the "agreements" with the Hungarian kings were still being mantained (although the manuscripts quoted here are the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century copies): SAD, Memoriae 8 *Brevi notizie sulla fondazione di Ragusa*, f. 26 v; Memoriae 24 *Dell origine della città di Ragusa*, f.12r. A similar story is repeated in an eighteenth-century copy of a version of *Annales* probably written in the early seventeenth century: SAD, Memorie 18, *Origine della Città*, 57.

[263] Orbini, *Regno degli Sclaui*, 192.

[264] Orbini, *Regno degli Sclaui*, 187-189. How important the city's independence was for Orbini is also visible from the fact that his account of Ragusan history consists largely of a fierce attack on Sabellico, who wrote about Ragusan acknowledgement of Venetian rule in the thirteenth century as well as in the year 1000. Although historically correct, the submission to Venice in 1000 was apparently not remembered in Ragusan tradition. It was through the work of Venetian historians, who mentioned it regularly, that Ragusans found out and began to polemicize against it -- in fact Orbini seems to have been the first to do so.

[265] The quotations are to be found in: Luccari, *Copioso ristretto*, 144; 88. At one point Luccari does mention that Ragusans had paid 500 ducats annually to the court in Buda, but claims it was simply for exemption from all the taxes in the kingdom and other immunities (Ibid., 137) and treats 1358 briefly as an alliance with the Hungarian king (Ibid., 62). When it comes to Ottomans, from time to time Luccari remarks breifly that the Republic renewed its "treaties" or "peace" with the Sublime Porte, mentioning tribute only once as *dono honorario* (for such accounts of agreements with the sultan, see: Ibid., 88, 95, 101, 127, 134; for the tribute: Ibid., 96).

embarrassment, he completely omitted the Venetians from the story, claiming that the tyrant was overthrown by Ragusan patricians themselves. Thus he was also able to omit the unpleasant epilogue of the story – the arrival of a Venetian *comes* in the city.[266]

The idea that Ragusa had enjoyed continuous independence from the foundation until the present day remained of paramount importance in the city's historiography. With endless variations when it came to reinterpreting the individual episodes of foreign rule, it was reiterated by all the later Ragusan historians until the end of the Republic. Moreover, in the eighteenth century it became the official position of the patrician government, which imposed strict censorship on authors writing about the city's past, carefully removing any reference to foreign dominion from their texts.[267] The importance of establishing flawless historical foundations for Ragusan *libertas* can be also seen from the fact that one of the most eminent eighteenth-century historians, S. Slade (Dolci), wrote a work dedicated exclusively to proving that Ragusa had never acknowledged Venetian rule.[268] In fact, Ragusan historians had done such a good job of obscuring the more delicate points of the city's history that as late as the 1870s one of the first critical Croatian historians, Šime Ljubić, had to prove painstakingly – debating with a patriotic local antiquarian -- that Venice had indeed ruled over Ragusa during the Middle Ages.[269]

Although the idea of uninterrupted Ragusan independence was most consistently elaborated in the historiography, it was far from being limited only to history-writing, in fact, it rapidly became a true common-place of the city's Renaissance culture in general. Interestingly, like many other cultural *topoi*, it seems to have appeared originally in

[266] Ibid., 40-41.

[267] Thus, in 1760s there was thorough censorship of the whole extensive opus of the Ragusan historian S. Cerva, which took several years to complete. In their work the censors removed the parts of the text which testified toVenetian rule over the city and the conflicts between the Church and the State (Relja Seferović. "Cenzura u djelu Prolegomena in sacram Metropolim Ragusinam" [Censorship in the work *Prolegomena in sacram Metropolim Ragusinam*), the text is available online at http://www.hdkf.net/Euroclassica%20zbornik%20hrvatski.pdf). A similar example of extensive censorship of any signs of foreign dominion apparently took place in 1791-3 with the important history of Ragusan Church by D. Farlati and J. Coleti (Šime Ljubić, "Ob odnošajih dubrovačke sa Mletačkom Republikom tja do g. 1358." [On the Relations of the Ragusan and the Venetian Republics until the Year 1358], *Rad JAZU* 5 (1868): 104-105, note 1).

[268] Slade's treatise bears a symptomatic title, *Ragusinae perpetuae libertatis adversus Venetos vinditiae.* This in turn provoked an answer from the Venetian side: Paul Pisani, *Num Ragusini ab omni iure veneto a seac. X. usque ad saec. XIV. immunes fuerint* (Lutetia, 1893).

[269] Ljubić wrote the first critical overviews of the relationship between the two Adriatic republics, correctly reconstructing -- against the influential Ragusan tradition -- the extensive periods of Venetian sovereignty during the Middle Ages. That Ragusan tradition still exerted some influence can be seen from Ljubić's deeply ironical references to his "friend and virtuous Ragusan writer," Professor Zore, who, very much along the lines of Ragusan historiography, had criticized Ljubić's claims about Venetian sovereignty over Ragusa. Šime Ljubić, "O Odnošajih medju republikom mletačkom i dubrovačkom od početka XVI stoljeća do njihove propasti" [On the Relations between the Venetian and Ragusan Republics from the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century until Their Fall] *Rad JAZU* 53 (Zagreb 1880): 95-96 (especially the note 1).

diplomacy. As early as 1440, in the instruction issued to Ragusan envoys to the sultan, the diplomats were instructed to reject Ottoman demands for tribute with the following argument:

> …God, from whom nothing can be hidden, knows and testifies that our city had always lived with franchise and liberty, and it will not be found that to the father of your Emperor or to any of his ancestors nor, similarly, to any other lord our city had ever given tribute or any *harac*.[270]

It is hard to say whether this early claim to continuous independence served as a basis for later occurrences of the same idea. While such an image of the city's past reappeared in the diplomacy of the sixteenth century, it only became a true common-place in the poetry and drama of the period. Thus, in one of his public speeches, Elias Cerva proclaimed that Ragusa "defended itself with divine aid and preserved the ancestral freedom through an uninterrupted sequence of years," while the seventeenth-century playwright, J. Palmotta, prophesied to the Republic: "From the first stone/ until your end/ your freedom unspoilt/ will shine together with the sun."[271] The idea was so well-known that it was even echoed by the neighbouring Dalmatian literati in their lauds of the city. As Hanibal Lučić from Hvar put it in his mid-sixteenth century poem dedicated to Ragusa: "there never was a yoke on it / it was always its own master."[272] In order to accentuate that the city had never had a foreign lord, some authors adopted the suggestive metaphor of the "virginity" of Ragusan liberty or even of Ragusa itself. Thus, the early seventeenth-century poet, Ivan Gondola, wrote about "the pure virginity in which, according to the higher grace, our liberty has been maintained and preserved unviolated for more than a thousand years..."[273] Apparently, this metaphor could even serve as

[270] *...dio dal qual non si po ascondar alguna chosa sa et e so testimonio che la nostra zitade sempre ha vivesto con franchizia et libertade, et mai non si trovera che allo padre del vostro Imperadore, ne ad alguni delli suoy antecessori, ne per lo simel ad algun altro signore la nostra zitade may abia dato tributo, ne carazo alguno* (SAD, *Lettere di Levante* 12, f. 214r). For the historical context of this instruction see: Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika*, tomus 1, 201-206; Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 82-83.

[271] Crijević, "Posmrtni govor Juniju Sorkočeviću," 253; Palmotić, *Pavlimir*, 127. For a mention of the "millennial" liberty of the city in a diplomat's speech from 1570, see: Radonić (ed.), *Dubrovačka akta i povelje*, tomus 2, book 2, 220.

[272] *Pjesme Petra Hektorovića i Hanibala Lucića*, 263. For the context of this verse see: Ravlić, "Politički pogledi H. Lučića," 29. For a similar idea in a laud by the Greek humanist Michele Marullo Tarcaniota, see: Albert Haler, "Grk Humanista slavi Dubrovnik" [A Greek Humanist lauds Ragusa], *Hrvatska revija* 10 (1938): 550-551; Mirko Tomasović. "Pohvalnice Dubrovniku: P. Ronsard, M. Marullo, L.P. Thomas" [Lauds to Ragusa: P. Ronsard, M. Marullo, L.P. Thomas], *Dubrovnik* 3, no. 1 (1992): 130–135.

[273] Ivan Gundulić, *Suze sina razmetnoga. Dubravka. Ferdinandu Drugomu od Toskane* [Tears of the Prodigal Son. Dubravka. To Ferdinand the Second of Tuscany], Pet stoljeća hrvatske književnosti, book 12, ed. Jakša Ravlić (Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska 1964), 37. Another instance of the same claim appears in an anonymous *relazione* of Ragusa from the first half of the seventeenth century, which states: *Dal principio della sua edificatione fino a questo tempo e non senza miracolo d'Iddio s'è conseruata sempre Uergine, e franca in libertà in mezzo di guerre crudelissime di sollleuatione de Regni uicini, e de mutatione de stati propinqui e de Religione* (British Library, London, Add. 48131 (Yelverton MS. 146), Relazioni, historical documents and tracts, relating to Italy; 1527-1620, f. 745v) Moreover, that *Respublica Ragusina intacta virgo usque ad hodiernum diem remanet* was stressed by the Ragusan Franciscan, Martinus Rosa, in his *Breve compendium nationis gloriosae*

an euphemistic summary for what the Republic's censors were after. In 1793, after the censorship of Coleti's history of the Ragusan Church, the Republic's secretary, John-Luke Volanti, wrote to Coleti, informing him that there was no longer a need to send his texts for inspection since: "having once established the virginity of Ragusan liberty… there will be no more peril for you."[274]

At a closer look such claims to uninterrupted liberty reveal one crucial point: that their goal was more than ensuring the historical precedents for Ragusan independence. Insisting on the surprising and improbable survival of the small city among powerful neighbours such as the Ottomans or Venice, Ragusans sought to suggest their Republic owed its independence to far more than coincidence or even the wisdom of its rulers. In one way or another, most Ragusan authors claimed that the preservation of the Republic's liberty was a direct result of divine intervention, that Ragusan history was deeply marked by the hand of providence. This, of course, had a profound impact on the always problematic legitimacy of the city's independence; if it was preserved and maintained by direct divine aid, then it was *as legitimate as it could be*.

As with the claim to continuous independence the first vague traces of the idea that Ragusa was defended by providence are to be found in the city's diplomacy. From the first half of the fifteenth century the diplomats at Western courts represented Ragusa as a Catholic city, surrounded by "schismatics," "heretics," and "infidels" who constantly sought to harm it but were repelled by "divine grace" defending the city as "the most powerful shield."[275] Clearly, in such instances providence was represented as protecting merely the welfare of a city which acknowledged the supreme Hungarian rule, not specifically the *libertas* of an independent Republic. However, what these early references to providential protection had in common with the later ones was the explanation for the transcendental sponsorship which the city enjoyed; it was seen as a consequence of Ragusa's special mission of preserving the Catholic faith at the frontier with the infidel.

An excellent sixteenth-century example connecting providential protection, virgin-like liberty, and the Catholic mission of Ragusa is found in the passionately patriotic opening of a dialogue on astronomy written by the Ragusan playwright and scholar, Nicolo di Nale (Nikola

totivs linguae Illyricae (Madrid: Ex typographia Francisci Martinez, 1638), 42. The metaphor of virignity was probably borrowed from Venice, as will be elaborated below.

[274] ...fissata una volta... la verginità della libertà Ragusea, non vi sarà piu pericolo di nulla…. (Ljubić, "Ob odnošajih dubrovačke sa mletačkom republikom tja do g. 1358," 105.

[275] Two good examples are: Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje*, book 1, tomus 1, 325; *Diplomatarium*, 523-526. The same motif of divine protection is also repeated in the important privilege which the ecclesiastical synod of Basel gave to Ragusa in 1433, allowing it to trade with the "infidel" (Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 1 tomus 1, 430). This image of Ragusa will be discussed at length in the following chapter.

Nalješković) (1505/1508 – 1587).[276] Nale first enumerated the many merits of Ragusa for the Catholic religion, pointing out that the city never wavered in the purity of its faith, saved numerous holy relics from the Ottoman infidels and baptised countless neighbouring heretics. After that he made the crucial point:

> Due to all of these deeds one can assume that the mighty and great God preserves to Ragusa its sweet liberty in which it had always lived and which was never violated or subjected by anyone; and this must have happened by the special gift of God, one can rightly presume, considering its forces together with the power of those who were in the vicinity and its enemies at various times.[277]

A similar idea was repeated by J. Resti in his early eighteenth-century chronicle. Mentioning the legend that St. Francis had passed through Ragusa on his way to the Levant, Resti writes that the great saint had prophesised the city would "remain in liberty only as long as it will preserve the pure Catholic faith." Indeed, Resti continues, this prophecy had proven true:

> … since against the human reason, until the day in which I am writing this history, its liberty suffered no detriment; not only that with its small territory Ragusa repelled endless attacks of various powers which at different times sought to conquer it, but it also held back for so many centuries the Turkish flood towards the Christian lands...[278]

While in these references the providence protecting the Republic's liberty remained abstract, in the work of most Ragusan authors it was personified – it took the shape of the city's patron, Saint Blaise. This late Classical bishop and martyr from Sebaste in present-day Turkey was probably adopted as Ragusa's patron in the twelfth century and thoroughly redefined in order to serve the city's ideological needs.[279] Although originally associated with

[276] On Nale, see: Rafo Bogišić, "Nikola Nalješković," *Rad JAZU* 357 (1971): 5-162; Davor Dukić, ed., *Pučka krv, plemstvo duha: Zbornik radova o Nikoli Nalješkoviću* [Plebeian Blood, Nobility of Spirit: Collected Works on Nikola Nalješković] (Zagreb: Disput, 2005).

[277] *Per le quali cose si può pensare, che Iddio ottimo e grandissimo le mantegna la sua dolce libertà, nella qual sempre è viuuta, che mai è stata da alcuno violata, ò soggiogata: il che, considerate le forze di lei, e la potenza di quelli che sono stati vicini, et in diuersi tempi nemici, si può meritamente pensare, che per partcolare dono di Dio sia auuenuto* (Nicolo di Nale, *Dialogo sopra la sfera del Mondo* (Venice: appresso Francesco Ziletti, 1579), 4). A similar claim is also to be found in the foreword to his dialogue, dedicated to the Ragusan senate, where Nale rhetorically asks: *Mà chi dubita, che la bontà diuina per commodo uniuersale non habbia in spetial prottetione questo luogho? Veggiendo chiaro essere miracolosamente per tanto spatio d'anni mantenuto, fra tanti pericoli, che di continuo da ogni parte gli soprastanno*. (Ibid., XI)

[278] *E veramente la profezia si vede verificata, mentre contro le ragioni umane, sin al giorno nel quale scrivo questa istoria, la sua libertà non ha patito detrimento, avendo ella, non solo col suo picciol stato ribattuto infiniti attentati di varie potenze, che in varij tempi procurarono soggiogarla, ma anche fermata per tanti secoli l'innondazione de'Turchi verso i paesi christiani* (Resti, *Chronica*, 82).

[279] Some works on the cult of St. Blasie are: Ivica Prlender, "Dubrovačko posvajanje sv. Vlaha" [The Ragusan Adoption of St. Blaise], *Dubrovnik* 5, no. 5 (1994): 9-22; Joško Belamarić, "Sveti Vlaho i dubrovačka obitelj

healing the illnesses of the throat – which remains his "specialty" in Catholicism even today – in Ragusan tradition he was mostly represented as a defender of the city from various harms, primarily an assault from the outside. In the mid-fifteenth century, de Diversis excellently summarized his role by describing him as "the divine protector of Ragusa, the guardian of its liberty and peace." Half a century later, in the poem, "Prayer to St. Blaise for Ragusa," Elias Cerva depicted the saint in the very same way, invoking his defence against the "hated enemies," "robbers" and, especially, "the sly serpents" (Venetians?).[280] This function of St. Blaise is confirmed also by his iconography and the topography of his statues. He was traditionally depicted protectively holding a small model of Ragusa in his hand and statues with such a suggestive message were installed at crucial places on the city-walls, enclosing the community in a symbolic defensive ring.[281]

The saint's role as a supernatural defender of Ragusan liberty from foreign attack is best illustrated by two famous episodes which were not only frequently repeated in Ragusan historiography and literature but were even commemorated through public ritual. The first celebrated instance of the saint's intervention allegedly took place in 1463, during the Ottoman conquest of Bosnia, when Sultan Mehmed II and his powerful army came perilously close to the city. According to the legend, the sultan had also intended to attack Ragusa, but, as he turned towards it, the saint made his horse slip three times. Correctly understanding this as a bad omen – a sign of divine protection over the city – the sultan gave up the idea and turned back. At the core of this legend, it seems, was genuine relief that the city had survived Ottoman military operations in its immediate hinterland. Namely, as early as 1465, the Ragusan government forbade trading and selling of meat on the *vigilia* of the Corpus Christi feast, explaining it was the day when the "ferocious" enemy, Sultan Mehmed, had changed his "poisonous intention" of destroying the city.[282] Later Ragusan authors embellished this tale, adding further details; for instance, they claimed that as his horse slipped the veil had fallen off the sultan's head or that it was the sultan's augur who had warned him not to attack

svetaca zaštitnika" [St. Blaise and the Ragusan Family of Protector Saints], in *Tisuću godina dubrovačke (nad)biskupije. Zbornik radova u povodu tisuću godina uspostave dubrovačke (nad)biskupije/metropolije (998.-1998)*[A thousand years of Dubrovnik's (arch)bishopric/metropolis (990-1998)], ed. Želimir Puljić and Nedeljko A. Ančić (Dubrovnik-Split: Biskupski ordinarijat, Crkva u svijetu, 2001), 703-731; Margaritoni, *St. Blaise*; Skurla, *Sveti Vlaho*. The cult of St. Blaise was the topic of a whole thematic issue of the journal *Dubrovnik* in 1994.

[280] For de Diversis, see: de Diversis, *Opis*, 50, 147. For Cerva's poem, see: Luko Paljetak, Dunja Fališevac and Miljenko Foretić, ed., *Sveti Vlaho: dubrovački parac u hrvatskoj književnosti*. [Saint Blaise: Ragusan Patron inCroatian Literature) (Dubrovnik: Matica Hrvatska, 2001), 16-17.

[281] Igor Fisković, "Kameni likovi svetoga Vlaha u Dubrovniku" [Stone Statues of St. Blaise in Ragusa] *Dubrovnik* 5 (1994): 94-112; Janeković, *Okvir*, 374-378.

[282] Another reason mentioned for commemorating this day is that it was the time when the plague stopped. See: Lonza *Kazalište vlasti,* 271-272; Skurla, *Sv Vlaho*, 157-158.

the city.[283] How well-established the story was can be seen from the fact that it was still repeated centuries afterwards by F. M. Appendini in his history of Ragusa published in 1802. According to Appendini, after seeing an image of St. Blaise, Sultan Mehmed II remarked "it was a similar old man to the one depicted in the picture who had threatened him with death if he continued his voyage and who had scared his horse."[284]

An even more important example of the saint's protection is to be found in what was probably the best known legend of old Ragusa. It was the story about the adoption of St. Blaise as the city's patron, a narrative which constructed the crucial connection between the saint and the community. St Blaise, who originally had nothing to do with Ragusa, entered the city's history in a highly characteristic manner. Beginning with the late fifteenth-century *Annales,* Ragusan historians narrate a clearly invented tale about a Venetian fleet which came under the walls of the city in the year 971, claiming it was headed for the Levant. Although the Venetians were received warmly, as friends, their true purpose was to conquer Ragusa by treachery, crossing its walls under the cover of night. To their great surprise, however, on the walls of the sleeping city they encountered an entire army dressed in white and led by a bearded old man, which successfully repelled their assaults. After several nights of such vain assaults by the Venetians, the old man who led the celestial army appeared in a vision to a pious local priest, introducing himself as St. Blaise "sent from the heavens" (*Annales*) to defend the city. He told the priest about the Venetian treachery and ordered him to notify the patriciate. After the priest told the patricians what had actually been happening, they gathered the populace, defeated the Venetians and, as a sign of their eternal gratitude, elected St. Blaise the patron of Ragusa.[285]

This legend in which St. Blaise emerges as the city's defender in the most literal sense – repelling the enemy from the walls – was re-evoked through a massive ritual event every year until the fall of the Republic. The feast day of St. Blaise, which fell on the 3rd of February, was celebrated through a lavish ceremony shaped less by the Church than by the patrician elite, which used it to transmit important ideological messages to its subjects. Besides the procession, which joined the state officials with the clergy and relics, thus suggesting divine sanction of the political order, the central event of the day was a grand military parade. It is likely that this parade – composed of the city's inhabitants together with

[283] *Annales,* 64; 261; Memorie 18 *Origine della Città di Ragusa,* 190; di Gozzi *Dello stato*, 352; Palmotić, *Pavlimir,* 100-101.
[284] Appendini, *Notizie,* tomus 1, 306.
[285] Versions of this legend are to be found in: *Annales Ragusini Anonymi,* 20-22; 199-201; Serafino Razzi, *La storia di Raugia,* 20-21; HAZU Archive, Zagreb, I c 59/506, 36-41 [Gondola's chronicle]; Resti, *Chronica,* 28-30.

militias from the entire district – was meant to evoke the earthly or even the celestial army which had defended Ragusa from the legendary Venetian attack. The "military spirit" (Appendini) characteristic of the whole ceremony was further accentuated by competitions in archery and knightly tournaments which followed at the end. The message of triumph over the external threat imbuing the entire celebration was made even more explicit in the eighteenth century through a staged combat of two symbolic figures. It seems that one personified Ragusa and the other an unspecified foreign assailant, with the duel predictably ending with victory for the city.[286]

However, despite such spectacular argumentation, which sought to provide Ragusan *libertas* with both historical and providential foundations, the independence of the small city-state always remained somewhat questionable. Importantly, this is far from saying that the Ragusan republic faced serious challenges to its legitimacy during the Early Modern period. European governments accepted it as a normal diplomatic partner while the contemporary scholarship routinely mentioned it among the European republican regimes, together with worthies such as Venice or Genoa.[287] Nonetheless, from the late sixteenth century a small number of Western commentators began to doubt whether Ragusan "liberty" was genuine at all, referring to it as *liberté fantastique*, *apparente libertà*, and *libertà falsa*. The reason was not the tributary status of the city nor its unilateral secession from the Hungarian Crown, but a third issue, which was to gradually prove quite damaging to Ragusan prestige. Namely, in the early modern world of large territorial states characterized by increasingly elaborate notions of sovereignty, a microscopic city-republic started to seem hopelessly out of place. This was the context from which the doubt regarding Ragusan sovereignty arose, a question whether such a small and helpless state, whose very existence depended on the goodwill of its powerful neighbours, should be considered truly independent – a sovereign among sovereigns.

The first to voice such doubts were the Venetians, traditionally suspicious of the claims to sovereignty of their former possession and economic competitor. As has been

[286] For a penetrating and extensive analysis of the feast as well as references to the rich older literature see: Lonza, *Kazalište vlasti,* 358-383; Zdenka Janeković-Römer, "Javni rituali u političkom diskursu humanističkog Dubrovnika" [Public Rituals in the Political Discourse of Humanistic Dubrovnik] *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest* 29 (1996): 74-75. On knightly games see: Zdravko Šundrica, "O igri alke u starom Dubrovniku" [On the Game of Alka in Old Ragusa], in Zdravko Šundrica, *Tajna kutija dubrovačkog arhiva,* part 2 (Zagreb-Dubrovnik: HAZU, Zavod za povijesne znanosti u Dubrovniku, 2009), 279-302.

[287] Several widely read early modern texts which mention Ragusa as an independent polity are: Francesco Sansovino, *Del governo dei Regni e delle Republiche cosi antiche come moderne. Libri XVIII* (Venice: apresso Francesco Sansovino, 1561), 123-129; Bodin, *De republica libri sex*, 10; Luca di Linda, *Le relationi de descrittioni vniversali et particolari del mondo* (Venice: Per Combi, & LaNoù, 1664), 640-641; Gothofredus, *Archontologia cosmica*, 623-627; Louis Moréri, *Le Grand dictionnaire historique, ou le Mélange curieux de l'histoire sacrée et profane.* Tomus 9 **(**Paris: les libraires associés, 1759): 24.

mentioned above, Venice was the only Western state which consistently refused to address Ragusa as a republic in official correspondence, for centuries calling it simply "community" or "city". Besides maintaining a vague historical right over Ragusa, another possible reason for such a policy was exactly the blatant lack of political and military self-sufficiency characteristic of Ragusa. The Serenissima's attitude towards Ragusan independence is excellently illustrated by the speech of an unknown official delivered in 1603 in the Venetian senate or *collegio*. Summarizing the city's position, the speaker stressed that the Ragusans were "from all the sides surrounded by the state of the Venetian *signori* and that on these *signori* depended their false liberty." He added that Ragusans themselves were aware that: "they will be free only as long as it will be useful to the Venetian republic" and knew that their protector, the sultan, had no power on the sea to protect them from the Venetian fleet.[288] While this speaker accentuated Ragusa's profound dependency on Venice as a reason for the "falseness" of its liberty, another Venetian, Lorenzo Bernardo, made the same point regarding Ragusan dependency in Istanbul. In his *relazione* of the Ottoman Empire, delivered in 1592, this former *bailo* spoke about Ragusa with open disdain:

> The community of Ragusa lives like a quail in front of the hawk, completely filled with fear; it pays its tribute of twelve thousand ducats per year and once more that sum for extraordinary expenses; it is frequently harassed by the Turkish savageries but appeases them all with money in order to survive and maintain that apparent liberty [289]

While the Venetians were the earliest to voice such doubts they were not the only ones. Beginning in the second half of the seventeenth century a number of Western European observers, mostly French, made strikingly similar judgements regarding the liberty of the small republic. Thus, the French traveller P. A. Poullet, who visited the city in 1658, remarked that Ragusa defended itself by its "submissions," pointed out that it existed "only due to mutual jealousies of the neighbouring states" and concluded:

[288] *...sono circondati da tutte le bande dal stato de Signori Veneziani, et che à quelli Signori, e de quelli dipende la finta sua libertà.* Ragusans are aware *che fin à quel tempo saran liberi, fin il quale tornerrà util, et piacerà alla Republica di Venezia.* (Biblioteca del Museo Correr (Venice), Codice *Cicogna* 978, number 21, without pagination).

[289] *La communità di Ragusi vive, come fa la quaglia sotto lo sparviero, tutta piena di timore; paga il suo tribute di zucchini dodicimila all'anno, e più di altrettanto di estraordinario; spesso viene travagliata da avanie turchesche, ma tutte le accomoda con danari per vivere, e sostentare quella sua apparente libertà* (Eugenio Albéri, ed., *Relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti al senato*, Serie III, vol 2 (Florence: tipografia all'insegna di Clio, 1844), 389).

> I can't stop being amazed at the pride with which are imbued these petty states, ruled as republics, which are making a parade of their imagined liberty, while in fact being slaves of both themselves and the others.[290]

A similar, judgment was made by another French traveller, the legal scholar Jean du Mont, who visited in 1691. Remarking that Ragusan power was negligible and that other states did whatever they want with the petty republic, du Mont also stressed the "apparent liberty with which Ragusans are deluding themselves, since, in fact, they are not their own masters."[291] However, perhaps the best summary of such an attitude towards Ragusa is found in the influential mid-seventeenth century description of the Ottoman Empire by the English traveller, Ricaut:

> This petty Republick hath always supported itself by submission, and addresses for favour and defence to divers powerful Princes, courting the favour of every one, never offering injuries, and when they receive them patiently support them; which is the cause the *Italians* call them *le sette bandiere*, or the seven banners, signifying that for their being and maintenance of the name of a free Republick, they are contented to become slaves to all parts of the world.[292]

Besides the usual claim that their lack of power made the Ragusans "slaves," Ricaut also reported another stereotype about the city which apparently became a commonplace in the seventeenth-century Mediterranean. It was the image of Ragusa as a city of "seven flags" (*sette bandiere*), which developed due to a mistaken but symptomatic belief that Ragusans paid tribute or even acknowledged the rule of no less than seven masters. These seven are never explicitly listed, but most likely included Spain, Venice, France, the Austrian Habsburgs, the Ottomans, the pope, and the viceroy of Naples.[293] Although this claim was factually incorrect – Ragusa acknowledged nobody's sovereignty and paid tribute only to the Ottomans -- it was a logical consequence of the city's traditionally humble diplomacy and its obvious strain to maintain good relations with all the major European powers.

[290] For the French original and Croatian translation of the relevant parts of Poullet's report, see: Vjekoslav Jelavić, "Doživljaji Francuza Poullet-a na putu kroz Dubrovnik i Bosnu (godine 1658)" [The Experiences of the French traveller Poullet on his Trip through Ragusa and Bosnia (in the year 1658)] *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u BiH* 20 (1908): the relevant part on Ragusa is, 24-27 and the quoted sentence, 27.

[291] For the relevant part of Du Monts report, see: Radovan Samardžić, "Nekoliko francuskih putopisaca XVII veka o Dalmaciji i Dubrovniku." [Several Seventeenth-Century French Travel Writers on Dalmatia and Ragusa] *Zbornik Filozofskog fakulteta* knjiga 7, no. 1 (1963): 376-377.

[292] Paul Ricaut, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire, in three books containing the Maxims of the Turkish Politic, their Religion, and Military Discipline* (London: John Starkey and Henry Brome, 1668), 66.

[293] Other good examples of this stereotype are to be found in: Tadić, *Promet*, 271: Samardžić, "Nekoliko francuskih putopisaca," 377.

It should be stressed, however, that such remarks of Western observers were not simply the result of a superficial scorn towards the petty republic, but in fact had a serious intellectual background. They were a natural consequence of a specific tradition of political thought, influential in Early Modern Europe, which Q. Skinner has labelled "neo-Roman" republicanism. At the centre of this ideology -- which originated in Roman law and philosophy – was the concept of liberty defined as the absence of dependence on the arbitrary will of another. In other words, liberty was not understood as a mere absence of interference -- the factual independence of an individual or a community -- in the way in which it is largely understood in contemporary political discourse. According to a neo-Roman view, true liberty meant an absence of even the *possibility* that the independence of a subject would be interfered with in an arbitrary way.[294] And Ragusa was, indeed, blatantly dependent upon the goodwill of a number of other states which could command it, even abolish its independence, if they so desired. It was this fragility of Ragusan independence which made Western commentators – influenced by Cicero, the Digest, also Machiavelli and other neo-Roman authors – doubt the authenticity of the liberty so obsessively proclaimed by the small republic.

At first glance at least, Ragusans had no problem acknowledging their city-state's deep state of dependence. For instance, instructing the ambassador in Istanbul in 1603, the senate mentioned "the princes protectors in whom, as you know, consist all of our forces" and in 1542 it wrote to its envoy to France: "the main intention of our ancestors and of ourselves always was to preserve the good grace of the princes of the world without whom we cannot survive."[295] However, these admissions of dependence were not as unequivocal as they appear at first. More precisely, while in diplomacy Ragusa had to continue with such a humble approach, it was in literature that an interesting defence of the city's liberty emerged, clearly intended for a domestic audience. Admitting the republic's blatant reliance on a number of stronger states, the literati nonetheless turned the claim of Western observers upside down; despite appearances, in fact it was Ragusa that was in charge. One of the most frequent *topoi* of Ragusan literature was the glorification of the patriciate's diplomatic skill, its ability to manipulate, even cheat, vastly superior states into acting in the best interests of the city. Seen from such an angle the multiple political patronage of Ragusa could even be represented in a

[294] Skinner has stated this thesis in many of his works. Only two representative examples are: Quentin Skinner, *Liberty before Liberalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Skinner, Quentin, "A Third Concept of Liberty," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 117 (2002): 237-268.

[295] The 1603 instruction is published in: Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 3, tomus 1, 115. The original of the 1542 instruction is: *Ma perche l'intenzione delli nostri maggiori e nostra sempre mai fu de conservare nella buona gratia delli principi del mondo senza quali noi non pottiamo regerse* (SAD, *Lettere di Levante* 22, f. 282 v).

positive light. Thus, in a kind of positive reinterpretation of the stereotype of *sette bandiere*, the seventeenth-century poet, Pasko Primi, proclaimed that Ragusan liberty would last forever:

> because in the East ready with arms stands/ the glorious house of Ottomans, which guards, protects and defends us./ But, behold the wonder, from the West also the sun rises to us and shines/ Phillip [III of Spain] who rules the world covers us with his wing./ From the North the Roman Emperor gives us his complete devotion:/ as befits the faith and justice of our lords [the patriciate]. / And above them all, as the head, the holy pastor [the pope] stands/ … in Christendom there is no Crown which does not defend this city of ours.[296]

Along the same lines, perhaps the greatest Ragusan writer, Marin Držić, in a prologue to his play *Tirena*, lauded the patricians for being "loved" and "cherished" by the lords of both East and West and concluded with an apt metaphor – "their ships sail on every wind."[297] Going a step further, in the mid-seventeenth century the patrician poet Junius Palmotta even suggested that this skilful diplomatic balancing between the great powers was the result of a special divine gift. In his play *Pavlimir* he proclaimed that, to Ragusa, "God gives this power/ to tame the grey eagle, / mighty dragon and the fierce lion" (i.e., the Habsburg Empire, the Ottomans and Venice).[298]

The "purest" of aristocracies: Representations of the Ragusan political system

When Renaissance authors addressed Ragusan statehood, besides the independence of the city another theme which they usually touched upon was its peculiar republican constitution. The close connection between these two themes can be seen from the fact that the concepts with which Ragusans referred to their statehood – *libertas* and *respublica* – had strongly dual meanings. In the republican tradition, including the Ragusan usage, these two concepts designated both independence in foreign affairs and a specific form of collective rule.[299] While the previous part of this chapter dealt with references to the city's independence, the following part reconstructs the ways in which Ragusans represented their republican self-governance. More precisely, it analyses various references to the political system of Ragusa,

[296] S oružijem er je spravna; u iztočnoj stoji strani/ Otmanović kuća slavna, ka nas čuva, bljude i brani./ Nu ti čudo, kde iz zapada izteče nam sunce i siva:/ Filip svetom koji vlada, kde nas krilom svojem pokriva./ Cesar rimski iz severa svu nam ljubav srdcem nosi:/ Od gospode naše vera i pravednos' tako prosi./ A nad svimi, ko je glava, sveti paster stojeć bljusti/ Od himbena tako lava i njegoveh zleh šeljusti./ U krstjanstvu nije krune, ka ne brani naš grad ovi... (Kurelac, *Runje i pahuljice*, 62).

[297] Marin Držić, *Djela* [Works], ed. Milan Rešetar *Stari pisci hrvatski*, vol. 7 (Zagreb: JAZU, 1930), 69-70.

[298] Palmotić, *Pavlimir*, 127.

[299] For the meaning of *libertas* see the introduction to this chapter. For the meaning of *respublica*, see: Mager, "Res publica chez les juristes, théologiens et philosophes," passim.

the virtue of its patrician rulers and the harmony, even consensus, which allegedly characterized its society.

Of course, these were issues of immense political importance, especially since Ragusa was ruled by probably the most exclusivist aristocratic regime of Renaissance Europe. After the "closing" of the patriciate in 1332 for more than three centuries not a single family managed to enter the ruling elite, which had completely monopolized public office. In a merchant city with otherwise strong social mobility, opportunities for immense profit, and relatively high levels of education, such an arrangement indeed required an explanation. Therefore, the vast majority of references to the republican governance of Ragusa were characterized by a strongly panegyric tone, with criticism only rarely disturbing the carefully maintained celebratory atmosphere. While such governmental propaganda surely contributed to the remarkable political and social stability of the city, its effects should not be overestimated. Throughout its history Ragusa managed to avoid major social unrest or significant institutional change primarily due to the relatively constant prosperity, its small size, which facilitated state control, and wise social policies (especially the well-functioning food supply).[300]

The earliest references to the republican governance of Ragusa emerged in the public art and civic ritual in the first decades of the fifteenth century, a period of intensive identity-building for the young republic. Probably the most important way in which the messages regarding the benefits of aristocratic rule were delivered to the broadest layers of the population was civic ritual. Intertwining the sacred and secular motifs, most Ragusan public rituals sought to deliver one crucial ideological message -- divine sanction of the political and social order.[301] On the most general level, the divine sanction of the patriciate's exceptional position was signalled by the privileged role which it played in literally all ceremonies. Thus, for instance, during the immensely important feast of St. Blaise it was the patricians who were charged with the duty of guarding the precious relics, both in the procession and at the cathedral altar, while the rector could even choose to personally carry those belonging to the

[300] The intriguing problem of Ragusan social stability has remained largely uninvestigated. The only work dedicated to the topic, written by Mosher Stuart, is unfortunately completely inadequate and misinformed, despite some interesting insights (Susan Mosher Stuart, *A State of Deference: Ragusa (Dubrovnik) in the Medieval Centuries* [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992]).

[301] The following paragraph is largely derived from the important works of two scholars, Zdenka Janeković and Nella Lonza, who have dealt extensively with the rituals of the Ragusan Republic. Their results have been published as: Janeković, *Okvir slobode,* 291-323; Zdenka Janeković-Römer, "Javni rituali u političkom diskursu humanističkog Dubrovnika," 68-86; Lonza, *Kazalište vlasti*; idem, "O dubrovačkom diplomatskom ceremonijalu," [On the Ragusan Diplomatic Ceremonial] *Zbornik Diplomatske akademije* 3 (1998): 169-175; idem, "Državni pogrebi u Dubrovniku (17.-18. stoljeće)" [State Funerals in Ragusa (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries)] *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 42 (2004): 131-148.

patron saint.[302] Moreover, the government strictly regulated the marching order of processions, carefully signalling the hierarchical relations between the Church and state, nobles and non-nobles, as well as within the state apparatus itself. By being projected into the sacral-liturgical context of a religious procession all these relationships of power – the fundamental political and social hierarchies – were again represented as having divine sanction. Thus, for instance, on certain occasions the rector walked in front of the archbishop, the Major Council was expected to follow behind the Minor, the nobility was usually situated closer to the focus of the procession than non-nobles (who were frequently, in an equally telling gesture, reduced to mere spectators). [303]

The fundamental message of the divine protection of the political order was especially clearly transmitted by one civic ceremony – the feast of the Forty Martyrs. It was a commemoration of a failed conspiracy in the year 1400, when a group of marginal nobles with the support of a few plebeians attempted to surrender the city to Slavic warlords from the hinterland. The details of the event are unclear, but according to the official rhetoric in the aftermath and a rich historiographical tradition that grew around it, the conspiracy was discovered by a remarkable coincidence and prevented by swift action of the government. The patrician authorities understood the propagandistic value of the story and began representing the discovery of the plot as a miracle, clear proof of the providence defending the Republic. Thus, the day when the conspiracy was discovered – the feast of the Forty Martyrs on 9March – was turned into one of the most important state holidays and henceforth commemorated with a solemn procession. The decree from 1403 which established the feast proclaimed that it was "the Forty Martyrs at whose intercession the divine power miraculously revealed the plots of traitors, cunningly and perfidiously made against the peace and quiet state of the community."[304] Describing the feast several decades afterwards, de Diversis confirms that this was its central message. He writes that the procession of dignitaries entered the church of St. Blaise, where they listened to a sermon which "evoked the memory of the grace of our Lord Jesus who preserved the liberty so that they would not cease to be grateful to God."[305]

[302] On patrician functions in the ceremony, see: Janeković, *Okvir,* 300-301. Janeković makes an interesting point that the confraternities, prominent in processions in other cities, were clearly marginalized in Ragusa for the sake of the patriciate (Janeković, "Javni rituali," 73).
[303] Lonza, *Kazalište vlasti,* 431-432; Janeković, "Javni rituali," 73-74; Janeković, *Okvir*, 300.
[304] Quote taken from: Bariša Krekić, "Prilozi unutrašnjoj istoriji Dubrovnika početkom 15. veka," [Contributions to the Internal History of Ragusa at the Beginning of the Fifteenth Century] *Istorijski glasnik* 1-2 (1953): 67. For the context of this conspiracy see: Ibid., 63-67; Janeković-Römer, *Okvir slobode*, 30-32.
[305] de Diversis, *Opis*, 177. It seems that some form of a public speech on liberty or republican values remained a part of the ceremony even in the later period (Lonza, *Kazalište,* 254, especially the note 926). The story about the conspiracy of 1400 appeared quite frequently in Ragusan historiography, for instance: *Annales* 52; Razzi, *La storia di Raugia*, 54; Luccari, *Copioso ristretto*, 76.

Interestingly, in arranging this ceremony the government clearly tried toconnect it symbolically with that of St. Blaise, most clearly by decreeing that the procession should carry only his relics (although the city did possess a relic of the Forty Martyrs as well).[306] Despite the similarities between these two main political feasts of the Republic, however, there also was one striking difference which revealed their somewhat different messages. While the large procession on the feast of St. Blaise also includednon-nobles, such as the clergy, important foreigners or *salariati*, that on the feast day of the Forty martyrs included only the highest dignitaries of the state, the senate and the rector. As Lonza aptly pointed out, although both ceremonies transmitted the general message of divine protection of the Republic, this difference suggested an additional layer of meaning. The feast of St. Blaise was a ceremonious display of unity against an external enemy, while the feast of the Forty Martyrs served as a ritual depiction of a vigilant government, always prepared to confront the internal enemies of the state.[307]

A similar glorifying portrait of the aristocratic regime was promulgated by the rich iconographic programme of the central building of the Republic – the Rector's Palace. Its complex sculptural decoration, installed during the middle decades of the fifteenth century, displayed two main themes. The first was the Roman origin of the city and its nobility, and the second was the wise and just government of the *respublica.*[308] The most salient motif within the programme of "good government" (*Buon Governo*) was the patriciate's just governance. It was impressed upon the observer repeatedly as he moved into the building: first, by the carving of Solomon's judgment on one of the capitals of the façade; then by a relief of a Ragusan rector listening to complaints, which originally stood at the Palace's portal; and finally, by the deep relief of justice with a programmatic inscription set above the entrance to the courtroom itself (as well as the aforementioned relief of the rector which was at one point moved to stand beside the figure of justice).[309] Another theme which was strongly accentuated was that of harmony and peace, elaborated by the classicizing reliefs on the Palace's portal. The most revealing among them depicted Venus embracing a disarmed [!] Mars, thus signalling the victory of peace over war. This scene could also be an allusion to the mythic daughter of the couple, the goddess Harmonia, whose presence was signalled by the depiction of *puttos* playing musical instruments in the adjacent relief -- a standard way of

[306] Lonza, *Kazalište,* 252; Janeković, *Okvir,* 305.
[307] Lonza, *Kazalište,* 254-255.
[308] The most detailed analyses of the iconography of the Rector's Palace are: Kokole, "Cyriacus of Ancona," 225-267; Fisković, "O porijeklu i značenju," 143-173.
[309] Kokole, "Cyriacus of Ancona," 231.

representing harmony.[310] The third important message of the Palace's iconographic program was the prudence of the patrician government. It was suggested already by the peculiar capital at the façade depicting a group of geese. This was most likely a reference to the famous episode when these animals saved Rome from a surprise attack by Gauls, and was thus a clear signal of the vigilance of the city's government. However, the prudence of the patrician authorities was proclaimed even more powerfully by an intriguing statue erected above the entrance to the hall of the senate -- an angelic figure holding a scroll with an inscription urging virtue on the senators. S. Kokole identified it as a depiction of the Roman goddess *Sacra mens,* a personification of political wisdom whose cult was invoked whenever Rome was threatened by a barbarian invasion. In the context of mid-fifteenth century Ragusa, endangered by the advance of the "new" Ottoman barbarians, such a personification was deeply fitting and served both as a laud of senatorial virtue and as an admonition to prudence.[311]

The earliest example of written reflection on the Ragusan political system is found in the description of the city composed in 1440 by Philippus de Diversis, a humanist from Lucca who served as a teacher in the communal school. In this work, dedicated to the Ragusan senate with an obvious panegyric intention, de Diversis provided an extensive account of the Ragusan political system.[312] The most intriguing part of his description, otherwise replete with details, is the general assessment of the Ragusan constitution. Diversis begins by expounding the classical Aristotelian scheme of six forms of government, raising the question of how the Ragusan constitution should be described within that classification. With slight embarrassment he admits that, strictly speaking, Ragusa should be considered to have the monarchical form of government, since the city acknowledges the king of Hungary as its ruler. However, he hurries to explain through a revealingly cautious formulation that "either due to his grace or due to contract" the king of Hungary has left all the power in the hands of the local nobles. After having thus solved the delicate question of Hungarian sovereignty, Diversis makes an interesting choice in his classification of Ragusa according to the Aristotelian scheme. He proclaims that the city is constitutionally a polity (*politia* or *principatus politicus*), which Aristotle defined as government by many for the common good. This was quite a surprising choice and Diversis was the only author to make it, since later

[310] Fisković, "O porijeklu i značenju,"148-156.
[311] Kokole, "Cyriacus of Ancona," passim, especially 233-237; 244-255.
[312] On de Diversis and his work, see: Zdenka Janeković-Römer, "Grad trgovaca koji nose naslov plemića: Filip de Diversis i njegova pohvala Dubrovniku" [The City of Merchants with Noble Titles: Philippus de Diversis and his Praise of Ragusa], in: de Diversis, *Opis,* 9-17.

writers opted for a more obvious characterization of Ragusa as an aristocracy. De Diversis, however, explains his reasons clearly:

> If, therefore, one considers the equality of votes, the changing of those who rule to those who obey and the other way around, the placing of many in public office or offices, and the governance limited by law, one can conclude with certainty and claim that the Ragusan government contains all the characteristics of a polity (*politici principatus*).[313]

What de Diversis stresses here and elsewhere in his text are two crucial traits of the Ragusan political system: its strongly elective nature and the supreme authority of law.[314] Intriguingly, these were exactly the essential traits which his famous compatriot, Ptolemy of Lucca (c. 1227 – c. 1327), also listed as characteristic of *politia* or *principatus politicus* in his well-known work, *De regimine principum.*[315] Due to the fact that Diversis uses identical terms and understands them in an identical way, it is likely that in describing Ragusa he did not follow only Aristotle but also his interpretation by Ptolemy. Moreover, this could help explain why he classified Ragusa as a polity, namely, that was how Ptolemy described the Italian city republics of his time. It might be due to his influence that Diversis accentuated the common traits of Ragusa and these regimes, neglecting to consider the rigidly closed nature of Ragusan governance which led most later authors to describe the city as an aristocracy.[316]

However, while his classification of the Ragusan constitution remained idiosyncratic, Diversis did stress two points which remained fundamental in the Ragusan political tradition. As he remarks in several places, all Ragusan patricians shared two characteristics: they were "equal" (*equales*) and "free" (*liberi*).[317] It is clear that for Diversis the equality of patricians meant their equal participation in public office, the fact that they periodically transformed from subjects into rulers and vice versa, thus fulfilling the ideal of the Aristotelian citizen.[318]

[313] *Si igitur consideretur ballotarum equalitas, commutatio principantium in subiectos, et e converso constitution plurium simul in offitio, vel offitiis, et potestas legibus artata. Concludere licet et firmissime asserere regimini Ragusino singulas descriptionis politici principatus particulas inesse* (de Diversis, *Opis*, 158). A very similar formulation is: Ibid., 156.

[314] These two motifs reappear throughout his description of the city's government: de Diversis, *Opis*, 155, 156, 158.

[315] See Ptolemy of Lucca, *De Regimine principum*, 2.8.1. An excellent summary of Ptolemy's ideas on *principatus politicus* is: Nicolai Rubinstein, "Marsilius of Padua and Italian Political Thought of his Time" in: *Studies in Italian History in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, 1: Political Thought and the Language of Politics: Art and Politics* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2004), 106-108.

[316] Ragusa was classified as an aristocracy by very different commentators, for instance: di Gozzi, *Dello Stato*, passim, especially 65-66, 177, 284; Resti, *Chronica*, 3; Bodin, *De republica libri sex*, 222.

[317] de Diversis, *Opis*, 155-156. The most important examples are: Ibid., 155: *est politia eorum principatus, qui natura sunt liberi, et fere equales … Ibid.*, 156: *principatus politicus est liberorum potestas, et equalium principantes in subditos, et subditos in principantes convertens equalitate, ….Omnes siquidem Ragusini patres* [patricians] *aequo iure liberi sunt…*

[318] For the famous articulation of the virtue expected from a citizen, see: Aristotle, *Politics*, III, 4.

How deeply rooted this patrician egalitarianism was, is demonstrated by two situations which, albeit centuries apart, reveal the same basic self-understanding typical of the Ragusan nobility. In 1429, the young patricians whom the rector tried to expel from the council-hall asked him: "Do you have a greater share in power than we do?" while in 1672 a patrician quarrelling with the rector's deputy proclaimed: "I also am the rector."[319] On the other hand, in proclaiming that all patricians were "free" Diversis simply reiterated the ancient republican axiom that liberty was realized only by a citizen who participated in the common affairs of a community as a holder of public office. However, as Diversis was clearly aware, when this classical understanding was applied to Ragusa, where the right to public office was acquired through noble birth, "liberty" became an exclusively patrician prerogative. Such an exclusivist understanding of political liberty, according to which genuine liberty did not pertain to all the citizens but only to the patricians, became yet another fundamental theme of Ragusan tradition.

Indeed, once the proper reflection on the city's governance began with the cultural flourishing of the late fifteenth century, the exclusivity of the patriciate was one of the main themes. In a typically Ragusan manner, the principal way in which the issue was thematized was through a historical myth about the genesis of the division between the nobility and the disenfranchised majority of the population. Explaining the origins of the patrician monopoly to power, Ragusan historiography did not speak of the historical process of the "closing" of the patriciate during the first decades of the fourteenth century. Instead, it projected the social structure of the late medieval city into a distant mythic past and represented the circumstances of its genesis in a most convenient manner.

According to many Ragusan historians, a large group of Vlach families with immense wealth and numerous servants immigrated into the city from the hinterland in the year 743 or 744. The new arrivals soon organized a general assembly of the population and urged the division of the inhabitants -- which had hitherto lived without stratification -- into three main groups. These groups were in fact the three social layers typical of late medieval Ragusa: the nobility (*gentilhuomini*), the small non-noble elite (*cittadini* or *popolani*), and the majority of plebeians (*plebei*).[320] According to the myth, the social standing of each person was

[319] These two examples are taken from Lonza, *Kazalište,* 75.

[320] In some accounts these groups have different names, for instance, *plebei* are also called *villani* or *artisiani* – but it is clear that Ragusan authors are referring to the social divisions of their time. Such divisions emerged in the late fourteenth century and, although they never received proper legal codification, they seem to have been firmly established, especially with the passing of time, as the *popolani* became an ever more closed group themselves. On this division, its genesis and meanings, see: Zrinka Pešorda Vardić, "'Pučka vlastela": Društvena struktura dubrovačke bratovštine Sv. Antuna u kasnom srednjem vijeku" ['Plebeian aristocrats': The social

determined justly, depending on origin and merit. The men of high origin and influence were made patricians and henceforth had exclusive access to public office. Those few who served the patricians, as guards or tending to their households and horses, were made the *popolani*. Finally, those of the lowest condition who worked as artisans or tended cattle were assigned to the plebeians.[321]

Despite the minor variations between the accounts, the essential meaning of this narrative remained the same in the historiography from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century. The story was meant to present a relatively recent social development – the patrician monopoly to power and the tripartite social division, which both originated in the fourteenth century – as immensely ancient, legitimizing them as a venerable tradition. Even more importantly, these socio-political structures were represented as a result of an agreement of the whole population, thus receiving a democratic legitimacy. Finally, the narrative also suggested they were just, since each individual was allocated a social standing according to his qualities (the fact that this also bound his descendants must not have seemed especially problematic in an aristocratic society with strong notions of hereditary virtue). After having thus justified the social underpinnings of Ragusan aristocratic governance, most historians used this narrative to introduce yet another of its fundamental principles – that of patrician endogamy. The newly established nobles had allegedly decided not to give their daughters to members of lower social orders, but to marry exclusively among themselves or with the nobility of the surrounding cities. The result of this custom was not only excellent relations with the neighbours, but also, as Ragusan historians insisted, that noble and non-noble blood always remained separate in the city.[322]

---

structure of the St. Anthony Confraternity in late medieval Dubrovnik] *Povijesni prilozi* 33 (2007): 216, 223-224; idem, "Youth and Age: Families of Wealthy Commoners in Late Medieval Dubrovnik" in *Generations in Towns: Succession and Success in Pre-industrial Urban societies*, ed. Finn-Einar Eliassen and Katalin Szende (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge scholars Publishing, 2009), 24-25, with entire text being an excellent introduction of the *cittadini* class; see also the chapter "Građanstvo kao stalež" [Citizenry as an Extate) in Zrinka Pešorda Vardić, "Dubrovački Antunini u kasnom srednjem vijeku" [The Ragusan Confraternity of St. Anthony in the Late Middle Ages], unpublished doctoral dissertation at the Filozofski Fakultet u Zagrebu, supervisor Zdenka Janeković-Römer, 2006; Janeković, *Okvir,* 231-232; Jorjo Tadić "O društvenoj strukturi Dalmacije i Dubrovnika u vreme renesanse" [On the Social Structure of Dalmatia and Ragusa in the Renaissance] *Zgodovinski časopis* 6-7 (1952-1953): 559.

[321] Some examples of this story in Ragusan historiography are: *Annales*, 8-10; 180-181; Razzi, *Storia,* 11; Resti, *Chronica,* 19-20; and a strongly modified version in Luccari, *Copioso ristretto,* 4. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, some historians connected the aristocratic form of government with the very foundation of the city, claiming that the aristocratic government was established by the mythic Prince Pavlimirus (for instance, Tubero, *Commentarii,* 90).

[322] This was stressed particularly by the early accounts of the Annalist and Ragnina (*Annales* 9, 181). On this story see also: Janeković, *Okvir,* 47-48; 231. The endogamy of the Ragusan patriciate soon became well known in Europe and was, for instance, commented on by Jean Bodin, who proclaimed that due to it Ragusa *purissimam & ab omni popolari temperatione remotissimam Aristocratiam colit* (Bodin, *De respublica libri sex,* 222).

This story about the origin of aristocratic governance should be considered together with the claims to Roman blood and descent from the city's founders which were also characteristic of many patrician houses. The nobility, it seems, spun a web of historical myths to hide two uncomfortable truths. First, that its privileged position was a recent development and, second, that its ancestors were essentially no different from those of the rest of the population. In other words, it was the origin of both the system as a whole and the origins of individual houses that were projected into the distant mythic past, beyond the reach of non-noble aspirants, thus accentuating the – mostly imaginary – differences between the rulers and the ruled.

Although such historical explanations were undeniably the most influential, an elaborate philosophical justification of Ragusan aristocratic exclusivism also existed. It is to be found in a unique example of a political treatise written by a Ragusan, *Dello stato delle reppubliche* of Niccolo di Gozze (1549 - 1610).[323] One of the central agendas of this work, in fact a commentary on Aristotle's politics, was legitimizing Ragusan governmental practices by dressing them in Aristotelian garb. The first way in which Gozze justified the political monopoly of the patriciate was by claiming that it was grounded in nature itself. It simply reflected a general principle observable in natural order, according to which in every thing composed of many parts the higher and better elements rule over the baser and lower ones. Society being such a thing composed of many diverse members, it was only just for it to be governed by those who were more worthy, in the same way in which the soul rules the body or males rule the females (as Gozze remarks, male "is superior in as much as it is better").[324] In another, more historically-minded explanation of noble exclusivism, Gozze began with the classical premise that virtue gives the best title to rule. He continued with the equally common claim that a noble title is an unquestionable sign of the virtue of one's ancestors who earned that social status through virtue at some point in the past. The trouble was, however, that this justified only the rule of the virtuous founders of noble houses, not of their descendants. At this point Gozze faced the delicate question of how to transmit virtue -- and with it the right to rule - from the patrician ancestors to their descendants. He found the way by clutching at one of Aristotle's remarks which could be understood to imply that virtue was hereditary. In book three of his *Politics*, speaking of why nobles are considered to have the right to public office, Aristotle mentions: "Those who are sprung from better ancestors are likely to be better men,

[323] On Gozze, see the comprehensive work: Ljerka Schiffler, *Nikola Vitov Gučetić* (Zagreb: Hrvatski studiji Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 2007).
[324] This idea re-occurs throughout Gozze's work, but see especially: di Gozzi, *Dello Stato,* 24-27.

for good birth is excellence of race."[325] Gozze elaborates on this remark, claiming that the basic natural principle is that *migliore sempre genera il migliore*, that excellence always gives birth to excellence, and consequently that virtue is usually transmitted through descent from virtuous parents. He is extremely careful to pay lip service repeatedly to the humanist commonplace that virtue is a result of self-discipline and work on oneself, yet his conclusion leaves no doubt as to the crucial role of noble descent in the possession of virtue. He writes: "Due to all of the aforementioned, it is reasonable to assume that the one who possesses nobility of blood also possesses virtue until the contrary is proven."[326] In other words, while non-noble men had to prove their virtue, nobles had to prove the *lack* of it.

Although Gozze articulated the belief in hereditary virtue most clearly, there are examples of the same idea in Ragusan tradition both before and after him. Lauding the rigid endogamy of the patriciate, de Diversis pointed out that the children of a non-noble spouse would doubtlessly "distort the virtues of the ancestors," and continued with a telling metaphor, proclaiming that the seed clearly testifies to the quality of the soil on which it is planted. His consideration of the wonders of Ragusan endogamy finished with a pointed rhetorical question: If the quality of the children depends on the quality of their wet-nurse, as is well known, how much more must the same be true of their mother?[327] Roughly two centuries afterwards, in one of his strongly propagandistic plays, the patrician J. Palmotta demonstrated a similar attitude. He made the mythic Anchises, the father of Aeneas, utter the following laud of aristocratic rule: "Where the nobility rules through the just laws/ that city is honourable and in true liberty/ the virtue of the fathers is repeated in their offspring/ and inherited with power...."[328]

However, the most common way of lauding the Ragusan political system in the Early Modern period was by accentuating its present merits -- the wisdom of its institutions and the virtue of its rulers. Predictably, the poetry and drama of early modern Ragusa contained numerous passionate but quite generic laudations of patrician rule, whose authors usually belonged to the higher layers of the Republic's society, the patriciate itself or the secondary elite of *popolani*. Besides lauding the patriciate for having preserved the city's independence, other usual *topoi* included accentuating the justice of its rule, the safety of life and possessions,

[325] Aristotle, *The Politics and the Constitution of Athens* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), 80.
[326] di Gozzi *Dello stato*, 160; 444. Gozze is here clearly indebted to Venetian reflections on the same issue, a good summary of which is to be found in King, *Venetian Humanism*, 104, 109, 118-132.
[327] de Diversis, *Opis*, 94.
[328] *Djela Gjona Gjora Palmotića*, 489.

the social harmony and prosperity it ensured for everyone.[329] Interestingly, probably the most emphatic laudation of patrician rule appears in the foreword of an astronomical work, published in 1579 by Niccolo de Nale (cca. 1500-1587), a member of a prominent *popolani* family. At the beginning of his treatise, which he dedicated to the senate, Nale showered his rulers with compliments. Among the other things he stressed that they treated their subjects "more like brothers than vassals" and continued:

> I will dare to claim that there is no state today where the subjects are ruled and governed with greater gentleness, and where the rulers undertake greater efforts and dangers for the benefit of their subjects.

Nale concluded his considerations of the wonders of aristocratic rule by drawing the predictable conclusion. Owing to the immense kindness of the republic's rulers, "the obligation that we [the subjects] have towards them is such that it will never be satisfied, not even in its thousandth part."[330]

A similar idea of benevolent patrician rule and the debt which it incurred among the subjects was suggested by a particular image which reappeared frequently in the official rhetoric of the Ragusan government: The patriciate represented the polity it ruled as a family. Especially in letters to its diplomats or citizens abroad, usually when appealing to their patriotism, the senate used the metaphor of a family extensively. Not surprisingly, it was a family in which the paternal role was played by the patrician rulers whose "sons" (*figli, buoni figli*), the subjects, owed love and obedience to their "fathers" (*padri*) or "natural masters" (*signori naturali*). Along the same lines, *patria* frequently took on maternal connotations, as in the often-repeated phrase *figlio di questa patria*, which was also used in attempts to awaken the patriotism of its addressees.[331] Such a paternalistic understanding of political authority, according to which paternal authority was the source and model for political governance, was also expounded by Gozze in his *Dello Stato*. As he remarked, every ruler should remember he

[329] Several notable examples are: Marin Držić, *Djela* [Works], ed. Frano Čale (Zagreb: Liber, 1979), 220-221; Kurelac, *Runje i pahuljice*, 62-63; Gundulić, *Dubravka* , 90; Palmotić, *Pavlimir*, 106-111.

[330] *...ma ben ardirò d'affermare, che non si troui hoggi Dominio alcuno; doue i uassalli sieno con maggior mansuetudine, retti, e gouernati, e doue i Principi per beneficio de sudditi sostenghino maggiori fatiche, e pericoli . Perloche s'ogni uassallo è obligato al suo Principe, quanto magiormente siamo obligati noi, che sotto cosi buoni Principi meniamo quieta, et tranquilla uita? Certo, l'obligo c'habbiamo è tale, che non saria mai possibile satisfaread una millesima parte* (Nicolo di Nale, *Dialogo sopra la sfera del Mondo* (Venice: appresso Francesco Ziletti, 1579), [XII]).

[331] Some of numerous examples of such familial language are to be found in: SAD, *Litterae et commissiones levantis* 22, f. 20r-20v, f. 205r; *Litterae et commissiones levantis* 23, f. 49r, f. 224v; *Litterae et commissiones levantis* 31, f. 7r, f. 168 v, f. 201v. For a similar understanding of the obligations of the individual towards the "state" and similar language used to conceptualize it in the Venetian case, see Alberto Tenenti, "Il senso dello stato" in *Storia di Venezia dalle origini alla caduta della Serenissima*, IV, Alberto Tenenti and Ugo Tucci, eds. (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1996), 326-333.

is by God and nature given the task of governing "neither less nor more than a father is to govern his own children, since from this [paternal] government arose originally every other legitimate government in the world."[332]

Building on the well-established image of good government and grateful subjects, a number of authors lauded the city by insisting on its remarkable social peace, the absence of popular rebellions and patrician factions. A good example is the aforementioned Francesco Serdonati, a Florentine teacher in the Ragusan communal school, who stressed the city's social harmony in two of his public speeches, published in 1578. Serdonati proclaimed that the wise rule and the good customs of the patricians – inherited from their Roman ancestors – can be discerned from the fact that Ragusa lived "without any strife, any intestine evil for more than a thousand years."[333] Probably due to the fact that his second speech was for the occasion of the arrival of the new archbishop, in this text Serdonati mentions yet another intriguing reason for the remarkable peace of Ragusa – divine providence. After stressing the great piety of Ragusans he proclaimed that their city enjoyed special divine favour and that its amazing peace and concord were maintained "with the help of God." Accentuating not only the internal, but also the external peacefulness of the Ragusan republic – the fact that it allegedly never participated in wars – Serdonati explicitly attributed a sacred dimension to it by stating that it was that same peace which Christ had given to his Apostles: *Pacem meam relinquo vobis, pacem meam do vobis*.[334]

A century and a half later, in the foreword to Resti's history of Ragusa, one finds an equally emphatic insistence on the social peace of the city, but articulated in a different way. Seeking to point out the importance of Ragusan history, despite the embarrassingly small size of the Republic, it proclaimed that one could learn more from the history of Ragusa than from the history of great Rome itself. The history of Rome contained "more vices to avoid than virtues to imitate," while Ragusan history revealed numerous maxims regarding wise republican governance. Most precisely, in Ragusa there was never anything similar to the

[332] di Gozzi, *Dello Stato*, 410. Another metaphor which sometimes occurred in Ragusan sources and expressed a similar paternalistic attitude was that of the state as a garden and patricians as its keepers. Thus, explaining to Fredindand of Habsburg why they banished the Bucignolo brothers in 1539, the senate claimed that "as a good farmer we could not have failed to remove that vile herb[weed?] from our garden" (*come buoni agricola non habbiamo possuto mancare di levare questa mala herba dal horto nostro e quelli pessimi cittadini e traditori della sua patria, caccaiare dalla citta,* (SAD; *Litterae et commissiones levantis* 22, f. 38v.

[333] This same point is made in two places: Serdonati, *Orationes duae*, III, 19.

[334] Ibid., 21. Other, less elaborate, references to social harmony in Ragusa are to be found in: Ioannes Paulus Gallucius, *Paulli Gallucii Saloenses oratio, publicae habita in Ecclesia Cathedrali Paduae in assumptione Caputei illustris Equitis Dominici Slatarichii Simeonis F. Ragvsini* (Venice, 1580), 2.

"envious" ostracism which expelled the best citizens, eventually leading to Nero or Caligula. Quite the contrary, the city had always enjoyed remarkable peace:

> the perfect equilibrium in our government made life and existence safe for everyone and if accidentally in all these hundreds of years there happened one Damiano Juda, who tried to make himself a tyrant, and a few more recent disorders of [patrician] families, nonetheless the wise mind of the patricians turned this republic into a safe haven…[335]

Another way of lauding the excellence of the Ragusan government was by stressing its immutability and stability, the fact that the republic's constitution had allegedly not changed for centuries. In his *Dello Stato* Gozze proclaimed the superiority of aristocracies over republics with broad citizen participation, invoking both Classical and contemporary examples to demonstrate that aristocratic regimes last far longer than their more democratic counterparts. With this criteria of constitutional longevity made paramount, Ragusa and Venice, being "stable and firm," were represented as superior to even the greatest celebrities of republican tradition such as medieval Florence or ancient Rome.[336] Gozze returned to the same topic at another place in his treatise, stressing that Ragusa had copied the Venetian constitution, and continuing:

> it is already nine hundred years that in this Adriatic sea, in imitation of that most glorious republic, we are enduring in civil liberty and inviolable aristocratic rule, which has not undergone any change nor any disorder, either due to good or bad fortune…[337]

Another author who insisted on the immutability of Ragusan political institutions was J. Resti, a late but reliable spokesman of the city's aristocratic ideology. Similarly to Gozze, he stressed the similarities of the Venetian and Ragusan constitutions, "which must be more perfect than all the forms of government with which Greece and the Roman Republic had boasted." As Resti points out, the Greek republics lasted only briefly and the Roman no more than five hundred years, while Ragusa and Venice had endured with the same form of government for a thousand and two hundred years already. Interestingly, it was Ragusa that demonstrated the excellence of that constitutional type more obviously than the usually celebrated Venice:

[335] *...dove che nel nostro governo un equilibrio perfetto ha reso sicura la vita e l'essere ad ogni uno, e se per sorte in tante centinara d'anni si trovò un Damiano Giuda, che affetò farsi tiranno, e qualche altro disordine di famiglie più recenti, pure la provida mente degli ottimati ridusse ad un porto sicuro questa republica* (Resti, *Chronica*, 3). For a poetic celebration of Ragusan concord, see: Palmotić, *Pavlimir*, 108.

[336] di Gozzi, *Dello stato*, 65.

[337] *…et noi... per essempio, et imitatione di si celeberrima Republica, in questo nostro Adriatico Mare sono novecento anni, che ci manteniamo in libertà civile, et Aristocratia inviolabile, che mai ne per prospera, ne per avversa fortuna ha patito mutatione, o disordine alcuno* (di Gozzi, *Dello stato*, 284).

> the conservation of the liberty of Ragusa, the small republic, reveals clearly, that the liberty of Venice was not conserved because of its power, but purely because of its perfect from of government. [338]

These examples reveal yet another way in which Ragusan authors celebrated their aristocratic governance besides invoking the city's peacefulness or constitutional immutability. Namely, they insisted that the Ragusan constitution was the same as that of Venice, which enjoyed European fame as the ideal republic.[339] Besides Resti and Gozze, another influential author connecting the two republics was the patrician historian Luccari, who pointed out that Ragusa can rightfully be considered *Venetia minore,* "since our government differs little from that of Venice."[340] In his late sixteenth-century history of the city, Razzi even offered a historical explanation for this prestigious similarity of constitutions. In the twelfth century Ragusans had allegedly invited a Venetian governor to their city, maintaining this arrangement for some thirty years, after which they dismissed the last of the Venetians, explaining: "that they had no more need for them, having learned quite well their way of governing."[341] It seems that in moments of special patriotic fervour Ragusans even attempted to turn this relationship of model and imitator upside down. Namely, several early modern travel-writers explicitly mention that the Ragusan from of government is older than the Venetian one.[342] The attempts to stress the similarity with the prestigious neighbour were sometimes so obvious and strained that they even became counterproductive, as is shown by one sixteenth-century traveller who remarked that Ragusans imitated the Venetians "like monkeys."[343] Nonetheless, such attempts to "parasitize" the enormous prestige which the *Serenissima* enjoyed had some success, since several influential authors such as F. Sansovino or J. Bodin did accentuate Ragusa's constitutional similarity to Venice.[344]

---

[338] *…e la conservatione della libertà di quella di Ragusa, reppublica piccola, mostra chiaramente, che quella di Venezia non s'è conservata per mezzo della sua potenza, ma puramente a causa della perfetta forma del suo governo* (Resti, *Chronica*, 38).

[339] For the fascination with Venice in the early modern Europe, see: William J. *Bouwsma, "*Venice and the Political Education of Europe," in *Renaissance Venice*, ed. John R. Hale (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1973), 445-66; Felix Gilbert, "The Venetian Constitution in Florentine Political Thought," in *Florentine Studies: Politics and Society in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Nicolai Rubinstein (London: Faber, 1968), 463-500; John Eglin, *The Myth of* Venice *in British Culture, 1660-1797* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001); Haitsma Mulier, *The Myth of Venice and Dutch Republican Thought in the Seventeenth Century* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1980).

[340] Luccari, *Copioso ristretto*, 41.

[341] Razzi, *La storia di Raugia*, 33-34.

[342] Ricaut, *The History of the Present State*, 120. For similar remarks of other travel writers, see: Tadić, *Promet putnika*, 255, 274.

[343] Tadić, *Promet putnika*, 255.

[344] Francesco Sansovino, *Del governo*, 123; Jean Bodin, *De republica*, 222. For more examples of Ragusan idealization of Venice, primarily in poetry, see: Miljenko Foretića, "Venecija u zrcalu starog Dubrovnika" [Venice in the Mirror of Old Ragusa], in: *Dubrovnik u povijesnim i kulturnim mijenama: zbornik odabranih*

As has been stressed repeatedly, Ragusan political culture was thoroughly shaped by the ideal of unanimity and therefore any form of public criticism or polemic was considered scandalous and appeared only on rare occasions. Nonetheless, there are some references to the Ragusan political system which were not characterized by the customary panegyric tone, but were critical, satirical or even plainly derogative. The closest to a proper political satire against the patriciate and its glorifying self-image was a poem, *Contro la nobiltà di Ragusa*, written by Marino Caboga (1505-1582).[345] The list of accusations which Caboga -- an archdeacon of the Ragusan Church and himself a nobleman -- directed at his patrician peers is truly impressive. He portrayed them as barbarous, vain and amoral, accusing them of usury, corruption, theft, even of murder and heresy. He specifically attacked the ideal of just government by claiming that the court verdicts were totally arbitrary, while the patrician judges pompously quoted the laws only to justify various abuses. He also ironized the ideal of *buon governo,* claiming that the patricians punished the innocent and rewarded the guilty, oppressed the weak and exalted the powerful, made the rich happy and the poor desperate, and destroyed the state with their folly. The central motif of Caboga's critique, however, was the peculiar combination of arrogance and ignorance which he saw as typical of patricians – in particular their conviction that noble descent automatically made them virtuous and educated. As Caboga pointed out, the patricians believed that they were learned simply because they were noble, walking "like Demosthenes around the plaza" although they could neither read nor understand Latin or Italian. Attacking the idea of hereditary virtue Caboga insisted that due to their "villainies," "lies," and "treacheries," patricians did not "deserve" the name of nobles, but of "loiterers" (*poltroni*), since true nobility belonged only to those who conquered their passions with reason. After stressing that the great Cicero was a *contadin* and the traitor Catilina a noble, Caboga finished the poem with yet another thrust at the Ragusan myth. Due to their arrogant obsession with descent Ragusans were just the opposite [!] of the Romans, who knew full well that "learning is more important than blood."[346]

---

radova [Dubrovnik in Historical and Cultural Changes: Collection of Selected Works], ed. Anica Kisić (Dubrovnik: Matica hrvatska, 2007), 323-325.

[345] For Caboga's biography with ample references to the older literature, see: "Kaboga Kordica Maroje" in *Hrvatski biografski leksikon* 6, 684-686, ed. Trpimir Macan (Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2005).

[346] The poem has been published twice: Makušev V. Vikentij, *Izsledovanija ob istoričeskih pamjatnikah i bytopisateljah Dubrovnika* [Studies of the Historical Monuments and Customs of Dubrovnik] (St Petersburg: Tipografia Imperatorskoj Akademii Nauk, 1867), 46-49; Rafo Bogišić, "Marin Držić i Mario Kaboga," [Marin Držić and Mario Kaboga] *Forum* 27, no. 3-4 (1988): 195-197. On this poem see: Bojan Đorđević, "Satira 'Contro la nobiltà di Ragusa' Marija Kabožića" [Satire *Contro la nobiltà di Ragusa* oby Mario Caboga], *Prilozi za književnost, jezik, istoriju i folklor* 70, no. 1-4 (2004): 211-218; Bogišić, "Marin Držić i Mario Kaboga," 189-206.

There was probably some truth to Caboga's insistence on the arrogance of the patricians, since it seems that they were indeed prone to accentuate their ancient and pure nobility in front of foreigners and their own subjects. Several sixteenth-century travellers mentioned the arrogance of Ragusan patricians, who were "convinced that there are no greater nobles than themselves" or that "there is no older nobility in the world than theirs."[347] An anonymous seventeenth-century description of the city even seems to have preserved traces of the ironic attitude of the Ragusan *popolani* and *plebei* towards such boasting by their rulers. After mentioning that the patricians prided themselves as "the most pure and genuine nobility of blood," it addressed the inter-class relations in Ragusa in the following way:

> Therefore in the nobility there is a certain natural pompousness and arrogance with which they show that they do not care much about others, and especially about their subjects, albeit they are [also] well-born and illustrious. To their subjects this is if not odious than at least little likable, and therefore the citizens and plebeians of their state among themselves tell a joke that the noble blood is not red like theirs, but white as was the that of the Trojans. [348]

The best known example of the Ragusan anti-myth, however, is to be found in the so-called conspiratorial letters of Marin Držić (1508-1567), the most famous dramatist of Renaissance Ragusa. In 1566, while in Florence, Držić wrote a series of letters to the city's Medici rulers asking for help in overthrowing the Ragusan government and establishing a new republic in which the power would be divided between the patriciate and the *popolo*.[349] Clearly, the portrait of the patrician regime in these letters is highly tendentious and shaped by Držić's attempt to persuade the rulers of Florence to support his cause. Nonetheless, there are intriguing similarities with other examples of critical discourse on Ragusan governance,

[347] Tadić, *Promet*, 253, 257, 259.

[348] British Library (London), Add. 48131 (Yelverton MS. 146), *Relazioni, historical documents and tracts, relating to Italy; 1527-1620*, *Relazione* of Rausa. This follows after the account of the mythic division of population in 744 and the list of noble families, on f.747v: ... [the patricians] *uantano la più pura, e la più schietta nobiltà di sangue cosi dal lato paterno come delle Madri, che sia in altre parti d'Europa. Onde nella nobiltà resta un certo farto, et arroganza naturale con il quale mostrano di non tenere molto conto dell'altri, e spetialmente de loro sudditi ancorche ben nati e illustri, che ne diuiene se non odiosa almeno poco amabile, e peró li Cittadini, e popolari del loro Dominio tra di loro dicono per ischerzo che il sangue nobile è bianco non rosso come il loro e che tale era quello de Troiani.*

[349] Držić's reasons for such drastic action remain unclear, but it is certain that his proposal was not taken seriously by the Medici and that soon, in 1567, he died in Venice. The literature on this intriguing episode is copious and therefore only a small selection can be mentioned: Vinko Foretić, "O Marinu Držiću" [On Marin Držić] *Rad Jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* 13 (1965): 49-145; Josip Pupačić, "Pjesnik urotnik (o političkim planovima Marina Držića" [The Poet Conspirator (on The Political Plans of Marin Držić)], in *Zbornik radova o Marinu Držiću,* ed. Jakša Ravlić (Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska, 1969), 472-511; Bernard Stulli, "Oko političkih planova Marina Držića-Vidre" [Regarding the Political Plans of Marin Držić-Vidra] in *Studije iz Povijesti Dubrovnika* (Zagreb: Konzor , 2001), 351-373; Lovro Kunčević, "'Ipak nije na odmet sve čuti': mediječejski pogled na urotničke namjere Marina Držića" [No Harm in Hearing it all: The Medicean Attitude to the Conspiracy of Marin Držić] *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti u Dubrovniku*, 45 (2007): 9-46.

especially with Caboga's poem. Thus, Držić also insists on the totally arbitrary nature of the city's judiciary, where patrician whim was more important than justice or even elementary common sense.[350] Držić also offers a similar portrait of the moral nature of the patricians, who are depicted as being simultaneously arrogant and incompetent. However, while the insistence on patrician arrogance (*superbia*) is similar in both authors, when it comes to incompetence the accent in Držić is somewhat different. Unlike Caboga, he does not insist on their lack of moral restraint or dubious education, but emphasizes their folly and cowardice. Držić illustrates the patrician folly (*pazzi, goffeza*) by claiming that they were destroying the city's thriving fleet with pointless policies, alienating the much-needed Western powers through bad diplomacy, and irrationally neglecting the city's fortifications.[351] The patriciate's cowardice (*timidissimi, pusilanimi*) is exemplified through a story about a crisis several years before, when the rumour came that the Ottomans were going to attack the city. The nobles allegedly did nothing but "cried," consulted "vile women" hoping for miraculous aid "from the stars," and the only arrangement they made was preparing keys of the city -- which they would have meekly given to the "Turk."[352]

Importantly, in Držić's letters there is one remarkable claim which is completely absent from Caboga's poem: an insistence that the popular discontent in Ragusa is so deep that the city is on the verge of rebellion. As he put it, the Ragusan *popolo* prays to God for one mercy only, "that power be taken from the twenty disarmed, crazy and worthless monsters" and that Duke Cosimo di Medici establishes a new regime in the city.[353] In another place, trying to persuade the duke how easy it will be to accomplish a coup, Držić proclaims that the patricians have "made enemies within their own nest on whom they are forced to rely" and that they are not secure since "they are having domestic enemies as guards."[354]

The only other document which makes a similar intriguing claim of broad popular discontent in Ragusa -- thus bringing into question its celebrated social harmony – is an anonymous sixteenth-century description (*relazione*) of the city. However, while Držić insisted that the population was on the verge of revolt, just waiting for minimal

[350] Držić, *Djela,* 885-887. A comparison between the two contemporaty Ragusan malcontents has already been attempted by: Bogišić, "Marin Držić i Mario Kaboga," passim.
[351] Držić, *Djela,* 882-883; 887. In another place he also insists on the brutal and unjust treatment of foreigners in the city (Ibid., 887-888).
[352] Držić, *Djela,* 884.
[353] Ibid., 884. A similar formulation about "fifteen crazy and worthless monsters" who rule the city is Ibid., 887. This probably alluded to the innermost circle of the most influentiual patricians gathered around the minor council, procuratori, and the rector.
[354] Kunčević, "Nije na odmet," 11.

encouragement from the Medici, the author of this description insists on rigid governmental control and the absolute deference of the intimidated population:

> The disposition of these people… towards the nobles is extremely bad due to endless insults which they suffer daily from them, but something truly great should happen if they are to rise against them. Namely, besides being by nature cowardly and accustomed to suffer insults, the nobles are holding them subjected not as subjects but as slaves.[355]

The text continues by elaborating a genuine anti-myth of good government. If a notable person arises among their subjects, the patricians allegedly "look for thousand ways to destroy or humiliate him." It is this maxim which "they uphold more than anything else," that is the true reason for the peace and quiet of the city. The sombre picture which the *relazione* paints of Ragusan society ends with a comparison no early modern ruler would have liked to hear. In the city the fear was so deep and widespread that "the nobles are obeyed by their subjects to an extreme level, even more than the Turk [is obeyed by his]."[356]

To sum up, the Ragusan constitution was usually thematized in a panegyric and somewhat superficial manner. As there was no serious challenge to the system, neither by the subjects nor by the fractions within the patrician elite, there was simply no reason for elaborate reflections on the city's constitution. The main elements in the glorifying portrait of the patrician governance, restated in most diverse cultural media such as ritual, poetry and the visual arts were the following: the divine protection of aristocratic rule, the remarkable social and political peace of the city, the virtue and wise rule of the patriciate, the immutability of the political institutions and their similarity to those of Venice. Out of the few voices of dissent – that is, Caboga, Držić, and two anonymous *relazioni* – only Caboga seems to have achieved a certain popularity within the city, while the other texts were meant for the use of the political elites only. Importantly, these references critical of Ragusan governance lacked serious elaboration and depth, being merely mirror-images of the usual panegyric discourse. That is, the same superficiality usually visible in the laudations of the patrician governance was reflected in the criticism directed against it.

[355] *L'animo de quelli popoli così di dentro come di fuori è cativissimo verso li nobeli, per li infiniti oltraggi che alla giornata da loro receveno, ma perciò gran cosa vorebbe esser, che essi mai si movessero contra loro, perciò che oltra che di natura sono vilissimi, asuefatti a comportar ingiurie, essi nobeli li tengono soggetti non da subditi ma da schiavi* (Ljubić ed., *Commissiones et relationes venetae*, tomus 3, 75-76).
[356] Ljubić ed., *Commissiones et relationes venetae*, tomus 3, 76.

Conclusion: The Ragusan discourse on statehood in comparative perspective

The first important characteristic of the Ragusan discourse on statehood, noticeable when it is compared with urban republicanism elsewhere, is a peculiar imbalance of themes. Namely, in Ragusa there was a striking discrepancy between the far more frequent and articulate references to the independence of the city and scarcer, even fragmentary, references to its republican form of government. This point is worth stressing since in the tradition of many other cities – most notably Florence, the paragon of republicanism – the situation was quite the opposite. Florentine authors were famously obsessed with the republican institutions of the city and their maintenance in time, while its independence was clearly a secondary issue.

Such a difference in accent between Ragusa and Florence stemmed from the very different historical circumstances which shaped their republican ideologies. Florence and many other cities of late medieval Italy were characterized by endemic civil strife – re-occurring social instability and elite factionalism – which frequently led to the establishment of *signorie*. Complicating the position of these republics even further was the fact that they were surrounded by aggressive and powerful princely governments – most famously that of the Visconti -- which had risen on the ruins of other republican regimes. All of this led them to focus closely on issues connected to the republican constitution, contrasting it with monarchic or tyrannical governments, and investigating the ways of ensuring its stability through virtue or institutional mechanisms.[357] On the other hand, such questions were clearly of secondary importance to Ragusan authors, whose city faced drastically different historical challenges. Despite the occasional threats to its republican institutions – such as the conspiracy of the year 1400 – in Ragusa the fear of social or political strife and the rise of tyranny was much less pronounced than in its Italian counterparts. What it suffered from instead was a persistent sense of the insecurity of its very independence. As a small community surrounded by vastly superior states with whom it was often forced to establish politically embarrassing relationships, it was focused on legitimizing and justifying its independence.

Another fundamental characteristic of the Ragusan discourse on statehood was connected to the central concept of "liberty." Namely, in Ragusan usage,

[357] For the discourses of statehood in late medieval and renaissance Italy, especially Florence, see: Nicolai Rubinstein, "Florence and the Despots in the Fourteenth Century," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* Ser. 5, 2 (1952): 21-45; Bueno de Mesquita, "The Place of Despotism in Italian Politics," in *Europe in the Late Middle Ages,* ed. John Hale et al. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1965), 303-312; Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 3-69; 77-79; Baron, *Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance*; James Hankins ed., *Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflections* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). For the famous thesis that the Florentine republicanism formed a basis of modern Western republican thought see: Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*.

libertas/libertà/sloboda was almost always an attribute of a community and only rarely the attribute of an individual. More precisely, in the overwhelmming majority of references, "liberty" pertained to the "Republic" or the "city," sometimes to the patriciate as a whole. On the few occasions when it pertained to an individual, it was either to a noble who was "free" due to his right to public office or to a subject who was "free" since he lived under the non-arbitrary rule of the patriciate.[358] Admittedly, individual liberty, primarily freedom from the state, was not a major topic of Renaissance political thought, becoming the central issue only in the seventeenth century. Yet in the immensely influential Florentine republicanism individual liberty was tackled in a substantial way already in the Renaissance period, primarily when it came to issues of political participation. Thus, it constantly resurfaced in reflections on the legal equality of citizens, the freedom of speech or the eligibility for public office, which were central in the Florentine tradition.[359] In the strongly collectivistic political culture of Ragusa, on the other hand, none of these issues provoked serious reflection and references to individual liberty always remained strikingly scarce.The third important characteristic of the Ragusan discourse on statehood was the absolute predominance of one model and influence – Venice. The political system and culture of Ragusa became remarkably similar to those of Venice already during the medieval period of Venetian rule in a remarkably successful case of cultural transmission which has unfortunately not been studied at all. On the one hand, Venetian influence shaped the political culture of Ragusa, the very framework within which statehood discourse emerged, significantly contributing to its important traits such as proneness to historical argumentation or an insistence on unanimity. On the other hand, Venetian influence is also noticeable in the key themes of Ragusan political discourse such as the original and continuous independence of the city, the hereditary virtue of its nobility, and the remarkable harmony of its society. In the following part, which seeks to consider these key themes in a comparative light, Venice will therefore be a constant point of reference.

Beyond any doubt, the central ideological concern of Renaissance Ragusans was justifying the independence of their city, which was done mostly through (pseudo)historical argumentation. From the early fifteenth century on one can trace a process of a gradual redefinition of Ragusa's past in which all the episodes of foreign domination were re-

[358] For examples of these two meanings see respectively: de Diversis, *Opis*, 156; Palmotić, *Pavlimir,* 82. For a similar understanding of *libertas* in the Venetian tradition see: Ventura, "Scrittori politici e scritture di governo," 523; King, "Venetian Humanism," 187-188.

[359] Rubinstein, "Florentina libertas," passim, especially, 279-294. A representative selection of Florentine texts on liberty in translation has been published as: Renée Neu Watkins trans. and ed., *Humanism and liberty: Writings on Freedom from Fifteenth-Century Florence*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1978).

interpreted as contractual "protection," military alliances or even harmless economic agreements. By the sixteenth century this trend had crystallized into an open claim that Ragusa had enjoyed independence continuously since its very foundation. This way of representing the city's history was probably borrowed from Venetian historiography. Since the chronicle of John the Deacon in the early eleventh century the *Serenissima*'s independence was legitimated in exactly the same way: by insisting that Venice had preserved its "original liberty" (*libertà originaria*) without interruption since the foundation until the present day.[360] Of course, in the Venetian case such a tendentious construct was more easily achieved than in Ragusa. In Venice one had to "forget" only the vague Byzantine and short Carolingian sovereignty, which had faded away by the ninth century, while in Ragusa one had far more embarrassing episodes to deal with – not the least the long medieval period of Venetian rule. Nonetheless, Ragusan authors insisted on the continuous liberty of their city, borrowing from Venice not only the ideological model but even the metaphor used to describe it. Thus, the "virginity" of Ragusan liberty was a motif borrowed from the Venetian tradition in which the unspoiled millennial liberty of the Republic was designated with the idea of *Venetia Vergine.*[361]

It has to be stressed, however, that such historical argumentation was far from being the only ideological option available to Ragusa. One could have legitimated the city's independence through a more philosophical or legal argumentation as well. For instance, Ragusans had at their disposal various medieval theories of popular sovereignty or the legal principle *ex facto ius oritur* with which Bartolus had justified the independence of Italian cities from the emperor.[362] Although there were members of Ragusan elite who were doubtless familiar with such doctrines, there is, intriguingly, not a single instance of Ragusan independence being justified in this way.[363] Occasionally, vague traces of the more contractualistic and "democratic" streaks of medieval political thought appear, especially in references to the nature of Hungarian sovereignty. Thus, the relationship between the monarch and the subjects was seen as originating in contract and consisting of reciprocal

[360] Carile, "Le origini di Venezia," passim, especially, 150-152; 163; Carile, "Origine come categoria storiografica," passim, especially, 63, 66; Ortalli, "Venezia allo specchio," 206-207; Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defense,* 54-55; 90; Franco Gaeta, "Idea di Venezia," in *Storia della cultura veneta,* tomus III-3, *Dal primo Quattrocento al concilio di Trento,* ed. Girolamo Arnaldi and Manlio Pastore Stocchi (Vicenza: Neri Pozza editore, 1981), 576.
[361] Rosand, *The Myths of Venice*, 36-38
[362] A classical overview is: Skinner, *The Foundations,* vol. 1, 3-65, especially, 3-12, 62-65.
[363] Concerning the legal education of the Ragusan elite, see: Nella Lonza, "Dubrovački studenti prava u kasnom srednjem vijeku" [Ragusan Students of Law in the Late Middle Ages], *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 48 (2010): 9-45.

duties; the monarch was seen as a magistrate, bound by law and the consent of the people; the urban community was understood as having an inherent right to rule itself, in specific circumstances even to reject royal sovereignty. Yet such traces of genuine political theory were always interwoven with historical myths and never appeared on their own. In other words, Ragusans clearly preferred to ground their self-governance on historical precedents, on *ius antiquum* and the tradition which was so important in the functioning of the city.

When it came to conceptualizing the republican governance of Ragusa, the Venetian model was again of paramount importance. The celebrated peacefulness of Ragusa, its alleged social harmony, was clearly modelled after the famous myth of social consensus in Venice due to which it came to be called The Most Serene Republic, *La Serenissima.*[364] Again as in Venice, the remarkable social peace of Ragusa was attributed to the virtuous rule of the patriciate and, even more, to the wise republican constitution of the city. Concerning their constitutions, both republics sought to prove their excellence with the same argument: they insisted on their longevity or even absolute immutability in time. In other words, both claimed to have found perfect institutional solutions which rendered them (almost) resistant to history, taking them beyond the reach of Fortuna, the contingent force of change which shaped history according to Renaissance political thought.[365]

It was exactly in their republican constitutions that one significant difference emerged between the two republics, however. A crucial element of the Venetian myth was the claim that it had realized a "mixed" constitution, an originally Platonic ideal of the perfect constitution. Such a "mixed" polity was seen as combining the best elements of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, which in Venice corresponded to the doge, the Senate and the Great Council.[366] Although prone to borrowing ideological claims from Venice, Ragusa could not take this one. Namely, there was a salient difference between its constitution and the Venetian one when it came to the head of state. The Ragusan rector had a mandate of one month only and therefore could not be interpreted as a "monarchic" element in the constitution. Thus, with this prestigious title of a mixed polity outside its reach, Ragusa was left to fashion itself as an exemplary aristocracy. [367]

[364] Edward Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice* (Princeton: PUP, 1981), 18; Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defence*, 63-64. On the ideal of unanimity in Venetian culture, see: King, *Venetian Humanism*, 92-205.

[365] One way of characterizing Venetian and Ragusan claims at their most optimistic was that those republics insisted that they had become immune to what Pocock – or, in fact, Skinner, with whom the expression originates – had famously called the "Machiavellian moment."

[366] Gaeta, "Idea di Venezia," 591-594; Ventura, "Scrittori politici e scritture di governo," 534-35; Gilbert, "The Venetian Constitution in Florentine Political Thought," 467-471.

[367] Of course, Venice oscillated between representing itself as mixed state or a perfect aristocracy (see, for instance Ventura, "Scrittori politici e scritture di governo," 544-45)

Another area of striking similarities between the two Adriatic republics was the self-representation of their elites. The claims of patrician families in both republics to Roman origins and descent from the city's founders were addressed in the previous chapter. Their similarities went even further, however, both groups claimed to be the oldest and, due to their strict endogamy, also the purest aristocracies in Europe.[368] Interestingly, when it came to the mythic "purity" of noble blood, in the European imagination Ragusa – due to its rigid endogamy – sometimes even took precedence over Venice. Thus, explicitly comparing the two republics, Jean Bodin proclaimed that Ragusans pursued the "honor of nobility" even more than the Venetians and concluded that they cherished "the purest and from any popular participation most distant aristocracy."[369]

Lastly, the two republics also shared a fundamental argument in favour of aristocratic rule – the idea of hereditary virtue. As Raines has aptly stressed, typical of Venetian tradition was its insistence on "a kind of managerial genetical code" (*une sorte de code genetique gestionnaire*) which was inherited by patricians through blood together with the right to public office.[370] Probably the clearest articulation of this idea is to be found in the famous fifteenth-century works of the Venetian nobleman Lauro Quirini. Provoked by the Florentine humanist Poggio Bracciolini, who launched a critique of hereditary aristocracy claiming that virtue was attained and not inherited – an attitude echoed later also by M. Caboga – Quirini formulated an influential defense of aristocratic self-understanding. The main thrust of his argument consisted of two related claims. The first was that the distinction between the noble and the base, with the nobler ruling over the baser, was inherent in the very structure of the universe, thus being grounded in the normative natural order. The second claim was that, again according to normative natural principles, all the qualities – and thus also virtue – were transmitted from parent to offspring, thereby making hereditary nobility a just and prudent arrangement.[371] More than a century afterwards N. Gozze made remarkably similar claims in his justification of aristocratic rule, albeit without explicitly mentioning Quirini. Gozze might have simply not acknowledged his source or, more intriguingly, it could be that this kind of argumentation was so well established and common-sensical that it required no textual transmission at all.

[368] For Venice, see: Raines, *L'invention du mythe aristocratique*, 367.
[369] Bodin, *De republica libri sex*, 222.
[370] Raines, *L'invention du mythe aristocratique*, 367. Other examples appear in the works of Venetian humanists are King, *Venetian Humanism*, 94-95, 109, 119-132.
[371] King, *Venetian Humanism*, 118-132; Gaeta, "Idea di venezia," 578-579; Ventura, "Scrittori politici e scritture di governo," 529.

At the end of these comparative considerations one should accentuate a highly peculiar part of Ragusan republican ideology which has no proper analogy elsewhere. It is the complex ideological manoeuvring with which Ragusans tried to "soften" their tributary status, attempting to reconcile republican *libertas* with the patronage of the "infidel" Ottoman monarch. Resting safely within the so-called urban belt of Europe, far from the Ottoman tide, other republican regimes of Early Modern Europe did not face similar ideological challenges.[372] More precisely, other republics were not situated on the frontier of religions, empires, even civilisations, while Renaissance Ragusa was a frontier society *par excellence.* The way in which this perilous position affected its discourse on statehood has been addressed in this chapter; the numerous references to that frontier and the city's behaviour on it are the topic of the one which follows.

[372] In fact, Venice also paid tribute to the Ottomans, but only for a small part of its Aegeian territories and this custom never provoked serious political reflection (Momčilo Spremić, "I tributi veneziani nel Levante nel XV secolo," *Studi Veneziani* 13 (1971): 221-252.)

CHAPTER 3: THE DISCOURSE ON THE FRONTIER

Introduction: A city "in-between"

Beyond any doubt, one of the most salient characteristics of Ragusan history was the city's position on the frontier – the frontier of empires, religions, even civilisations. From the medieval period Ragusa was a staunchly Catholic city facing a Balkan hinterland which was predominantly Orthodox or heretical, belonging to the so-called Bosnian Church. In the fifteenth century the situation became even more complex, since that hinterland came to be dominated by yet another religious-civilizational conglomerate, the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman conquest led to the crystallisation of a recognizable multiple frontier which shaped Ragusan history until the fall of the Republic. Politically, this small city-state lay between the Ottoman and Venetian empires, but was also within the Habsburg interest zone, while in the religious and cultural sense it represented a Catholic enclave facing predominantly Orthodox and Islamic communities in the hinterland.[373]

Although such a delicate position brought many dangers, Ragusa managed to turn it into an advantage, using it to achieve disproportionate political importance and spectacular wealth. Using its position at the fringes of two mutually alien and hostile civilisations – Christianity and Islam – it turned into an indispensable mediator, providing a much-needed flow of goods, information and technologies. Such an international role, however, required not only great skill, but also constant adaptations, compromises, and extreme pragmatism. In other words, it required a number of arrangements and policies -- such as double espionage, military assistance, and various services to both sides -- which were seen as morally dubious,

[373] The recent historiography on frontiers is immensely rich. Good general introductions are: Alfred J. Rieber, "The Frontier in History," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, ed. N. J. Smelser and P. B. Baltes, vol. 9 (Amsterdam, New York: Elsevier, 2001), 5812-17; Daniel Power, "Frontiers: Terms, Concepts, and the Historians of Medieval and Early Modern Europe," in *Frontiers in Question: Eurasian Borderlands 700-1700*, ed. Daniel Power and Naomi Standen (London: Macmillan Press, 1999), 1-12. The works of Norman Housley are instructive regarding religious frontiers and frontier warfare in the Renaissance, especially: Norman Housley, "Frontier Societies and Crusading in the Late Middle Ages," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 10 (1995): 104-119; idem., *Religious Warfare in Europe, 1400–1536* (Oxford University Press, 2002). In the Croatian context important research has been done by Roksandić: Drago Roksandić, "The *triplex confinium*. International Research Project: Objectives, Approaches and Methods," in *Microhistory of the Triplex Confinium: International Project Conference Papers*, ed. idem (Budapest: CEU Institute on Southeastern Europe, 1998), 7-25; Alfred Rieber, "*Triplex Confinium* in Comparative Context," in *Constructing Border Societies on the Triplex Confinium*, ed. Drago Roksandić and Nataša Štefanec (Budapest: Central European University, 2000), 13-29; Catherine W Bracewell. "The Historiography of the *Triplex Confinium*: Conflict and Community on the Triple Frontier, 16th-18th Centuries," in *Frontiers and the Writing of History, 1500-1850*, ed. Steven Ellis and Raingard Esser, (Hannover: Wehrhahn Verlag, 2006), 211-228. A valuable study of the early modern Adriatic frontier is: Catherine W. Bracewell, *The Uskoks of Senj: Piracy, Banditry and Holy War in the Sixteenth-century Adriatic* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992).

even outright unacceptable, from either the Ottoman or the Christian perspective. Beyond any doubt, the most embarrassing among such arrangements was the city's status of a tribute-payer to the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, Ragusans worked exceedingly hard to explain to the Christian states the highly profitable and cordial relationship which their Republic maintained so carefully with the detested enemy of the Christian religion.

This chapter investigates the ways in which Renaissance Ragusans described and commented on the frontier position of their city. It is largely dedicated to analysing the various strategies of diplomatic self-representation which thematized the Republic's position between Christianity and Islam. In this regard, the most important was the rhetoric towards Western courts, which sought to justify the tributary position in a quite surprising way: by representing Ragusa as an altruistic frontier guard of Christianity who defended the true religion by appeasing the "infidel." Besides diplomatic rhetoric, this chapter also discusses various references to the religious identity of Ragusa and its position on the fringe of Christianity that appear in the literature and historiography. While some of these references were written in the usual panegyric tone, lauding the piety of the city and its unwavering loyalty to Rome, others were echoes of a hushed but fervent debate among the city's elite regarding the relationship with the "infidel." Namely, despite the diplomacy which trumpeted the great merit of Ragusan tributary status, numerous historians and literati felt distinctly uneasy about it, raising the question whether it was morally permissible and politically prudent for a Catholic city to cherish such good relations with a Muslim empire.

Following the development of the city's image as a Christian frontier guard in roughly chronological order, this chapter opens with an investigation of its medieval origins. The earliest traces emerged in the Ragusan diplomacy of the fourteenth century, which represented the city as a centre of Catholic missionary activity and a fortress of the true faith in the Balkans. The following section discusses the drastic reconfiguration of this image in the middle of the 1400s, after Ragusa was forced to become an Ottoman tributary state. The tension between the traditional self-representation as Christian frontier guard and this embarrassing new arrangement led to the creation of an original image of Ragusa which managed to reconcile them. The third section turns from diplomacy to culture, investigating references to the city's frontier position in its historiography, public speeches, and literature. It offers an overview of the ways in which Ragusans commented on the city's behaviour on the frontier, ranging from panegyric all the way to the openly critical references to its double game between the Christians and Ottomans. Finally, the chapter ends by adopting a broader

perspective, that is, by comparing Ragusan discourse on the frontier with similar self-representations of other Christian states situated on the borderlands of the Ottoman Empire.[374]

Ragusa as a Christian frontier guard in the medieval tradition

The first references to Ragusa as the guardian of the "true faith" on the frontier with "schismatics" and "heretics" emerged in the diplomacy of the late fourteenth century. In this period Ragusa was already an independent city-state under the nominal sovereignty of the Hungarian king, bordering with the largely heretical Bosnia and Orthodox Serbian Empire. The insistence on Ragusa's praiseworthy role on the religious frontier usually emerged when the city asked for concessions and help from Western rulers during the numerous conflicts with its non-Catholic neighbours. Predictably, in the late 1300s the principal addressees of such self-representation were two rulers – the king of Hungary and the pope.

When it came to the kings of Hungary, Ragusans used the obvious tactic. Since the various neighbouring magnates with whom they waged wars in this period were not Catholic, Ragusans began to represent these conflicts as a struggle of a Catholic city with "schismatics" and "heretics." Of course, in asking for help from their sovereign, Ragusans insisted primarily on the ruler's obligation to protect the city, but increasingly also stressed his duty to defend fellow Christians from the enemies of the faith. Already during the conflict with the Serbian warlord, Vojislav Vojinović, in 1359 and 1360, the Ragusans pointed out in several letters that this "perfidious tyrant" was also an "infidel" (*infidelis*).[375] With time such religious derogations of the city's enemies at the Hungarian court became increasingly elaborate. Thus, in 1430 Ragusans described one Bosnian magnate as "the perfidious Pataren and the public enemy of your crown" or "the villainous Pataren and the whip of the Catholic faith," while their main antagonist in the 1450s became "the enemy of God, the Hungarian crown and this city."[376]

[374] Lastly, a remark regarding terminology has to be made. The terms "Christian" and "Christianity" in this chapter are used in an ambiguous way, to designate both Catholicism in particular and Christianity in general. This ambiguity originates from the Ragusan documents and was kept here since it is hard to decide each time what exactly the Ragusans had in mind, especially since they themselves were deliberately ambiguous on many occasions. Another term borrowed from the sources is that of "infidel(s)." It is, of course, far from expressing a value judgement of Islam, but is kept here to mark the strongly negative attitude of Ragusans and other early modern Christians.

[375] *Diplomatarium*, 13, 17.

[376] The first two references were to Radoslav Pavlović, while the last was to Stjepan Vukčić Kosača, both of whom were at war with the city at this time (*Diplomatarium*: 337; 341; 351; 495). An early example of such rhetoric in front of the pope is a letter of Gregory XI to the Ragusan government from 1371 in which the pontiff mentions that he was told their city was built in the vicinity of "heretics and schismatics" (Theiner, *Vetera monumenta Slavorum Meridionalium,* tomus 1, 284).

The first unquestionable traces of the new image of the city, however, are noticeable in the instruction which the Ragusan government issued to its envoys at the Hungarian court in 1371. Asking for help in a war with the neighbouring Serbian warlord, Nikola Altomanović, the envoys were not only to derogate their enemy, but also accentuate the important role which Ragusa performed for the sake of Christianity. They were to begin their audience with the king with a catastrophic description of the state of the city, devastated by the warlord's armies, after which they were to make the following point:

> If we will not soon receive help from your royal majesty in these immense anxieties and sufferings of ours, then a great part of our peasants who came from the aforementioned Kingdom of Serbia, and since they were schismatics we had them baptized in the Catholic faith… will leave Ragusa and again become schismatic, as was the case before.[377]

After this blatant moral blackmail the diplomats were to invoke the king's duties both as a ruler and a Christian, stressing that he should help the city "for the love of God and the Catholic faith and for your honour." They finished by once again appealing to him not to allow "Christians" to be destroyed by "shismatics and pagans such as the aforementioned Župan Nicola and his men."[378]

The important role of Ragusa in baptising the neighbouring "heretics" and "schismatics" alluded to in the aforementioned instruction, was accentuated even more clearly before another addressee – the pope. The insistence on the "missionary" role of Ragusa was instrumental in the attempts of Ragusan government during the 1370s and 1380s to gain papal approval for not collecting the ecclesiastical tithe in the recently acquired peninsula of Pelješac. In 1333 Ragusa had bought this strategically located area to the northwest from the Bosnian ban and the Serbian emperor and immediately begun to ensure its authority by redistributing the land, erecting fortifications, and re-Catholicizing the population with the help of the Franciscans.[379] The way in which these efforts were presented to the pope can be

[377] *Et la macor parte deli nostri contadini, li quali son vignudi dalo dito regno di Rassa, et siando scismatici, li havemo fatti bapticare alla fe catholica et mantegnimo dintro dela citade, lor sconvignera di andar foura di Ragusa et tornara scismatici, sicho era avanty, se remedio non havaremo in brieve dela vostra regal magestade in queste nostre grande angustie et afflictioni* (*Diplomatarium*, 52).

[378] Ibid., 52.

[379] Vinicije B. Lupis, "Pregled povijesti Stonske biskupije od osnutka do 1541. godine" [An overview of the History of the Bishopric of Ston from its Establishment until 1541], in *Tisuću godina Dubrovačke nad(biskupije), Zbornik radova znanstvenog skupa u povodu tisuću godina uspostave dubrovačke (nad)biskupije/metropolije (998.-1998.)* [A thousand years of the (arch)bishopric of Dubrovnik. Collected Papers from the Conference on Occasion of the one thousand years of the Eastblishment of the Ragusan (arch)bishopric/Metropoly] (Dubrovnik and Split: Biskupski ordinarijat Dubrovnik-Crkva u svijetu, 2001), 197-217; Zdravko Šundrica, *Stonski rat u 14. stoljeću (1333-1399)* [The Pelješac Peninsula (Ston) in the Fourteenth century (1333-1399)], in *Tajna Kutija dubrovačkog arhiva,* [translate title] part 1 (Dubrovnik: HAZU Zavod za povijesne znanosti, 2008), 209-392.

reconstructed from a letter by Urban VI from 1386 to the bishop of Korčula-Ston, under whose jurisdiction the peninsula was. The pope mentions that he was informed that Ragusans had acquired the schismatic and Pataren peninsula and "as the faithful sons of the Church, striving laudably towards the conversion of the schismatic infidels and Patarens" they had invited the Bosnian Franciscans, who were successfully dissuading the locals from their false beliefs. Moreover, the Ragusans were fortifying the settlement of Ston, located on the peninsula:

> so that the city would not come into the hands and under the power of the surrounding schismatic infidels and Patarens to the detriment of the aforementioned [Catholic] faith, but even more so that the Christian cult would spread more strongly from that opportune place to the neighbouring areas.[380]

This claim that Ragusa was a "missionary" city, working tirelessly on the conversion of the surrounding non-Catholic populations, became a genuine common-place in Ragusan diplomacy. In fact, it was the first of the several important missions for the sake of Christendom which the diplomats attributed to the small republic in order to elevate its prestige and make its requests harder to deny at Western courts. Another typical example of the missionary *topos* was used in a letter to the King Sigismund in 1434, where the senate proclaimed:

> We are continuously vigilant regarding that which we consider will be to the enlargement of the piety of our [subjects] and to the conversion of heretics with whom we are surrounded and who are to be attracted into the Christ's faith; into which, thanks to the omnipotent God and his truest faith, they are being baptized every day and become good Catholics with the honour to the divine name and the glory to your highness.[381]

How important and well-established this image of Ragusa became by the first half of the fifteenth century can be seen from the fact that it also began to be used outside of a narrow

[380] *...ne ipsa civitas ad huiusmodi schismaticorum infidelium et Patarenorum circumvicinorum manus et potestatem deveniat, in dicte fidei detrimentum, sed potius Christianus cultus, ex eius statu prospero, in ipsis circumvicinis partibus augeatur...* This papal letter, together with a few similar ones related to the same issue, was published in: Daniele Farlati, *Illyrici sacri tomus sextus. Ecclesia Ragusina* (Venice: Apud Sebastianum Coleti, 1800), 334-335. Even on later occasions – for instance, in 1403 proving legitimacy of their possession of Pelješac at the Hungarian court – Ragusans insisted on the huge sums and efforts which they spent on converting the inhabitants to Catholicism (*Diplomatarium*, 153).

[381] *Continue uigilantes ad ea, que concernimus fore augmentum deuotionum nostrarum et ad suasionem hereticorum, quibus circumdati sumus, ad christicolam fidem aliciendorum, in quam gratia omnipotentis et sue uerissime fidei dietim baptizantur et boni fiunt catholici cum honore divini nominis et gloria serenitatis vestre* (*Diplomatarium*, 383). A similar example is to be found in SAD, *Lettere di Levante* 16, f. 63r. Such a characterization of Ragusa soon emerged also out of the diplomatic context in a public speech by Ph. De Diversis which commemorated the coronation of the Hungarian King Albrecht in 1438 (de Diversis, *Dubrovački govori u slavu ugarskih kraljeva*, 121.)

diplomatic context. Probably the earliest literary reference to the frontier position of Ragusa appeared in a public speech by Philippus de Diversis, delivered during the city's celebrations of the coronation of the new Hungarian king, Albrecht of Habsburg, in 1438. Echoing the words of Ragusan diplomats, Diversis proclaimed that Ragusa was built "among schismatics, infidels and adherents of bad doctrines." Nonetheless, he continued, "not only does it preserves the purest Catholic faith, but it managed to convert and keeps converting to the true faith many souls among the aforementioned, with enormous effort and strain, examples and exhortations."[382]

Besides the insistence on the missionary role of Ragusa, the first decades of the fifteenth century saw the emergence of yet another image of the city, which was also based on its frontier position. In this period, which was characterized by growing Christian alarm at the rapid Ottoman advance – taking place largely in the Balkan hinterland of the city – Ragusans began to insist on the desperate situation of their republic and its miraculous survival despite the infidel threat. A telling example of such self-representation -- but also the way in which it was used to achieve diplomatic goals – is to be seen in a letter of the Ragusan government to Queen Joan II of Naples in 1431. Refusing to extradite one of her subjects whom they imprisoned since he allegedly worked against the city, they justified themselves by painting the following stark picture of their position:

> Since this city of ours is situated on the steepest rock and almost completely enclosed by the sea, and, even worse, surrounded by the devious Patarens and the infidel Turks who are even more wicked. These aforementioned neighbours are day and night striving to destroy our possessions and lives and to deprive us of this republic of ours with their inherent inhuman sly cunningness. Were it not for the divine grace which defends us with its most powerful shield, and were we not vigilant in opposing the betrayals committed against us by the same Patarens and punishing these assailants with force, sword and the power of law, we would not be able to defend and protect ourselves form these neighbours.[383]

This description of Ragusa contains several elements which attained immense importance in later elaborations of the city's frontier position. The first is an insistence on the

[382] Ibid., 121. A similar but less elaborate reference also appears in Diversis' description of Ragusa (de Diversis, *Opis*, 143-144).

[383] *Sed cum hec nostra civitas sit scopulo ardissimo sita, marique quasi tota amplexata, et, quod deterius est, patarinis nequissimis circumdata, quibus patarinis nequiores se denuntiantur Teucri infideles, qui tales memorati convicini nostri die noctuque ipsorum innata versipelli inhumana sagacitate nos posse in ere et persona offendere ac huius nostre Reipublicae privare admodum vigilant, contra quos quidem ni divina pereunte clementia, que suo seriosissimo clipeo nos custodit, vigilem solicitudinem obstandi proditionibus in nos perpetratis per ipsos patarinos prestaremus, nec non ipsos eosdem deliquentes cum acie, ensis et vigore iuris puniremus, hucusque non potuissemus ab ipsis convicinis custodisse et defendisse* (Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje*, book 1, tomus 1, 325). For similar rhetoric in another letter to Queen Joan II, see: Ibid., 333.

desperate situation of Ragusa as under constant pressure from its non-Catholic neighbours. The second is the claim that it enjoys divine protection, that providence itself ensures the improbable survival of a Catholic city in such surroundings. The third element is the emergence of a new religious "Other" – the Ottoman "infidel" – who gradually came to marginalize the traditional "schismatics" and "Patarens" in Ragusan rhetoric. All these claims were repeated and elaborated upon *ad nauseam* in the diplomatic self-representation of the republic. The reason for their importance and persistence is simple: describing the city's position in utterly catastrophic terms while at the same time accentuating its divine protection enabled the Ragusans to ever and again request special treatment and extraordinary concessions from Western rulers.

Importantly, it seems that this tactic worked remarkably well. Namely, both frontier images of Ragusa -- that of a besieged Catholic fortress and that of a "missionary" city – were soon confirmed by the highest authority of the *respublica Christiana.* In 1433, after comprehensive diplomatic action, Ragusa managed to gain a privilege from the ecclesiastical synod in Basel which allowed it to trade with the Muslim world. The main agents in arranging this important document were King Sigismund and Ivan Stojković (Johannes de Ragusio) (1395-1443), an influential Dominican of Ragusan origin, who were most likely responsible for the fact that the charter clearly echoes the rhetoric of Ragusan diplomacy. In the opening lines the participants of the synod proclaimed that Sigismund had told them:

> That the city of Ragusa is situated on the shore of the sea, with whose waves it is frequently battered, shaken and endangered, and on the harshest of rocks in an infertile area. The neighbouring infidel rivals of the Christian faith and the enemies of the Catholic Church of different sects, heretics and schismatics, often used to attack it in big numbers, with various prosecutions and wicked wars. To them the citizens resisted strongly, luckily and fearlessly, equipped and strengthened by the divine force, not sparing any effort, strain nor expense in various occasions for the glory of divine name and defence of the Catholic faith, since the right hand of the Lord gave them virtue. With their honest and Catholic exhortations, zeal and incitements, they have managed and are still managing every day to attract [surrounding non-Catholics] of both sexes to the love of our redeemer Jesus Christ and have them baptized in great numbers. This city persists in Christian faith and cult as well as in the most faithful obedience towards the Hungarian King, and humbly and consistently accepts the teachings of the apostolic see and the holy Roman Church. We have heard many other laudatory things as well, which rightly make this city worthy of commendation in front of us and the whole Church and deserving of every grace and favour.[384]

[384] Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 1, tomus 1, 430. For the historical context of this privilege see: Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 57-60.

This is the first but not the last instance in which the authorities of the Catholic Church acknowledged the great merit and the special status of Ragusa as a frontier guard of Christianity. Yet there was an embarrassing fact that the majority of the synod's participants was not aware of. Just a little before it received such a flattering description by the authorities of the Western Church, Ragusa made a move which was quite at odds with its new international image. In 1430 it had sent the first official embassy to the sultan, arranging peaceful relations with the Ottoman Empire and obtaining a permit to freely trade in its territories. To make things even worse, since the Ottomans came to dominate its whole Balkan hinterland, soon the city had to agree to much more than that. In a few decades the heroic frontier guard of Christianity became a tributary state of the Sublime Porte, establishing not only peaceful but also highly profitable, even a comparatively cordial, relationship with the Ottoman infidel.

"Shelter, shield, and firm bastion of the entire Christian republic:" The representations of tributary status in Ragusan Renaissance diplomacy

The Ragusan government long avoided initiating official diplomatic communication with the Ottoman Empire. However, by the 1430s it became impossible to ignore the powerful state which was rapidly expanding in the hinterland of the city, conquering areas vital for its trade and even threatening Ragusa itself. Therefore, in a series of ever-more-cumbersome treaties – in 1430, 1442 and finally in 1458 – Ragusa negotiated its position towards the Sublime Porte. Since the Ottomans needed a mediator with the Christian Mediterranean, the small republic received terms that were in fact quite generous. According to the sultan's charter (*ahdname*), Ragusa owed a relatively small annual tribute of 12,500 thousand ducats and a vaguely defined "faithfulness" or "obedience," in practice also providing the Ottomans with military assistance such as skilled labourers and strategic information. In return the republic gained Ottoman military protection – much needed against Venice – and unprecedented trading privileges in the empire which enabled it to amass enormous wealth. Despite numerous crises, this mutually useful relationship proved to be remarkably long-lasting; with only one minor seventeenth-century interruption, Ragusa remained an Ottoman tributary state until its fall in 1808.[385]

[385] The classic overviews of Ragusan-Ottoman relationship are: Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*; Popović, *Turska i Dubrovnik*; Biegman, *The Turco-Ragusan Relationship;* Miović, *Dubrovačka republika u spisima osmanskih sultana*.

Clearly, such a close relationship with the infidel was profoundly embarrassing for a city which claimed to be the frontier guard of Christianity; therefore it was an absolute imperative for Ragusan diplomacy to find a good way of explaining it to Western princes. How deeply problematic was Ragusa's position becomes apparent when one recalls that religious concerns continued to play a fundamental role even in the increasingly "secularized" politics of the Renaissance period. Namely, the old medieval idea about the unity of the "Christian republic" (*respublica christiana*) and the irreconcilable antagonism of that *respublica* towards the Muslim infidel continued to exert a profound influence, at least on the level of official rhetoric. Invoking the unity of Christian princes in order to organize a joint crusade against the Ottomans was a genuine commonplace, an indispensable part of "politically correct" European discourse, which featured not only in numerous international treaties but also in public speeches, poetry, and historiography. The powerful appeal of such a sense of Christian unity is visible through the fact that it survived, at least to a certain extent, even the deep chasm caused by the Reformation. Christian solidarity in front of a demonized infidel was so deeply-rooted that even in Protestant England the ecclesiastical authorities encouraged prayers for the victory of the otherwise detested Catholic powers in their struggles against the Ottomans in the Mediterranean.[386]

All of this makes it clear how dangerous and compromising close relations with the Muslim powers could have been for a Catholic state. As early as the ninth century, Pope John VIII invoked the words of St. Paul: *nolite iugum ducere cum infidelibus* (Rom. 1: 32), formulating the doctrine of the "impious alliance," which strongly condemned any form of alliance with the Muslims. By making such an alliance a Christian ruler was understood to have excluded himself from the community of Christians, becoming *exterus inimicus* and *Christo adversus,* to be treated in the same way as the infidels themselves. Through repeated elaborations of the concept, by the thirteenth century the understanding emerged that *impium foedus* referred not only to alliance, but also to any kind of treaty with the infidel that could damage Christian interest.[387] It is largely due to this fact that merchant city-states, such as Venice or Genoa, and later also Ragusa, took care to obtain specific charters from the ecclesiastical authorities which legalized their trade with the Muslim world. In other words,

[386] For the concept of *respublica christiana* see*:* Giulio Vismara, *Impium foedus: le origini della respublica christiana* (Milano: A. Giuffre, 1974); Jean Rupp, *L'idée de Chrétienté dans la pensée pontificale des origines à Innocent III* (Paris: Presses modernes, 1939); Werner Frizemeyer, *Christenheit und Europa. Zur Geschichte des europaischen Gemeinschaftgefuhls von Dante bis Leibniz* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1931). For the sense of Christian unity even after the schism of the Reformation see: Franklin L. Baumer, "The Conception of Christendom in Renaissance England," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 6 (1945): 131-156.

[387] For the idea of *impium foedus* see: Vismara, *Impium foedus*; Tomaž Mastnak, *Crusading Peace*, 108-113; 149-151.

while economic and even diplomatic contacts were tolerated, the accusation of (overly) close cooperation or alliance with the infidel could have led to the gravest ecclesiastical punishments such as excommunication or interdict. Clearly, in the Renaissance period the influence of the Church over the whole issue waned somewhat, but the dealings with the infidels nonetheless remained profoundly scandalous. This is demonstrated by the conspicuous hesitation of Christian rulers to establish formal diplomatic ties with the Ottoman court. Despite the undeniable usefulness of such arrangements, most European states organized permanent embassies in Istanbul only in the late sixteenth and seventeenth century. Even more revealing was the fate of France, a state which did create strong diplomatic ties with the Porte before the others. The Ottoman-French alliance of 1536 and especially the joint operations of their fleets in the Mediterranean led to an enormous diplomatic scandal, even a genuine propaganda war. The French king had to hire whole teams of jurists, theologians, and historians to defend him from the accusations of Habsburg apologists who insisted that he had behaved like the worst of "pagans" and betrayed the interests of Christendom.[388]

In a way, for Ragusa the stakes were even higher than for France; the very economic survival of the small city depended upon its reputation. As a trading community which enjoyed broad privileges all over the Mediterranean, Ragusa was strongly dependent on the benevolence of numerous authorities and could not afford to be seen as a subject of the infidel empire. Therefore, from the very beginnings of the tributary status, the city's diplomats had to find a way of explaining this embarrassing arrangement to the Christian public. As was shown in the previous chapter, during the first half century of Ottoman patronage – roughly from the 1440s until the early 1500s – Ragusa used a combination of silence and misrepresentation for that purpose. That is, Ragusan diplomats generally avoided mentioning contacts with the Ottomans, and even when they did, they represented them in a highly tendentious manner. An excellent example of such a diplomatic strategy is found in the instruction issued to the Ragusan envoys at the Hungarian court in October of 1443. The diplomats were to mention the recent treaty with the sultan, made in 1442, only if the king asked directly why Ragusa had sent an embassy with gifts to the Sublime Porte. Faced with a direct question they were to admit, but immediately resort to misinterpretation. They were supposed to claim that the embassy was sent in order to liberate the city's merchants captured during the recent Ottoman conquest of Serbia and also in order to ensure free trade in the territory which was crucial for

[388] On this polemic see: Poumarède, "Justifier l'injustifiable," 217–246 and Michael Hochedlinger, "Die französisch-osmanische "Freundschaft" 1525-1792. Element antihabsburgischer Politik, Gleichgewichts-instrument, Prestigeunternehmung. Aufriss eines Problemes," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 102, no. 1-2 (1994): 108-164.

the city's survival. This was a remarkably euphemistic interpretation of the treaty of 1442; indeed, Ragusans had ensured free trade in the Ottoman possessions, but they also had to promise an annual tribute and "faithfulness" to the sultan – two embarrassing issues which were not mentioned to their Hungarian sovereign.[389] Despite the ever-closer Ragusan cooperation with the Ottomans, such a combination of silence and obfuscation seems to have worked well. As was shown in the previous chapter, during the second half of the fifteenth century, Christian rulers, even the well-informed pope and the Hungarian king, continued to address Ragusa as a Christian champion defying the Turks.[390]

Yet with time such diplomatic tactics grew ever harder to reconcile with Ragusan reality. That is, by the early 1500s it became increasingly difficult for the city to hide its close relationship with the Ottomans – the thriving economic relations and, especially, the political patronage of the Sublime Porte. Thus, for instance, every year Ragusa ceremoniously dispatched its emissaries with tribute to Istanbul, celebrated sultan's victories with cannon fire, maintained an Ottoman customs official (*emin*) in front of its gates, sent gifts to the neighbouring *sanjakbeys*, and in general conducted vibrant diplomacy at the Porte.[391] Another factor probably also played a role in the change of Ragusan rhetoric. By the first decades of the sixteenth century – especially after the Hungarian disaster of 1526 – it became increasingly evident that the Ottomans were there to stay. It was due to these reasons that a novel rhetoric emerged in Ragusan diplomacy, which represented the city and its frontier position in a strikingly original, even completely unprecedented, manner.

This new diplomatic self-representation managed to fulfil a demanding ideological task: it reconciled the older images of Ragusa as a Christian frontier guard with the hitherto unimaginable acknowledgement of its deep dependence on the neighbouring infidel empire. Unable to deny the obvious, Ragusan diplomats at the Western courts admitted – albeit, as the instructions often put it, "with tears in the eyes" – that their city indeed paid an annual tribute to the sultan and even served him in many other ways. After this embarrassing admission a remarkable twist followed, however. The diplomats insisted that Ragusans did all this not only to preserve their poor Catholic city, situated "in the jaws of the infidel," but also for *the*

[389] *Diplomatarium*, 442-443. A similar diplomatic tactic is noticeable regarding the earliest embassy sent to the sultan in 1430, which the Ragusans admitted to King Sigismund. They insisted, however, it was done "not gladly but out of necessity" so that they would "survive in this city of your majesty." Revealingly, they failed to mention the profitable permit to trade freely in the Ottoman territories which they also acquired (for that instruction see: *Diplomatarium*, 351). For silence regarding the 1458 treaty see: Nedeljković, "Ugovor," 372.
[390] See chapter two, section: "A most embarrassing relationship: Ragusa as an Ottoman tributary state."
[391] On Ragusan diplomacy in Istanbul, see: Miović, *Dubrovačka diplomacija,* passim. On the signs of Ottoman protection in the public life of the city, see: Konstantin Jireček, "Beiträge zur ragusanischen Literaturgeschichte," 399-412.

sake of all Christendom. In other words, the tributary status began to be represented as an altruistic sacrifice on Ragusa's part, an arrangement which, although involving collaboration with the infidel, in fact enabled the small republic to perform tasks of immense importance for the Christian faith. As early as the 1530s and 1540s the praiseworthy purpose of Ragusan cooperation with the Ottomans began to be proclaimed in the clearest of terms. For instance, in 1535, the diplomats at the court of Ferdinand of Habsburg stated that the Ragusans appeased their infidel neighbours with gold "not so much for the conservation of our private goods, as much as *in the name of the whole Christian republic* which can be in better spirits seeing that [Ragusa still] marches under the banner of Christ."[392] Similarly, in 1540 the diplomats were to mention to the Venetian doge the immense tribute which Ragusans "pay annually to the sultan in order to preserve this city under the banner of Christ, to the utility and service of this state [Venice] and the entire Christian republic."[393]

Clearly, Ragusan diplomats had to work exceedingly hard to demonstrate the surprising claim that being an Ottoman tribute-payer served to promote Christian interests, and that Ragusa's collaboration with the infidel was in fact useful to Christianity. In order to achieve this goal they insisted that Ragusa performed a series of unique tasks which were crucial for the defence and even propagation of the "true faith." Importantly, all of these tasks were represented as being possible exactly *because* Ragusa was an Ottoman tributary state or, at least, because it maintained good relations with the infidel. In a nut-shell, Ragusa was represented as a pious mole, dissimulating friendship with the Ottomans while in fact working tirelessly for the sake of the Christian republic.

The first among the important tasks that diplomacy attributed to Ragusa is visible in the explanation of the tributary status that Frano Gondola, the city's envoy to Rome, offered to Pope Pius Vin May 1570. In the dramatic circumstances of the war for Cyprus, Gondola admitted the city's ties with the Ottomans but immediately explained the specific rationale behind them. Narrating his audience with the pope to the senate he wrote: "Afterwards I said that the Ragusans admittedly do pay the tribute to the Turks, but they do that since they are

[392] Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje* book 2, tomus 1, 375; on this see also Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika,* book 2, 26-27.

[393] The instruction to the envoy in Venice is worth quoting *in extenso* for being truly typical: *Qualmente trovandosi quella città situata in uno sterilissimo luogo, dal quale non se puo cavare tanta vitovaglia che basti per uno mese del anno, e sendo angaridiati dal tributo, qual annualmente pagamo al Gran Signore Turcho per conservare quella citta et habitanti sotto lo vexillo de christo, et al servigio e commodita di questo Dominio e tutta la Republica Christiana.* (SAD, *Lettere di Levante* 22, f.108r, senate's letter to Seraphino Zamagna, dated 14 February 1540) Other examples of such statements typical of Ragsuan diplomacy are: SAD, Lettere di Ponente, 3, f. 104r; SAD, *Lettere di Ponente* 6, f. 9 r; SAD, Lettere *di Ponente* 15, f. 11r.

forced to; nor does it seem unworthy to them to pay that sum in order to keep alive in these parts the faith of Jesus Christ and that city with its inhabitants…"[394]

How exactly Ragusa maintained the Christian faith in "these parts" becomes apparent from the instruction which the senate sent to Gondola few weeks afterwards. Answering the Venetian accusations that the city cooperated with the Ottomans, Gondola was supposed to accentuate not only the Christian loyalty but also the exceptional strategic significance of the small republic. Throwing himself at the pope's feet he was, among other things, to tell him:

> By preserving the city of Ragusa your Holiness will preserve not only our nation in the faith of Christ and in the most holy cult of God, but also the most tormented people in the world, that is, the poor slaves of which the whole land of the Turk is full. Namely, not so much for the salvation of the souls of our Ragusans who are trading in the land of the Turk, but more to make an immensely pious and Christian deed for the salvation of the souls of the poor slaves, my lords have many years ago attained wonderful privileges from the Emperors of the Turks allowing them to keep priests and monks near their merchants in those lands. And therefore, there is no city, no castle, nor house where are our Ragusans -- and they are everywhere -- where are not also the priests and monks who administer holy sacraments of the Church, not only to Ragusans but also to the slaves, and baptize their sons, and preserve and stabilize them in Christian faith, with the grace of God and their work. Therefore, if the city of Ragusa were lost, these and many similar Christian works -- which I omit to mention here so my lords do not seem boastful – would all get lost with immense loss to Christianity, since in this way the faith of Christ would disappear in many regions of the Orient, which [faith] is preserved in the midst of infidel peoples due to the miracle of God and the zeal of my lords…[395]

[394] *Dissi poi che, se bene li Ragusei pagan oil tribute al Turco, lo fanno per mera forza, nè li pare inconveniente pagar quella somma de danari per manterenere in quelli paesi viva la Religione di Gesù Christo et quella Città con il suo popolo* ….Vojnović, "Depeschen," 558.

[395] *…conservando V.B. ne la città di Ragugia, non solo viene a conservare la nostra natione nella fede di christo et nel culto s.mo di Dio, ma le più afflitte genti che siano al mondo, che sono i poveri schiavi dei quali n'è pieno tutto il paese del Turco; imperóche non tanto per salute dell'animo dei nostri Ragugei che praticano nel paese del Turco, qua per fare un(a) opera tanto pia et christiana à salute delle anime dei poveri Schiavi, hanno ottenuto da molti e molti anni in qua belissimi privilegi dagli imperatori dei Turchi de potere tenere appresso i mercatanti nel paese loro Preti et Frati, et cosi non è città non è castello non è villa, dove siano dei nostri Ragugei che non ci sono anco dei Preti o Frati, i quali amministrano i sancti sagramenti della chiesa, non solo à i Ragugei, ma à gli schiavi et schiave, et battezano loro figliouli et gli conservano et stabiliscono per gratia di Dio et per opera loro, nella fede christiana, onde se venisse à perdersi la città di Ragugia queste e simili altre christiane operationi le quali tralascio di dire per non mostrare i miei signori vanagloriosi, verrebbono insieme à perdersi con grandissima perdita del christianesimo, perche à questo modo si finirebbe di perdere la fede di Christo in molte parti dell'Oriente la quale si va conservando tuttavia fra gente infidele per miracolo di Dio et per zelo dei miei Signori...* SAD, Lettere di Ponente 1 (1566-1570), f. 225r-225v, senate's letter to F. Gondola in Rome, 1st July 1570.

As is apparent from Gondola's dramatic rhetoric, the first task attributed to Ragusa in order to justify its tributary status was preserving Catholicism in the Ottoman Empire.[396] How important and deeply-rooted this claim was can be seen from the fact that it emerged almost a century afterwards in the instructions to the Ragusan envoy at the court of Louis XIV in 1667. Asking the king to help Ragusa, devastated by an earthquake, the diplomat was to proclaim that "due to the privileges which the Republic enjoys in the entire Ottoman Empire, the Christians of these parts are maintained with the comfort of churches and distribution of most holy sacraments, to the great utility and consolation of these peoples."[397] The insistence that Ragusa played a fundamental role in the preservation of Catholicism under the sultan's rule also emerged outside the narrow diplomatic context. Thus, it was one of the most prominent themes in the description of the Ottoman Empire written in the 1620s by Matteo Gondola, a former Ragusan ambassador to Istanbul. Stressing the Republic's merit in not only defending the Catholics but even converting the Orthodox, Gondola also proudly mentioned a certain Ragusan burial in Hadrianople, which included a public Catholic procession headed by a priest carrying a cross -- all of it deep in the infidel empire.[398] In his seventeenth-century description of the world, cosmographer Luca de Linda illustrated the alleged religious privileges of Ragusa with a similar story. He narrates that in 1621, during the Ottoman campaign in Poland, priests from the retinue of the Ragusan ambassadors publicly served mass in the middle of the infidel camp. De Linda continued by proclaiming that all Catholics in the Ottoman Empire lived under Ragusan patronage "so that these small remnants of Christianity are maintained in the purity of Catholic faith through the endless expenses of this most religious republic."[399]

[396] Although the sultan's privileges about which Gondola boasted in fact never existed, in general there was some truth to his claims. With their religious activities silently tolerated, Ragusan merchant colonies indeed played a significant role in the maintenance of Catholicism in the empire. Regarding the alleged Ragsuan privileges see: Antal Molnár, *Le Saint-Siège, Raguse et les missions catholiques de la Hongrie Ottomane 1572-1647* (Rome-Budapest: Accademia d'Ungeria, Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, METEM, 2007), 57-58; for Ragusa's role in preseving Catholicism in the Balkans and Hungary see the entire impressive work, but especially, ibid., 53-58. On the Ragusan role as promotors of Catholicsm see also: Miović, *Dubrovačka Republika u spisima Osmanskih sultana*, 110-115; idem, *Dubrovačka diplomacija*, 101-103.

[397] Radovan Samardžić, *Borba Dubrovnika za opstanak posle velikog zemljotresa 1667 g. Arhivska građa (1667-1670)* [The Struggle of Dubrovnik for Survival after the Great Earthquake of the year 1667. Archival materials] (Belgrade: SAN, 1960), 131.

[398] Karlo Horvat, "Novi historijski spomenici za povijest Bosne i susjednih zemalja" [New Historical Documents for the History of Bosnia and the Neighbouring Countries] *Glasnik zemaljskog Muzeja Bosne i Hercegovine* 21 (1909): 388-389. Another version of this *relazione*, unknown to Horvat, is to be found in: *Bibliothèque nationale de France (Paris), Clairambault* 1017, f. 37r-48v. The literature on Matteo Gondola and his *relazione* is given in Zlatar, *Between the Double Eagle and the Crescent,* 256, note 76.

[399] Di Linda, *Le relationi de descrittioni vniversali*, 641. Other examples of non-diplomatic documents accentuating the importance of Ragusa for preserving Catholicism in the Balkans are: Skurla, *Sveti Vlaho*, 85-87; Luccari, *Copioso ristretto,* 115.

This image of Ragusa as a guardian of Catholicism in the Ottoman Empire was clearly a modification of its older image as a missionary city, typical of the diplomacy of fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Simply put, as the frontier on which Ragusa was situated changed -- from a mosaic of Orthodox and heretical polities to a Muslim superpower -- so also the religious mission attributed to the city changed. It should be stressed, however, that the Ragusan republic was not the only Western state which justified close contacts with the sultan by claiming that they served to promote Christian interests in the Ottoman Empire. A relatively similar argument was used by the apologists of the French king in order to justify their patron's alliance with the Sublime Porte. It was represented as an arrangement of general utility to Christianity since it enabled the French monarch to protect European merchants in the empire and, even more importantly, to ensure the safety of pilgrims to the Holy Land.[400]

Another important task attributed to Ragusa for the benefit of Christianity was saving and redeeming Christian prisoners from Ottoman slavery. Again, this was a reworking of an older *topos* which had emerged as early as the fifteenth century: for instance, in 1459 the Hungarian King Matthias Corvinus lauded Ragusa's efforts to liberate prisoners from the infidels, adding that the city is therefore considered "a port of Christian freedom."[401] A typical later example of such diplomatic rhetoric appears in the instruction issued to the Republic's envoy in Ancona in 1578. Attempting to achieve the abolishment of newly introduced customs for Ragusan merchants, the envoy was instructed to warn the local authorities that if this "novelty" were maintained Ragusans "would no longer be able to pay the tribute, nor help our poor citizens in their needs, nor save our subjects and foreigners from the hands of the infidels where they end up every day."[402] Another example of such a claim appears in a letter from the Ragusan senate to the pope from 1603, in which the Ragusans boasted about a certain young man from Bologna who had converted to Islam and intended to depart the city for the Ottoman Empire. Hearing of this, the government had -- allegedly with great "scandal" -- torn the youth from the hands of the Turks at the very gates of Ragusa and sent him to Rome as concrete evidence of "the zeal with which the Christian faith is preserved in our city."[403]

[400] Poumarède, "Justifier l'injustifiable," 238-246.
[401] Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 1, tome 2, 620.
[402] SAD, *Lettere di Ponente* 3, f. 104r-104v, senate's letter to Jerome Caboga, dated 24 January 1578: *...non potriamo pagar piu il tributo, ne soccorrere i poveri nostri ne i bisogni loro, ne cavare i suditi nostri e forestieri dalle mani degli infideli dove vi capitano giornalmente.* Similar examples are found in: Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 3, tome 1 (Belgrade: SKA, 1939) 124-125; Samardžić, *Borba Dubrovnika*, 131.
[403] Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 3, tomus 1, 129.

Finally, the third task attributed to Ragusa by its diplomats when they had to represent it at Western courts was also the most important: the city had, allegedly for centuries, stopped the Ottoman advance to towards the West. According to Ragusan diplomacy, maintaining itself with extraordinary efforts in the "jaws of the infidel," the small republic was the first line of defence of the Christian world, enabling its coreligionists to enjoy peace while it held back the Ottoman tide. Typical of such rhetoric was the insistence on the immense strategic importance of Ragusa, the fact that its fall would have had catastrophic consequences for all Christianity, enabling the Ottomans to assault Italy. Thus, in 1572, asking the pope to allow the export of armaments to Ragusa, the aforementioned Frano Gondola accentuated that the city's existence was immensely important for Christianity on whose eastern side it was the "last frontier." Then he offered a highly dubious geo-strategic estimate, warning that the consequence of Ragusa's fall would be that "Christianity in the eastern parts would not reach further than Venice," since the Dalmatian cities, weak and poor as they were, "would fall at the first occasion when the Turk showed his face."[404] Almost two centuries later, in 1752, in a report on the Republic's conflict with the Venetian general *proveditore*, an anonymous Ragusan repeated the same traditional argument. Complaining about the Venetian fleet harassing Ragusan shipping, he warned that the *Serenissima* should treat Ragusa with more respect since it was not in its interest that the smaller republic should fall under the Ottomans. The reasons were clear: "Let the Christian princes consider what would happen with the safety of Italy if a territory so elongated, so full of excellent ports, so close to many very populated Ottoman provinces would come under the absolute power of the Turk?"[405]

That the Ottoman conquest of Ragusa would have fatal consequences for other Christian lands was also acknowledged by foreign rulers and, most importantly, the papacy. For instance, Pope Clement VIII wrote to Emperor Rudolf in 1595 asking him to forbid Uskok raids on the Ottomans over Ragusan territory since they might provoke the sultan to "conquer that city from which he would lean over the neck of Italy to the great detriment of everyone."[406]

[404] Vojnović, "Depeschen," 612.

[405] *Ora riflettano i Principi Christiani qual sarebbe la sicurezza d'Italia, se uno stato tanto disteso in lunghezza, così pieno di ottimi porti, così vicino a tante provincie Turche sì popolate, venisse sotto al Dominio assoluto del Turcho?* (Mss. Correr 1411, Miscellanea, saec XVII-XVIII, Fol 173r (Museo civico Correr, Venice)). A similar argument from a high Venetian official, most likely a senator, in the late seventeenth century is to be found in a sketch for a public speech: Codice Cicogna 697/25, *Che i Veneziani debbano nelle presenti congiunture permettere il passo del Golfo all esercito Turchesco per assediare la citta di Ragusa*, f. 76r (Museo civico Correr, Venice).

[406] Augustino Theiner, *Vetera monumenta Slavorum Meridionalium historiam illustrantia*, tomus 2 (Zagreb: Academia Scientarum et Artium Slavorum Meridionalium, 1875), 89.

The claim that Ragusa was an obstacle to the infidel tide was a re-elaboration of an older image of the city, typical of the fifteenth-century diplomacy, the idea that Ragusa was a Catholic fortress heroically resisting the pressure of neighbouring "schismatics" and "heretics." An intermediate phase between this older image and the new one seems to have been the specific rhetoric typical of the Hungarian kings in the second half of the fifteenth century. Probably echoing the rhetoric of the city itself – which is unknown since the documents are lost – the Hungarian kings had regularly described Ragusa as the "wall for our faithful" or the "shield of the borders of our Dalmatian Kingdom." Building on such stereotypes, the sixteenth-century Ragusan diplomats gave new meaning to the city's struggle for survival in infidel surroundings: Ragusa was not only defending itself, nor even the Hungarian Kingdom, but the *entire* Christendom.[407]

This heroic role of Ragusa was often expressed through an ancient and influential metaphor applied to the territories which had bordered on the Muslims since the Middle Ages – the metaphor of "the bulwark of Christendom" (*antemurale* or *propugnaculum christianitatis*).[408] Beginning in the sixteenth century, Ragusan diplomacy used many variants of this metaphor, all of which suggested the same image of Ragusa as an isolated fortification of Christianity, exposed to the first wave of the infidel assault. Thus, in the 1570s and 1580s, in front of the pope, Frano Gondola spoke about the city "as a true bulwark of entire Italy and its rulers" or "the bulwark of Christianity which on its shoulders on that side keeps closed the frontiers with the barbarians." [409] Besides the terms *antemurale* and *propugnaculo* in diplomatic rhetoric similar notions of *riparo* (shelter), *scudo* (shield), *bastione* (bastion) or *argine* (embankment) also emerged, all of which suggested the idea of stopping an enemy assault. For instance, in the instruction to its envoys to Rome in 1607, the senate described Ragusa as "a shelter, shield and firm bastion of the entire Christian republic," while the ambassador to Louis XIV characterized the city as "embankment, support and shelter of Christianity."[410]

[407] For instances when Ragsua was called a "shield" and "wall" of Christians in the charters of Ladislas Posthumous (1454) and Matthias Corvinus (1459), see: Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 1, tomus 1, 557; *Diplomatarium*, 615.

[408] On the origin of this expression, see: Nora Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom: Jews, Muslims and "Pagans" in Medieval Hungary c. 1000-c.1300* (Cambridge: CUP, 2001), 209-210; the entry *Antemurale Christianitatis*, in *Hrvatska encikopedija* [The Croatian Encyclopedia], tomus I, ed. Mate Ujević (Zagreb 1941), 469.

[409] Vojnović, "Depeschen," 546, 558, 571.

[410] *come a riparo, scudo e saldo bastione de tutta la Republica christiana* (Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje* book 3, tomus 1, 180); *un argine sostegno e riparo della christianità* (Samardžić, *Borba Dubrovnika*, 252). In characterizing the frontier position of the Republic in diplomacy different metaphors such as "the column of Christ's faith" (*colonna della fede di Christo*) or even "a true shelter and landmark of the entire Christian

While it was surprising for an Ottoman tributary state to claim that its position served Christian interests, it was absolutely unprecedented for such a polity to appropriate the prestigious title of "bulwark of Christendom." As the comparative section at the end of this chapter will show, other states which claimed the title of *antemurale* all had an impressive record of military conflicts with the Ottomans. Being a Christian bulwark meant primarily defending the true faith on the battlefield -- it was a warrior's myth *par excellence.* Clearly, Ragusa was singularly unfit for such an image since, except for a short episode in 1444, the city had not spent a single day at war with the Ottomans. Even worse, it maintained a highly profitable relationship with them, enjoyed the political protection of the Sublime Porte, and did everything in its power to appease the huge empire at its borders.

To deal with this embarrassing situation of an utterly pacifist and militarily negligible *antemurale*, Ragusan diplomats had to remove the bellicose component typical of the image while keeping the praiseworthy function of "bulwark." This was done by claiming that Ragusa did indeed stop the Turk for centuries, yet it was not done with arms but with diplomacy, by having found a way of appeasing and manipulating the Ottoman barbarian. This unusual solution does seem to have caused some unease because references to such "diplomatic *antemurale*" often emerged together with a story which gave it a high sanction. That is, when thematizing the appeasing, even servile, Ragusan relationship with the Ottomans, the city's diplomats hurried to narrate an anecdote according to which such demeanour was lauded by no less than Emperor Charles V. As Frano Gondola explained to the viceroy of Naples in the early 1580s, the Ragusan government could not allow an exiled Spanish spy to return to the city since:

> concerning the Turks one should also follow the advice of Charles V, the Emperor of most glorious memory and the wisest lord of that [Neapolitan] Kingdom, who encouraged the Republic through his emissaries to avoid any quarrel with the Turk, to *feign friendship* and to *seek peace*, since its preservation is to the utility both to him and to the entire Christian republic…[411]

Gondola soon explained the strategic importance of Ragusa, echoing the well-known argument: "evidently, that city is like a ferry and gate for the attack on this [Neapolitan]

republic" (*uero riparo e bersaglio di tutta la Republica christiana*) occasionally also emerge (SAD, *Lettere di Levante* 30, f. 101r; SAD, *Lettere di Ponente* 6, f. 9 r.)

[411] *rebus Turcae morem gerere oportere consilio etiam magni illius Caroli V. Imp. gloriosissime memoriae, sed enim sapientissimi et istius Regni domini qui Remp. per eius oratores hortabatur ut cum Turca quaevis dissidia fuggeret, amicitiam insimularet, et quietem quereret, cum salus eius, et illius et totius Christianae Reip. commodo cedat* ...(SAD, *Isprave i akti* 16, 8, number 424/22, Lettere di Francesco Gondola da Roma e da Napoli degli anni 1581-1583, attachment 50/1, [6-7])

Kingdom, this is known everywhere." He continued by accentuating the bulwark function of Ragusa, insisting on the terrible consequences which would follow if the Ottomans were to gain possession of its fleet and excellent ports, from which Italy could be reached in one night.[412]

An equally interesting reference to the peculiar Ragusan bulwark and its imperial approval is found in the instructions to the envoy to Charles V himself. In 1547, asking the emperor to understand the Republic's considerations for the Ottomans, the envoy had to remind him that Ragusa was situated in dangerous infidel surroundings:

> And therefore your majesty, after being thoroughly informed regarding all these issues, not once but many times encouraged the ambassadors of my lords that they should strive with all the possible diligence about the survival of that city, on which [survival], except its special interest, depends also the general utility of the entire Christian republic. Of this opinion were also the popes and in general all the rulers who continuously lauded the *wisdom* of my lords who knew *how to conduct and behave* towards the Turkish Grand Signore on whom, due to vicinity, depends the survival of that city.[413]

Here the approval of the way in which Ragusan patriciate "knew how to conduct and behave towards" the Ottomans was attributed not only to Charles V, but also to other unspecified rulers and even popes. According to Ragusan diplomats, the *respublica Christiana* not only tolerated the city's relationship with the infidel, but even encouraged Ragusa to continue with it.

However, the claim that Ragusan behaviour was sanctioned by the Christian authorities was most clearly expressed by yet another version of the anecdote with Charles V (which, apparently, changed according to the circumstances). Writing to the same emperor in 1547, the Ragusan senate reminisced about a certain episode when the envoys of Messina had "in front of his majesty defamed the customs and the ways in which we live with those neighbours of ours." It seems that the emperor, to the great delight of the senate, responded by defending Ragusa in a most remarkable way, warning the Messinesi:

[412] *...est nimirum illa Civitas ad hoc regnum invadendum velut scala et porta, scitur hoc passim...* (Ibid., [7])

[413] *Onde la Maiesta vostra, sendo minutamente informata de questi andamenti, non una ma piu uolte ha esshortato gli ambassatori delli miei signori douesero con ogni debita diligentia attendere alla consruatione di quella citta, dalla qual, oltra la particulare commodita sua, ne dipende uno beneficio uniuersale de tutta la republica christiana. E di quella opinione parimente suono stati i pontifici e generalmente tutti li principi, quali continuamente hano comendato la buona mente delli miei signori, quali hano saputo gouernarse e tratenerse col Gran Signor turco, dal quale per la vicinta del luogno depende la salute di quella citta* (Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje*, book 2, tomus 1, 494).

> Had the inhabitants of Rhodes known how to behave and conduct with the Turks, as the Ragusans do, they would not be without a state as they are, but would enjoy it in peace, as Ragusans are doing.[414]

In order to understand the full weight of this statement, one should keep in mind that Rhodes – conquered by the Ottomans after a bloody siege in 1522 – was synonymous with heroic resistance to the infidel and was, doubtlessly, one of the most famous "bulwarks" of the Mediterranean. The point of this anecdote is therefore truly surprising: the Ragusan way of "behaving" and "treating" (*gouernare e tratenere*) with the Ottomans is represented as *superior* to that of Rhodes, a prestigious military *antemurale.* Moreover, such a judgement was – perhaps even with some basis, since the Ragusans repeated it in front of the emperor himself – attributed to Charles V, himself a celebrated defender of Christendom.[415]

This kind of diplomatic rhetoric remained the main way in which Ragusan diplomacy represented the city in front of the Christian princes throughout the Early Modern period. The last important question to be addressed therefore remains: What were the reasons for the importance and longevity of this rhetoric? What purposes did it serve? Generally speaking, the insistence on the praiseworthy tasks which Ragusa performed in the Christian interest – maintaining the Ottoman Catholics, redeeming Christian slaves, and stopping the infidel advance – had the one basic purpose: Ragusan diplomats tried to give Western rulers as many reasons as they could to help their city. The conclusion which they tried to provoke was well summarized in the instructions issued to the envoy to Rome in 1602, who had to mention "our Republic for whose survival his Holiness and the entire Christendom have to struggle, due to the place where it is situated."[416] In other words, Ragusan diplomats were trying to persuade Western rulers that the survival and welfare of the Republic were not only Ragusa's concern, but also in *everyone's* interest. This in turn enabled them to do something convenient: to represent the particular, even selfish, requests of their city as being of general utility to Christendom. Needless to say, this kind of request was quite hard for any Christian prince to reject.

[414] *Quando i Rhodiotti s' hauessero saputo gouernare e tratenere con li Turchi sicome fanno li Ragusei, non sariano fuora del Stato loro come si trouano, anzi quietamente lo galdariano, come fano li Ragusei* (Ibid., 503; for the context, see: Tadić, *Dubrovnik i Španija*, 37-38).

[415] Other variations of the same anecdote with Charles V are to be found in: Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 2, tomus 1, 494; 499; SAD, *Lettere di Levante* 31, f. 240v. An interesting version of the tale is also found in: Luccari, *Copioso ristretto*, 139.

[416] SAD, *Lettere di Ponente* 8, f. 205 r, senate's letter to Giorgio Gozze in Rome, dated with November 18, 1602: ... *nostra Republica la quale, et la Santità sua e tutta la christianità debbono procurare che sia conseruata, rispetto al sito doue si troua.*

However, besides accentuating the important tasks of the Republic, there was yet another element in Ragusa's rhetoric which added further persuasiveness to its diplomatic requests. This was an insistence on the catastrophic situation of the city, which was allegedly on the verge of falling to the infidel. On endless occasions Ragusan envoys at Western courts were instructed to – "if possible, with tears in the eyes" – lament their poor city [sic], built on infertile rock and surrounded by wicked infidels plotting its destruction. Similar insistence on Ragusa's desperate situation is already visible in several medieval examples mentioned above – for instance, laments about Altomanović in 1371 or the letter to the Queen Joan II in 1431 – but with time it attained truly epic proportions. A good example of such self-victimization is found in the letter to the ambassador in Rome in 1578, who was reminded by the senate:

> as you know, in these lands we are not tolerated as Christians, because as Christians we are harassed with iron and fire, but are tolerated since our blood is sucked every day, now with this, now with that scandal; and besides all the suffering and efforts that we go through and the insupportable expenses that we make, we [also] live in continual fear.[417]

Sometimes the threat inherent in such an image of the city was explicated; the diplomats would claim that if their requests were not fulfilled Ragusa would surely be destroyed by the Ottomans. Thus, in 1588 the Ragusan envoy to Rome had to persuade the pope to renounce the reform of the city's Church by insisting on the "misery of our state" and explicitly asking for special treatment due to the Ragusan position on the frontier. Warning that "our state is very different from other states of Christian princes" the envoy was to ask the pope to leave things as they were "since if our government were to change we would not be tolerated anymore by the aforementioned tyrant [the sultan] and from it would follow our ruin and destruction."[418]

In sum, the Republic's diplomats created a highly useful image of the city which rested on two basic elements. The first was an insistence on the immense importance of Ragusa for all of Christianity and the second was an insistence on its desperate situation in the "jaws" of the infidel. The reasons why this image was used when asking for concessions from

[417] SAD, *Lettere di Ponente* 3, f. 113 v, senate's letter to Jerome Caboga ambassador in Rome, dated 29 March 1578:... *perche come sapete, noi non siamo comportati in questi confini come cristiani, perche come a cristiani, ci è apparecchiato il ferro e'l fuogo, ma siamo comportati, perche quotidiamente ci viene succhiato il sangue, hor con uno, hor con un altro garbuglio, e oltre i stenti et travagli che soportiamo, et le insuportabili spese che facciamo, viviamo in continuò* [!] *timore.*

[418] SAD, Lettere di Ponente 6, f. 13v, senate's letter to Vladislav Menze in Rome, dated 13August 1588: *sicome il stato nostro è molto diverso dahli altri stati di Principi Christiani si degni comportarci nel governo in che siamo stati sempre sin qui, perche quando questo nostro governo si alterasse non sariamo già mai comportati dal detto tiranno et ne seguirebbe la ruina et perdita nostra* (similar rhetoric is also used in: SAD, Lettere di Ponente 6 (1588-92), f. 8v).

Western rulers are clear. Rejecting the pleas coming from such a community would have been quite embarrassing, since it meant taking responsibility for damage to or even destruction of a place of extraordinary importance for the Christian faith. In other words, Ragusan rhetoric owed a great deal of its effectiveness to the fact that it put its addressee in a politically uncomfortable position – it rested on a kind of moral blackmail. Skillfully playing on religious solidarities, Ragusan diplomacy formulated its requests in such a way that fulfilling them seemed like a religious duty, while rejecting them appeared as betraying the interest of *respublica Christiana.*

However, besides making Ragusan demands harder to reject, this rhetoric occasionally served yet another function. It was used to counter the anti-myth, the accusations that Ragusa collaborated with the infidel to the detriment of Christianity. Although the city's tributary status was mostly accepted without much scandal in the West, there still were instances when such accusations surfaced. They were the most obvious argumentation to reach for when one wanted to defame Ragusa and were thus used by its rivals. The case when envoys of Messina brought them before Charles V has been already mentioned, but that seems to have been only a minor episode.[419] On the contrary, truly dangerous and persistent in their defamations of Ragusa were the traditional enemies and main economic competitors of the city – the Venetians.

The most serious Venetian campaign against Ragusa was conducted at the papal court during the war of Cyprus (1570-1573), a massive naval conflict between a coalition of Christian states and the Ottomans. On the one hand, the Venetians were rightfully irritated by the Ragusan assistance to the Ottoman war effort, but, on the other, they were also attempting to use the situation in order to get rid of an important economic rival. Their goals were therefore not only to make Ragusa stop assisting the Porte, but also to force it to join the Christian league or, at least, to provide the Christian allies with significant assistance. Such requests were completely unacceptable to the small Republic, since accepting either would have almost inevitably provoked the Ottoman intervention and the destruction of Ragusa. The most important obstacle to the Venetian designs was Pope Pius V, who seems to have been remarkably benevolent towards the Republic and prone to believe its envoy Frano Gondola, often quoted above. Trying to change the pope's mind, the Venetian ambassadors represented the Ragusans as traitors who "not only do not want to help the Christians, but even want to damage them so they unite with the Turks," or as hypocritical profiteers who were led to aid

[419] On that situation see: Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika,* book 2, 15; Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 2, tomus 1, 238-240.

the Ottomans "not so much by fear… but the desire to stay with them due to great profits."[420] Revealing how familiar they were with Ragusan rhetoric, the Venetians warned the pope that "under the pretext that they are forced to cooperate with the Turks, since they are so close to them, [Ragusans] are doing many things which are not good."[421] The Serenissima's diplomats went as far as to claim Ragusa was "a serpent in the bosom of Christianity" and even "a plague and a rotten member" to be removed."[422] The best summary of Venetian propaganda, however, came from the Council of Ten, which sketched a genuine mirror-image of Ragusan self-representation by warning its ambassador in Rome:

> these bad Christians, even worse than the infidels, are behaving in the aforementioned way to the common loss of the Christian republic…. They are such that they should not be helped by any Christian prince unless it is desired to one day through them inflict exceptional harm and shame upon the Christian name.[423]

In sum, during the turbulent years of the war for Cyprus the struggle between Venetian and Ragusan diplomats seems to have been exceptionally fierce. This was only natural since the stakes were immensely high: the very survival of Ragusa depended upon its image, on whether the city was seen as a champion or a betrayer of Christendom. Although undeniably exceptional, this episode nonetheless reveals the importance of the international image for the survival of the small mercantile Republic, dependent upon the benevolence of the Mediterranean powers.

However, the city's position on the frontier of different religions, empires, and civilizations was not a fundamental topic of its diplomacy only. It reverberated throughout the entire culture of Renaissance Ragusa, elaborated upon in the public speeches, poetry, drama, and historiography. The central issue Ragusan authors focused on was the prudence and moral justifiability of tributary status – or, more broadly, of the double game which the city played seeking to please both East and West. Although most writers followed the celebratory and

[420] Both examples are taken from reports of Venetian ambassadors to the senate about their conversations with the pope in 1571:... *perche non solamente li Ragusei non vogliono aiutar li christiani, ma vogliono farli danni, et si uniscono con li Turchi alla loro destruttione...* ASV, *Senato, Dispacci di Ambasciatori, Roma*, Filza 7 (1571) f. 258r, letter dated with June 18, 1571; *Dicessimo; Padre Sto non tanto il timore, che hanno de Turchi li persuade à queste cose cosi mal fatte, quanto il desiderio, che hanno di trattenersi con loro per li gran guadagni...* ASV, *Senato, Dispacci di Ambasciatori, Roma*, Filza 7 (1571), f. 282r, letter dated 30 June 1571.

[421] …*che li Ragusei sotto coperta di essere astretti tratteresi con Turchi, per esserli cosi vicini, facevano molte operationi, che non erano bone,* (ASV, CCX, *Lettere di ambasciatori Roma* busta 25 (1566-1573), letter dated 7 October 1570)

[422] …*morbo et membro putrido; un serpe nelle viscere della Christianità* (Vojnović, "Depeschen," 556, 629).

[423] …*quelli cattivi christiani anzi peggiori che Infedeli si portano nel modo che e soprascritto a danno commune della Respublica Christiana ...sono tali che non possono esser sopportati da alcun Principe christiano se non si vuole per causa loro un giorno ricever qualche segnalato danno et ignominia al nome christiano*. (ASV, CCX, *Lettere secrete*, busta 8 (1571-1573), letter dated 23 June 1571)

apologetic tone set by the government, there also were those who expressed their reservations, even open discontent. In other words, if there was an issue which revealed the cracks in the carefully maintained facade of unanimity typical of Ragusa, it was exactly the delicate theme of Christian-Ottoman relations.

Infidel slavery or defence of faith: References to the frontier in Ragusan Renaissance culture

Characteristic of Ragusa's relationship with the Ottoman Empire was a profound gap, an uncomfortable discrepancy, between governmental policy and the disposition of the great part of the population. On the one hand, the Republic's government cherished a servile attitude towards the Sublime Porte, going to great lengths to appease the Ottomans by providing them with strategic information, skilled labor, and transport services. On the other hand, from the early sixteenth century at least, there were many in Ragusa who urged a stronger anti-Ottoman stance and closer cooperation with the Christian powers, especially Spain. Not content with the government's cautious assistance to the Western states – part of the city's traditional double game – a number of them engaged in anti-Ottoman activity on their own. Despite the strictest governmental prohibitions, they spied for the Western powers, incited Balkan Christians to rebel against the empire, and some even openly joined the Christian fleets in their battles with the Ottomans. Due to the carefully maintained image of consensus and harmony typical of Ragusan politics, it is hard to ascertain clearly the influence of such individuals and groups. It is certain, however, that after the intimidated awe which characterized the epoch of Mehmed II the Conqueror, they grew steadily in strength so that by the late sixteenth century the policy towards the Sublime Porte became a genuine neuralgic point of Ragusan politics. More precisely, it became a central issue of contention between the two well-established patrician factions. The dominant one argued for the traditional policy of appeasing the Ottomans, while the opposition called for stronger engagement on the Christian side, especially in the eventual reconquest of the Balkans.[424]

[424] A good overview of the anti-Ottoman tendencies in sixteenth-century Ragusa is: Vinko Foretić "O Marinu Držiću," 49-58. For the late sixteenth and seventeenth century, see: Zlatar, *Our Kingdom Come*, 261–297; Zlatar, *Between the Double Eagle and the Crescent*, 55-74. Many of Zlatar's finds have been modified and further elaborated by Nenad Vekarić and Stjepan Ćosić in their works concerning the split of the Ragusan patriciate: Nenad Vekarić and Stjepan Ćosić, **"**The Factions within the Ragusan Patriciate (17th-18th Century)" *Dubrovnik Annals* 7 (2003): 7-79, especially 9-30**;** Nenad Vekarić and Stjepan Ćosić, *Dubrovačka vlastela između roda i države: Salamankezi i sorbonezi* [The Ragusan Patriciate between Family and State: Salamankezi and Sorbonezi] (Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2005). For a comprehensive overview of anti-Ottoman plans regarding the reconquest of the Balkans see: Peter Bartl, *Der Westbalkan zwischen Spanischer Monarchie und Osmanischem Reich: Zur Türkenproblematik an der Wende vom 16. zum 17.*

Although this conflict was fierce, it was typically not allowed to spill beyond the council chambers and never became a matter of public debate. Such a profound discrepancy between the bitter political struggle and its meager reflections in historiography and literature speaks volumes about the amount of (self-)censorship which the topic of Ottoman-Christian relations engendered in Ragusan culture. The following section seeks to present an overview of references to this sensitive topic in the city's culture, moving from the apologetic to somber and finally to genuinely critical. All of them can be understood properly only if read with the aforementioned thick context in mind, as politically delicate utterances often shaped by immense circumspection, allusiveness, and self-censorship.

Not surprisingly, the majority of Ragusan literati and historians addressed the frontier role of the Republic in a strongly panegyric tone, echoing the well-established apologetic discourse of diplomacy. Not only was the tone of diplomatic rhetoric repeated, however, but its crucial *topoi* were even transplanted into other cultural genres. Thus, Ragusan historians and rhetoricians regularly lauded the city's efforts in maintaining Catholicism under the Ottomans or its merits in redeeming Christian captives from the infidel.[425] While most of such re-elaborations were mechanical repetitions of diplomatic common-places, some were more original. For instance, a suggestive articulation of Ragusa's role as a Christian bulwark – even specifically a "diplomatic" bulwark – appears in one of Elias Cerva's funeral orations. In a characteristically theatrical manner, Cerva proclaimed that were it not for Ragusans, who served as the firmest "barrier," "crowbar," and "obstacle" to the "barbaric people" [the Ottomans], this "savage plague" would run wild across all the lands to the Atlantic Ocean. He continued with an even more suggestive image, a wonderful formulation of the specific Ragusan diplomatic bulwark:

> One should be maximally grateful to God that this most foul beast has advanced until here, since it is not so much held back by the mountains and chasms, as by the prudence and wisdom of our senate.[426]

An equally forceful affirmation of Ragusa's role as a Christian frontier guard appears in Luccari's chronicle. In the work of this patrician historian the oft-repeated anecdote about Emperor Charles' endorsement of Ragusan tributary status achieved a most dramatic form:

Jahrhundert (Wiesbaden: Otto Hassarowitz, 1970); Angelo Tamborra, *Gli stati italiani e il problema turco dopo Lepanto* (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1961).

[425] Some examples are: Luccari, *Copioso ristretto,* 115; Nale, *Dialogo,* 10; Razzi, *Storia,* 117; Serdonati, *Orationes duae,* 20v; Lucca de Linda, *Le Relazioni,* 641.

[426] *Sed deo immortali maxima habenda est gratia, quod hucusque illa reterrima bellua progressa est, nec tam montibus aut salebris, quam nostril senatus prudential atque consilio retardatur* (for this and similar rhetoric see: Crijević, "Ex Cervini oratione in obitum Martuli Zamagnae," 182-183).

> The Emperor took great care of our city, as born to the rule of the Mediterranean, and wished that the heavens would send to Christians many Ragusas as defence and protection against the infidels.[427]

However, definitely the most intriguing literary elaboration of Ragusa's role as a "diplomatic" bulwark is found in the late seventeenth-century epic, "Ragusa Restored" (*Dubrovnik ponovljen*), written by the patrician Jaketa Palmota (Palmotić) (1623-1680). This work is an account of a diplomatic crisis between Ragusa and the Ottomans in 1667, when the city, after being ravaged by a terrible earthquake, faced the Porte's attempts to extort enormous sums of money. Palmota himself was a protagonist of these events, having served as ambassador to the sultan, and therefore his account is historically believable -- with one important exception. Namely, the patrician poet added a metaphysical background to the story, representing the conflict as a consequence of a demonic plot to destroy Ragusa, the valiant Christian frontier guard. Palmota made Satan himself fume before all of hell about that "small city by the sea," which was the only place in the Balkans resisting "the Turkish faith/through which I [Satan] have raised/ our power to the skies."[428] The frustrated demons decided to destroy Ragusa by instigating Kara-Mustafa, the powerful deputy of the grand vizier, against it. Influenced by demons, the Ottomans began demanding enormous sums from the city, threatening to destroy it otherwise. In such a desperate situation Ragusa was left with one last remedy – its fabled diplomacy. Most of Palmota's epic narrates the dramatic diplomatic struggle which followed, describing audiences in which the prudent Ragusan envoys fought to sway the Ottoman dignitaries, eventually undoing the infernal manipulation and saving the city.[429]

Although "Ragusa restored" is clearly to be numbered among the heroic Baroque epics, in one important regard it is completely different from the other examples of the genre. As Andreas Angyal has shown, most of the early modern frontier societies, from Poland all the way to the Balkans, created similar epic literature which celebrated the struggle of virtuous Christian knights against the infidel.[430] In Palmota's epic this paradigmatic story about the valiant defence of the true faith against Islam remained, but the warriors were replaced by

[427] *Percioche l'Imperadore haveva molto à cuore la nostra città, come nata all imperio del mare Mediterraneo, & desiderava, ch'i cieli mandassero à i Christiani molte Rause in difesa, & riparo contro gli Infedeli* (Luccari, *Copioso ristretto,* 139).
[428] Palmotić, *Dubrovnik ponovljen*, 57. Having turned demons into true agents of the ploy against Ragusa, Palmota, ever the diplomat, was able to at least partially exculpate the Ottoman patrons of the city by suggesting that their malevolence and bad judgement had been a consequence of demonic temptation.
[429] The best account of this crisis is found in: Miović, *Dubrovačka diplomacija,* 144-149.
[430] Andreas Angyal, *Die Slawische Barockwelt,* (Leipzig: VEB E. A. Seemann, 1961), 228-263. For a similar heroic pathos in Croatian and Hungarian cultures see also: Birnbaum, *Humanists in a Shattered World,* 309-321.

diplomats, martial skill by eloquence, and the battlefield by the audience chamber. In other words, this epic was an extensive literary rendering of the *topos* of the "diplomatic" bulwark of Christendom typical of Ragusan tradition. It also had a recognizably Ragusan panegyric tone and aims. On the one hand, it can be read as a long justification of city's tributary status, which represented a barrier to the advance of Islam. On the other hand, it is also a passionate panegyric to the city's diplomacy; according to Palmota, Ragusan diplomats were able to outsmart and out-manipulate no less than the forces of Hell themselves!

Importantly, Ragusan literati and historians not only re-elaborated the stereotypes from diplomacy, but also stressed other elements of the city's frontier identity which were less prominent in the diplomatic rhetoric. One immensely important claim in public speeches and historiography was what can be labeled "the *topos* of purity." It was an insistence on both the doctrinal purity of Ragusan Catholicism and on the city's unwavering fidelity to the papacy, none of which had ever been compromised despite the heretic, schismatic, and infidel surrounding of the Republic. Such a representation of the city's history is already present in the public speeches of Elias Cerva at the turn of the fifteenth century. This patrician humanist proclaimed that the city was built by Christians (i.e., had no pagan past) and insisted that "although it had in the vicinity the Manicheans and now has the Turks, it is known that it was never contaminated with their heresy."[431] A similar insistence on the impeccable millennial loyalty of Ragusa to the Roman Church, both doctrinally and politically, was used in the works of other Renaissance authors such as N. Nale or S. Razzi.[432] It was articulated particularly forcefully in an anonymous early seventeenth-century description of Ragusa which proclaimed:

> There is neither notice nor memory that a noble Ragusan would have ever left the Catholic religion, or would have converted to make himself heretic, schismatic or Muslim, which happens quite a lot amongst other nations, and especially in Rome.[433]

In the later period, there was even a peculiar local legend which connected the religious purity of Ragusa with the preservation of its very independence. This story, which apparently served as a (pseudo)historical justification for the Catholic exclusivism of the

[431] Rački, "Iz djela E. L. Crijevića," 195; A similar example is found in Cerva's speech *In adventu Raynaldi Gratiani Archepiscopi* (Library of the Franciscan Convent in Ragusa, maunscript no 243 (old collocation 301) *Orationes Latinae civium Rhagusinorum Rhacusii habitae,* 158. In this speech Cerva mentions the Ragusan Church *quae inter barbaras nationes castissima nullo tot ferarum gentium polluta est contagio.*

[432] Nale, *Dialogo,* 2; Razzi, *Storia,* 35.

[433] *Non ui è notitia ò memoria che alcun Raguseo della nobilità per alcun tempo mai habbia lassato la Religione Catholica, ò sia passato a farsi heretico, scismatico, ò Mahomettano che molto si preggia apresso l'altre nationi, e specialmente à Roma.* (British Library, London, Add. 48131 (Yelverton MS. 146), f. 759v.).

Republic, appears for the first time in the early eighteenth-century *Chronica* by J. Resti. The patrician historian writes about the alleged visit of St. Francis to the city, when the saint prophesized "that the Republic will remain in liberty only as long as it will preserve the virgin-like Catholic faith in its possessions." Resti continued by stressing that the prophecy had come true since Ragusa had indeed preserved its independence throughout all these centuries "against the human reason."[434] That this legend was still well-known in the last years of the Republic is testified by J. C. Engel in his history of Ragusa published in 1807. According to Engel, in 1803 the Russian consul brought two Orthodox priests to provide religious services in the consulate's chapel, thereby settling the Orthodox clergy within the walls for the first time in hundreds of years. The senate had them banished from the city, however, explaining that St. Francis had prophesized that Ragusa will keep its independence only as long as "it closes its doors to the adherents of the Greek faith."[435]

Another important frontier *topos*, mostly elaborated outside of the diplomatic context, was the city's role as a safe-haven, a refuge for Christian soldiers pursued by the infidels. It was a modification of a claim typical of the city's medieval diplomacy which had insisted that Ragusa was neutral territory, a safe asylum for the defeated among the endlessly warring Slavic magnates in the hinterland.[436] This traditional right to stay unhindered in Ragusa was also guaranteed by a treaty (*ahdname*) with the Ottomans in which the sultan explicitly acknowledged that people of "whatever language" [provenience] can safely come to the city.[437] The ancient custom of providing refuge for the notables of the hinterland was lauded in the fifteenth-century description of Ragusa by Ph. de Diversis. Writing about the rapid territorial expansion of the Republic in the last decades, the Luccan humanist stressed that the neighbouring lords were ready to sell their lands to the city knowing they might come to need Ragusa as a refuge. Pointing out that for them Ragusa was "the calmest and the most sheltered

[434] Resti, *Chronica*, 82.
[435] Engel, *Geschichte des Freystaates Ragusa*, VII-VIII. The conflict -- a minor diplomatic scandal -- was resolved with a compromise (Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika*, tomus 2, 435).
[436] Ilija Mitić, "Imigracijska politika Dubrovačke Republike s posebnim obzirom na ustanovu svjetovnog azila" [The Immigration Policy of the Ragsuan Republic especially regarding the Institution of Secular Exile] *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti IC JAZU u Dubrovniku* 17 (1979): 125-163. For several examples of insistence on Ragusa as a sanctuary in its fifteenth-century diplomacy see: *Diplomatarium*, 116, 151-152, 196-197; Stojanović, *Stare srpske povelje i pisma*, 133-4, 261, 262, 264. For medieval contracts of Ragusa and the lords of the hinterland in which, among other things, they were guaranteed safe refuge in the city in necessity, see, for instance: Franc Miklošić, *Monumenta Serbica spectantia historiam Serbia, Bosniae, Ragusii* (Vienna: Apud Guilelmum Braumueller, 1858), 210, 216, 258, 418.
[437] For several examples in the early fifteenth-century Slavic *ahdnames* see: Ćiro Truhelka, *Tursko-slovjenski spomenici dubrovačke arhive* [Turkish-Slavic Documents of the Ragusan Archive] (Sarajevo: Zemaljska štamparija, 1911), 10, 18, 63; Nedejković, "Ugovor," 390. Of course in the *ahdname* the purpose of this clause was mostly economic, enabling the free movement of foreign merchants.

port," de Diversis mentioned the following proverb among the Slavs: "When the rabbit, pursued by hunters, seeks refuge, he goes to Ragusa."[438]

With the arrival of the Ottomans Ragusa's traditional role as a place of asylum changed somewhat. What had been a pragmatic political arrangement became a praiseworthy religious task. One historical episode in particular was stressed by Ragusan historians as an illustration of the city's role as a safe haven for Christians in infidel surroundings. It was a story about the asylum given to the last Serbian despot, Đurađ Branković, in 1441, after the Ottomans had conquered his lands. The exiled ruler had indeed come to Ragusa and there was significant Ottoman pressure to extradite him, which the Republic had resisted until the despot left for Hungary several months later.[439] Most Ragusan historians narrated this historical episode, turning it into an epic story of courage and keeping the faith against the might of the Ottoman Empire. According to Ragusan historiography, the sultan had not only threatened to attack the city, but also tried to bribe the Republic, offering it the abolishment of tribute, all the despots' treasure, and even a huge part of his territory.[440] The Ragusans rejected this extraordinary offer, stressing that they would sooner give their "city, wives, and sons" than the despot since they had "nothing but their word." The sultan was allegedly deeply impressed with such courage and remarked that "this city, where one values so much the faith given to guests, will not perish."[441]

The story about Branković was simply the best known among many similar ones narrated by Renaissance authors to demonstrate that Ragusa was "the greatest shelter of all the Christians."[442] Other often-mentioned episodes included the refuge given to King Sigismund after his defeat at Nicopolis in 1396 and the shelter provided to ships of Christian

[438] de Diversis, *Opis,* 193.
[439] For the despot's sojourn in Ragusa see: Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 86-89.
[440] The exact details of the Ottoman attitude and offer vary from one account to another. The sultan's incredible offer is mentioned by the anonymous Annalist and Ragnina (*Annales,* 56, 253). The historian Bonfini mentions that the sultan offered Ragusa to keep the despot's gold and promised a lasting peace (Antonius Bonfinius, *Antonii Bonfinii Rerum Ungaricarum decades quatuor cum dimidia* (Hanover: Typis Wechelianis, apud Claud. Marnium, 1606), 431). Tubero, Razzi, and Orbini mention both Ottoman threats and promises (Tubero, *Commentarii*, 97; Razzi, *Storia,* 57; Orbini, *Regno,* 194-195), while Lucari speaks only of Ottoman threats (Luccari, *Copioso ristretto,* 93). There is an anachronism in the narration of these historians since at that moment Ragusa was not paying the tribute so the sultan could not offer to abolish it (Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 88, note 59.) In order to stress Ragusan sacrifice even more strongly, Razzi writes that the sultan had raised the tribute because the city refused to extradite Branković (Razzi, *Storia,* 57).
[441] The quotations are from the anonymous Annals (*Annales* 56-57), but other historians echo them closely (*Annales*, 253; Razzi, *Storia,* 57, Luccari, *Copioso ristretto,* 93). This story about Branković was also addressed in Nale's *Dialogo* and in seventeenth-century works by Ivan Gondola (Nale, *Dialogo*, 6-7; Letić, *Rodoljublje,* 96-99; Zlatar, *Slavic Epic*, 244-245).
[442] *Paulli Gallucii Saloenses*, [III] *…optimum omnium Christianorum perfugium.*

notables during the second war of the Holy League (1571-1573).[443] Writing about the protection given to the Venetians on yet another occasion, J. Luccari accentuated the article from the *ahdname* which guaranteed the free sojourn of foreigners in Ragusa. Interpreting it in the most optimistic way, the patrician historian boasted:

> in the pacts that we maintain with the Ottoman dynasty there is one article which states that the public enemies of the Ottoman house can stay without any peril in Ragusa and enjoy their possessions.[444]

Besides the authors who echoed the panegyric tone of diplomacy, there were also those who opted for a less enthusiastic description of Ragusa's role on the frontier. A good example of such an approach – more moderate, but apologetic nonetheless – is found in Ragusan Renaissance historiography, especially in treating the tributary status. As was shown in the previous chapter, the historians were less eager than the diplomats to trumpet the usefulness of tributary status for the Christian cause, instead preferring to trivialize and downplay its meaning. In order not to compromise the cherished "liberty" or the Christian loyalty of Ragusa, they chose to interpret the treaties with the Ottomans as harmless agreements which had nothing to do with political subordination. The *ahdname* were thus represented as purely economic arrangements in which tribute was given in return for free trade or, at most, as treaties of non-aggression with tribute as the price of peace with the Porte. As if such belittling interpretations were not enough, the historians dedicated remarkably little space – few sentences at most -- to these treaties, which were of fundamental importance to the small Republic. That this laconic approach was not accidental is attested by the fact that the same authors were ready to dedicate far more space to ancient and obsolete treaties with the Hungarian Kingdom or Venice. All in all, it seems as if Ragusan authors shunned this sensitive topic, trying to say as little as possible about the Republic's embarrassing connection with the Muslim empire. It is also important to notice that in this delicate issue the historians chose a different approach from the one well-established in diplomacy, which was quite uncharacteristic since in Ragusa these two discourses usually echoed each other. From the numerous -- mostly indirect -- condemnations of tributary status analysed below one could

[443] For Sigismund's refuge, see: *Annales*, 50-51; 241-242; Orbini, *Regno*, 194; Luccari, *Copioso ristretto*, 71. On the shelter given to Christian ships see: Razzi, 114-116; *Paulli Gallucii Saloenses*, [III]; Nale, Dialogo, 7.

[444] …*nelli patti che noi mantenemo con la famiglia Ottomana, è posta nel contesto del privilegio una particella, la quale dice, ch'in Ragusa possano senza pericolo fermarsi i publici nemici della Casa Ottomana, è assicurare le loro facoltà* (Luccari, *Copioso ristretto,* 124). Importantly, some Ragusan authors lauded their city for giving asylum without religious overtones, simply perpetuating the older medieval topos. Thus, Orbini (Orbini, *Regno,* 194-195) insists that the city was always "a refuge to mortals" and numbers a whole series of illustrious refugees who found shelter in the city. In the first half of the seventeenth century Junius Palmota elaborated on the same theme in his poem *Gosti grada Dubrovnika* (Guests of the City of Ragusa) (Letić, *Rodoljublje,* 128-130).

surmise that many Ragusans felt embarrassed by its tendentious interpretation in diplomacy and opted for a different strategy.[445]

While the historians revealed their discomfort through silence and symptomatic brevity, there were also writers who expressed their concerns about the Ragusan position more clearly. The most significant sombre voice within the general apologetic chatter was that of a well-respected Benedictine monk and poet, Mavro Vetrani (Vetranović) (1482 or 1483 - 1576). In the mid-sixteenth century Vetrani wrote a series of poems commenting on the political situation in Europe and Ragusa, often in a satirical and moralizing tone. The basic motif in his work – typical for many other writers of the period as well – was the discord among Christian princes, whose selfish and short-sighted bickering enabled the Ottomans to conquer Christendom.[446] In a disillusioned tone Vetrani lamented the Christian defeats in the Balkans and the recent fall of Hungary, warning the besieged defenders of the important fortress of Klis not to count on the help of "evil Christians" but to put their faith only in God.[447] Besides discord among Christians, another common-place which re-occurred in his poems was the idea that the Ottoman advance was divine punishment for the sins of Christianity.[448] Starting from such historical and metaphysical premises Vetrani moved on to interpret the Ragusan position and its moral repercussions differently than the official celebratory discourse. His basic attitude could be described as a disillusioned political pragmatism supplemented by profound piety. It is best exemplified by a famous poem entitled "A Song to the Emperor's [sultan's] glory" (*Pjesanca slavi carevoj*) which thematized the relationship between Ragusa and the Ottomans. After stressing the hopeless bickering of Christians and enumerating Ottoman victories, Vetrani turned to the Ragusan relationship with the sultan:

> The weak city of Ragusa thus to him/ many years ago began to pay the tribute/ and serves him faithfully, was always faithful/ and prosperously and peacefully rests on its own./ And the Turks who know how much it is beloved by the Emperor [the sultan]/ all bow to it, cherishing [it as] a precious asset./[449]

[445] On the repesentation of the tributary status in Ragusan Renaissance historiography see: Chapter two, section "A most embarrassing relationship: Ragusa as an Ottoman tributary state"

[446] A good example is his *Pjesanca gospodi krstjanskoj*, publshed in: *Pjesme Mavra Vetranića Čavčića*, 37-41. Similar ideas re-occurred in other poems by Vetrani, for instance: Ibid., 46-47, 49; 52-63. An excellent analysis of Vetrani's political outlook is Foretić, "Politički pogledi Mavra Vetranovića," 321-333. Importantly, Ragusan poets expressed such sentiments even before Vetrani, for instance: Vlado Rezar, "*Dubrovački pjesnik opominje vladarsku trojku*" [A Ragusan Poet Admonishes Three Rulers] *Vijenac* 133 (1999): 14-15.

[447] *Pjesme Mavra Vetranića Čavčića*, 47.

[448] Ibid., 44-46.

[449] *Dubrovnik slabi grad jošte se njemu tač/ od mnogo liet do sad postavi u harač,/ i služi mu vjerno, vazda je vjeran bil,/ ter gojno i mirno počiva pod svoj kril./ I Turci ki znaju, koli ga ljubi car,/ svi mu se klanjaju, scieneći dragu stvar* (Ibid., 49).

Vetrani continued by proclaiming that he feared Ragusa might lose this "glory" [sic] due to its sins. Interestingly, such punishment for Ragusa's "pride" and "lavishness" was seen by Vetrani as coming from "the fierce lion" – clearly an allusion not to the Ottomans, but to Venice. After thus stressing the ever-present Venetian peril, Vetrani offered a famous piece of advice to his beloved city. Although quite surprising on its own, this maxim sounds even more remarkable if one keeps in mind it came from a pious Benedictine monk:

> I am imploring you dearly, for the sake of [my] love,/ do not rely on money or your fortress;/ do not rely on the [Habsburg] emperor nor Christian aid,/ since the God above punishes every wickedness./ So prepare yourself and quickly/ leave pride and every other sin aside,/ *join with God and leaving everything else/ serve and attend to the Ottoman dynasty*.[450]

In other words, in the given circumstances the best Ragusa could do was serve the Ottomans and pray, hoping that eventually, as Vetrani states at the end of the poem, God will forgive its sins and liberate it "from the Eastern dragon." A similar disillusioned pragmatism is expressed in another of Vetrani's poems, "Lament for the City of Buda," written after the conquest of the Hungarian capital by the Ottomans in 1541. This event, which followed the death of János Szapolyai, the Ottoman-backed king of Hungary, signified the definite dissolution of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom, with Buda becoming the center of a newly established *pashaluk*. There is no doubt that in Vetrani's poem, written as a monologue of personified Buda, the sad fate of the Hungarian capital served as an implicit comparison to Ragusa. Thus, after a long lament about the ruin of Hungary, Buda admitted that it would have been better to pay the tribute and be ruled by a woman and a newborn – that is, the son and wife of the late King János – than to be conquered by "pagans" as it was. Moreover, it acknowledged that, having chosen to appease the Ottomans, it would not have had to suffer such "wailing and uproar," the Hungarian nobility would not have been slaughtered nor would its lands been divided into *timars*. Finally, Buda explicated what seems to have been Vetrani's understanding of the reason behind Ragusa's tribute-paying: "I would count the

[450] *Molim te tiem drago, za ljubav jedinu,/ ne uzdaj se u blago ni u svoju tvrdinu;/ ne uzdaj se u cara, ni u pomoć krstjansku,/ zač višnji bog zgara koriepi zled svaku./ Za toj se ti spravi ter hrlo na pospjeh/ oholas ostavi i ostali svaki grieh,/ s bogom se ti sdruži i mimo sve ino/ i dvori i služi otmansko koljeno* (Ibid., 49). A penetrating analysis of this poem is to be found in: Foretić, "Politički pogledi Mavra Vetranovića," 326-327.

tribute to the sultan,/ until the God above would help the [Habsburg] emperor/ and other lords (if there are any)/ to eventually liberate me…"[451]

Vetrani used the fate of Buda to show that tribute-paying was definitely better than being conquered by the Ottomans, if for no other reason than that one could at least hope that Christian help would come eventually. This is the same thought as the one at the end of "A Song to the Emperor's Glory:" one must do everything to survive the Ottoman pressure, praying for better times. This was in fact a pragmatic justification of the Ragusan tributary status, quite different from that of the official diplomatic rhetoric. Instead of insisting on the usefulness of tributary status for Christianity, Vetrani justified it as a bare necessity, the only way to preserve a small city left alone to face the Ottoman might by the short-sighted princes of Christendom.

Although Vetrani was a genuine literary doyen of Renaissance Ragusa, his political poetry was not imitated. Later writers found a different way of thematizing Ottoman-Christian relations. As it was delicate to openly express many of their sentiments regarding the nearby Muslim superpower, they developed a different, indirect, way of tackling the subject. In the late sixteenth and especially the seventeenth century Ragusan poets started to write extensively and enthusiastically about the struggles of *other* Christians against the infidel. Such heroic poetry was a genuine obsession, probably even the most central concern, of Ragusan Baroque literature. The most important works of Ragusan epic poetry, imbued with strong sense of Slavic unity, were dedicated to describing the contemporary struggles of Croatian, Hungarian, and Polish elites against the Ottomans. Paradoxically, such literature was far richer in Ragusa, an Ottoman tributary, than in any of the neighboring Venetian or Habsburg territories which had participated in the wars with the Ottomans. Writing about the heroism of other Christians, primarily the fellow Slavs, authors such as A. Sasin, V. Menze, and I. Gondola were able to articulate their attitude and understanding of the religious frontier more openly than if they were writing about Ragusa itself. It was in fact a form of voluntary self-censorship, an indirect way of tackling the sensitive but central concerns of contemporary Ragusan society. These concerns, reiterated endlessly in the epic poetry, were the following: enthusiasm for Christian victories; fervent, sometimes even eschatological, hopes for the

[451] *Harač bih tiem nebog odbrajal ja caru,/ dokli bi višnji bog pomogao česaru/ i ostaloj gospodi (ako su gdi koja)/ da mene slobodi s vrjemenom čes moja* (for this and the aforementioned quotes from the poem see: *Pjesme Mavra Vetranića,* 63-64).

imminent downfall of the Ottoman Empire; a strong sense of solidarity with other Slavs, even the Orthodox and Muslim populations ruled by the sultan.[452]

How politically sensitive the topic of Ottoman-Christian relations was in Early Modern Ragusa is well illustrated by the fate of the most important among such Baroque epics, *Osman,* written by the patrician Ivan Gondola (Gundulić) (1589-1638).[453] This work, which served as a model for much of seventeenth-century Ragusan literature, was written in the usual way, by displacing the Ottoman-Christian conflict that it sought to thematize. Gondola expressed strong anti-Ottoman sentiments and his hopes for the imminent downfall of the empire by writing about the conveniently distant Polish-Turkish wars. However, this traditional way of softening the sensitive message seems not to have been enough. The text as we know it today has a conspicuous hole among its twenty cantos: the fourteenth and fifteenth are missing. One of *Osman*'s eighteenth-century copyists left a short note explaining that these cantos are lacking since the original version was destroyed by "our sovereigns" (*našijeh samovladalaca*), who ordered the poet to "clean them and do them again," which Gondola failed to do due to his death.[454] On the basis of this notice many modern historians assume that a part of Gondola's work was indeed destroyed by the government since it was too openly anti-Ottoman. That the elite had serious reservations about this text is further confirmed by the remarkable fact that, despite being absolutely adored and much copied in manuscript, it was not printed until after the fall of the Republic.[455]

However, there were several exceptions to the general atmosphere of hushedness and circumspection which characterized the discourses on Ottomans in Ragusan culture. Yet even the most scandalous among such references retained some of the characteristic indirectness;

[452] Literature on the epic poetry of early modern Ragusa and its connection to contemporary politics is quite rich, so only most basic and recent references are listed here: Letić, "Rodoljublje u dubrovačkoj književnosti;" Rafo Bogišić, "Hrvatski barokni slavizam" [Croatian Baroque Slavism] in Rafo Bogišić, *Zrcalo duhovno: književne studije* (Zagreb: Hrvatska sveučilišna naklada, 1997), 138–164; Zlatar, *The Slavic Epic*; Zlatar, *Our Kingdom Come,* 425-454. Zlatar, *Between the Double Eagle and the Crescent,* 58-74. Besides Zlatar's works, the best historical contextualization of this literary production remains: Jorjo Tadić, "Dubrovnik za vreme Djiva Gundulića" [Ragusa in the Age of Djivo Gundulić] *Srpski književni glasnik* 56 (1939): 175-282.

[453] See Zlatar, *Slavic Epic,* passim; on Gondola's biography see, 44-58 with references to copious older literature.

[454] Most recently, the entire version of the Lovro Cekinić's note from 1731 was published in: Ivan Gundulić, *Osman,* ed. Slobodan P. Novak and Antun Pavešković (Zagreb: Nakladni Zavod Matice Hrvatske, 1991), 420.

[455] For the idea that the two cantos were destroyed by the government, see: Foretić, "O Marinu Držiću," 59; Zlatar, *Between the Double Eagle and the Crescent,* 66). An influential alternative interpretation is that Gondola in fact never wrote these two chapters due to structural and narrative problems with the huge text (see: Zoran Kravar, "Svjetovi Osmana" [The Worlds of Osman] in: *Nakon godine MDC: studije o književnom baroku i dodirnim temama* (Dubrovnik: Matica Hrvatska, 1993), 104–125; in another of his works Zlatar seems to subscribe to this position: Zlatar, *The Slavic Epic,* 19). Concerning the late publication of Osman, Zlatar even asserts -- although there is no direct proof – that the pro-Turkish majority "steadfastly refused to allow its publication" (Zlatar, *Between the Double Eagle and the Crescent,* 70). The epic was printed for the first time in Ragusa only in 1826. (The printed editions are listed in: Zlatar, *Slavic Epic,* 389; 569-570).

they did not openly encourage anti-Ottoman activities but suggestively lauded those Ragusans who engaged in them. The earliest and least subversive is found in M. Vetrani's poem *Galijun* (Merchant Ship), celebrating the Ragusan navy. The main thing which Vetrani praises is the courage and fierceness of Ragusan sailors in fighting the enemy he calls *leventi*. This choice of words was probably not accidental, but was an attempt to "soften" the sensitive message of the poem. Instead of openly speaking of the Turks (*Turci*), Vetrani used the more ambivalent and less frequent term *leventi*, which designated the sailors and soldiers on an Ottoman warship. Despite such a meagre attempt at obfuscation, the fact remains that Vetrani made a scandalous political point. The venerable Benedictine openly praised the Ragusan sailors who drove their government mad by joining the Christian fleets in their struggles against the Ottomans throughout the sixteenth century.[456]

A few decades later another poet, Antun Sasin (1517-1595/1596), echoed Vetrani but was even more explicit. Sasin eventually vented his anti-Ottoman sentiments in the customary circumspect manner: in the 1590s he wrote *Razboji od Turaka* (The Ottoman Defeats), the earliest among the typical Ragusan epic descriptions of the wars between the neighbouring Christians and the Ottomans.[457] Before this major work, which narrated the beginnings of the Ottoman-Austrian war (1593-1606), Sasin wrote an intriguing poem entitled *Mrnarica* (The Navy). Closely modelled on Vetrani's *Galijun*, it was also a laud for Ragusan sailors and their struggles with the enemy, openly labelled as "Turks" (*Turci*) or "Moors" (*Mori*). Insisting on the valour of Ragusan sailors, Sasin represented the Republic's fleet as an imposing military force whose members were "true Christians," "fraternally keeping company with the Spaniards" and "defending the true faith."[458] Clearly, such a description of the Ragusan navy was profoundly misleading since Sasin ignored the blatant fact that the same ships frequently served the interests of the Ottoman Empire as well. It seems, however, that this one-sidedness was not coincidental but programmatic: by lauding its anti-Ottoman engagement and ignoring its assistance to the "infidel" empire, Sasin was signalling what he felt the Ragusan fleet *should* do.

[456] *Pjesme Mavra Vetranovića Čavčića*, 225-226. For Foretić's remark see: Foretić, "O Marinu Držiću," 56; Foretić, "Politički pogledi," 321-322.

[457] A good introduction to Sasin and his work are: Rafo Bogišić, "Antun Sasin: 'Razboji od Turaka'" [Antun Sasin: "The Turskih Defeats"] in *Sisačka Bitka 1593,* ed. Ivo Goldstein and Milan Kruhek (Zagreb, Sisak: Zavod za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskog fakulteta: Povijesni arhiv, 1994), 227-238; Irena Arsić, *Antun Sasin, dubrovački pesnik XVI veka* [Antun Sasin: Ragusan Poet of the 16th Century] (Banja Luka, Beograd: Besjeda, Ars Libri, 2002).

[458] Sasin's poem is published in: Pero Budmani, ed., *Djela Petra Zoranića, Antuna Sasina, Savka Gučetića Bendeviševića* [The Works of Petar Zoranić, Antun Sasin, Savko Gučetić Bendevišević]. Stari pisci hrvatski, book 16, (Zagreb: JAZU 1888), 168-171. On the poem see: Arsić, *Antun Sasin*, 101-112.

This kind of programmatic insistence on only one side of the Republic's double game is also visible in the third important anti-Ottoman text of sixteenth-century Ragusa - the famous work by the Ragusan Benedictine, Mavro Orbini, entitled *The Kingdom of the Slavs*, published in Pesaro in 1601. This comprehensive and panegyric history of the Slavs represents the most elaborate articulation of Ragusan pan-Slavism and as such it exerted profound influence on the seventeenth-century epic literature of the city. Far from a disinterested antiquarian, Orbini served as the ideologue of a patrician group involved in schemes for the reconquest of the Ottoman Balkans sponsored by several Italian rulers. [459] It is therefore likely that his work was not only motivated by a kind of proto-nationalistic Slavic pride, but also intended to serve as an introduction to the Balkans for anti-Ottoman Western elites. Orbini's basic thesis also seems like an encouragement to the Western crusading initiatives: as he never tired of repeating, the Balkan Slavs possessed remarkable military virtue and were conquered by the Ottomans only because they were disunited.[460]

The most anti-Ottoman part of Orbini's work, however, is his description of the Ragusan Republic. Reading it one is immediately struck by the same rhetorical manoeuvre as in Sasin's *Mrnarica*: in representing his homeland Orbini was strongly one-sided with clear programmatic intentions. That is, unable to explicitly say what he thought Ragusa should do, he signalled it by accentuating one aspect of its international engagement, the pro-Christian one, completely ignoring the other, pro-Ottoman. From his pages Ragusa emerges as a genuine crusading city, decidedly engaged on the side of Christendom in its epic struggle against the Ottoman Empire. Needless to say, Orbini did not mention the city's tributary status at all, not even in the trivializing manner typical of other historians. What he did insist on, however, were various episodes in which Ragusan fleets fought the Ottomans. On the same track as Vetrani and Sasin, but with a historian's erudition, he provided a list of the battles in which Ragusans had fought alongside other Christians. Thus, historically correctly, he mentioned the Republic's participation in the crusade of Varna in 1444 and in the anti-Ottoman league of Pius II, but then continued with far more dubious examples, claiming that Ragusa had also fought with "many ships" in the key battles of Prevesa (1539) and Gerba (1560). In fact, there were some Ragusan ships in the Christian fleets on these occasions, but they were either forced to join or did it despite the strictest prohibition of the government. In

[459] Zlatar, *Our Kingdom Come*, 362-363; Zlatar, *Between the Double Eagle and the Crescent*, 61-62. On Orbini's role in the so-called Great Conspiracy see also: Vekarić and Ćosić, "The Factions within the Ragusan Patriciate (17th-18th Century)," 12, note 8.

[460] As Zlatar has correctly stressed this is the central thesis of Orbini's work (Zlatar, *Between the Double Eagle and the Crescent*, 60).

sum, Ragusa certainly did not openly and willingly participate in the anti-Ottoman military operations as Orbini makes it appear.[461] Even more tendentious is Orbini's narration of the Republic's conflict with the Ottoman dignitary Enehano, who in 1588 managed to acquire the sultan's permit to annex a part of the Ragusan territory and organize it as a *sandjak* for himself. Although this conflict was essentially diplomatic – the Ragusans eventually managed to get the grant dissolved in Istanbul – Orbini made it sound as if the Republic had repelled no less than a direct Ottoman attack. He omitted the diplomatic struggle and claimed that Enehano came with many troops trying to occupy Ragusan territory, but was "chased away" by the Republic's army, led by three prudent patricians.[462] In sum, it is certain that no contemporary even vaguely familiar with the Eastern Mediterranean would have found Orbini's depiction of Ragusa believable. The point is that they *were not expected to:* the image of Ragusa as a staunchly anti-Ottoman state was not meant to be believable, but programmatic.

While most Ragusan authors expressed their reservations in various indirect ways, there were a few who openly voiced their criticism of the city's relationship with the Ottomans. As on many other issues, the most outspoken critic of Ragusan policy towards the Porte was the patrician Ludovicus Cerva Tubero (1459-1527). In his "Commentaries," a history of contemporary Southeastern Europe, Tubero dedicated a small section to his native city, describing it in a scornful tone, highly uncharacteristic of the otherwise apologetic Ragusan historiography. Tubero's deprecating attitude towards his homeland, which he saw as morally degenerate due to its mercantile mentality, is most clearly visible exactly in his narration of the beginnings of Ragusa's tributary status. According to Tubero, the city's dependence on the Porte was the result of a cowardly and immoral Ragusan plot that backfired. In the 1450s, during a war with Stjepan Kosača, a powerful warlord from the hinterland, Ragusans had allegedly "with despicable crime" bribed his eldest son to cross over to the Ottomans. This act, which revealed that Ragusans "had no concern for the rules of war," had dire consequences. As Tubero warned, it:

> …opened the path to Dalmatia to the Turks, destroyed the Kosača family, and not only made the city of Ragusa a tribute-payer, but almost reduced it to Ottoman servitude.[463]

[461] Orbini, *Il regno*, 193.
[462] Ibid., 193-193. For an overview of this conflict see: Popović, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 307-361.
[463] …. *Turcis aditum in Dalmatia aperuit, et Cossiciam familiam extinxit, Rhacusanamque ciuitatem non modo tributariam fecit, sed etiam in Turcaicam seruitutem pene redigit.* (Tubero, *Comentarii*, 98).

Tubero continues by considering the moral consequences of the "slavery" [!] into which the city led itself. In a typically venomous manner, he remarks that tributary status, although "taking away some of their dignity," was also useful to Ragusans. Namely, living in constant fear of the Ottomans they had to renounce their greed and were forced to dedicate themselves to "higher goals" – the gathering of money in order to fortify the city and pay the Ottoman tribute.[464]

Although Tubero was doubtlessly the most articulate, others in Ragusan historiography also openly condemned the tributary status of their city. Such condemnations are found in the unpublished versions of the widespread anonymous *Annales,* and most likely originated from copyists who felt the need to add their comments to the text. This can be discerned from the fact that these versions of the *Annales* repeat the same apologetic explanation of the tribute as the other manuscripts, but then, quite abruptly, add a remark that is at odds with it. In other words, they repeat the typical trivializing explanation of the Ottoman tribute as a price for economic privileges in the empire, but then admit that this tribute was a terrible detriment to the city's liberty. Thus, one sixteenth-century version of the *Annales* claimed that in 1410 the Republic began paying the annual tribute to the sultan so that: "the Ragusan merchants could freely trade in his dominions." Immediately afterwards, however, followed a surprisingly dramatic characterisation of this event: "and this year Ragusans are considering to be unfortunate and wretched since they have put themselves into new [?] servitude to the infidel."[465] The same uneasy synthesis of a traditional trivializing explanation and an extremely negative characterization of the Ottoman tribute can be seen in another example, also from a sixteenth-century version of *Annales*. Under the year 1416 the text states:

> One could say with good reasons that this year was for the Ragusans the unhappiest of all since Ragusa was founded; namely, in this year they made themselves tribute-payers to the Ottoman Empire, obliging themselves to pay every year to that court 500 ducats, and they made that so that Ragusan merchants could freely trade and traffic in the entire empire… [466]

[464] Tubero, *Comentarii,* 98. It should be kept in mind that Tubero's work was not printed until 1603 in Frankfurt, apparently without Ragsuan involvement. Clearly, this part of Tubero's text did not enjoy great influence in Ragusan historiography -- the only author repeating it was the foreigner, Razzi. Even Razzi first narrated a different apologetic version of the conflict with Kosača, taken from the *Annales.* Only then did he turn to Tubero's account, which he reproduced by carefully and repeatedly stressing he was only repeating what the older historian had written (Razzi, *Storia,* 58-61).

[465] SAD, *Memoriae* 24, *Dell'origine della città di Ragusa,* f 20v.: *accioche li Mercadanti Ragusei possino liberamente pratticar in tutto el dominio suo et exercitar la mercantia detto patto fù fatto con Baiazet Begh, et questo anno ebbeno li Ragusei per infelice, et sventurato per aversi posto in nova servitù alli infedeli.*

[466] SAD, Memoriae 8, *Brevi notizie sulla fondazione di Ragusa,* f. 41r: *Questo anno con ragione si puol dire, che per li Ragusei sia stato il più infelice di tutti altri Anni da che fù Raguusi fondato; mentre questo Anno se fecero*

Since the authors of these lines do not explain themselves, it is hard to be certain what the exact reasons were behind such strong condemnations of the city's tributary status. What is certain is that, despite repeating it, they did not consider the official explanation of the tribute to be acceptable. In fact, despite all the tendentiousness, it seems that most Ragusans were clearly aware that the relationship with the Ottoman Empire was far more than just a good business deal. This is well illustrated by a testimony of a certain Ragusan goldsmith, interrogated in 1548 regarding the pro-Habsburg plots of a bishop of Ston. The goldsmith declared he was admonishing the bishop with what sounds as if it were a genuine political common-place:

> as you know, our *signori* have two great *signori* themselves, one in Constantinople and the other just here, and that is the lord *sandjakbey* [of Herzegovina], and each of them stands with his eyes open… [467]

Conclusion: The Ragusan discourse on the frontier in comparative perspective

It is an old cliché to state that Ragusa was a city between the "East" and "West", the "Cross" and "Crescent", the "Dragon" and "Eagle" – all in all, a community situated on the frontier of religions, empires, even civilisations. Such widespread qualifications, here borrowed from the titles of several recent books, in fact echo the self-understanding of medieval and Renaissance Ragsuans, who also saw their city as a frontier community *par excellence*. The previous chapter has sought to reconstruct the various articulations of that self-understanding, while this conclusion seeks to put them in a broader comparative perspective. In doing so, it follows the twofold structure of the preceding text. The first part addresses the central medium of frontier discourse, diplomacy, comparing Ragusan diplomatic rhetoric with that of other frontier states. The second part is dedicated to the frontier discourse beyond diplomacy – in historiography, literature, and rhetoric -- contrasting Ragusan elaborations of Christian-Muslim relations with those of other cultures facing Ottoman pressure.

Regarding the frontier motif in diplomacy, as early as the fourteenth century Ragusa began to represent itself as a staunchly Catholic city heroically resisting the assaults of neighbouring "Patarens" and "schismatics" and tirelessly converting them to the true faith. The prestigious status of the Christian frontier guard was acknowledged by the ecclesiastical council of Basel in 1433, but was soon brought into question because in the mid-decades of

---

Tributarij all'Ottomano Impero, obbligandosi di pagare ogni Anno a quella Corte 500 ducatti, e ciò fecero affine li mercanti Ragusei possino liberamente trafficare e negoziare in tutto il suo imperio

[467] SAD, *Lamenta Politica* 6, f. 33v.:... *e come sapete li nostri signori hano due gran signori uno in Constantinopoli laltro questo li juste quale e il signor sangiaco e ciascuno sta con gli occhi aperti*.

the fifteenth century Ragusa became a tributary state of the Ottoman Empire. This new political status created what was doubtlessly the greatest problem Ragusan diplomacy ever faced: one had to find a way to reconcile the prestigious image of Christian frontier guard with the embarrassing position of tribute-payer to an infidel state. The solution which was found was remarkably original and long-lasting. Beginning in the sixteenth century and until the very end of the Republic, the close ties with the infidel were represented as something of immense usefulness to Christianity. Ragusa was represented as a heroic Christian city which endured immense sufferings in the "jaws of the infidel," feigning friendship and paying an enormous tribute so it could function as a Christian mole behind infidel lines. Namely, the tributary status was interpreted as enabling the city to perform a series of important tasks for the entire Christendom: to take care for the remains of Christian faith in the Ottoman Empire, to redeem Christian prisoners from Ottoman captivity and, finally, to block the further advance of the infidel towards the West.

Of course, the Ragusan republic was far from being the only European state which represented itself as a defender of Christian interests at the frontier with the infidel. Many other polities situated on the religious borderlands, especially those facing the Ottoman might, developed a similar diplomatic rhetoric. They lay on the outer fringes of Renaissance Europe, ranging from Aragon and Castile, to Malta, Rhodes, and Venice all the way to the best known Christian frontier guards, the Hungarian and Polish kingdoms. Despite the significant differences in size, location, and political organization, in many regards the diplomatic self-representation of these states was similar to that of Ragusa. For instance, the Hospitallers of Rhodes also boasted of their great service to the Christian cause due to their redeeming Christian prisoners from Ottoman hands.[468] Another analogy to Ragusan self-representation is the rhetoric of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Polish diplomacy, which insisted on the missionary role of the kingdom. The main argument of Polish diplomats in the West – often in fierce polemics with the representatives of Teutonic order – was the exceptional merit of their kingdom for Christianity due to the massive conversions of Lithuanian and Ruthenian pagans and schismatics to Catholicism.[469] Even the vocabulary which the diplomacies of the frontier

[468] Nicolas Vatin, "The Hospitallers at Rhodes and the Ottoman Turks, 1480-1522," in *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century. Message and Impact*, ed. Norman Housley (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 160-161.

[469] Admittedly, one important difference was that these schismatics and pagans were largely within the Polish state and not outside as in the Ragusan case, yet the basic symbolic profit derived from missionary activity was the same. Another difference was that the Polish claim was largely articulated through a fierce debate with the Teutonic Order – culminating at the Council of Constance – while the Ragusan missionary role was never debated or disputed. For the Polish case: Jadwiga Krzyzaniakowa, "Poland as *Antemurale Christianitatis*: The Political and Ideological Foundations of the Idea," *Polish Western Affairs* 33 (1992): 9-15.

states used to describe their situation was remarkably similar. For instance, the non-Catholic neighbours were often characterized as "perfidious" infidels, "barbarians" or "enemies of the Christian faith," while the metaphor of being "in the jaws" of the infidel re-occurred in places as distant as Ragusa and Livonia.[470]

Finally and most importantly, these states all claimed that they held back the infidel advance towards other Christians, suffering enormous ordeals and losses in defence of *respublica Christiana*. Here again a similar vocabulary was used to describe their function, a recognizable set of metaphors which originated from the Bible and was initially disseminated by the papal chancellery.[471] The polities facing non-Catholic neighbours were described with the terms: *antemurale, propugnaculum, scutum, clypeus, murus, munimentum, praesidium christianitatis* and so on, all of which mediated the same basic idea of an obstacle to the enemy assault.[472] As J. Bak has noted, this function of a bulwark brought significant international prestige since it was seen as a kind of "defensive crusading" and thus played a significant role in the diplomacy of these countries.[473]

Ragusan frontier rhetoric differed most strongly from those of other states in portraying this fundamental function of bulwark. Clearly, for an *antemurale Christianitatis*, the Ragusan Republic had quite an unusual relationship with the Ottoman infidel. Except for a short episode in 1444, when it participated in the failed crusading adventure of King Wladislas, the city had never been at war with the Ottomans, but spent most of the Renaissance as their tributary state.[474] While the other border polities had impressive records of military engagement with the infidel to boast about, Ragusa was a mercantile and militarily weak state, notorious for appeasing the Ottomans. Unable to invoke heroic struggles of their community against the Turks as the diplomats of other polities did, the Ragusans resorted to a different and strikingly original argument. They began claiming that the city indeed held back

[470] Some examples of similar rhetoric are: Anti Selart, "Political Rhetoric and the Edges of Christianity: Livonia and its Evil Enemies in the Fifteenth Century," in *The Edges of the Medieval World,* ed. Gerhard Jaritz and Juhan Kreem (Budapest: CEU Press, 2009), 62, 64; Paul W. Knoll, "Poland as *Antemurale Christianitatis* in the Late Middle Ages," *The Catholic Historical Review* 60 (1974): 392; Sante Graciotti, "L'antemurale polacco in Italia tra Cinquecento e Seicento: il barocchizzarsi di un mito," in: *Barocco fra Italia e Polonia,* ed. J. Ślaski (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe 1977), 306-7.

[471] On the origin of this set of metaphors, see: Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom*, 209-210; Urszula Borkowska, "The Ideology of *antemurale* in the Sphere of Slavic Culture (13th-17th centuries)" in *The Common Christian Roots of European Nations. An International Colloqium in the Vatican*, vol. 2 (Forence: Le Monnier, 1982), 1206-1207; *Antemurale Christianitatis*, in *Hrvatska encikopedija,* tomus I, ed. Mate Ujević (Zagreb 1941), 469.

[472] Borkowska, "The Ideology of *antemurale*, 1206-1207;" Krzyżaniakowa, "Poland as *Antemurale Christianitatis*," 5.

[473] János Bak, "Hungary and Crusading in the Fifteenth Century," in *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century,* ed., Norman Housley (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 118.

[474] Good summaries of the events of the mid-1440s are: Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika,* tomus 1, 212-214; Harris, *Dubrovnik,* 86-87; Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska,* 99-103.

the Ottoman tide, however not with the force of arms but with its prudent diplomacy. This is the central difference between the bulwark *topos* in the self-representation of Ragusa and other frontier states. The Ragusan rhetoric was completely devoid of the warrior pathos so typical elsewhere, lacking the usual imagery of heroic Christian knights defending Christendom on the battlefield. Quite the contrary, Ragusans insisted they had found a way of defending Christendom without having to wage war with the Ottomans, that they knew "how to conduct [themselves] and behave" with the infidels, as the aforementioned letter from 1547 put it. The method was to "feign friendship and seek peace," as the ambassador F. Gondola put it, that is, to be an Ottoman tributary state. Unable to boast of their military merit, Ragusans stressed their diplomatic skill and prudence, their political virtue (*virtù*) in the Renaissance meaning of the term. [475]

In sum, if other bulwarks of Europe were military, the Ragusan one was "diplomatic." Further distinctive traits of the city's image as a Christian frontier sentry stemmed from this basic difference. To begin with, since the Hungarian, Iberian, and Polish kings indeed waged war with non-Catholics, they had at their disposal such a much-used and powerful argument which Ragusa did not. It was a complaint that the other Christians had left them to bleed and struggle alone, a lament which only deepened the element of moral blackmail that was inherent in much of the frontier rhetoric in any case. Another difference was that as much as the diplomats of these larger states insisted on their desperate situation, such self-victimization never attained the proportions of the Ragusan lamentations. In the rhetoric of the large monarchies, self-victimization interchanged with a diametrically opposite insistence on military prowess and optimistic announcements that the Turks would soon be expelled from Europe. In contrast, nothing similar can be seen in Ragusan diplomatic discourse, which always insisted on the catastrophic situation of the small city, constantly represented as being on the brink of destruction.

Such Ragusan laments about the infidel threat should be considered together with two other arguments which frequently appeared in its diplomacy and have been cursorily mentioned above. The first were grievances about the Republic's poverty and the sterility of its territory, while the second were the admissions that it could not survive without the protection of more powerful states.[476] In the diplomatic instructions this kind self-deprecating

[475] On the glorification of Ragusan diplomatic ability in the Early Modern period see chapter two, section: "'That liberty in which God has put us in this place:' Ragusa as a fully independent republic."
[476] Several examples mentioned in the second chapter are: Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje* book 2, tomus 1, 374; Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje,* book 3, tomus 1, 115. The original of the 1542 instruction is: *Ma*

rhetoric was often accompanied with the suggestion that the envoys should utter it with "tears in the eyes" and "a broken voice."[477] All of this reveals a peculiar strategy of self-representation typical of Ragusan diplomacy: in creating the Republic's international image, its diplomats insisted on its *weakness*, not its strength. While the majority of early modern states attempted to depict their situation and resources in a better light than they really were, Ragusa did just the opposite. It persistently sought to persuade the Western powers – and also its Ottoman patrons -- that it was even more helpless, poor, and weak than it truly was. Instead of trying to impress, which was evidently a hopeless cause, Ragusa tried to invoke pity and a protective attitude or at least to persuade the other states of its utter harmlessness.[478]

The last point to be made when Ragusan frontier rhetoric is considered in a comparative context regards the uses to which it was put. By and large the Ragusan variant served the same purposes as the variants of powerful monarchies on the fringes of the Catholic world, such as Aragon, Castile, Hungary, and Poland. Similarly to Ragusa, the rulers of these kingdoms used the frontier position of their realms in order to make their diplomatic requests harder to reject and to incur exceptional favors. Thus, it was used to justify otherwise unacceptable political behaviour such as blocking the reforms of the local Church or refusing to participate in crusades. In these kingdoms, the ideology of defence and expansion of Christendom even served to fill the royal coffers since the papacy occasionally granted part of ecclesiastical revenues or the right to sell indulgences to the Crown.[479] The basic rhetorical strategy of these states had much in common with that of Ragusa, since it also rested on a kind of moral blackmail. On the one hand, their diplomats fostered "papal anxiety with a spectre of disaster to the Christian cause at the hands of the Muslims," insisting on the perilous situation and the catastrophic consequences of the eventual fall of these states.[480] On the other hand, their diplomacy trumpeted the exceptional tasks they had performed in the

perche l'intenzione delli nostri maggiori e nostra sempre mai fu de conservare nella buona gratia delli principi del mondo senza quali noi non pottiamo regerse (SAD, *Lettere di Levante* 22, f. 282 r.).

[477] On crying in Ragusan diplomacy, albeit in the context of envoys in Istanbul, see: Vesna Miović, *Dubrovačka diplomacija*, 160-161.

[478] For the pompous self-rerpesentation of contemporary small Italian states, see: Daniela Frigo, "'Small states' and Diplomacy: Mantua and Modena," in *Politics and Diplomacy in Early Modern Italy: The Structure of Diplomatic Practice, 1450-1800*, ed., Daniela Frigo (Cambridge: CUP, 2000), especially 151, 156. On the Ragusan insistence on the city's alleged poverty in diplomacy with the Ottomans see: Miović, *Dubrovačka diplomacija*, 201-210.

[479] Good overviews of the diplomacy of other Christian frontiersmen are: Nora Berend, "Défense de la Chrétienité et naissance d'une identité: Hongrie, Pologne et péninsule Ibérique au Moyen Âge," *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 58 (2003): 1009-1027; Knoll, "Poland as *Antemurale Christianitatis*," 381-401, especially 392-393; Krzyżaniakowa, "Poland as *Antemurale Christianitatis*," 3-24; Bak, "Hungary and Crusading in the Fifteenth Century," 125-126; Selart, "Political Rhetoric and the Edges of Christianity," 55-69; Vedran Gligo, ed., *Govori protiv Turaka* [Orations against the Turks] (Split: Logos, 1983), 7-65.

[480] The quotation is from: Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom*, 213-214.

common interest of Christianity, most frequently as its bulwarks. All in all, the essential message was the same as in the Ragusan case: they were simultaneously precious and fragile and therefore other Christians should do everything in their power to help them.[481]

Concerning the references to Ragusa's frontier position beyond diplomacy, in the elite culture of the city the first salient characteristic was deep indebtedness to diplomatic discourse. Many historians and literati simply echoed and elaborated the *topoi* inherited from the diplomatic rhetoric. At most they added a few common-places which, however, followed the style of the official ideology, such as representing Ragusa as an asylum for Christians or accentuating the millennial doctrinal purity of its Catholicism. Such proximity of frontier discourse to the diplomatic rhetoric is not surprising since Ottoman-Christian relations were probably the most sensitive topic in the city's culture. Due to this fact one has the impression that of the three major discourses of identity – that is, those of origin, statehood and frontier – the last was the most tendentious and characterized by the greatest amount of self-censorship. This is confirmed by a clear discrepancy between the apologetic, or at least circumspect, tone of Ragusan frontier writing and the strongly anti-Ottoman orientation of many in the elite. Nonetheless, a close reading of Renaissance texts does reveal many "cracks" in the façade of unanimity, a whole array of indirect and allusive criticisms of the Republic's close cooperation with the Ottomans. Most Renaissance and Baroque poets adopted a cautious approach, choosing to articulate their anti-Ottoman sentiment indirectly by celebrating the struggles of other Slavs with the "infidel." Another, more outspoken, strategy consisted of lauding the "private" anti-Ottoman activities of some Ragusans, without, importantly, openly denigrating the Ottomans. This kind of suggestive, even programmatic laudation of individual opposition to the Ottomans is noticeable in the poems of Vetrani and Sasin, while in Orbini's history such an attitude is mistakenly and tendentiously attributed to the Republic as a whole. Finally, there were few openly critical references to the tributary status. The scornful Tubero went as far as stating that Ragusa was under Ottoman "slavery" while several anonymous sixteenth-century copyists of the *Annales* lamented the beginnings of tributary status as the most tragic moment in the city's history.

When the frontier discourse in Ragusan culture is compared with those of other states, primarily Hungary and Poland, one notes intriguing similarities, but also differences regarding their genesis and cultural function. For a start, there were important similarities in their origins. In all these countries they were created by political elites who insisted on the special

[481] For the Polish examples, see: Krzyżaniakowa, "Poland as *Antemurale Christianitatis*," 8-9; Borkowska, "The ideology of *antemurale*," 1207-1208; Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom*, 211-214.

importance of their polities for Christendom in order to meet various diplomatic goals.[482] Again similarly, in all of them such diplomatic discourses eventually penetrated a broader sphere of culture, with their *topoi* entering historiography, rhetoric, and literature. After this, however, a significant difference can be noted between Ragusa and the Central European kingdoms. In Hungary and Poland much of the frontier discourse – especially the idea of the bulwark of Christendom – gradually became integral, even central, elements of the collective identity, adopted by the broadest layers of the population. This probably happened through long and traumatic experience of the wars with the Ottomans during which the infidel danger, once merely tendentious diplomatic rhetoric, became a tangible and quotidian reality. Thus, the fundamental stereotype of the noble Pole during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was that of a Catholic faithful to the pope, a defender of the faith against the Turks, Tartars, and Moscow, as well as a defender of the nobility's freedoms and Latin culture. Importantly, the claim that the Polish nation defended true faith and civilization also appeared beyond the elite culture in popular literary genres such as the vernacular prayer-like elegies.[483] In Hungary a similar internalization took place, influenced by a specific eschatological interpretation of the national history which will be addressed below. As J. Varga has stressed, by the sixteenth century the broadest social layers believed that the Hungarians were chosen by God to defend the Christian faith. This idea is found in the proclamations of local assemblies, in Verböczy's *Tripartitum*, which articulated the ideology of the petty nobility, and in vernacular poems such as those of Bálint Balassi.[484] Although it is quite hard for a historian to ascertain such things, it does seem that in Ragusa there was nothing similar to such deep internalzation of the idea of defending Christendom. As it was shown above, once one leaves the official diplomatic discourse, the claim that Ragusans were performing a praiseworthy function as defenders of Christendom was far from accepted consensually. Of course, it was also reiterated by many Ragusan authors beyond diplomacy, but, equally so, many others showed reservations regarding the city's behaviour on the frontier. Once the strong but hushed anti-Ottoman tendencies of Ragusan society are taken into account, what seems to have been more genuine was an undeniable fascination with the military struggle against the "infidel" in many historical and literary works. In sum, it seems that the peculiar

[482] Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom*, 209; Krzyżaniakowa, "Poland as *Antemurale Christianitatis*," 5.
[483] Krzyzaniakowa, "Poland as *Antemurale Christianitatis*," 5; 23-24; Henrik Olszewski, "The Ideology of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as the Bulwark of Christianity" *Polish Western Affairs* 33, no. 2 (1992): 76-81; Heidi Hein, "*Antemurale christianitatis* – Grenzsituation als Selbstverständnis," in *NGO. Unabhängige Kulturzeitschrift JI* (http://www.ji-magazine.lviv.ua/seminary/2003/sem25-03-ger.htm), no pagination.
[484] Excellent examples are found in: János Varga, "Europa und 'Die Vormauer des Christentums,'" in: *Europa und die Türken in der Renaissance*, ed. Bodo Güthmuller and Wilhelm Kühlmann (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2000), 58-59.

Ragusan claim that cooperation with the infidel was a praiseworthy way of serving Christianity was a bit too tendentious to become a deeply accepted idea and shape the collective self-understanding. It always remained what it originally was – a tendentious construct of the elite.

Another major difference between the frontier discourses in Ragusa and the Central European kingdoms had to do with interpreting the meaning of the Ottoman pressure. In Poland and Hungary, the Ottoman assault was interpreted as God's punishment for the sins of the nation.[485] The Hungarian case is especially revealing; the catastrophic dissolution of the kingdom between 1526 and 1541, coupled with the spread of Protestantism, strengthened the tendencies to interpret recent events in terms of providential history. Under the influence of an Old-Testament understanding of history popularized by the Reformation, many authors went even further than merely representing the Ottomans as divine punishment. Interpreting their recent catastrophic history through the Biblical lens, they drew parallels between the sufferings of the ancient Jews and their own community, proclaiming Hungarians to be an elect nation. [486] It was exactly the enormity of the collective suffering that was seen as a clear sign of divine election since, as many sermons accentuated, God punishes those whom he loves.[487] Such an interpretation of the contemporary situation combined the idea of the Ottomans as divine punishment with those of elect nationhood and of Hungarians as the bulwark of Christendom (since that was seen as the mission divine providence had assigned to them). A version of the frontier-premised idea of elect nationhood also emerged in Poland, but, due to much weaker Ottoman pressure, it was neither as powerful nor as apocalyptic in tone. The Ottoman advance was, as in the Hungarian case, seen as a result of the divine will, which had chosen the Polish nation for the crucial historical mission of defending the Christian world.[488]

Needless to say, in Renaissance Ragusa the history and contemporary situation of the Republic were interpreted in a completely different way. Most obviously, even according to

[485] For the Ottomans as punishment for sin in Hungarian literature, see: József Jankovics, "The Image of the Turks in Hungarian Renaissance Literature," in *Europa und die Türken in der Renaissance,* ed. Bodo Güthmuller and Wilhelm Kühlmann (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2000), 269-271; Varga, "Europa und 'Die Vormauer des Christentums,'" 55; Márta Fata, "Deutsche und schweizerische Einflüsse auf die Reformation in Ungarn im 16. Jahrhundert. Aspekte der frühneuzeitlich-vormodernen Identität zwischen Ethnie und Konfession," in *Deutschland und Ungarn in ihren wechselseitigen Beziehungen während der Renaissance*, eds. Wilhelm Kühlmann and Anton Schindling (Tübingen: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2002), 66-70. For a less radical but similar idea of the Ottomans as punishment for the community's sins in Poland, see: Borkowska, "The ideology of *antemurale*," 1211.

[486] Varga, "Europa und 'Die Vormauer des Christentums,'" 59; Fata, "Deutsche und schweizerische Einflüsse," 66-67, 72; Jankovics, "The Image of the Turks," 268-269.

[487] Varga, "Europa und 'Die Vormauer des Christentums,'" 59.

[488] Borkowska, "The ideology of *antemurale*," 1215.

the loose criteria of the Early Modern period, Ragusans were not a nation and, thus, the Old-Testament vocabulary of elect nationhood could not be applied to them. This, however, does not seem to be the only and sufficient reason for the different historical and even theological understanding of the Ottoman pressure in Ragusa. For instance, it fails to account for the conspicuous absence of one immensely influential topos which was not connected specifically with (elect) nationhood -- the claim that Ottomans were a divine punishment. Admittedly, the idea that God might punish the sins of the city through a foreign attack does appear once, in Vetrani's *Pjesanac slavi carevoj,* but the hypothetical invader was not the Ottomans, but Venice [sic]. Nonetheless, this is far from saying that Ragusan history was not interpreted in the providential key. Quite the contrary, as was shown above, many authors insisted on an active involvement of divine will in the history of the Republic, usually through the city's patron, St. Blaise. The basic claim was that God was actively defending Ragusan independence due to the important tasks which the Republic performed for Christianity by maintaining the purity of its faith in infidel surroundings, baptizing the neighbouring non-Catholics or stopping the Ottoman advance to the West.[489] When all of this is compared with the paradigmatic Hungarian case, one can note remarkable differences in the way divine interventions were interpreted, especially their reasons and goals. Instead of punishing Ragusa, God was *defending the city from harm* when he intervened, ensuring its miraculous survival "against all the human reasons," as J. Resti aptly put it. Equally, God intervened not to punish the sins of Ragusans, but to reward their praiseworthy work for the Christian faith. In sum, one could say the Ragusan interpretation of the frontier in providential terms was in many respects the opposite, mirror-image, of the Hungarian one.

The last question to be addressed is the reasons for such a peculiar, even "optimistic" interpretation of Ragusa's position on the Ottoman frontier. The first reason was the relatively peaceful, even profitable, relationship which Ragusa enjoyed with the Ottoman Empire. In other words, if there was anything surprising and remarkable to be accentuated about that relationship it was not the suffering of Ragusa but the comparative absence of it. The second reason for such an interpretation of the Ottoman presence was the utter absence of religious conflict and polemics. In the staunchly Catholic Ragusa there was nothing similar to the propaganda war between the Protestants and Catholics which had elsewhere fuelled the idea that the Ottomans were a divine punishment for the sins of the other confessional group.[490]

[489] See the second chapter, section: "'That liberty in which God has put us in this place:' Ragusa as a fully independent republic."
[490] For the Hungarian example see: Varga, "Europa und 'Die Vormauer des Christentums,'" 55.

Finally, a third reason was the panegyric ethos of Ragusan culture, for which the idea that Ottomans were a punishment for the community's sins hid too many ideological dangers. If the Ottomans were interpreted as a result of Ragusan sins, that was dangerously close to implying that the patrician elite itself was sinful and had provoked the wrath of God. Needless to say, that was something Ragusan *signori* could not allow.

CONCLUSION: CIVIC DISCOURSES IN THE BROADER IDEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

Instead of summarizing the findings of this work, the conclusion will consider the three civic discourses discussed above and the resulting image of the city-state in their broader ideological context. More precisely, it will address two important questions. The first is how these three civic discourses interacted among themselves and how they related to create the totality of the city's image. A second, even more important, question is the relationship of these civic discourses with other discourses on collectivity – focused on religious, social, familial or ethnic communities – which appear in Ragusan documents.

As can be grasped from the text, the three civic discourses seem to have coexisted without contradictions, frequently even complementing and reinforcing each other. Thus, for instance, the origin discourse already contained within itself the elements of the other two discourses, providing them with a kind of historical legitimacy. By portraying the newly erected city as a fully independent and profoundly Christian community, the founding story provided the starting point for the glorifying narratives of continuous independence and Catholic purity of Ragusa. Another good example of the interdependency of the civic discourses is the mutually reinforcing relationship between the discourses on the frontier and statehood. On the one hand, as a number of historians and literati proclaimed, the cherished *libertas* of Ragusa depended upon its function as a Christian "bulwark," since that is why divine providence protected the city. On the other hand, as Ragusan diplomats frequently stressed, the "bulwark" role of the city depended on maintaining its liberty, whose preservation was therefore the general interest of all Christendom. Such coherence of the various claims about the city-state is not surprising once their social and cultural background is taken into account. They were created by the same group – the small patrician elite and those in its pay -- which, moreover, shared the same basic goal of glorifying and legitimizing the extant political order.

When it comes to the interaction between the civic and other discourses on collectivity, the situation was far more complex. Needless to say, when Ragusans spoke about themselves, they frequently made claims of belonging to various other types of "imagined communities" besides that of the city-state.[491] These communities varied widely in their sizes

[491] The influential concept of "imagined community" has, of course, been borrowed from B. Anderson (for a definition see: Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (rev. and extended edition) (London: Verso, 1991), 5-8). I have adopted the concept since it can quite elegantly express the multiplicity of belonging typical of individuals which is the central topic of this conclusion. The concepts of "self-representation" and "discourse," normally used in this study, have overly

and defining features. They ranged from the vast, religion-based, *respublica Christiana*, to social categories such as *popolani*, *nobili* and *plebei*, to ethno-cultural groups such as Slavs or Dalmatians, all the way to professional corporations or various parochial groups belonging to the city's surroundings. Similarly to the community of the city-state, these "imagined communities" were also constructed through traditionally sanctioned ways of speaking about them, that is, through specific discourses defined by recognizable themes and *topoi*. Therefore, an important question is: How did the civic discourses and the resulting image of the city-state interact with these other discourses and the related "imagined communities?" In other words, what was the relationship between the references to the city-state and references to the other types of collectivity in Ragusan self-representation? Did they coexist, compete or even contradict each other? Is it possible to detect a kind of hierarchy of importance when it comes to them as means of self-definition?

The best way of tackling this issue is by investigating the instances in which the references to the civic and the non-civic communities appeared together in the sources. In such revealing moments it is possible to distinguish two main patterns of interaction, one of which could be labelled "parasitic" and the other "supportive." The "parasitic" pattern is seen in instances in which references to other communities were combined with those to the civic community in order to "borrow" some of the latter's prestige or legitimacy. A good example, combining the civic and familial discourses, are the stories which attributed prominent places in the crucial events of the city's history to certain noble families, such as the Croce or Gozze, stressing their role in the founding or the establishment of the aristocratic order. Another similar example which linked the references to the civic community with those to a social group is the narrative about the founding of the city, which was attributed to the patriciate as a whole. In both of these instances the non-civic communities – a noble family and the patrician class – were firmly connected with the civic community, even represented as having been crucial in its history, thereby drastically bolstering their legitimacy and prestige.

strong processual connotations, while another possible choice, the concept of "identity," has been avoided for the reasons sketched in the introduction. However, in this text the term "imagined community" is used with a slightly changed meaning. Namely, Anderson stresses that nations are "imagined" because the members of even the smallest among them will never know most of their fellow-members and yet the image of their communion lives in the mind of each. Although surely a valid point, this does not seem to be a crucial element constituting the "imaginedness" of a community, whether national or any other. Even much smaller groups – the smallest being a family – can be seen as "imagined communities," since all of them, besides their objective existence, also exist as cultural constructs. That is, although all their members might know each other, what they nonetheless do "imagine" are issues such as common traits, a shared past, or the social standing of their community – in sum, more than enough to consider it "imagined." In fact, Anderson himself admits that perhaps even the smallest communities – his example is a village -- are also "imagined" (Ibid., 6).

In a way, the supportive pattern was the exact opposite; it was used in instances in which references to the non-civic communities were invoked in order to elevate the prestige of the civic one. Good examples are the numerous references to Ragusa as the only free city of Dalmatia, Illyricum or Slavdom, which combined the elements of civic discourse with those of the ethnic discourse. A similar pattern appeared in the endless claims about Ragusa as the bulwark of Christendom: the civic community was integrated in the broader religious framework of *respublica Christiana*. In both of these cases the essential ideological manoeuvre was the same. The non-civic communities, whether ethnic or religious, served as a kind of supportive "dark background" against which the glorifying self-portrait of the city-state could emerge more clearly. In other words, all such utterances contained an implicit comparison which was of course favourable for Ragusa: the city-state was represented as a special, privileged part of the ethnic community or the Christian republic.

It is crucial to note, however, that in both "parasitic" and supportive patterns the basic bearer of prestige and legitimacy always remained the civic community. In the "parasitic" pattern its prestige and legitimacy were borrowed by other collectivities. In the supportive pattern they were simply augmented through the references to broader (and less illustrious) communities. This reveals a kind of ideological primacy of the civic community, the privileged status which the city-state enjoyed in the Ragusan self-representation.

That ideological primacy can also be clearly discerned when one looks at the ways in which the various "imagined communities" appeared separately in the documents. Beyond any doubt, the civic community was by far the most frequently mentioned and the most clearly defined among them. In other words, when Ragusans spoke about themselves, they usually invoked their city-state, portraying it in remarkable detail, while the other communities emerged much more rarely and remained far hazier. The "city" or the "republic" truly was a "default" community, the self-understandable point of reference for public rituals, patriotic literature, representative art, and also official documents and diplomatic correspondence. Along the same lines, the subject of all the histories written in Renaissance Ragusa – with Tubero the single exception – was always the city-state, never a family, even less an ethnic, social or religious group.[492]

Another area in which the ideological predominance of the civic community emerged quite clearly was the types of loyalties expected from its members. While the other communities, such as Christendom or one's family, also evoked forms of allegiance, the city-

[492] For intriguing reflections on a somewhat similar problem in Venice, see: James S. Grubb, "Memory and Identity: why Venetians Didn't Keep *Ricordanze*," *Renaissance Studies* 8 (1994): 375–387.

state commanded the *supreme* loyalty. At least that was the case according to official documents, which endlessly repeated that the good citizen should be ready to sacrifice his possessions, even his life, for the sake of the Republic. The extreme loyalties and emotional attachment expected from the members of the civic community can also be discerned from the aforementioned custom of speaking about the city-state in terms of family, a metaphor typical of the government's correspondence with its subjects. Last but not least, the city-state was the only one among the various communities mentioned in the sources which was ascribed the emotion-laden concept of *patria.* Although otherwise not particularly sensitive when it comes to the usage of concepts, Ragusans were extremely consistent in the case of this powerful term: for centuries *patria* designated exclusively and only the city-state. [493]

In sum, compared to other "imagined communities" which appeared in Ragusan documents, the civic community seems to have had three distinguishing characteristics. It was the main bearer of prestige and legitimacy; it was the most clearly defined and frequently mentioned "imagined community;" and, finally, the focus of supreme loyalty (at least in theory). The civic community held that privileged position for several hundred years, until the end of the Ragusan Republic in the early 1800s. After the somewhat disoriented and sentimental self-reflection typical of the first decades of nineteenth century, in mid-century a new kind of collectivity began to crystallize gradually. The hitherto marginal types of ethnic belonging were redefined and charged with new meanings and new political relevance through the novel ideology of nationalism. At the same time, the community of the city – no longer of the city-state – clearly faded into the background, taking a subordinate place in the broader framework of the nascent nation. As the epilogue below shows, due to the great prestige which Ragusa enjoyed in the region elements of its traditional self-representation were integrated in the surrounding national canons, the Croatian and, to a much lesser extent, also the Serbian. While the modern nations enriched their image by borrowing from the old city-state, the image of Ragusa was in return profoundly altered in order to function better in the broader national community. In sum, there was quite a drastic transformation of collective "identity," typical for the nineteenth century everywhere in Europe, but further complicated by the powerful political and cultural heritage of Ragusa. However, the intricacies of such a

[493] Janeković, *Višegradski ugovor,* 121, has noted this. For some intriguing Italian analogies, see: Alberto Tenenti, "Profilo e limiti delle realtà nazionali in Italia fra Quattro e Seicento," in *Cultura e nazione in Italia e Polonia dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo,* ed. Vittore Branca and Sante Graciotti (Florence: Olschki, 1986), 266, passim; Chabod, Federico, "Alcune questioni di terminologia: Stato, nazione, patria nel linguaggio del Cinquecento," in idem.,*Scritti sul rinascimento* (Turin: Einaudi, 1967), 657-9. For the meaning of patria in a wider European context, see: Thomas Eichenberger, *Patria. Studien zur Bedeutung des Wortes im Mittelalter* (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke 1991).

fascinating ideological encounter between the ancient republican tradition and modern nationalism are far beyond the scope and ambitions of this study.[494]

[494] On the intriguing possibility that Ragusa itself developed into a nation see the following texts: Vlaho Bogišić, "O inzularnosti nesuđene dubrovačke nacije u osam točaka i nekoliko referencija" [On the Insularity of the Unrealised Ragusan Nation in Eight Points and Several References], available online at: http://www.matica.hr/kolo/kolo2008_2.nsf/AllWebDocs/O_inzularnosti_nesudjene_dubrovacke_nacije_u_osam_tocaka_i_nekoliko_referencija (accessed 7 February 2012).

EPILOGUE: RAGUSAN ECHOES

At the very end of this study one remarkable fact remains to be addressed: many of the *topoi* of Ragusan self-representation have survived since the Renaissance and still exert a profound influence upon our thinking about the old Republic. In other words, modified by modern ideologies and interests, many of the ancient *topoi* still enjoy a vibrant existence, emerging in different cultural genres from academic historiography and politics all the way to tourist marketing and schoolbooks. The aim of this epilogue is to provide a cursory overview of the more salient cases of such survival, thus revealing the remarkable posthumous influence of Ragusan Renaissance ideology.[495]

Before analyzing the most important of the surviving *topoi*, one more question should be addressed: How were they transmitted from the Renaissance until the present? Who promoted them and who were their main audiences? In answering these questions one should keep in mind the extraordinary position, almost mythic status, which Ragusa has enjoyed in modern integrative ideologies, from Illyrianism and Yugoslavism all the way to Croatian nationalism. On the one hand, Ragusan history was seen as a brilliant page in the political history of the South Slavs, a continuation of their independent statehood in the epoch when most of the nation lost its independence under foreign masters. On the other hand, Ragusa was seen as a cultural model of paramount importance, primarily since in all these integrative ideologies the language of its early modern literature was designated a literary language of the national community.[496]

Clearly, the high esteem in which the old Republic was traditionally held facilitated the survival of its Renaissance self-portrait in the modern cultures of Southeast Europe. More

[495] It should be stressed that the goal of this conclusion is not to provide an overview of the changes in the image of the Ragusan Republic in the modern cultures of Southeastern Europe. Such a massive enterprise is far beyond the scope of this conclusion, which has a far more modest goal -- to detect echoes of Renaissance rhetoric in modern references to the city. The former complex task has been brilliantly initiated by Stjepan Ćosić and, especially, Ivo Banac and Hrvoje Ivanković (Ivo Banac, "Ministration and Desecration: The Place of Dubrovnik in Modern Croat National Ideology and Political Culture," in *Nation and Ideology: Essays in Honor of Wayne S. Vucinich*, ed., Ivo Banac, John G. Ackerman, and Roman Szporluk (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1981), 149-75. I am using the Croatian translation published as: Ivo Banac, "Ministracija i desekracija: Mjesto Dubrovnika u modernim hrvatskim nacionalnim ideologijama i političkoj kulturi," in Ivo Banac, *Dubrovački eseji* (Dubrovnik: Matica Hrvatska, 1992), 9-39. Other relevant texts are: Ivo Banac, "Struktura konzervativne utopije braće Vojnovića" [The Structure of the Conservative Utopia of the Vojnović Brothers] in ibid., 97-151; Hrvoje Ivanković, "Doživljaj Dubrovnika – lamentacije o mrtvom gradu" [The Image of Ragusa – Lamentations regarding the Dead City] (available at: http://www.sveske.ba/bs/content/dozivljaj-dubrovnika-%E2%80%93-lamentacije-o-mrtvom-gradu); Stjepan Ćosić, *Dubrovnik nakon pada Republike (1808-1848)* [Ragusa after the Fall of the Republic (1808-1848)] (Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 1999), 305-324. For few insightful remarks see also: Ivica Prlender, "Povijesni identitet Dubrovnika" [The Historical Identity of Ragusa] *Dubrovnik* 3, no. 2-3 (1992): 286-295.

[496] Banac, "Ministracija i desekracija," passim; Ćosić, *Dubrovnik nakon pada*, 305-324

concretely, the first main reason behind this striking survival was the cultic status of Ragusan literature, considered to be the most important canon of texts for both the national language and aesthetics. The works of authors such as I. Gondola, M. Vetranović, and J. Palmota were proclaimed to be the central national heritage and were printed, studied, and widely read in Serbia and, even more, in Croatia. In other words, generation after generation of modern readers were directly exposed to the *topoi* of early modern Ragusa. Another important factor in perpetuating the Republic's ideology was the enduring influence of the Ragusan intelligentsia, which enjoyed enthusiastic audiences in both Belgrade and Zagreb. These people, primarily the Vojnović brothers, often mentioned below, created an idealized and nostalgic image of the old Republic which they successfully disseminated across the region. Finally, the third important factor in the survival of Ragusan ideology had nothing to do with the prestige of the old Republic, but stemmed from the nature of the historian's craft in general. As will be illustrated below, historians have unconsciously interiorized a number of *topoi* from their documents and, after removing their more obviously ideological content, turned them into scholarly common-places transferred from one academic generation to another.

Among the three main identity discourses, the one dedicated to the origin of the city had the most straightforward destiny after the Republic's fall: it was taken as historical truth. Namely, a central part of the traditional foundation story remained the standard scholarly narrative of the beginnings of Ragusa until the late twentieth century -- the endlessly repeated claim that the city was founded by refugees from the neighboring Roman city of Epidaurus. In other words, lacking significant archaeological evidence, academic historiography had to rely almost exclusively on the accounts of medieval and Renaissance authors. After removing the clearly mythical Pavlimirus and his noble escorts, what was left was a plausible-sounding account about the foundation of a new city by refugees from a Classical centre destroyed by the barbarian invasions.[497] While some scholars did remark that such a narrative, ensuring unquestionable continuity with ancient Epidaurus, suited the interests of medieval Ragusa remarkably well, no one seriously doubted its veracity. More precisely, nobody doubted it until a remarkable find which shook the entire well-entrenched image of Ragusa's beginnings. In the early 1980s archaeological excavations under the present Ragusan cathedral uncovered a large basilica with three naves, the dating of which is uncertain – archaeologists have

[497] Good examples are the two accounts by the doyens of academic Ragusan historiography: Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika,* tomus 1, 17; Lučić, *Povijest Dubrovnika*, 10-19.

suggested everything from the fifth to the early ninth century.[498] In any case, quite suddenly undeniable proofs of a significant late Classical or – at least – early medieval community literally sprang from the ground. Coupled with other archaeological evidence which has surfaced in the last three decades, this has led scholars to dismiss the traditional idea of Epidaurian refugees building Ragusa, since it has become increasingly likely that the two cities *coexisted* during late Antiquity.[499] In sum, the traditional foundation myth definitely lost its power only a few decades ago due to fortunate finds of modern archaeology. This ancient narrative took with itself some of its deeply rooted implications, most notably the close connection, even identification, of the Classical and the medieval settlements so cherished throughout the Republic's history. In sum, Ragusa was never less Epidaurus than it is today.

Another, far more dangerous, way in which the Ragusan origin discourse survived until the present was through an encounter with a modern ideology obsessed with origins – nationalism. A remarkable example of such a perilous encounter appears in a work of an otherwise exceptional scholar, a genuine doyen of Italian historiography, Sergio Bertelli. In one of Bertelli's late works, *Trittico,* dedicated to the history of Lucca, Ragusa, and Boston, an intriguing thing happened: the renaissance self-representation of Ragusan patriciate merged with modern Italian nationalism.[500] Unable to read the Serbian and Croatian literature, but also unaware of most publications in major languages, Bertelli is grossly misinformed, thus his argumentation does not merit serious analysis – suffice it to list several works that disprove his interpretation on the most elementary factual basis.[501] What does merit attention

[498] The literature on these finds is rich and thus only a few representative texts are mentioned here: Peković, *Dubrovnik. Nastanak i razvoj srednjevjekovnoga grada*, passim; for the finds under the cathedral, 116-142; for several hypotheses concerning the nature of the city before an Epidaurian settlement, see Ivica Žile, "Naselje prije Grada" [The Settlement before the City] *Dubrovnik* 4 (1997): 97-119. Only a few of many comments on the finds under the cathedral are: Trpimir Macan, "U povodu istraživanja u dubrovačkoj katedrali" [Concerning the Excavations in the Ragusan Cathedral], *Dubrovački Horizonti* 23 (1983): 3-11; Josip Stošić, "Prikaz nalaza ispod katedrale i bunićeve poljane u Dubrovniku" [A Report on the Finds under the Cathedral and Bunić's Square in Ragusa], *Izdanja Hrvatskog arheološkog društva* 12 (1988): 15-38; Željko Rapanić, "Marginalia o 'postanku' Dubrovnika" [Marginalia about the 'Beginning' of Dubrovnik], *Izdanja Hrvatskog arheološkog društva,* 12 (1988): 15-38.

[499] Beyond any doubt, the most important recent reflections on the beginnings of Ragusa are the works of Antun Ničetić: *Nove spoznaje o postanku. Dubrovnika, o njegovu brodarstvu i plovidbi svetog Pavla* [New Conclusions about the Genesis of Dubrovnik, its Maritime Affairs and the Shipwreck of St. Paul] (Dubrovnik: Sveučilište u Dubrovniku, 2005); Antun Ničetić, *Povijest dubrovačke luke* [History of the Ragusan Port] (Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 1996). See also: Dino Milinović, "Dubrovnik-Ragusium. Prilog viđenju nastanka i razvitka grada na kraju kasne antike" [Dubrovnik-Ragusium. A Contribution to the Conception of the Genesis and the Development of the City at the End of the Late Antiquity], *Dubrovnik. Časopis za književnost i znanost* 4 (1997): 124-144. The best survey of the earliest history of the city in English is: Robin Harris, *Dubrovnik. A History* (London: Saqi Books, 2003), 19-32

[500] Sergio Bertelli, *Trittico: Lucca, Ragusa, Boston: tre città mercantili tra Cinque e Seicento* (Rome: Donzelli Editore, 2004)

[501] Regarding the relationship between the remnants of the ancient Romanized population, the Italian language, and the Slavic culture in Ragusa only some of the numerous studies whose argumentation and wealth of data

is the fascinating fact that Bertelli took the Renaissance claim about the Roman origin of the Ragusan patriciate seriously and read it through the lens of Italian nationalism. The result was that his book repeats the ancient *topos*, typical of patrician propaganda, depicting Ragusa as a city whose elite was Roman and subjects Slavic. Then, however, follows a conclusion which the Renaissance patricians would have found quite puzzling. Building on the belief in the profound connection, even identity, between the Romans and Italians characteristic of Italian national discourse, Bertelli cautiously but clearly suggests a predictable conclusion - that such a professed Roman origin means that the Ragusan elite was in fact Italian. [502]

An equally bizarre mixture of the Ragusan origin discourse and modern nationalism appears in a recent publication with a symptomatic title, "The Serbhood of Ragusa," by the Serbian historian Jeremija D. Mitrović. Building on a different part of Ragusan tradition, Mitrović uses the legend about the founding by the Slavic Prince Pavlimirus to prove that the ancient Ragusans thought of themselves as Serbs. Focusing on Palmota's epic, *Pavlimir*, Mitrović points out that by attributing the beginnings of the city to a "Serbian" ruler [!] Palmota revealed "the consciousness of Ragusans about their Bosnian Serbian origin."[503] While Mitrović at least understood the Pavlimirus story as a Baroque *imagining* of Serbian origin, others have taken it far more literally. Thus, on one of the many internet forums where

---

Bertelli ignored, are: Jireček, *Die Romanen in den Städten Dalmatiens*; Matteo Giulio Bartoli, *Il Dalmatico*; Mahnken, *Dubrovački patricijat*, 53-88; Irmgard Mahnken, "Die Personennamen des mittelalterischen Patriziats von Dubrovnik als Quelle zu etnograpischen Untersuchungen," *Slavistična revije* 10 (1957): 279-295; Viktor Novak, "The Slavonic-Latin Symbiosis in Dalmatia during the Middle Ages," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 32 (1954): 1-29; Ante Kadić, "Croatian Renaissance," *Studies in the Renaissance* 6 (1959): 28-35; Krekić, "On the Latino-Slavic Cultural Symbiosis" 321-332; Tadić, "Dubrovnik u doba," 175-282; Foretić, "Dubrovnik u doba Marina Držića," 7-27; Letić, *Rodoljublje*; *Zlatar*, *The Slavic Epic*; Zlatar, *Our Kingdom come*, 425-454; Zlatar, *Between the Double Eagle*, 58-74; Jankeović-Römer, *Okvir*, 45-49; 343-344.

[502] Bertelli is, of course, cautious not to openly connect a Roman origin and Italian nationhood, yet he repeatedly reveals that for him the connection is self-evident. A good example is on page 52: *per mantenere distinto il carattere romano, il patriziato ebbe sempre gran cura di tenere apperte le scuole di italiano.* Bertelli here speaks of the public school in Ragusa, which in fact never held classes of Italian, only of Latin (on the school, see Harris, *Dubrovnik*, 244-245). Another example of the close connection which Bertelli suggests between the patriciate's Roman(ce) identity and Italian nationhood is his claim – absolutely stunning for anyone familiar with Ragusan history -- that Italian replaced the old Romance language as the everyday language of the elite by the sixteenth century (pp. 58-59). An excellent example of Bertelli's restatement of an imagined division between the nobles and non-nobles, created by patrician propaganda, is when he speaks of *un diaframma profondo fra patriziato e popolo* (pp. 60). Importantly, this "barrier" between the classes was, according to him, not (only) political but, as he openly states, also linguistic, religious, and cultura, in sum, the elite and the subjects were two distinct ethnic communities. The extent to which Bertelli's thinking about pre-modern identities is anachronistic and shaped by modern notions of nationhood is visible in yet another example. As paramount proof that the Ragusan elite was not Slavic he lists (pp. 57-58) a series of examples in which Ragusan authorities expelled recent Slavic immigrants from the city or mentioned Slavs as their "enemies." After such examples, Bertelli states, it is hard to believe a Slavic patriciate "would have behaved in such a way to those who.... are supposed to be of the same blood (pp. 58)." The medieval elite were clearly expected to behave according to the standards of modern nationalism.

[503] Jeremija D. Mitrović, *Srpstvo Dubrovnika* [The Serbhood of Ragusa] (Belgrade, 1992). The entire book is available online at: (http://www.rastko.rs/rastko-du/istorija/jmitrovic/1992/jmitrovic-dubrovnik_l.html) Mitović makes this claim several times in the text.

amateur historians from both the Serbian and Croatian sides debate the belonging of various groups and territories, one disputant from the Serbian side used this fantastic story in an intriguing way. After repeating this narrative – taking it not from Palmota but from the medieval Diocleian's chronicle -- he combined it with information from *De administrando imperio* to reach a conclusion which inscribed Serbian identity in the very beginning of Ragusa:

> Therefore, a man from a dynasty which ruled Serbia founded Ragusa, and the city was settled by inhabitants of Cavtat and Trebinje, that is, Serbs, according to the account of Constantine Porphyrogenitus.[504] [Translation mine.]

In a certain way, both of these interpretations are on the right track, since the Pavlimirus myth was indeed constructed originally to prove that Ragusa belonged to a state in its hinterland. As was mentioned, the original intention behind the narrative was to legitimize the pretensions of the rulers of medieval Duklja, who counted Pavlimirus as their ancestor, to rule Ragusa. The essential logic of appropriation has thus remained the same; what changed from the medieval period is merely that the beneficiary of the myth is not a dynasty but a nation.

However, the modern echoes of Ragusan origin discourse are comparatively straightforward and their impact on the present is relatively marginal. The situation is far more complex when it comes to the survival of the other two discourses of identity. The ancient *topoi* connected to Ragusan statehood and its frontier position play a far more significant role in modern reflections on the city-state. Appearing in quite different discursive spheres from academic historiography to politics, literature, theatre, even tourist marketing they have undergone drastic transformations due to the vastly different purposes which they served. Therefore, their gradual development and modern forms have to be demonstrated in more detail.

The most convenient starting point for the discourse on statehood is the last two decades of the nineteenth century. While in the preceding period the Ragusan Republic was celebrated – both by Ragusans themselves and by their admiring neighbors – primarily for its cultural achievements, at this point the city-state also became a political symbol. A crucial contribution to such a shift in perspective was made by the most important representatives of the Ragusan intelligentsia in the late nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century, the

[504] *Dakle, čovek iz dinastije koja je kraljevala Srbijom osnovala je Dubrovnik, a njega su naselili stanovnici iz Cavtata i Trebinja, dakle Srbi prema Porfirogenitu* http://www.index.hr/forum/5/politika/tema/114696/dubrovnik-6-12-1991--6-12-2006.aspx?p=19 (accessed 28 December 2011)

brothers Ivo and Lujo Vojnović. Political opportunists, but leaning towards the options of Yugoslav or Serbian identity, the historian Lujo and the dramatist Ivo had immense impacts on the subsequent image of Ragusa. Lujo, especially, insisted on the need to revalorize the city's history, stating that the political heritage of the old Republic was in fact far more important than its celebrated cultural legacy. Writing in the 1890s, when the hopes were high for South Slavs to unite under the leadership of the young Serbian or Montenegrin kingdom, Lujo stressed that old Ragusa was "an unsurpassable teacher of our inexperienced people in the art of the state which we lack and which we direly need today."[505] The specific lesson Ragusa was to provide to the South Slavs, who lacked significant state traditions, was "how small peoples can preserve their individuality and make a brilliant contribution to the history of the world."[506] As Banac has stressed, in the works of the Vojnović brothers the old Republic emerged as a unique example of independent statehood among the Balkan Slavs, a vast majority of whom had suffered under the foreign yoke for centuries.[507] This idea was famously reiterated by Ivo Vojnović, who made a protagonist of one of his plays, a patriotic patrician, Orsat, passionately describe his homeland by contrasting it with the Ottoman subjects in the hinterland: "This [is] a state, a state!... and everything else is *reayya*, mere *reayya*!..."[508]

Clearly, such an image of Ragusa was a direct echo of an ancient *topos*, present in the works of early modern authors such as H. Lucić, M. Orbini and I. Gondola. It was a panegyric claim that Ragusa was the only city of "Dalmatia," "Illyria" or "Slavonia" which had managed to preserve its "liberty", thus surpassing in glory its neighbors who suffered under Venetian or Ottoman rule.[509] By the 1890s the roles had reversed; now Ragusa was under foreign (Austrian) rule, while the Balkan Slavs – at least the Serbs and Montenegrins – were enjoying their newly established liberty. An even more important difference was the political agenda behind this image. While the early modern authors simply celebrated the city by contrasting it with the foreign-dominated surroundings, the Vojnović brothers expressed their hopes that Ragusa would join with its neighbors in a community which their predecessors never even imagined – a South Slavic national state.

[505] Lujo Vojnović, *Dubrovnik i Osmansko carstvo* [Ragusa and the Ottoman Empire] (Belgrade: Državna štamparija Kraljevine Srbije, 1898), 2. For the image of Ragusa as a bearer of the Croatian state tradition in the contemporary political discourses of northern Croatia, exposed to strong Magyarization, see: Banac, "Ministracija i desekracija," 28-29; 31.
[506] *Ibid.*, 2.
[507] Banac, "Struktura konzervativne utopije," 107-108. For this idea see also: Prlender, "Povijesni identitet," 287
[508] Vojnović, *Trilogija*, 90.
[509] See chapter two, section "'The Liberty Given by God:' Ragusa as a Fully Independent Republic."

Insisting on the political heritage of the old Republic, the Vojnović brothers bequeathed to later generations an even more important idea which still resonates in both academia and popular culture. This was the idea that the essential process of Ragusan history, the red thread connecting all its centuries, was *a dramatic and ingenious struggle for political independence*. On a more abstract level, through their works the Vojnovići forcefully affirmed a deep associative connection between the old Republic and "liberty" (whose precise meaning, however, was already slightly blurred in their works, becoming ever less clear afterwards). Thus, Lujo wrote of Ragusa's "uncontrollable striving towards the prudent maintenance of liberty" and insisted that the old Republic had "gathered all the rays of its spirit in the one thought, not to lose its liberty…"[510] On the same track, his brother Ivo had the patrician character, Orsat, describe Ragusa as "this millennial land of liberty," and the legendary poet I. Gondola proclaim: "I am free since I am a Ragusan."[511]

Needless to say, such interpretations again owed a great deal to ancient *topoi*. On the most general level, with their references to liberty, the Vojnovići were simply repeating the characteristic insistence of Renaissance Ragusans on *libertas* as the fundamental value and symbol of their Republic. More specifically, they also echoed a specific interpretation of the city's history typical of the Early Modern period: the claim about the improbable and admirable survival of a small Republic among the Great Powers. As has been shown, the Ragusan senate regularly lamented the Republic's fragility and weakness in its correspondence; the poets spoke about it being surrounded by the "dragon" and the "lion," and the historians literally proclaimed that the small city's survival was miraculous.[512]

Mediated through the Vojnović brothers, this idea – with less pathos, of course – was taken over in academic historiography so that, even today, the narrative about the achievement and defense of political independence represents the most common way of organizing the account of Ragusan history. A telling example is probably the most important synthesis of Ragusan history, published by Vinko Foretić in 1980. Not only that Foretić's work is structured – divided in chapters and books – according to the changes of political sovereignty over the city, thus revealing what for him was the fundamental content of Ragusan history. Equally revealing is that at the end of both books he enters into extensive concluding considerations dedicated exclusively to the state and legal position (*državnopravni položaj*) of the Republic. In other words, in the places where one would expect references to

[510] Vojnović, *Dubrovnik i Osmansko carstvo*, 2.
[511] Vojnović, *Trilogija*, 90; Vojnović, *Djela*, 22.
[512] See chapter two, section "'The Liberty Given by God:' Ragusa as a fully independent republic."

the social, cultural, and economic themes previously addressed in the book, the primacy of foreign policy and sovereignty issues is absolute. In sum, *libertas* remains the central theme of Ragusan history.[513]

This strong conceptual and associative link between the old Republic and "liberty" is even more visible in contemporary popular culture. Thus, a Wikipedia entry for the Ragusan Republic proclaims: "In Ragusa liberty was the most cherished thing…"[514] How firm and self-understandable this link has become can be seen from the fact that the term *libertas* is almost synonymous with Ragusa itself. The following remarkable examples should suffice: the public transport company in the city is called *Libertas* and that the word is written on all its busses; the inscription *libertas*, in an imitation of the Republic's Renaissance flag, also appears on the airplanes of *Dubrovnik Airlines;* finally, one of the more imposing hotels in the city bears the name *Rixos libertas Dubrovnik.* A slightly different but equally intriguing example of invoking the liberty of the old Republic is found in the visual identity and ceremonies of the Dubrovnik Summer festival, a prestigious international manifestation of drama and music. Its flirtation with the republican heritage is clearly recognizable, as is testified by the comment of the eminent theatre critic, Dalibor Foretić, who wrote: "to me that festival has always seemed a collective Ragusan dream *of lost statehood and never-lost liberty.*"[515] The opening ceremony of the festival, a major cultural event, is especially evocative. Traditionally it consists of the "senators" and "rector" giving the keys of the city to the actors, which is followed by raising a version of the *libertas* flag together with recitating Gondola's famous *Hymn to liberty.*

However, the identity discourses of the old Republic are not only echoed when it comes to such generalities, but even connected to some concrete issues. Thus, for instance, modern authors tend to faithfully repeat one of the traditional explanations for the remarkable survival of the small Republic. As was shown, Renaissance authors attributed it either to divine providence protecting the Republic or to the shrewd diplomacy of the city's patrician

[513] Thus, at the end of the first book, from the foundation to 1526, Foretić finishes with "A Retrospective Overview of Ragusa's Position as a State" (Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika*, book 1, 315-325), while the second book finishes with a detailed account of the French occupation and the abolition of the Republic (Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika*, book 2, 441-466). Another example of the same interpretative framework, even more obviously indebted to Lujo Vojnović, is: Božo Cvjetković, *Povijest Dubrovačke Republike* [History of the Ragusan Republic], book 1, (Dubrovnik: Dubrovačka Hrvatska Tiskara, 1917), 74, 77-78, 80, 95.

[514] http://bs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dubrova%C4%8Dka_republika The same is also stressed on the Facebook page of the Ragusan Republic (http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=69614155569) (both accessed 5 November 2011).

[515] Dalibor Foretić, "Pokušaj tipologije festivalskih dramskiuh zbivanbja od 1971. do 1996" [An Attempt at a Typology of the Drama Events of the Festival from 1971 to 1996], in Dalibor Foretić, *Hrid za slobodu: dubrovačke ljetne kronike 1971-1996.* (Dubrovnik: Matica hrvatska Dubrovnik, 1998), 5.

rulers; obviously, modern scholars have opted for the second of these explanations. Thus, Božo Cvjetković, an inter-war historian, never tired of stressing the "unique diplomacy" of Ragusa, crucial in the city's "gigantic" struggle for liberty, while even Robin Harris, the author of an excellent recent synthesis, writes about the "diplomatic virtuosity" of Ragusa.[516] Needless to say, local patriotic lauds are even stronger outside the academic sphere. Thus, the official internet sites of the city of Dubrovnik and its tourist board sing the praises of the diplomatic ability of the old Republic, while the standard tourist guidebook proclaims that Ragusa "created one of the most subtle schools of diplomatic business in the world."[517]

Interestingly, when it comes to echoing the ancient *topoi* in a most literal way, it is the professional historians who are often in the forefront. This is a natural consequence of their closeness to the documents and engagement with specific questions which are not of interest to the general public. A good case in point is the traditionally sensitive question of the relationship of the Ragusan Republic with the Ottoman Empire. It was again the influential historian Vinko Foretić who clearly reiterated the traditional Ragusan interpretation of this relationship. Insisting on the difference between a tribute-payer and a subject, he has persistently refused to speak of Ottoman sovereignty, arguing that Ragusa was *de iure* an independent state.[518] Most other historians have also echoed Ragusan senators and diplomats: they repeat the tendentious explanation of tribute as the mere price of military protection or free trade and describe the Ragusan-Ottoman relationship using the tendentious term "protection" borrowed from the Renaissance sources. Another problem that has reoccurred in modern Ragusan historiography is the centuries-old question of whether, due to its small size and power, the Ragusan republic can be considered to have been a truly sovereign state. Besides resulting in a number of smaller studies, this problem has led another influential historian, Ilija Mitić, to write a 250-page book dedicated primarily to proving that, indeed, Ragusa was sovereign. Despite his modern vocabulary, Mitić argues for Ragusan sovereignty much along the same lines as Junius Resti, that is, by invoking the factual exercise of full state prerogatives by the Republic's government.[519]

[516] Božo Cjetković, *Uvod u povijest Dubrovačke Republike* [Introduction to the History of the Ragusan Republic], book 1 (Dubrovnik: Naklada "Svećeničke književne družbe," Dubrovačka Hrvatska Tiskara, 1916), XXI-XXII, XXIII-XXIV; Cvjetković, *Povijest Dubrovačke Republike,* 93-94; 96-97**;** Harris, *Dubrovnik,* 18, 87.
[517] Antun Travirka, *Dubrovnik. History. Culture. Art Heritage* (Zadar: Forum, 1998), 16. The official pages of the city of Dubrovnik and the Dubrovnik tourist board are at: http://www.dubrovnik.hr/dubrovnik_info.php?id=94; http://www.tzdubrovnik.hr/eng/vodic_novost.php?id=1503&id_main=1503 (both accessed 7 November 2011). On the creation of the mythology of the Republic's diplomacy see also: Prlender, "Povijesni identitet Dubrovnika," 287
[518] Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika,* book 1, 315-325, especially 318-321; Foretić, "Dubrovnik u doba Marina Držića," 302; 305.
[519] Mitić, *Dubrovačka država,* passim.

The trend toward comparative de-politicization of Ragusa's image, visible from the examples above and typical of the second half of the twentieth century, has been abruptly reversed by one event of monumental significance. In the early 1990s, the Yugoslav People's Army, together with Serbian and Montenegrin volunteers, attacked Ragusa, heavily bombarding the city, especially in the last months of 1991. These dramatic events made Ragusa an important topic of public debate and reflection in Croatia, leading to a drastic refashioning of its image, which was achieved largely through a reactivation of the Early Modern *topoi*. However, as the majority of discourses on Ragusa in this period combined references to the city's "liberty" with those on its frontier position, it seems best to address them together. Therefore, before turning to the image of Ragusa in the 1990s, it is necessary to present an overview of the ways in which Renaissance discourse on the frontier fared after the end of the Republic.

At the outset, one curious case has to be mentioned. Among the nineteenth-century authors, one whose work was most strongly indebted to Renaissance frontier discourse was Stijepo Skurla, a priest and canon of the Ragusan church. In his book dedicated to the cult of St. Blaise, published in 1871, Skurla repeated the essential *topoi* of the Republic's self-representation in a completely literal manner. To begin with, one of his main goals was to prove that divine providence had for centuries actively defended the Ragusan Republic through the interventions of St. Blaise. Needless to say, this was an agenda completely in accord with old Ragusan historiography. Another ancient *topos* that Skurla faithfully reproduced was the idea of the city's religious purity. He insisted that, although it was surrounded by various heresies, Ragusa had never soiled itself with them. Finally, Skurla also echoed the traditional claim about Ragusan missionary activity: stating Ragusans were "apostles" to the wretched populations under the sultan's rule, he proclaimed their immense merit for preserving Catholicism in the Ottoman Empire.[520]

Of course, such a literal repetition of the Renaissance frontier discourse was exceptional. In order to shape the image of Ragusa this discourse had to be redefined and secularized, losing its traditional religious overtones. In other words, Ragusa's frontier role could be brought into focus again under one condition – if the frontier ceased to be religious and became cultural. The first vague traces of such a transformation appear in a short introduction to Ragusan history written by Antun Sorgo, published in 1820. Sorgo, a member of an important patrician family, characterized his homeland as "one of the most ancient

[520] For these claims, see: Stijepo, *Sveti Vlaho*, 82-85; 86-87.

centers of civilization and education in the South of Europe, the Athens of Illyria…"[521] Importantly, Sorgo was far from being the only one to describe Ragusa as a beacon of civilization in the European South. In the last two hundred years the city has repeatedly been represented as "Athens," a cultural centre of a broader ethnic community – whether Illyrian, Yugoslav, Serbian or Croatian.[522] In such statements the idea of Ragusa as a frontier guard was still implicit, but, as will be shown, they provided an important point of departure for creating a novel frontier identity for the old Republic.

In the historiography of the late nineteenth, and especially the early twentieth, century the idea of Ragusa as a frontier community in a secular sense was clearly articulated for the first time. Explicating what was implicit in the idea of a "Slavic Athens," Lujo Vojnović represented the Republic as having performed an important civilizing mission in the Balkans, mediating between the "West" and its "uncouth" Slavic brethren. Besides being a beacon of Western "Latin" culture, Ragusa was also represented as having worked hard to decrease the suffering of its compatriots under the Ottoman yoke – as L. Vojnović put it, the "Balkans" owed the Republic "the alleviating of its slavery and many comforts of a moral nature."[523] The important tasks which Ragusa had performed for the neighboring Slavs were stressed even more forcefully by B. Cvjetković, who clearly followed in Vojnović's footsteps. In his history of Ragusa, Cvjetković described Ragusa as a "bridge between the Apennines and the Balkans," mentioning its "special mission to maintain the connection between the young and timid Slavic world and the old Western culture."[524] Cvjetković also repeated Vojnović's claim about the city's role in alleviating the consequences of the Ottoman conquest. After describing the Ottoman expansion in the neighboring lands, he wrote: "This created another mission for Ragusa: [to provide] comfort and hope when the darkness of barbarism fell…"[525]

It is clear that such "missions" attributed to the Republic were echoes of the traditional insistence on the important tasks which Ragusa performed on the religious frontier, typical of Renaissance diplomacy. It is hard not to notice a salient secularizing twist, however: both the frontier and what Ragusa propagated beyond it have changed. The frontier was no longer that of *Respublica Christiana* but of Western civilization, and what was propagated was not Catholicism but Western culture. The related claim that Ragusa alleviated the misery of the Ottoman Catholics is also the echo of an old *topos*. The motif of comforting the Ottoman

[521] Sorgo, *Origine et chute*, 2.
[522] See, for instance: Banac, "Ministracija i desekracija," 20.
[523] Banac, "Struktura konzervativne utopije," 108. The quotation is from: Lujo Vojnović, *Pad Dubrovnika. Knjiga druga (1807.-1815)* [The Fall of Ragusa]. Book 2 (1807-1815) (Zagreb: author's edition, 1908), 330-331.
[524] Cvjetković, *Povijest Dubrovačke republike,* 129.
[525] Ibid., 130.

Catholics – "the most tormented people in the world" as F. Gondola put it -- was an important element in Renaissance rhetoric, which often stressed the various forms of protection Ragusan merchants provided to their coreligionists in "infidel" lands.

In the historiography of the second half of the twentieth century such dramatic formulations of Ragusa's frontier position and mission are much harder to find. The disappearance of such value judgments does not mean, however, that the frontier identity of Ragusa has been neglected. Quite the contrary, it has become a genuine commonplace in historiography, but formulated in a more neutral way than in the works of Vojnović or Cvjetković. Even the titles of several important books about the city reveal that the frontier has remained a central feature of Ragusa's history. Thus, a study by Bariša Krekić, published in 1971, bore the subtitle: *A City between East and West*; Zdenko Zlatar entitled his 1992 book *Between the Double Eagle and the Crescent*, consciously echoing the city's Baroque poetry; finally, in 2000, Mirjana Polić Bobić published her work under the title: *Between the Cross and the Crescent.* [526]

Naturally, in these works the frontier on which the Republic lay was conceptualized differently than in the works of Vojnović or Cvjetković. While remaining a cultural and religious divide, other elements constituting it have come to the fore, primarily the fact that it was also a political and, especially, economic frontier. Consequently, old Ragusa ceased to be represented as a mediator between "Western civilization" and its uncouth but promising Slavic brethren. Historically more correctly, it was seen as mediator among the various Mediterranean powers, primarily the massive imperial complexes of the Ottomans and Spain. Its motives for the often-perilous task of connecting East and West were also reconsidered. The Republic was not engaged in an altruistic civilizing mission nor was it comforting the Ottoman Catholics, but it was ensuring its political survival and, above all, mercantile gain. Importantly, such a de-politicized and realistic image of the Ragusan Republic continues to dominate scholarship and a greater part of the popular culture today.

Yet, there was one monumental ideological *hiatus* whose repercussions are still felt; the traumatic events of the early 1990s have engendered a drastically different image of the city's history. The Yugoslav bombardment and siege resulted in a largely unprecedented image of Ragusa which integrated it more strongly than ever before into the grand narrative of the modern Croatian nation. Especially intriguing is the fact that this integration was achieved

[526] Bariša Krekić *Dubrovnik in the 14th and 15th Centuries. A City between East and West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972); Zlatar, *Between the Double Eagle and the Crescent;* Mirjana Polić Bobić, *Među križom i polumjesecom* [Between the Cross and the Crescent], (Zagreb. Ljevak, 2000).

largely through reworking the ancient *topoi* concerning both the frontier position and the "liberty" of the city.

Simply put, the attack of 1991 led to a forceful restatement of the old image of Ragusa as a defender from attacks from the East, the idea of *antemurale*. However, what Ragusa defended, how and from whom it defended it -- have all changed profoundly compared to the Renaissance rhetoric. Instead of defending the *respublica Christiana*, the city was represented as defending Croatian [sic] liberty and Western civilization. The enemies from which it defended these values were not Ottoman "infidels," but Orthodox Serbian and Montenegrin "barbarians", a personification of the cultural East as seeking to conquer and destroy the West. Finally, the way in which Ragusa performed its defensive role was not through diplomatic skill, as was the traditional claim, but as a "bulwark" in a most literal sense -- by repelling a full-fledged military attack.[527]

However, concrete examples of this dramatic rhetoric, which had immensely rich cultural connotations, are far more revealing than this schematic overview. Thus, the eminent historian, Josip Lučić, excellently summarized the new understanding of the frontier on which the city lay: "Therefore the centuries and millennia-old frontier of Ragusan space is the frontier... of Ragusan, that is, Croatian liberty; the Western European territory and Western European liberty and civilization."[528] A similar thought is found in the touching diary of the siege by the art historian Maja Nodari: "We have whispered from our shelters to the European gentlemen: 'You who know what are ancient cities and monuments, you should know that protecting this unique Ragusa you are protecting European, Mediterranean civilization.'"[529] This novel formulation of the *antemurale* idea, i.e., the understanding that the attack on Ragusa was a civilisational struggle of East and West, is nicely seen in an article by the eminent art historian, Igor Zidić. In this passionate text, imbued with a peculiar version of Croatian orientalism widespread in that period, Zidić speaks of the "Asiatic cruelty" of the besiegers of Ragusa, who "wage their dirty war against everything that belongs to the

[527] As with many other Central European nations the idea of bulwark is deeply rooted in Croatian political culture, which surely facilitated the reactivation of this peculiar common-place concerning Ragusa. For the broader Croatian case see the excellent study: Ivo Žanić, "Simbolični identitet Hrvatske u trokutu raskrižje-predziđe-most" [Symbolic Identity of Croatia within the Triangle Crossroads-Bulwark-Bridge] in *Historijski mitovi na Balkanu*, ed. Husnija Kamberović (Sarajevo: Institut za istoriju, 2003), 161-202. The text is also available online: http://www.iis.unsa.ba/izdavacka_djelatnost/posebna_izdanja/mitovi/mitovi_zanic.html

[528] Josip Lučić, "*Etničko-politička pripadnost Dubrovnika,*" [The Ethnic and Political Belonging of Ragusa] *Dubrovački horizonti* 32 (1992): 12.

[529] Maja Nodari, "Vrijeme patnje -- pred Uskrs slobode" [Time of Suffering – Before the Easter of Freedom] *Dubrovački horizonti* 32 (1992): 74.

civilizational, religious, cultural and political tradition of the Western *oecumene*."[530] Similar orientalizing rhetoric is visible in an article by the poet and journalist Dubravko Horvatić, revealingly entitled: "Barbarians in Front of the City." Making a remarkable (pseudo)historical parallel, Horvatić speaks of the Serbs as "the new Ottomans" and claims that their attack on Ragusa has a twin motif: "Thirst for what belongs to another but also a hatred for the West has led the Barbarians to the gates of the City, as once at the gates of the Urbs."[531] According to some authors there was an element of historical ingratitude in the Serbian and Montenegrin attack, since Ragusa had for centuries played a civilizing role in its "barbaric" hinterland. Echoing Vojnović, the poet and essayist Tonko Maroević stressed that Ragusa, which he called a "Croatian Athens," helped "the expansion of culture in the otherwise poor and sterile lands, and has enabled the individuals and entire social groups to cross to a new civilisational level and leave a written record."[532] Another thing characteristic of the 1990s rhetoric and widespread in the Croatian public of the time was the radical, in fact essentialist, understanding of the frontier on which Ragusa lay. The difference between the city and those who attacked it, as well as the Balkan hinterland from which they came, was seen in strongest possible terms; the divide between them was absolute, without any gradation, similarity or points of contact. Zidić was speaking for many when he wrote: "It (Ragusa) is a Border: Light on the edge of Darkness. *Dubrovnik is all that Serbia is not.*"[533]

This somewhat fragmentary and essayistic overview has tried to outline an intriguing case of ideological *vinum novum in utres veteres.* Through an encounter with modern ideologies and needs, Renaissance *topoi* have been transformed while continuing to shape contemporary thinking about Ragusa. Sometimes they have been taken at face value, as in the case with the foundation narrative or with the insistence on the protection of Ottoman Catholics so faithfully reproduced by Skurla. On other occasions they have been "secularized" and "rationalized," becoming conceptual tools of modern scholarship, as is the case with the struggle for liberty becoming the meta-narrative of the city's history. In certain instances, moreover, they have been used as recognizable motifs by commercial interests, as happened with the concept of *libertas* which decorates busses, airplanes, and hotels in the city. Renaissance *topoi* have also been reshaped by the intellectual and cultural elites, as is illustrated by the central role of the concept of *libertas* in the iconography and ritual of the Dubrovnik summer festival, where an archaic notion of political aristocratic liberty has been

[530] Igor Zidić "Opsada i rane Dubrovnika" [The Siege and the Wounds of Ragusa], *Dubrovnik* 2-3 (1992): 37.
[531] Dubravko Horvatić, "Barbari pred Gradom" [Barbarians before the City], *Dubrovnik* 2-3 (1992): 60.
[532] Tonko Maroević, "Dubrovnik opkoljen" [Ragusa Surrounded] *Dubrovnik* 2-3 (1992): 48.
[533] Zidić "Opsada i rane Dubrovnika," 40.

transformed in the ontological liberty of an artist-creator. Lastly, the ancient *topoi* have been appropriated and redefined by modern nation(alistic) discourses, so that Ragusa has become a civilizer of the young Yugoslav nation, as in the works of Vojnović, or an *antemurale* of Croatian liberty, as in the rhetoric of the 1990s.

Let there be no misunderstanding, though. This study will not end in a predictable way, by proclaiming that once their origin and genesis are known, our thinking about Ragusan Republic will be free of such ideological constructs or myths. The belief in this kind of intellectual exorcism seems naive. There is no doubt whatsoever that the ideology of the old Republic will continue to reverberate in the future, both in scholarship and in popular culture. Nor is there anything bad about that: Myths are a deep cultural need which societies require to function. On the bottom line, despite the scholarly goals and apparatus, this study does not stand apart from the perennial societal process of myth-reproduction. After all, is it not just another restatement of these same ancient myths?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Archival Sources

State Archives of Dubrovnik, Ragusa

Arhiv Bassegli, box 7, B 3/1 Corrispondenza delli Signori Senatori di Ragusa Marco Bassegli, Jacomo Bobali Sorgo, Valentino Giorgi, Proculi Relativa a una loro ambasciata a Constantinopoli dal 21 Giugno 1604 fino al Luglio 1606.

Isprave i akti s pečatom 16, bundle (svezak) 16, no. 466-24/I

Isprave i akti 16, bundle (svezak) 8, no. 424, Lettere di Francesco Gondola da Roma e da Napoli degli anni 1581-1583

Lamenti politici 6, Processvs secreti Minoris Consilii. Dal 1547-1563

Litterae et commissiones levantis/*Lettere di Levante*, vol. 10, 12, 16, 21, 22, 23, 30, 31, 37, 41

Lettere di Ponente, vol. 1, 3, 6, 8, 15

Memoriae 8, Brevi notizie sulla fondazione di Ragusa estratte da un antico anonimo (usque a. 1771), fol 57.

Memoriae 18, Origine della Città di Ragusa estratta da certe scritture antichissime con agiunta di alcun cose più memorabili costumate in Ragusa, 1507, I. Giorigi ab M.

Memoriae 24, Dell'origine della città di Ragusa. Ms.

Memoriae 32 Trattato. Origine di Ragusa. Seac XVI. Ms,

Rukopisne ostavštine, Zbrika Ernesta Katića, box 16, number 4

Secreta Rogatorum, vol. 1

Library of the Franciscan monastery, Ragusa

Ms. 243, Orationes Latinae civium Rhagusinorum Rhacusii habitae

State Archives of Venice, Venice

CCX, Lettere di ambasciatori Roma busta 25 (1566-1573)

CCX, Lettere secrete, busta 8 (1571-1573)

Inquisitori di stato, busta 208, no. 34

Inquisitori di stato, busta 1219, "Processi e carte politiche 1753-1766", no. 135

Senato, Dispacci di Ambasciatori, Roma, Filza 7 (1571)

Library of the Museum Correr, Venice

Codice Cicogna 697

Codice Cicogna 978

Mss. Correr 1411, Miscellanea, saec XVII-XVIII

Archive of Croatian Academy of Arts and Sciences (HAZU), Zagreb

MS II d 55, [Joannis de Ravenna]. Hystoria Ragusii

MS I c 59/506, Resti Junius, Chroniche di Ragusa

National Library in Zagreb, Zagreb

R 3918, *Zbornik Gučetićev*, "Chronichetta (626-1484)"

R 3359 *Miscellanea Rhacusii charactere Bosniaco exarata*

R 3544 *Cronaca di Ragusa (825-1715)*

National Library of France, Paris

Cod. 6494

Clairambault 1017

British Library, London

Royal 14 A. XIII, Relazioni of Venetian and other ambassadors, &c., circ. 1555-1586

Add. 48131 (Yelverton MS. 146), Relazioni, historical documents and tracts, relating to Italy; 1527-1620

Published Sources

Albéri, Eugenio ed. *Relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti al senato,* Serie III, vol 2. Florence: tipografia all'insegna di Clio, 1844.

Annales Ragusini anonymi item Nicolai de Ragnina. Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum meridionalium, vol. 14. Ed. Natko Nodilo. Zagreb: Academia scientarum et artium Slavorum meridionalium, 1883.

Appendini, Urbanus ed. *Carmina (accedunt selecta illustrium Ragusinorum poemata), pars prima.* Ragusa: Typis Martecchinianis, 1811.

Archdeacon Thomas of Split. *History of the Bishops of Salona and Split.* Damir Karbić, Mirjana Sokol and James Ross Sweeney, eds. Budapest: CEU Press, 2006.

Arhiđakon, Toma. *Historia Salonitana: povijest salonitanskih i splitskih prosvećenika* (Historia Salonitana: the History of Bishops of Salona and Split). Olga Perić, ed. and trans. Split: Književni krug, 2003.

Aristotle. *The Politics and the Constitution of Athens*. Cambridge: CUP, 1996.

Baglivi, Georgius. *De praxi medica ad priscam observandi rationem revocanda, libri dvo*. London: Anisson & Joann, 1699.

Bodin, Jean. *De republica libri sex.* Paris: Apud Iacobvm Dv-pvys, 1586.

Bonfinius, Antonius. *Antonii Bonfinii Rerum Ungaricarum decades quatuor cum dimidia.* Hanoviae: Typis Wechelianis, apud Claud. Marnium, 1606.

Constantine, Porphyrogenitus. *De Administrando Imperio*. Ed. Gyula Moravcsik, tr. R. J. H. Jenkins. Dumbarton Oaks: Center for Byzantine Studies, 1967.

Cessi, Roberto and Fanny Bennato, eds. *Venetiarum historia vulgo Petro Iustiniano Iustiniani filio adiudicata.* Venezia: Deputazione di storia patria per le Venezie, 1964.

Cerva, Ludovicus Tubero. *Commentarii de temporibus suis*. Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2001.

_____. *Commentariolus Ludovici Cervarii Tuberonis De Origine & incremento Urbis Rhacusanae.* Rhacusii: Typis Andreae Trevisan, 1790.

Cerva, Seraphinus Maria. *Prolegomena in Sacram metropoim Ragusinam. Editio princeps.* Ed. Relja Seferović. Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 2008.

Codex diplomaticus, tomus I. Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski, ed. Zagreb: Štamparija Dragutina Albrechta, 1874.

De Diversis, Filip. *Dubrovački govori u slavu ugarskih kraljeva Sigismunda i Alberta* (Ragusan Orations in Honor of the Hungarian Kings Sigismund and Albert). Ed.

Zdenka Janeković Römer. Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2001.

_____. *Opis slavnog grada Dubrovnika* (The Description of the Glorious City of Ragusa). Ed and trans. Zdenka Janeković –Römer. Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 2004.

Djela Gjona Gjora Palmotića (The Works of Gjon Gjoro Palmotić). Stari pisci hrvatski, book 13, part 2. Ed. Armin Pavić. Zagreb: JAZU, 1883.

Djela Petra Zoranića, Antuna Sasina, Savka Gučetića Bendeviševića (Works of Petar Zoranić, Antun Sasin, Savko Gučetić Bendevišević). Stari pisci hrvatski, book 16. Ed. Pero Budmani. Zagreb: JAZU 1888.

Držić, Marin. *Djela* (Works). Ed. Frano Čale. Zagreb: Sveučilišna naklada Liber, 1979.

Radonić, Jovan. *Dubrovačka akta i povelje I/1* (The Ragusan Decrees and Charters). Zbornik za istoriju, jezik i književnost srpskog naroda, III. odeljenje. Beograd: SKA, 1934.

_____. *Dubrovačka akta i povelje I/2* (The Ragusan Decrees and Charters). Zbornik za istoriju, jezik i književnost srpskog naroda, III. odeljenje. Beograd: SKA, 1934.

_____. *Dubrovačka akta i povelje II/1* (The Ragusan Decrees and Charters). Zbornik za istoriju, jezik i književnost srpskog naroda, III. odeljenje. Beograd: SKA, 1935.

_____. *Dubrovačka akta i povelje II/2* (The Ragusan Decrees and Charters). Zbornik za istoriju, jezik i književnost srpskog naroda, III. odeljenje. Beograd: SKA, 1938.

_____. *Dubrovačka akta i povelje III/1* (The Ragusan Decrees and Charters). Zbornik za istoriju, jezik i književnost srpskog naroda, III. odeljenje. Beograd: SKA, 1939.

_____. *Dubrovačka akta i povelje III/2* (The Ragusan Decrees and Charters). Zbornik za istoriju, jezik i književnost srpskog naroda, III. odeljenje. Beograd: SKA, 1939.

Ferrarius, Philippus. *Lexicon Geographicum, Universi Orbis Oppida, Urbes, Regiones, Provinciae, Regna, Emporia, Academiae, Metropoles, Fontes, Flumina, & Maria Antiquis Recentibusque Nominibus appellata, suisque distantiis descripta recensentur.* London: Ex officina Rogeri Danielis, 1657.

Fusko, Paladije. *Opis obale Ilirika* (Description of the Shore of Illyricum). Ed. and trans. Bruna Kuntić-Makvić. Zagreb: Latina et Graeca, 1990.

Gallucius, Ioannes Paulus. *Paulli Gallucii Saloenses oratio, publicae habita in Ecclesia Cathedrali Paduae in assumptione Caputei illustris Equitis Dominici Slatarichii Simeonis F. Ragvsini.* Venice, 1580

Gelcich, Giuseppe and Lajos Thalloczy, ed. *Diplomatarium relationum reipublicae ragusanae cum regno Hungariae.* Budapest, 1887.

Gligo, Vedran ed. *Govori protiv Turaka* (Orations against the Turks). Split: Logos, 1983.

Gothofredus, Johannes Ludovicus. *Archontologia cosmica, sive imperiorum, regnorum, principatuum, rerumque publicarum omnium per totum terrarum orbem commentarii luculentissimi.* Frankfurt: Jennisius, 1628.

Gović, Tamara. *Epigrafski spomenici u Dubrovniku* (Epigraphic Monuments in Ragusa). Dubrovnik: Biskupski ordinarijat Dubrovnik, 2004.

Gozzi, Nicolò Vito di. *Dello stato delle republiche.* Venetia: Aldo, 1591.

Gesta Regum Sclavorum, vols I-II. Tibor Živković, ed. Belgrade: Institute of History Belgrade and Ostrog Monastery, 2009.

Gregorii I Papae Registrum epistularum. Tomus 1. Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Epistolae 1. Ewald, Paul and Ludwig Hartmann, eds. Berlin: Weidmann, 1891.

Gregorii I Papae Registrum epistularum. Tomus 2. Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Epistolae 2. Ewald, Paul and Ludwig Hartmann, eds. Berlin: Weidmann, 1899.

Gundulić, Ivan. *Osman.* Ed. Slobodan P. Novak and Antun Pavešković. Zagreb: Nakladni Zavod Matice Hrvatske, 1991.

Gundulić, Ivan. *Suze sina razmetnoga. Dubravka. Ferdinandu Drugomu od Toskane* (Tears of the Prodigal Son. Dubravka. To Ferdinand the Second of Tuscany). Pet stoljeća hrvatske književnosti, book 12. Ed. Jakša Ravlić. Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska 1964.

Hein, Heidi. "Antemurale christianitatis – Grenzsituation als Selbstverständnis." In *NGO. Unabhängige Kulturzeitschrift JI.* Available at: http://www.ji-magazine.lviv.ua/seminary/2003/sem25-03-ger.htm

Horvat, Karlo. "Novi historijski spomenici za povijest Bosne i susjednih zemalja" (New Historical Documents for the History of Bosnia and the Neighbouring Countries). *Glasnik zemaljskog Muzeja Bosne i Hercegovine* 21 (1909): 381.389.

Jelavić, Vjekoslav. "Doživljaji Francuza Poullet-a na putu kroz Dubrovnik i Bosnu (godine 1658)" (The Experiences of the French traveller Poullet on his Trip through Ragusa and Bosnia (in the year 1658)). *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u BiH* 20 (1908): 23-75.

Krasić, Stjepan. "Opis hrvatske jadranske obale u putopisima švicarskog dominikanca Feliksa Fabrija (Schmida) iz 1480. i 1483/1484 godine" (Description of the Croatian Adriatic Coast in the Travelogues of Swiss Dominican Felix Fabri (Schmid). *Anali Zavoda za povijesne Znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 39 (2001): 133-216.

Kurelac, Fran ed. *Runje i pahuljice pjesni podrugljive i pastirske ponajveć dubrovačke* (Rags and Snowflakes: Satirical and Pastoral Poems, mostly from Ragusa). Zagreb, 1866-68.

Monumenta Habsburgica Regni Croatiae Dalmatiae Slavoniae, volumen I (1526-1530). Ed. Emilij Laszowski, MSHSM vol 35. Zagreb: JAZU 1914.

Liber Viridis. Zbornik za istoriju, jezik i književnost srpskog naroda, vol. 23. Ed. Branislav Nedeljković. Belgrade: Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti, 1984.

di Linda, Luca. *Le relationi de descrittioni vniversali et particolari del mondo.* Venice: Per Combi, & LaNoù, 1664

Legende i Kronike (Legends and Chronicles). Ed. Nikola Disopra, Cvito Fisković, Jure Franičević Pločar, Vedran Gligo, Živko Jeličić, Hrvoje Morović and Vladimir Rismondo. Split: Književni krug – Čakavski sabor, 1977.

Liepopili, Ante "Dopisi Marojice Kaboge vladi dubrovačkoj" (Dispatches of Marojica Caboga to the Ragusan Government). *Glasnik dubrovačkog učenog društva "Sveti Vlaho"* 1 (1929): 125-146.

Luccari, Giacomo. *Copioso ristretto degli annali di Rausa.* Venice: Ad instantia di Antonio Leonardi, 1605.

Ljetopis Popa Dukljanina (Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja). Ed. Vladimir Mošin, tr. S. Mencinger and V. Štefanić. Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska, 1950.

Ljubić, Simeon ed. *Commissiones et relationes venetae.* tomus II (annorum 1525-1553) MSHSM vol. 8. Zagreb: Academia scientarum et artium slavorum meridionalium, 1877.

_____. *Commissiones et relationes venetae.* tomus III (annorum 1553-1571), MSHSM vol. 11. Zagreb: JAZU, 1880.

Machiavelli, Niccolò. *The Discourses.* ed. Bernard Crick, trans. by Leslie J. Walker and Brian Richardson. London: Penguin books, 2003.

Makušev, Vikentij. *Izsljedovanja ob historičeskih pamjatnikah ni bitopisateljah Dubrovnika* (Studies of the Historical Monuments and Customs of Dubrovnik). St. Petersburg: Imperatorskaia Akademia Nauk, 1867.

_____. "Nekoliko novih izvora za historiju južnih Slovena" (Several New Documents for the History of the South Slavs). *Rad JAZU* 5 (1868): 150-177.

Makušev, Vićentije. *Istorijski spomenici južnih Slovena i okolnih naroda* (Historical Monuments of the South Slavs and Other Peoples), tome 2. Belgrade: Štamparija Kraljevine Srbije, 1882.

Matas, Ante Konstantin. *Miletii Versus*. Dubrovnik: J. Flori, 1882.

Miklošić, Franc. *Monumenta Serbica spectantia historiam Serbia, Bosniae, Ragusii.* Vienna: Apud Guilelmum Braumueller, 1858.

Momigliano Lepschy, Anna Laura ed., *Viaggio in Terrasanta di Santo Brasca (1480) con l'Itinerario di Gabriele Capodilista (1458).* Milano: Longanesi & C, 1966.

Moréri, Louis. *Le Grand dictionnaire historique, ou le Mélange curieux de l'histoire sacrée et profane.* Tomus 9. Paris: les libraires associés, 1759.

Nagy, Iván and Albert Nyáry ed. *Magyar diplomacziai emlékek Mátyás király korából 1458-1490*, tomus 2. Budapest: A M. Tud. Akadémia, 1877.

di Nale, Nicolo. *Dialogo sopra la sfera del Mondo*. Venice: appresso Francesco Ziletti, 1579.

Neu Watkins, Renée trans. and ed. *Humanism and Liberty: Writings on Freedom from Fifteenth-Century Florence*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1978.

Nevenić-Grabovac, Darinka. "Ilija Lamprice Crijević, krunisani pesnik. Posmrtni govor svojem ujaku Juniju Sorkočeviću (Ilija Lamprice Crijević, Crowned Poet. Funeral Oration to His Unce Junije Sorkočević)" *Živa antika* 27 (1977): 231-236.

_____. "Poema Ilije Crijevića *De Epidauro*" (Ilija Crijević's Poem *De Epidauro*). *Živa Antika* (1970): 241-277.

_____. "Oratio funebris humaniste Ilije Crijevića dubrovačkom pesniku Ivanu (Džívu) Gučetiću" (The Oratio Funebris of the Humanist Ilija Crijević to the Ragusan Poet Ivan (Dživo) Gučetić). *Živa antika* 24 (1974): 333-364.

Odluke veća Dubrovačke Republike, II (Decisions of the Councils of the Ragusan Republic II). Zbornik za istoriju jezik i književnost srpskog naroda vol XXI. Ed. Mihajlo Dinić. Belgrade: Srpska Akademija Nauka i Umetnosti, 1951, 1964.

Orbini, Mauro. *Il Regno degli Slavi*. München: Verlag Otto Sagner, 1985.

Palmotić, Jaketa. *Dubrovnik ponovljen i Didone* (Ragusa Restored and Didone). Ed. Stijepo Skurla. Ragusa, 1874-1875.

Palmotić, Junije. *Pavlimir*. Zagreb: Zagrebačka stvarnost, 1995.

Paljetak, Luko, Dunja Fališevac and Miljenko Foretić, Ed. *Sveti Vlaho: dubrovački parac u hrvatskoj književnosti*. (Saint Blaise: Ragusan Patron in the Croatian Literature). Dubrovnik: Matica Hrvatska, 2001.

Pastorello, Ester ed. *Andreae Danduli chronica per extensum descripta.* Rerum italicarum scriptores, tomus 12, part 1. Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli, 1942.

Pelicelli, Nestore. "Due opere inedite di G. M. Filelfo*: La Raguseide e Storia di Ragusa*." *Rivista Dalmatica* V (1902–03): 5-33, 139–176.

Pjesme Mavra Vetranića Čavčića (The Poems of Mavro Vetranić Čavčić). Stari pisci hrvatski, 3. Ed. Vatroslav Jagić and August Kaznačić. Zagreb: JAZU, 1871.

Pjesme Petra Hektorovića i Hanibala Lucića (The Poems of Petar Hektorović and Hanibal Lucić) Stari pisci hrvatski 6. Ed. Sebastijan Žepić. Zagreb: JAZU, 1874.

Della Porta, Gianbattista. *Phytognomonica Io. Baptistae Portae Neap. Octo libris contenta.* Naples: Apud Horatium Saluianum, 1588.

Praga, Giuseppe. "Ciriaco de Pizzicolli e Marino de Resti." *Archivio storico per la Dalmazia* 7 (1932): 262-280.

Pribojević, Vinko. *O porijeklu i zgodama Slavena* (On the Origin and the Deeds of the Slavs). Ed. Grga Novak. Split: Književni krug, 1991.

Pyrrhus, Didacus. *De illustribus familiis quae hodie Rhacusae exstant.* Venice: Aldus, 1582.

Rački, Franjo. "Iz djela E.L. Crijevića, Dubrovčanina" (From the Works of E.L.Crijević the Ragusan). *Starine JAZU* (1872): 155-200.

Razzi, Serafino. *La Storia di Raugia*. Lucca: Per Vicentio Busdraghi, 1595.

Resti, Junije. *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii (ab origine urbis usque ad annum 1451) item Joannis Gundulae (1451-1484)*, ed. Natko Nodilo. MSHSM, XXV. Zagreb: JAZU, 1893.

Ricaut, Paul. *The present State of the Ottoman Empire, in three books containing the Maxims of the Turkish Politic, their Religion, and Military Discipline.* London: John Starkey and Henry Brome, 1668.

Rosa, Martinus. *Breve compendium nationis gloriosae totivs linguae Illyricae.* Madrid: Ex typographia Francisci Martinez, 1638.

Rosaccio, Giuseppe. *Viaggio da Venetia, a Costantinopoli, Per Mare e per Terra, insieme a quello di Terra Santa.* Venezia: Giacomo Franco, 1598.

Rossebastiano, Alda and Simona Fenoglio, eds. *Viaggio in Oriente di un nobile del Quattrocento, Il pellegrinaggio di Miliaduse d'Este*. Torino: UTET, 2005.

Sabellicus, Marcus Antonius Coccius. *M. Antonii Cocii Sabellici opera Omnia.* Tomus 1-2. Basle: per Ioannem Heruagium, 1560.

Samardžić, Radovan. "Nekoliko francuskih putopisaca XVII veka o Dalmaciji i Dubrovniku." (Several Seventeenth-Century French Travel Writers on Dalmatia and Ragusa). *Zbornik Filozofskog fakulteta* knjiga VII-1 (1963): 361-377.

_____. *Borba Dubrovnika za opstanak posle velikog zemljotresa 1667 g. Arhivska građa (1667-1670)* (The Struggle of Dubrovnik for Survival after the Great Earthquake of the year 1667. Archival materials). Belgrade: SAN, 1960.

Sansovino, Francesco. *Del governo dei Regni e delle Republiche cosi antiche come moderne. Libri XVIII.* Venice: apresso Francesco Sansovino, 1561.

Seydlitz, Melchior. *Gründtliche Beschriebung der Wallfart nach dem heiligen Lande.* Görlitz, 1591.

Serdonati, Francesco. *Francisci Serdonati Florentini orationes duae habitae Rhacusii, altera in funere Chrysostomi Caluini Archiepiscopi in aede Diuae Mariae.* Camerino: Apud Haeredes Antonij Gioiosi, & Hieronymum Stringarium, 1578.

Smičiklas, Tadija ed. *Codex diplomaticus* regni *Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*, tomus 17. Zagreb: JAZU, 1981.

Statut grada Dubrovnika: sastavljen godine 1272. (The Statute of the City of Ragusa Composed in the year 1272). Trans and ed. Antun Šoljić, Zdravko Šundrica and Ivo Veselić. Dubrovnik: Državni arhiv, 2002.

Statut grada Splita (The Statute of the City of Split). Ed. Antun Cvitanić. Split: Književni krug, 1998.

Stojanović, Ljuba ed. *Stare srpske povelje i pisma* (Old Serbian Charters and Letters), book I vol.1. Belgrade: SKA, 1929.

_____. *Stare srpske povelje i pisma* (Old Serbian Charters and Letters), book I vol.2. Belgrade: SKA, 1934.

Suriano, Francesco. *Il Trattato di terra santa e dell'oriente di frate Francesco Suriano missionario e viaggiatore del scolo XV*. Ed. Girolamo Golubovich. Milano: Tipografia editrice artigianelli, 1900.

Šišić, Ferdo ed. *Letopis popa Dukljanina* (Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja). Belgrade: Srpska Kraljevska Akademija, 1928.

Tadić, Jorjo. *Pisma i uputstva Dubrovačke Republike I I* (The Letters and Instructions of the Ragusan Republic). Beograd: SKA, 1935.

Theiner, Augustino. *Vetera monumenta Slavorum Meridionalium historiam illustrantia*, tomus 1. Zagreb: Academia Scientarum et Artium Slavorum Meridionalium, 1863.

_____. *Vetera monumenta Slavorum Meridionalium historiam illustrantia*, tomus 2. Zagreb: Academia Scientarum et Artium Slavorum Meridionalium, 1875.

Truhelka, Ćiro. *Tursko-slovjenski spomenici dubrovačke arhive* (Turkish-Slavic Documents of the Ragusan Archive). Sarajevo: Zemaljska štamparija, 1911.

Vojnović, Lujo ed. "Depeschen des Francesco Gondola, Gesandten der Republik Ragusa bei Pius V und Gregor XIII (1570-1573)." *Archiv für Österreichische Geschichte* 98 (1909): 495-645.

Secondary Literature

Anderson, Benedict R. O'G. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1991.

Angyal, Andreas. *Die Slawische Barockwelt.* Leipzig: VEB E. A. Seemann, 1961.

Appendini, Francesco Maria. *Notizie istoricho-critiche sulle antichità storia e letteratura de'Ragusei I-II*. Ragusa: Antonio Martecchini, 1803.

Arsić, Irena. *Antun Sasin, dubrovački pesnik XVI veka* (Antun Sasin: Ragusan Poet of the 16th Century). Banja Luka, Beograd: Besjeda, Ars Libri, 2002.

Babić, Ivo. "Mit o podrijetlu u Statutu grada Splita" (The Origin Myth in the Statute of the City of Split). In *Dioklecijan i Split,* ed. Frane Bulić, Nenad Cambi and Ivo Babić, 183 -221. Split: Slobodna. Dalmacija, 2005.

Bak, János M. *Königtum und Stände in Ungarn im 14.-16. Jahrhundert.* Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH, 1973.

_____. "Hungary and Crusading in the fifteenth century." In *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century*. Ed. Norman Housley, 116-127. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

Banac, Ivo."Ministration and Desecration: The Place of Dubrovnik in Modern Croat National Ideology and Political Culture." In *Nation and Ideology: Essays in Honor of Wayne S. Vucinich*. Ed., Ivo Banac, John G. Ackerman and Roman Szporluk, 149-175. Boulder, Colorado: East European Monographs, 1981.

_____. "Ministracija i desekracija: Mjesto Dubrovnika u modernim hrvatskim nacionalnim ideologijama i političkoj kulturi" (Ministration and Desecration: The Place of Dubrovnik in Modern Croat National Ideology and Political Culture). In Ivo Banac, *Dubrovački eseji,* 9-39. Dubrovnik: Matica Hrvatska, 1992.

_____."Struktura konzervativne utopije braće Vojnovića" (The Structure of the Conservative Utopia of the Vojnović Brothers). In Ivo Banac, *Dubrovački eseji,* 97-151. Dubrovnik: Matica Hrvatska, 1992.

Baron, Hans. *From Petrarch to Leonardo Bruni: Studies in Humanistic and Political Literature.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968.

_____. *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny*. Princeton: PUP, 1955.

Bartoli, Matteo Giulio. *Il Dalmatico. Resti di un'antica lingua romanza parlata da Veglia a Ragusa e sua collocazione nella Rom`ania appennino-balcanica.* Roma: Instituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 2000.

Bartl, Peter. *Der Westbalkan zwischen Spanischer Monarchie und Osmanischem Reich: Zur Türkenproblematik an der Wende vom 16. zum 17. Jahrhundert*. Wiesbaden: Otto Hassarowitz, 1970.

Baumer, Franklin L. "The Conception of Christendom in Renaissance England." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 6 (1945): 131-156.

Bazala, Vladimir. *Pregled povijesti zdravstvene kulture Dubrovačke republike* (An Overview of the Health Culture of Ragusan Republic). Zagreb: Dubrovački horizonti, 1972.

Belamarić, Joško. "Sveti Vlaho i dubrovačka obitelj svetaca zaštitnika" (St. Blaise and the Ragusan Family of Patron Saints). *Dubrovnik. Časopis za književnost i znanost* 5 (1994): 29–39.

Benussi, Antonije. "Jedan nepoznati dubrovački novac. Prilog dubrovačkoj numizmatici" (An Unknown Example of Ragusan Coinage. A Contribution to Ragusan Numismatics). In *Zbornik iz dubrovačke prošlosti: Milanu Rešetaru o 70-oj godišnjici života prijatelji i učenici*, 246-278. Ed. Vladimir Ćorović et al. Dubrovnik, 1931.

Benzoni, Gino. "La cultura: contenuti e forme." In *Storia di Venezia*, vol IV, Gaetano Cozzi and Paolo Prodi, eds., 515-588. Rome: Enciclopedia Italiana, 1994.

Berend, Nora. *At the Gate of Christendom: Jews, Muslims and "Pagans" in Medieval Hungary c. 1000-c.1300.* Cambridge: CUP, 2001.

_____. "Défense de la Chrétienité et naissance d'une identité: Hongrie, Pologne et péninsule Ibérique au Moyen Âge." *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 58 (2003): 1009-1027.

Bertelli, Sergio. *Trittico: Lucca, Ragusa, Boston: tre città mercantili tra Cinque e Seicento.* Rome: Donzelli Editore, 2004.

De Biasi, Mario. "Leggenda e storia nelle origini di Venezia." *Ateneo Veneto* 23 (1985): 78-81.

Biegman, Nicolaas H. *The Turco-Ragusan relationship.* The Hague, Paris: Mouton, 1967.

Birnbaum, Marianna D. *Humanists in a shattered world. Croatian and Hungarian Latinity in the Sixteenth Century*. Los Angeles: Slavica Publishers, 1986.

Bogišić, Vlaho. "O inzularnosti nesuđene dubrovačke nacije u osam točaka i nekoliko referencija," (On the Insularity of the Unrealised Ragusan Nation in Eight Points and Several References). Available at: http://www.matica.hr/kolo/kolo2008_2.nsf/AllWebDocs/O_inzularnosti_nesudjene_dubrovacke_nacije_u_osam_tocaka_i_nekoliko_referencija

Bloch, Marc. *The Historian's Craft*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992.

Bogišić, Rafo. "Hrvatski barokni slavizam" (Croatian Baroque Slavism). In Rafo Bogišić, *Zrcalo duhovno: književne studije*, 138–164. Zagreb: Hrvatska sveučilišna naklada, 1997.

_____. "Nikola Nalješković." *Rad JAZU* 357 (1971): 5-162.

_____. "Marin Držić i Mario Kaboga" (Marin Držić and Mario Kaboga). *Forum* 27, no. 3-4 (1988): 189-206.

_____. "Antun Sasin: "Razboji od Turaka"" (Antun Sasin: "The Turskih Defeats"). In *Sisačka Bitka 1593.* Ed. Ivo Goldstein and Milan Kruhek, 227-238. Zagreb, Sisak: Zavod za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskog fakulteta: Povijesni arhiv, 1994.

Bouwsma, William J. *Venice and the Defense of Republican Liberty: Renaissance Values in the Age of the Counter-Reformation*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968.

_____. "Liberty in Renaissance and Reformation." In *The Origins of Modern Freedom in the West*. Ed. R. Davis, 203-234. Stanford, California: University of Stanford Press, 1995.

_____. "Venice and the Political Education of Europe." In *Renaissance Venice.* Ed. John R. Hale, 445-66. Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman and Littlefield, 1973.

Božić, Ivan. "Ekonomski i društveni razvitak Dubrovnka u XIV-XV veku" (The Economic and Social Development of Ragusa in Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries). *Istorijski glasnik* 1 (1948/1949): 21-61.

_____. *Dubrovnik i Turska u XIV i XV veku* (Ragusa and Turkey in the 14th and 15th Centuries. Belgrade: SAN, 1952.

_____. "Dubrovački kancelar Ksenofon *Filelfo*" (The Ragusan Chancellor Xenophon Filelfo). *Zbornik Filozofskog fakulteta u Beogradu* 9/1 (1967): 225-245.

_____. "Pojava humanizma u Dubrovniku" (The emergence of Humanism in Ragusa). *Istorijski pregled* II/1 (1955): 6-18.

Bordone, Renato. "Il passato storico come tempo mitico nel mondo cittadino italiano nel Medioevo." *Società e Storia* 51 (1991): 3-22.

Borkowska, Urszula. "The ideology of «antemurale» in the sphere of Slavic culture (13th-17th centuries)." In *The Common Christian Roots of European nations. An International Colloqium in the Vatican*, vol 2., 1206-122. Forence: Le Monnier, 1982

Bracewell, Catherine W. *The Uskoks of Senj: Piracy, Banditry and Holy War in the Sixteenth-century Adriatic*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992.

_____. "The Historiography of the Triplex Confinium: Conflict and Community on the Triple Frontier, 16th-18th Centuries." In *Frontiers and the Writing of History, 1500-1850*. Ed. Steven Ellis and Raingard Esser, 211-228. Hannover-Laatzen: Wehrhahn Verlag, 2006.

Brett, Annabel. "Scholastic political thought and the modern concept of the state." In *Rethinking the Foundations of Modern Political Thought***.** Ed. Annabel Brett and James Tully, 349-358. Cambridge: CUP, 2006.

Brubaker, Rogers and Frederick Cooper. "Beyond 'Identity'." *Theory and Society* 29 (2000): 1-47.

Budak, Neven. "Tumačenje podrijetla i najstarije povijesti Hrvata u djelima srednjovjekovnih pisaca" (The Interpretations of the Origin and the Earliest History of the Croats in the Works of the Medieval Authors). In *Etnogeneza Hrvata*. Ed. Neven Budak, 73-79.

Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice Hrvatske, Zavod za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 1996.

Bujan Solange. "La *Chronique* du prêtre de Dioclée. Un faux document historique." *Revue des études byzantines* 66 (2008): 5-38.

Burđelez, Ivana "Prinos kulturnoj povijesti Cavtata" (A Contribution to the Cultural History of Cavtat). In *Konavle u prošlosti, sadašnjosti i budućnosti. Zbornik radova sa znanstvenog skupa "Konavle u prošlosti, sadašnjosti i budućnosti" održanog u Cavtatu od 25. do 27. studenog 1996. godine. Svezak 1*. Ed. Vladimir Stipetić, 139-141. Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 1998.

Carile, Antonio. "Le origini di Venezia nella tradizione storiografica." In *Storia della cultura veneta*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini al Trecento*, ed. Girolamo, Arnaldi, Gianfranco Folena, and Marino Berengo, 135-166. Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1978.

_____. "Origine come categoria storiografica." In Antonio Carile and Giorgio Fedalto, *Le origini di Venezia*, 19-23. Bologna: Patron, 1978.

Chabod, Federico. "Esiste uno Stato del Rinascimento?" In Federico Chabod, *Scritti sul Rinascimento,* 593-604. Turin: Einaudi, 1967.

_____. "Alcune questioni di terminologia: Stato, nazione, patria nel linguaggio del Cinquecento." In Federico Chabod, *Scritti sul rinascimento,* 625-661. Turin: Einaudi, 1967.

Cipriani, Giovanni. *Il mito etrusco nel rinascimento fiorentino*. Florence: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1980.

Collingwood, Robin G. *The Idea of History*. London, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1970.

Cvjetković, Božo. *Povijest Dubrovačke Republike* (History of the Ragusan Republic), book 1. Dubrovnik: Dubrovačka Hrvatska Tiskara, 1917.

_____. *Uvod u povijest Dubrovačke Republike* (Introduction to the History of the Ragusan Republic), book 1. Dubrovnik: Naklada "Svećeničke književne družbe", Dubrovačka Hrvatska Tiskara, 1916.

Ćosić, Stjepan. *Dubrovnik nakon pada Republike (1808-1848)* (Ragusa after the Fall of the Republic). Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 1999.

_____. "Dubrovački plemićki i građanski rodovi konavoskog podrijetla" (Ragusan Noble and Burgeois Families of Konavle Descent). In *Konavle u prošlosti, sadašnjosti i budućnosti. Zbornik radova sa znanstvenog skupa "Konavle u prošlosti, sadašnjosti i budućnosti" održanog u Cavtatu od 25. do 27. studenog 1996. godine. Svezak 1*. Ed. Vladimir Stipetić, 47-75. Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 1998.

Ćosić, Stjepan and Vekarić, Nenad. *Dubrovačka vlastela između roda i države: salamankezi i sorbonezi* (The Ragusan Patriciate between the Kindred and the State: Salamankezi

and Sorbonezi). Zagreb – Dubrovnik: HAZU, Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2005.

_____. "The Factions within the Ragusan Patriciate (17th-18th Century)" *Dubrovnik Annals* 7 (2003): 7-79.

Čače, Slobodan. "'Kozmografija' Anonima Ravenjanina i počeci Dubrovnika" (The *Cosmography* of Anonymous from Ravenna and the Beginnings of Dubrovnik). *Dubrovnik. Časopis za književnost i znanost* 4 (1997): 84–97.

Čremošnik, Gregor. "Dubrovački pečati srednjeg vijeka" (Ragusan Medieval Seals). *Anali Historijskog instituta JAZU u Dubrovniku* 4-5 (1956): 31-47.

D'Amico, John F. *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome: Humanists and Churchmen on the Eve of the Reformation*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983.

van Dijk, Teun ed. *Discourse as Structure and Process*. London: Sage, 1997.

Dinić, Mihajlo. "Dubrovački tributi: Mogoriš, Svetodmitarski i Konavoski dohodak, Provižun braće Vlatkovića" (Ragusan Tributes: the Mogoriš, the Tribute for St. Demetrius and Konavle, the Provižun of Brothers Vlatković). *Glas SAN* 168 (1935): 203-257.

Dinić-Knežević, Dušanka. *Dubrovnik i Ugarska u srednjem veku* (Ragusa and the Hungarian Kingdom in the Middle Ages). Novi Sad: Filozofski fakultet u Novom Sadu, 1986.

Dukić, Davor ed. *Pučka krv, plemstvo duha: Zbornik radova o Nikoli Nalješkoviću* (Plebeian Blood, Nobility of Spirit: Collected Works on Nikola Nalješković). Zagreb: Disput, 2005.

Đorđević, Bojan. "Satira "Contro la nobiltà di Ragusa" Marija Kabožića" (Satire *Contro la nobiltà di Ragusa* of Mario Caboga). *Prilozi za književnost, jezik, istoriju i folklor* 70 1-4 (2004): 211-218.

Đurić, Ivan. "Romejski jezik i romejski govor Konstantina VII Porfirogenita" (The Romeian Language and Romeian Speech of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus). *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta*, 24-25 (1986): 109-134.

Eckhart, Ferenc. *A szentkorona-eszme története* (The history of the Doctrine of the Holy Crown). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1941.

von Edelberg, Eitelberger. *Die mittelalterlichen Kunstdenkmale Dalmatiens in Arbe, Zara, Trau, Spalato und Ragusa.* Vienna, 1861.

Eglin, John. *The Myth of Venice in British Culture, 1660-1797*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001.

Eichenberger, Thomas. *Patria. Studien zur Bedeutung des Wortes im Mittelalter.* Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke 1991.

von Engel, Johann Christian. *Geschichte des Freystaates Ragusa.* Vienna: Anton Doll, 1807.

Farlati, Daniele and Jacobus Coleti. *Ecclesiae Ragusinae Historia*. Venetiis: Apud Sebastianum Coleti, 1800.

Fata, Márta. "Deutsche und schweizerische Einflüsse auf die Reformation in Ungarn im 16. Jahrhundert. Aspekte der frühneuzeitlich-vormodernen Identität zwischen Ethnie und Konfession." In *Deutschland und Ungarn in ihren wechselseitigen Beziehungen während der Renaissance.* Ed. Wilhelm Kühlmann and Anton Schindling, 53-91. Tübingen: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2002.

Finlay, Robert. *Politics in Renaissance Venice*. London: Ernest Benn, 1980.

Fisković, Igor. "Povijesni biljezi dubrovačkog identiteta" (Historical Signs of Ragusan Identity). *Dubrovnik* 4 (1993): 79-99.

_____. "Kameni likovi svetoga Vlaha u Dubrovniku" (Stone Statues of St. Blaise in Ragusa). *Dubrovnik* 5 (1994): 94-112.

_____."O značenju i porijeklu reljefa na portalu Kneževa dvora" (On the Meaning and Origin of the Reliefs on the Portal of the Rector's Palace). In Igor Fisković, *Reljef Renesansnog Dubrovnika,* 143-174. Dubrovnik: Matica Hrvatska, 1993.

_____. "Skulptura u urbanističkom usavršavanju renesansnog Dubrovnika" (The Sculpture in the Urbanistic Embellishing of the Renaissance Ragusa). In Igor Fisković, *Reljef Renesansnog Dubrovnika,* 85-141. Dubrovnik: Matica Hrvatska, 1993.

Foretić, Dalibor. "Pokušaj tipologije festivalskih dramskih zbivanja od 1971. do 1996." (An Attempt at a Typology of the Drama Events of the Festival from 1971 to 1996). In Dalibor Foretić, *Hrid za slobodu: dubrovačke ljetne kronike 1971-1996.,* 5-13. Dubrovnik: Matica hrvatska Dubrovnik, 1998.

Foretić, Miljenko. "Venecija u zrcalu starog Dubrovnika" (Venice in the Mirror of Old Ragusa). In *Dubrovnik u povijesnim i kulturnim mijenama: zbornik odabranih radova,* 321-328. Dubrovnik: Matica hrvatska, 2007.

Foretić, Vinko. *Povijest Dubrovnika do 1808. Prvi dio, Od osnutka do 1526* (History of Dubrovnik until 1808. First Part, From the Foundation to 1526). Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice Hrvatske, 1980.

_____. *Povijest Dubrovnika do 1808. Drugi dio, Od 1526. do 1808.* (History of Dubrovnik until 1808. Second Part, From 1526 to 1808). Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice Hrvatske, 1980.

_____. "Dubrovnik u doba Marina Držića" (Ragusa in the Age of Marin Držić), in Vinko Foretić, *Studije i rasprave iz hrvatske povijesti*, 301-321. Split: Književni krug Split, Matica Hrvatska Dubrovnik, 2001.

_____. "Godina 1358. u povijesti Dubrovnika" (The Year 1358 in the History of Ragusa). *Starine JAZU* 50 (1960): 251-278.

_____. "Politički pogledi Mavra Vetranovića" (Political Views of Mavro Vetranović). In Vinko Foretić, *Studije i rasprave iz hrvatske povijesti,* 321-333. Split: Književni krug Split, Matica Hrvatska Dubrovnik, 2001.

_____. "O Marinu Držiću" (On Marin Držić). *Rad Jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* 13 (1965): 49-145.

Fortini-Brown, Patritia. *Venice and Antiquity. The Venetian Sense of the Past*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997.

Foucault, Michel. *Archaeology of Knowledge*. New York: Pantheon, 1972.

_____. *The order of Things*. New York: Pantheon,1970.

Franičević, Marin. *Povijest hrvatske renesansne književnosti* (History of the Croatian Renaissance Literature). Zagreb: Nakladni Zavod Matice Hrvatske, 1986.

Frigo, Daniela ""Small states" and diplomacy: Mantua and Modena." In *Politics and Diplomacy in Early Modern Italy: The Structure of Diplomatic Practice, 1450-1800*. ed., Daniela Frigo, 147-175. Cambridge: CUP, 2000.

Frizemeyer, Werner. *Christenheit und Europa. Zur Geschichte des europaischen Gemeinschaftgefuhls von Dante bis Leibniz.* Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1931.

Gaeta, Franco. "Idea di Venezia." In *Storia della cultura veneta*, tomus III-3, *Dal primo Quattrocento al concilio di Trento*. Ed. Girolamo Arnaldi and Manlio Pastore Stocchi, 565-641. Vicenza: Neri Pozza editore, 1981.

Geary, Patrick. *Women at the Beginning: Origin Myths from the Amazons to the Virgin Mary*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.

Gelcich, Giuseppe. *Dello sviluppo civile di Ragusa ne' suoi monumenti istorici ed artistici*. Ragusa: C. Pretner, 1884.

von Gierke, Otto. *Political Theories of the Middle Ages.* Trans. Frederick William Maitland. Cambridge: At the University Press, 1922.

Gilbert, Felix. "The Venetian Constitution in Florentine Political Thought." In *Florentine Studies: Politics and Society in Renaissance Florence*. Ed. Nicolai Rubinstein, 463-500. London: Faber, 1968.

Goleniščev, Il'ja. *Il Rinascimento italiano e le letterature slave dei secoli XV e XVI*. Milan: Pubblicazioni della Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, 1973.

Gleason, Philip. "Identifying *Identity*: A Semantic History." *The Journal of American History* 69 (1983): 910-931.

Graciotti, Sante. "L'antemurale polacco in Italia tra Cinquecento e Seicento: il barocchizzarsi di un mito." In *Barocco fra Italia e Polonia.* Ed. J. Ślaski, 303-324. Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe 1977.

Grubb, James S. “When Myths Lose Power: Four Decades of Venetian Historiography.” *Journal of Modern History* 58 (1986): 43-94.

_____. “Memory and Identity: why Venetians didn't keep ricordanze.” *Renaissance Studies* 8 (1994): 375–387.

Grujić, Nada. “Cavtat rinascimentale. Rievocazione dell'Epidauro antica.” In *Homo Adriaticus, identità culturale e autocoscienza attraverso i secoli*, ed. Nadia Falaschini, Sante Graciotti and Sergio Sconocchia, 251-261. Reggio Emilia: Edizioni Diabasis, 1998.

Haler, Albert. “Grk Humanista slavi Dubrovnik” (A Greek Humanist lauds Ragusa). *Hrvatska revija* 10 (1938): 550-551.

Hankins, James ed. *Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflections.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Hampsher-Monk, Iain Karin Tilmans and Frank van Vree, eds. *The History of Concepts. Comparative Perspectives.* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998.

Harding, Alan. “The Origins of the Concept of the State.” *History of Political Thought* 15 (1994): 57-72.

Harris, Robin. *Dubrovnik: A History*. London: Saqi Books, 2003.

Hochedlinger, Michael. “Die französisch-osmanische "Freundschaft" 1525-1792. Element antihabsburgischer Politik, Gleichgewichtsinstrument, Prestigeunternehmung. Aufriss eines Problemes.” *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 102/1-2 (1994): 108-164.

Höpfl, Harro and Martyn P. Thompson. “The History of Contract as a Motif in Political Thought.” *The American Historical Review* vol. 84 No. 4 (1979): 919-944.

Hoppenbrouwers, Peter. “Such Stuff as Peoples are Made on: Ethnogenesis and the Construction of Nationhood in Medieval Europe.” *The Medieval History Journal* 9 (2006): 195-242.

Hörnqvist, Mikael. *Machiavelli and Empire*. Cambridge: CUP, 2004.

Horvatić, Dubravko. “Barbari pred Gradom” (Barbarians in front of the City). *Dubrovnik* 2-3 (1992): 59-62.

Housley, Norman. “Frontier Societies and Crusading in the Late Middle Ages.” *Mediterranean Historical Review* 10 (1995): 104-119.

_____. *Religious Warfare in Europe, 1400–1536.* Oxford University Press, 2002.

Howarth, David. *Discourse.* Buckingham UK: Open University Press, 2000.

Hrvatski biografski leksikon (Croatian Biographical Lexicon), tomus 5. Ed. Trpimir Macan. Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod "Miroslav Krleža," 2005.

Hrvatska encikopedija (Croatian Encyclopedia), tomus I. Ed. Mate Ujević. Zagreb, 1941.

Ivić, Nenad. *Domišljanje Prošlosti* (Fabulation of the Past). Zagreb: Zavod za znanost o književnosti Filozofskog fakulteta u Zagrebu, 1992.

Jakić-Cestarić, Vesna. "Etnički odnosi u srednjevjekovnom Zadru prema analizi osobnih imena" (The Ethnic Situation in Medieval Zadar Based on the Analysis of Personal Names). *Radovi Instituta Jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti u Zadru* 19 (1972): 99-166.

_____. "Nastajanje hrvatskoga (čakavskog) Splita i Trogira u svjetlu antroponima XI stoljeća" (The Genesis of Croatian (Čakavian) Split and Trogir in the Light of Antroponims of the Eleventh Century). *Hrvatski dijalektološki zbornik* 5 (1981): 93-112.

Janeković, Zdenka. "Stjecanje Konavala: Antička tradicija i mit u službi diplomacije" (The Acquisition of Konavle: Classical Myth and Tradition in the Service of Diplomacy). In *Konavle u prošlosti, sadašnjosti i budućnosti*. *Zbornik radova sa znanstvenog skupa* "*Konavle u prošlosti, sadašnjosti i budućnosti" održanog u Cavtatu od 25. do 27. studenog 1996. godine. Svezak 1*. Ed. Vladimir Stipetić, 31–44. Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 1998.

_____. "Javni rituali u političkom diskursu humanističkog Dubrovnika" (The Public Rituals in the Political Discourse of the Humanist Ragusa). *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest* 29 (1996): 68-86.

Janeković-Römer, Zdenka. *Okvir slobode. Dubrovačka vlastela između srednjovjekovlja i humanizma* (The Frame of Freedom: Patricians of Dubrovnik between the Middle Ages and Humanism). Zagreb and Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 1999.

_____. *Višegradski ugovor temelj Dubrovačke Republike* (The Treaty of Visegrad - the Foundation of the Ragusan Republic). Zagreb: Golden Marketing, 2003.

_____. *Rod i grad: dubrovačka obitelj od XIII. do XV. Stoljeća* (Kindred and City: the Ragusan Family between the Thirteenth and Fifteenth Century). Dubrovnik: HAZU, 1994.

Jireček, Konstantin. *Die Romanen in den Städten Dalmatiens während des Mittelalters*. Vienna: Kais. Akedemie der Wissenschaften, 1901.

_____. "Beiträge zur ragusanischen Literaturgeschichte." *Archiv für slavische Philologie* 21 (1899): 399-542.

Kolumbić, Nikica. "Dubrovački humanisti u okviru hrvatskog humanizma" (Ragusan Humanists in the Context of Croatian Humanism). *Dubrovnik: časopis za književnost i znanost* 4 (1995): 129-137.

Krasić Stjepan, Serafino Razzi, *Povijest dubrovačke metropolije i dubrovačkih nadbiskupa* (The History of Ragsuan Metropolitan See and Ragusan Archbishops) Dubrovnik: Biskupski ordinarijat Dubrovnik, 1999.

Katičić, Radoslav. "Aedificaverunt Ragusium et habitaverunt in eo: tragom najstarijih dubrovačkih zapisa" (Aedificaverunt Ragusium et habitaverunt in eo: Tracing the Oldest Texts of Dubrovnik). In *Uz početke hrvatskih početaka. Filološke studije o našem najranijem srednjovjekovlju*, 131–160. Split: Književni krug, 1993.

_____. *Illyricum Mythologicum.* Zagreb: Antibarbarus, 1995.

Kidd, Colin. "Identity before Identities: Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Historian." In *History and Nation,* ed. Julia Rudolph, 9-44. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2006.

King, Margaret L. *Venetian Humanism in an Age of Patrician Dominance.* Princeton, N.J; Princeton University Press, 1986.

Kokole, Stanko. "Ciriaco d'Ancona v Dubrovniku: renesansna epigrafika, arheologija in obujanja antike v humanističnem okolju mestne državice sredi petnajstega stoletja"(Cyriacus of Ancona in Ragusa: Renaissance Epigraphic, Archeology and the Waking of Antiquity in the Humanistic Context of the City-State in the Middle of the Fifteenth Century). *Arheološki vestnik* 41 (1990): 663-698.

_____. "Cyriacus of Ancona and the Revival of Two Forgotten Ancient Personifications in the Rector's Palace of Dubrovnik." *Renaissance Quarterly* 49.2 (1996): 225-267.

_____. "Venera i Mars na portalu Kneževog dvora. O porijeklu prvog mitološkog prizora "all'antica" u kiparstvu ranorenesansnog Dubrovnika" (Venus and Mars on the Portal of the Rector's Palace. On the origin of the First Mythological Depiction "all antica" in the Sculpture of Renaissance Ragusa). In *Likovna kultura Dubrovnika 15 i 16 stoljeća* (The Artistic Culture of Dubrovnik in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century), 121-126. Ed. Igor Fisković. Zagreb: Muzejsko-galerijski centar, 1991.

Kontler, Laszlo. *Milenium in Central Europe. A History of Hungary.* Budapest: Atlantisz Publishing House, 1999.

Körbler, Đuro. "Dubrovačka republika i zapadne evropske države: veze Dubrovnika s Napulem, Sicilijom, Francuskom i Španolskom" (The Ragusan Republic and the States of Western Europe: the Relations of Ragusa with Naples, Sicily, France and Spain). *Rad JAZU* 93 (1916): 165-252.

_____. "Iz mladih dana triju humanista Dubrovčana 15. Vijeka" (Karlo Pavov Pucić, Ilija Lampričin Crijević i Damjan Paskojev Benešić)" (From the Early Days of Three Ragusan Humanists of the 15th Century [Karlo Pavov Pucić, Ilija Lampričin Crijević and Damjan Paskojev Benešić]). *Rad JAZU* 206 (1915): 218-252.

Košćak, Vladimir. "Od Epidaura do Dubrovnika" (From Epidaurus to Dubrovnik). *Dubrovnik. Časopis za književnost i znanost* 4 (1997): 5–38.

Knoll, Paul W. "Poland as "Antemurale Christianitatis" in the Late Middle Ages." *The Catholic Historical Review* 60 (1974): 381-401.

Kravar, Zoran. "Svjetovi Osmana" (The Worlds of Osman). In *Nakon godine MDC: studije o književnom baroku i dodirnim temama,* 104–125 .Dubrovnik: Matica Hrvatska, 1993.

Krzyzaniakowa, Jadwiga. "Poland as Antemurale Christianitatis: the political and ideological foundations of the idea," *Polish Western Affairs* 33 (1992): 3-24.

Kunčević, Lovro. "Civic and ethnic discourses of identity in a city-state context: The case of Renaissance Ragusa." In: *Whose Love of Which Country? Composite States, National Histories and Patriotic Discourses in Early Modern East Central Europe,* 149-175. Ed. Balázs Trencsényi and Márton Zászkaliczky. Leiden: Brill, 2010.

_____. "The Janus-Faced Sovereignty: the International Status of the Early Modern Ragusan Republic." In *The Tributary States of the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. Ed. Kármán Gábor and Lovro Kunčević. Leiden: Brill, forthcoming.

_____. "On Ragusan *Libertas* in the Late Middle Ages." *Dubrovnik annals* 14 (2010): 25-69.

_____. "'Ipak nije na odmet sve čuti:' medičejski pogled na urotničke namjere Marina Držića" (No Harm in Hearing it all: The Medicean Attitude to the Conspiracy of Marin Držić). *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti u Dubrovniku*, 45 (2007): 9-46.

Krekić, Bariša. "On the Latino-Slavic Cultural Symbiosis in Late Medieval and Renaissance Dalmatia and Dubrovnik." In *Dubrovnik: A Mediterranean Urban Society, 1300–1600*, IX, 321–332. Vermont: Variorum, 1997.

_____. *Dubrovnik in the 14th and 15th Centuries: A city between east and west*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972.

_____. "Developed Autonomy: The Patricians in Dubrovnik and Dalmatian Cities." In *Dubrovnik: a Mediterranean Urban Society, 1300-1600*. Aldershot: Variorum Ashgate, 1997: II: 185-215.

Labalme, Patricia H. *Bernardo Giustiniani*. *A Venetian of the Quattrocento*. Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1969.

Lazzarini, Vittorio. "Il preteso documento della fondazione di Venezia e la cronaca del medico Jacopo Dondi." *Atti dell'Instituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti* 75 (1915-1916): 1263-1281.

Letić, Branko. *Rodoljublje u dubrovačkoj književnosti XVII veka* (Patriotism in the Ragusan Literature of the Seventeenth Century). Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1982.

Loechel, André J.-M. “Le rappresentazioni della communità.” In *Storia di Venezia dale origini alla caduta. Il Rinascimento: politica e cultura*, ed. Alberto Tenenti and Ugo Tucci, 603-721. Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1996.

Lončar, Milenko. “Dalmatinske etimologije Konstantina Porfirogeneta” (Dalmatian Etymologies of Constantine Porphyrogenitus). *Folia onomastica Croatica* 11 (2002): 149-174.

Lonza, Nella. *Kazalište vlasti: Ceremonijal i državni blagdani Dubrovačke Republike u 17. i 18. Stoljeću* (The Theatre of Power: State Ceremony and Feasts of the Dubrovnik Republic in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century). Zagreb – Dubrovnik: HAZU, Zavod za povijesne znanosti u Dubrovniku, 2009.

_____.“O dubrovačkom diplomatskom ceremonijalu,” (On the Ragusan Diplomatic Ceremonial), *Zbornik Diplomatske akademije* 3 (1998): 169-175.

_____.“Državni pogrebi u Dubrovniku (17.-18. stoljeće)” (The State Funerals in Ragusa (seventtenth and eighteenth Century)) *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 42 (2004): 131-148.

_____. “La giustizia in scena: punizione e spazio pubblico nella Repubblica di Ragusa.” *Acta Histriae* 10/1 (2002): 161-190.

_____. “Dubrovački studenti prava u kasnom srednjem vijeku” (Ragusan Students of Law in the Late Middle Ages). *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 48 (2010): 9-45.

Lučić, Josip. “Etničko-politička pripadnost Dubrovnika” (Ethnic and Political Belonging of Ragusa). *Dubrovački horizonti* 32 (1992): 9-17.

_____. *Povijest Dubrovnika od VII stoljeća do godine 1205* (History of Dubrovnik from the Seventh Century until the Year 1205). Dubrovnik: Anali Historijskog odjela Centra za znanstveni rad Jugoslavenske akademije u Dubrovniku, 1976.

_____. “Podaci o doseljenju Slavena u staroj dubrovačkoj historiografiji” (Mentions of Slavic Migration in Old Ragusan Historiography). In *Etnogeneza Hrvata*. Ed. Neven Budak, 79-85. Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice Hrvatske and Zavod za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 1995.

Ljubić, Šime. “O odnošajih medju Dubrovčani i Mletčani za ugar.-hrv. vladanja u Dubrovniku” (On the relations between the Ragusans and the Venetians during the Hungarian-Croatian rule over Ragusa). *Rad JAZU* 17 (1871): 1-69.

_____. “Ob odnošajih dubrovačke sa mletačkom Republikom tja do g. 1358.” (On the Relations of the Ragusan and the Venetian Republics until the Year 1358). *Rad JAZU* 5 (1868): 44-122.

_____.“O Odnošajih medju republikom mletačkom i dubrovačkom od početka XVI stoljeća do njihove propasti” (On the Relations between the Venetian and Ragusan Republics from the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century until Their Fall) *Rad JAZU* 53 (Zagreb 1880): 94-185.

Lupis, Vinicije B. “Pregled povijesti Stonske biskupije od osnutka do 1541. godine” (An overview of the History of the Bishopric of Ston from its Establishment until 1541). In *Tisuću godina Dubrovačke nad(biskupije), Zbornik radova znanstvenog skupa u povodu tisuću godina uspostave dubrovačke (nad)biskupije/metropolije (998.-1998.),* 197-217.Dubrovnik and Split: Biskupski ordinarijat Dubrovnik-Crkva u svijetu, 2001.

Macan, Trpimir. “U povodu istraživanja u dubrovačkoj katedrali” (Concerning the Excavations in the Ragusan Cathedral). *Dubrovački Horizonti* 23 (1983): 3–11.

Mager, Wolfgang. “Res publica chez les juristes, théologiens et philosophes à la fin du Moyen Âge: sur l'élaboration d'une notion-clé de la théorie politique modern.” In *Théologie et droit dans la science politique de l'État modern,* 229-239. Rome: Ecole Française de Rome, 1991.

Mahnken Irmgard, *Dubrovački patricijat u XIV veku* (Ragusan Patriciate in the Fourteenth Century). Posebna izdanja Srpske Akademije Nauka i Umetnosti 340. Belgrade: Srpska Akademija nauka i umetnosti, 1960.

_____.“Die Personennamen des mittelalterlichen Patriziats von Dubrovnik als Quelle zu etnographischen Untersuchungen.” *Slavistična revija* 10 (1957): 279-295.

_____. “Slavisch und Romanisch im mittelalterlichen Dubrovnik.” *Zeitschrift für Balkanologie* (1963): 60-72.

Margaritoni, Marko. *Saint Blaise. History and legends.* Dubrovnik-Zagreb: Church of Saint Blaise, 2004.

Marinković, Ana, “Social and Territorial Endogamy in the Ragusan Republic: Matrimonial Dispenses during the Pontificates of Paul II and Sixtus IV (1464-1484).” In *The Long Arm of Papal Authority: Late Medieval Christian Peripheries and Their Communication with the Holy See,* Gerhard Jaritz, Torsten Bo Jørgensen and Kirsi Salonen, eds. (Bergen-Budapest-Krems: CEU Press & Medium Aevum Quotidianum, 2005), 135-156.

Marinović, Ante “O postanku i historijskom razvitku Cavtata” (On the Genesis and Historical Development of Cavtat). *Vojnoistorijski glasnik* 1 (1971): 109-140.

Maroević, Tonko. “Dubrovnik opkoljen” (Ragusa Surrounded). *Dubrovnik* 2-3 (1992): 47-50.

Mastnak, Tomaž. *Crusading Peace: Christendom, the Muslim World and Western Political Order.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002.

Matković, Petar. *Putovanja po Balkanskom poluotoku za Srednjega vijeka* (Travels on the Balcan Penninusula in the Middle Ages). Zagreb, 1878.

McHoul, Alec and Wendy Grace. *A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power and the Subject.* London and New York: Routledge, 2002.

Medini, Milorad. *Starine dubrovačke* (Dubrovnik's Antiquities). Dubrovnik: author's publication, 1935.

_____. *Dubrovnik Gučetića* (Ragusa of Gučetići). Beograd: SAN, 1953.

de Mesquita, Bueno. "The Place of Despotism in Italian Politics." In *Europe in the Late Middle Ages.* Ed. John Hale et al., 303-312. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1965.

Milinović, Dino. "Dubrovnik-Ragusium. Prilog viđenju nastanka i razvitka grada na kraju kasne antike" (Dubrovnik-Ragusium. A Contribution to the Conception of the Genesis and the Development of the City at the End of Late Antiquity). *Dubrovnik. Časopis za književnost i znanost* 4 (1997): 124–142.

Miović, Vesna. *Dubrovačka diplomacija u Istambulu* (Ragusan Diplomacy in Istanbul). Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 2003.

_____. *Dubrovačka Republika u spisima osmanskih sultana* (Ragusan Republic in the Documents of the Ottoman Sultans). Dubrovnik: Državni arhiv u Dubrovniku, 2005.

Miović-Perić, Vesna. *Na razmeđu: osmansko-dubrovačka granica (1667.-1806.)* (On the Frontier: the Ottoman-Ragusan Border 1667-1806). Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti Hrvatske akademije, 1997.

Mitić, Ilija. "Orlandov stup u Dubrovniku" (The Orlando Column in Ragusa) *Anali Historijskog instituta JAZU u Dubrovniku*, 10/11 (1966): 233-254.

_____. "Kada se Dubrovnik počeo nazivati Republikom" (When Ragusa started to call Itself a Republic). *Pomorski zbornik* 25 (1987): 488-491.

_____. "Za Serenissimu – Dubrovnik samo komuna nikad republika" (For Serenissima – Ragusa only a Commune never a Republic). *Dubrovnik* 5 (1976): 65-69.

_____. "Trajan Lalić – jedan od zaslužnih podanika Dubrovačke republike" (Trajan Lalić – one of the Meritorious Subjects of the Ragusan Republic). *Dubrovački horizonti* 16-17 (1976-1977): 119-122.

_____. "Imigracijska politika Dubrovačke Republike s posebnim obzirom na ustanovu svjetovnog azila" (The Immigration Policy of Ragsuan Republic especially regarding the Institution of Secular Exile). *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti IC JAZU u Dubrovniku* 17 (1979): 125-163.

Mitrović, Jeremija D. *Srpstvo Dubrovnika* (The Serbhood of Ragusa). Available at: http://www.rastko.rs/rastko-du/istorija/jmitrovic/1992/jmitrovic-dubrovnik_l.html

Mišić, Siniša. "Povelja Beljaka i Radiča Sankovića Dubrovniku" (The Charter of Beljak and Radič Sanković to Ragusa). *Stari srpski arhiv* 7 (2008): 113-127.

Molnár, Antal. *Le Saint-Siège, Raguse et les missions catholiques de la Hongrie Ottomane 1572-1647.* Rome-Budapest: Accademia d'Ungeria, Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, METEM, 2007.

Mosher Stuard, Susan. *A State of Deference: Ragusa/Dubrovnik in the Medieval Centuries*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992.

Mulier, Haitsma. *The Myth of Venice and Dutch Republican Thought in the Seventeenth Century.* Assen: Van Gorcum, 1980.

Muljačić, Žarko. *Das Dalmatische, Studien zu einer untergangenen Sprache*. Quellen und Beiträge zur kroatischen Kulturgeschichte 10. Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2000.

Munzel-Everling Taunusstein, Dietlinde. "Kaiserrecht und Rolandfiguren - ein weiterer Beitrag zur Rolandforschung." *Forum Historiae Iuris* (1997). Available at: http://fhi.rg.mpg.de/articles/9709munzel-everling.htm (accessed on 10 December 2010).

Muir, Edward. *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice.* Princeton: PUP, 1981.

Nedeljković, Branislav. "Položaj Dubrovnika prema Ugarskoj (1358-1460)" (Position of Ragusa towards the Hungarian Kingdom [1358-1460]). *Godišnjak Pravnog fakulteta u Sarajevu* 15 (1967): 447-463.

_____. Branislav M. Nedeljković, "Dubrovačko-turski ugovor od 23. oktobra 1458. godine" (The Ragusan-Ottoman Treaty of the 23 of October 1458). *Zbornik Filozofskog Fakulteta* 9/1 (1970): 363-393.

Ničetić, Antun. *Povijest dubrovačke luke* (The History of the Ragusan Port). Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 1996.

_____. *Nove spoznaje o postanku. Dubrovnika, o njegovu brodarstvu i plovidbi svetog Pavla* (New Conclusions regarding the Genesis of Dubrovnik, its Maritime Affairs and the Shipwreck of St. Paul). Dubrovnik: Sveučilište u Dubrovniku, 2005.

Nodari, Maja. "Vrijeme patnje - pred Uskrs slobode" (Time of Suffering – Before the Easter of Freedom). *Dubrovački horizonti* 32 (1992): 56-75.

Nodilo, Natko. "Prvi ljetopisci i davna historiografija dubrovačka"(First Chroniclers and the Ancient Historiography of Ragusa). *RAD JAZU* 65 (1883): 92–128.

Novak, Grga. *Povijest Dubrovnika od najstarijih vremena do početka VII stoljeća* (History of Ragusa from the Oldest Times until the Beginning of the Seventh Century). Zagreb: Izdavački zavod Jugoslavenske Akademije Znanosti i Umjetnosti, 1972.

_____. "Questiones Epidauritanae," *Rad JAZU* 13 (1965): 97-140.

Novak, Grga. *Povijest Splita* I. (History of Split). Split: Matica Hrvatska, 1957.

Novak, Slobodan Prosperov. *Povijest hrvatske književnosti, II. Knjiga: Od humanističkih početaka do Kašićeve ilirske gramatike 1604.*, (History of Croatian Literature, II Book: From the Humanist Beginnings until Kašić's Illyrian Grammar of 1604). Zagreb: Antibarbarus, 1997.

Novak, Viktor. "The Slavonic-Latin Symbiosis in Dalmatia during the Middle Ages." *The Slavonic and East European Review* 32 (1954): 1-29.

Novak Klemenčič, Renata. "Kiparski ukras Kneževa dvora u Dubrovniku u 15. stoljeću – nekoliko priloga" (Sculptural Decoration of the Rector's palace in Ragusa – Several Contributions), *Prilozi Povijesti Umjetnosti u Dalmaciji* 39 (2001-2002): 269-302.

Novaković, Vlaho. *Cavtat i Konavle* (Cavtat and Konavle). Cavtat: starinarsko društvo "Epidaurum", 1954.

Olszewski, Henrik. "The Ideology of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as the Bulwark of Christianity." *Polish Western Affairs* vol. 33 no 2 (1992): 69-86.

Ortalli, Gherardo. "Il mito di Venezia: mezzo secolo dopo." In *L'eredità culturale di Gina Fasoli. Atti del convegno di studi per il centenario della nascita* (1905-2005), Francesca Bocchi and Gian Maria Varanini, eds., 91-106. Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 2008.

_____. "Venezia allo specchio." In *La diversa visuale. Il fenomeno Venezia osservato dagli altri,* ed. Uwe Israel, 200-219. Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2008.

Panaite, Viorel. *The Ottoman Law of War and Peace. The Ottoman Empire and Tribute Payers.* Boulder: East European Monographs, 2000.

Papp, Sándor. *Die Verleihungs-, Bekräftigungs- und Vertragsurkunden der Osmanen für Ungarn und Siebenbürgen*. Schriften der Balkan-Kommission tome 42. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2003.

Pavlović, Bernardica. "Roland's Column in Dubrovnik: His Role, His Changes and His Permanence." In *Orlandovi europski putevi* (Roland's European Paths). Ed. Adrijana Kremenjaš-Daničić, 420-426. Dubrovnik: Europski dom Dubrovnik, 2006.

Peković, Željko. *Dubrovnik. Nastanak i razvoj srednjevjekovnoga grada* (Dubrovnik. Genesis and the Development of the Medieval City). Split: Muzej hrvatskih arheoloških spomenika-Split, 1998.

_____. "Nastanak i razvoj crkve sv. Vlaha u Dubrovniku" (The Genesis and Development of the Church of St. Blaise in Dubrovnik). *Dubrovnik. Časopis za književnost i znanost* 5 (1994): 43–79.

Péter, László. "The Holy Crown of Hungary, Visible and Invisible," *Slavonic and East European Review* 81/3 (2003): 421-510.

Pešorda Vardić, Zrinka. "The Crown, the King and the City: Dubrovnik, Hungary and the dynastic controversy, 1382-1390." *Dubrovnik Annals* 10 (2006), 7-29.

_____. ""Pučka vlastela": Društvena struktura dubrovačke bratovštine Sv. Antuna u kasnom srednjem vijeku" ('Plebeian aristocrats': the social structure of the St. Anthony Confraternity in late Medieval Dubrovnik). *Povijesni prilozi* 33 (2007): 215-236.

Peričić, Eduard. *Sclavorum Regnum Grgura Barskog. Ljetopis popa Dukljanina* (Sclavorum Regnum of Grgur of Bar. The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja). Zagreb: Kršćanska sadašnjost, 1991.

_____."Dubrovački Antunini u kasnom srednjem vijeku" (The Ragusan Confraternity of St. Anthony in the Late Middle Ages). Unpublished doctoral dissertation at the Filozofski Fakultet u Zagrebu, supervisor Zdenka Janeković-Röemer, 2006.

Petrovich, Michael B. "Dalmatian Historiography in the Age of Humanism". *Medievalia et humanistica* 12 (1958): 84-103.

Picchio, Riccardo. "L'interprétation humaniste de l'histoire de Raguse de Giovan Mario Filelfo." *Etudes litéraires slavo-romanes* (Studia-Historica et Philologica, VI) (1978): 43-54.

Pisani, Paul. *Num Ragusini ab omni iure veneto a seac. X. usque ad saec. XIV. immunes fuerint*. Paris, 1893.

Pocock, John G. A. *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975.

_____."*Languages and Their Implications*: The Transformation of the Study of Political Thought." In *Politics, Language and Time*, 3-41. London: Methuen, 1971.

_____. "The Concept of a Language and the métier d'historien: some Considerations on Practice." In *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-modern Europe*, ed. Anthony Pagden, 19-38. Cambridge: CUP, 1987.

Polić Bobić, Mirjana. *Među križom i polumjesecom* (Between the Cross and the Crescent). Zagreb. Ljevak, 2000.

Popović, Toma. *Turska i Dubrovnik u XVI veku* (Turkey and Ragusa in the Sixteenth Century). Belgrade; Srpska književna zadruga, 1973.

Pötschke, Dieter. "Roland und Recht. Ursprung und rechtliche Bedeutung insbesondere der märkischen Rolandstandbilder." In *Rolande, Kaiser und Recht. Zur Rechtsgeschichte des Harzraums und seiner Umgebung.* Ed. Dieter Pötschke, 44-132. Berlin: Lukas Verlag, 1999.

_____. "Rolandovi kipovi u Europi," (Roland's Statues in Europe). In *Orlandovi europski putevi* (Roland's European Paths). Ed. Adrijana Kremenjaš-Daničić, 205-215. Dubrovnik: Europski dom Dubrovnik, 2006.

Poumarède, Géraud. "Justifier l'injustifiable: l'alliance turque au miroir de la chrétienté (XVIe–XVIIe siècles)." *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* 3 (1997): 217–246.

Power, Daniel. “Frontiers: Terms, Concepts, and the Historians of Medieval and Early Modern Europe.” In *Frontiers in Question: Eurasian Borderlands 700-1700.* Ed. Daniel Power and Naomi Standen, 1-12. London: Macmillan Press, 1999.

Praga, Giuseppe. “Ciriaco de Pizzicolli e Marino de Resti.” *Archivio storico per la Dalmazia* 7/13 (1932): 262-80.

Prlender, Ivica. “Dubrovačko posvajanje svetoga Vlaha” (Ragusan Adoption of St. Blaise). *Dubrovnik* 5 (1994): 9-21.

_____.“Povijesni identitet Dubrovnika” (The Historical Identity of Ragusa). *Dubrovnik* 2-3 (1992): 286-296.

Puhiera, Samuel. *O postanku Dubrovnika* (About the Foundation of Ragusa). Split: author’s edition, 1963.

Pupačić, Josip. “Pjesnik urotnik (o političkim planovima Marina Držića” (The Poet Conspirator (on The Political Plans of Marin Držić)). In *Zbornik radova o Marinu Držiću.* Ed. Jakša Ravlić, 472-511. Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska, 1969.

Raines, Dorit. *L'invention du mythe aristocratique: l'image de soi du patriciat vénitien au temps de la Sérénissime*. Venice: Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti, 2006.

Rapanić, Željko. “Marginalia o ‘postanku’ Dubrovnika” (Marginalia about the ‘Beginning’ of Dubrovnik). *Izdanja Hrvatskog arheološkog društva* 12 (1988): 15–38.

Ravlić, Jakša. “Politički pogledi H. Lucića” (Political Views of H. Lucić), *Historijski pregled* 2 (1954): 27-31.

Raukar, Tomislav. *Hrvatsko Srednjovjekovlje. Prostor, ljudi, ideje* (Croatian Middle Ages. Space, People, Ideas). Zagreb: Školska knjiga, Zavod za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskoh Fakulteta u Zagrebu, 1997.

Rešetar, Milan. “Popis dubrovačkijeh vlasteoskijeh porodica” (The List of the Ragusan Noble Families). *Glasnik dubrovačkog učenog društva “Sveti Vlaho”* 1 (1929): 1–11.

_____. *Dubrovačka numizmatika I, II* (The Ragusan Numismatics). Beograd-Zemun: Srpska kraljevska akademija, 1925.

Reynolds, Susan. “Medieval *origines gentium* and the Community of the Realm.” *History* 68 (1984): 375-90.

Rezar, Vlado. “Dubrovački humanistički historiograf Ludovik Crijević Tuberon” (The Ragusan Humanist Historiographer Ludovik Crijević Tuberon). *Anali zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 37 (1999): 47-94**.**

_____. Vlado Rezar, “Dubrovački pjesnik opominje vladarsku trojku” (Ragusan Poet Admonsihes the Three Rulers) *Vijenac* 133 (1999): 14-15.

Rieber, Alfred J. "The Frontier in History." In *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, vol 9., 5812-17. Amsterdam, New York: Elsevier, 2001.

_____. "Triplex Confinium in Comparative Context." In *Constructing Border Societies on the Triplex Confinium.* Ed. Drago Roksandić and Nataša Štefanec, 13-29. Budapest: Central European University, 2000.

Roksandić, Drago. "The triplex confinium. International research project: objectives, approaches and methods." In *Microhistory of the Triplex Confinium: International Project Conference Papers.* Ed. Drago Roksandić, 7-25. Budapest: CEU Institute on Southeastern Europe, 1998.

Rosand, David. *The Myths of Venice. The Figuration of the State.* Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.

Rubinstein, Nicolai. "The Beginnings of Political Thought in Florence. A Study in Mediaeval Historiography." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942): 198-227.

_____. "Il Poliziano e la questione delle origini di Firenze." In *Il Poliziano e il suo tempo, Atti del IV convegno internazionale di studi sul Rinascimento,* 101-110. Florence: Sansoni, 1957.

_____. "Florentina Libertas." *Rinascimento*, n.s. 26 (1986): 3-26.

_____. "Marsilius of Padua and Italian Political Thought of his Time." In *Studies in Italian History in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, 1: Political Thought and the Language of Politics: Art and Politics.* Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2004.

_____. "Florence and the Despots in the Fourteenth Century." *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Ser. 5, 2 (1952): 21-45.

Rupp, Jean. *L'idée de Chrétienté dans la pensée pontificale des origines à Innocent III.* Paris: Presses modernes, 1939.

Schiffler, Ljerka. *Nikola Vitov Gučetić*. Zagreb: Studentski centar Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 1977.

Seferović, Relja. "O retoričkoj kulturi u Dubrovniku Petrićeva vremena" (On the Rhetorical Culture of Ragusa in Petrić's Time). *Filozofska istraživanja* 119 tomus 3 (2010): 431–449.

_____. "Strani učitelj i domaći povjesničar: Nascimbene Nascimbeni i Serafin Cerva o retorici" (Foreign Teacher and Local Historian: Nascimbene Nascimbeni and Serafin Cerva on Rhetoric). *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 45 (2007): 47-116.

_____. "*Cenzura u djelu* Prolegomena in sacram Metropolim Ragusinam" (Censorship in the work Prolegomena in sacram Metropolim Ragusinam). Available online at: http://www.hdkf.net/Euroclassica%20zbornik%20hrvatski.pdf

Selart, Anti. "Political Rhetoric and the Edges of Christianity: Livonia and its Evil Enemies in the Fifteenth Century." In *The Edges of the Medieval World.* Ed. Gerhard Jaritz and Juhan Kreem, 55-69. Budapest: CEU Press, 2009.

Skurla, Stijepo. *Sveti Vlaho. Biskup i mučenik od Sevasta* (St. Blaise. Bishop and Martyr from Sevast). Dubrovnik, 1871.

Skinner, Quentin. *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought: Vol. 1, The Renaissance; Vol. 2: The Age of Reformation.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.

_____."Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas." In *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and his Critics,* ed. James Tully, 29-67. Cambridge: Polity press, 1988.

_____. "Ambrogio Lorenzetti and the Portrayal of Virtuous Government," In Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics, Volume 2, Renaissance Virtues,* 39-92. Cambridge: CUP 2002.

_____. "Ambrogio Lorenzetti on the Power and Glory of Republics." In *Visions of Politics, Volume 2, Renaissance Virtues,* 93-117. Cambridge: CUP 2002.

_____."From the State of Princes to the Person of the State." In *Visions of Politics, Volume 2, Renaissance Virtues,* 368-413. Cambridge: CUP 2002.

_____. "The Vocabulary of Renaissance Republicanism: a Cultural Longue-durée?" In *Language and images of Renaissance Italy*. Ed. Alison Brown, 87-110. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.

_____. *Liberty before Liberalism.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

_____. "A Third Concept of Liberty." *Proceedings of the British Academy* 117 (2002): 237-268.

Sorgo, Antoine. *Origine et chute de l'ancienne Republique de Raguse.* Paris: imprimerie de Madame Porthmann, 1820.

Spremić, Momčilo, "I tributi veneziani nel Levante nel XV secolo." *Studi Veneziani* 13 (1971): 221-252.

Stanković, Vlada. "Idejna načela Konstantina Porfirogenita i dalmatinski Romani" (The Ideological Principles of Constantine Porphyrogenitus and the Dalmatian *Romani*). *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 38 (1999-2000): 67-85.

Steindorff, Ludwig. "Tumačenja riječi *Dalmatia* u srednjovjekovnoj historiografiji. Istovremeno o saboru na *planities Dalmae*" (Interpretations of the Word *Dalmatia* in the Medieval Historiography. At the same time concerning the synod on *planities Dalmae*). In *Etnogeneza Hrvata,* ed. Neven Budak, 148-159. Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice Hrvatske, Zavod za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 1996.

_____. "Reichseinteilung und Kirchenorganisation Im Bilde der Chronik des Priesters von Dioclea." *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreiche Geschichtsforschung* 93 (1985): 279-324.

Stošić, Josip. "Prikaz nalaza ispod katedrale i bunićeve poljane u Dubrovniku" (A Report on the Finds under the Cathedral and Bunić's Square in Ragusa). *Izdanja Hrvatskog arheološkog društva* 12 (1988): 15–38.

Stulli, Bernard. "Dubrovačke odredbe o Konavlima" (Ragusan Decrees about Konavli). In *Konavoski Zbornik*, ed. Rafo Bogišić, Stijepo Mijović-Kočan, Bernard Stulli and Ivica Valjalo, 29–43. Dubrovnik: "Konavle"-društvo za znanstvene i kulturne djelatnosti, 1982.

_____. "Oko političkih planova Marina Držića-Vidre" (Regarding the Political Plans of Marin Držić-Vidra). In *Studije iz Povijesti Dubrovnika,* 351-373. Zagreb: Konzor , 2001.

Szende, Katalin. "Between Hatred and Affection*:* Towns and Sigismund in Hungary and in the Empire." In *Sigismund von Luxemburg:ein Kaiser in Europa*. Ed. Michel Pauly and Francois Reinert, 199-210. Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 2006.

Šanjek, Franjo ed. *Povijest Hrvata. Knjiga Prva. Srednji vijek* (The History of the Croats. Book One. Middle Ages). Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 2003.

Šišić, Ferdo. "O Hrvatskoj Kraljici Margareti" (About the Croatian Queen Margareta). *Dubrovnik* 1 (1930): 5–54.

Škunca, Stanislaus. *Aelius Lampridius Cervinus poeta Ragusinus (saec. XV).* Roma: Edizioni Francescane, 1971.

_____. "Humanist Ilija Crijević u kontekstu jezične situacije u Dubrovniku XV. i XVI. st." (The Humanist Ilija Crijević in the Context of the Linguistic Situation in Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century Ragusa). In *Regiones paeninsulae balcanicae et proximi orientis. Aspekte der Geschichte und Kultur. Festschrift für Basilius S. Pandžić,* ed. Elisabeth von Erdmann-Pandžić, 271-284. Bamberg: Fach Slavische Philologie der Universität Bamberg, 1988.

Šoljić, Antun. "O ranoj renesansi u Dubrovniku (On the Early Renaissance in Ragusa). *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 40 (2002): 127-146.

Šundrica, Zdravko. "O igri alke u starom Dubrovniku" (On the Game of Alka in Old Ragusa). In Zdravko Šundrica, *Tajna kutija dubrovačkog arhiva,* part 2, 279-302. Zagreb-Dubrovnik: HAZU, Zavod za povijesne znanosti u Dubrovniku, 2009.

_____. "Stonski rat u 14. stoljeću (1333-1399)" (Pelješac Peninsula in the Fourteenth century (1333-1399)), in *Tajna Kutija dubrovačkog arhiva,* part 1, 209-392. Dubrovnik: HAZU, Zavod za povijesne znanosti u Dubrovniku , 2008

Tadić, Jorjo. *Promet putnika u starom Dubrovniku* (The Traffic of Travelers in Old Ragusa). Dubrovnik, 1939.

_____. “Dubrovnik za vreme Djiva Gundulića” (Ragusa in the Age of Djivo Gundulić). *Srpski književni glasnik* 56 (1939): 175-282.

_____. “O društvenoj strukturi Dalmacije i Dubrovnika u vreme renesanse” (On the Social Structure of Ragsua in the Renaissance). *Zgodovinski časopis* 6-7 (1952-1953): 552-565.

_____. Španija i Dubrovnik *u XVI veku* (Spain and Ragusa in the Sixteenth Century). Belgrade: SKA, 1932.

Tamborra, Angelo. *Gli stati italiani e il problema turco dopo Lepanto*. Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1961.

Teke, Zsuzsa. “Zsigmond és Raguza: Egy ötveneves kapcsolat” (Sigismund and Raguza: a fifty Year long Relationship). *Historia* 31 (2009): 17-19.

Tenenti, Alberto. “Il senso dello Stato.” In *Storia di Venezia dalle origini alla caduta della Serenissima*, vol. IV. *Il Rinascimento. Politica e cultura*, ed. Alberto Tenenti and Ugo Tucci, 311-44. Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1996.

_____. “Profilo e limiti delle realtà nazionali in Italia fra Quattro e Seicento.” In *Cultura e nazione in Italia e Polonia dal Rinascimento all’Illuminismo.* Ed. Vittore Branca and Sante Graciotti, 263-279. Firenze: Olschki, 1986.

Teszelszky, Kees. “A Holy Crown for a Nation. The Symbolic Meaning of the Holy Crown of Hungary and the Construction of the Idea of a Nation.” In *Building the Past/Konstruktion der eigenen Vergangenheit.* Ed. Rudolf Suntrup Rudolf and Jan R. Veenstra, 247-259. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2006.

_____. *Az ismeretlen korona* (The Unknown Corona). Pannonhalma: Bencés Kiadó, 2009

Tomasović, Mirko “Pohvalnice Dubrovniku” (The Lauds of Ragusa). *Dubrovnik* 1 (1992): 130-135.

Travirka, Antun. *Dubrovnik. History.Culture. Art Heritage.* Zadar: Forum, 1998.

Truhelka, Ćiro. “Konavoski rat (1430-1433)” (The Konavle War (1430-1433). *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Bosni i Hercegovini* 29 (1917): 179-184.

Tully, James. “The Pen is a Mighty Sword: Quentin Skinner’s Analysis of Politics.” In *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and his Critics,* ed. James Tully, 7-25. Cambridge: Polity press, 1988.

Varga, János. “Europa und “Die Vormauer des Christentums.”” In *Europa und die Türken in der Renaissance.* Ed. Bodo Güthmuller and Wilhelm Kühlmann, 55-63. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2000.

Vatin, Nicolas. “The Hospitallers at Rhodes and the Ottoman Turks, 1480-1522.” In *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century. Message and Impact.* Ed. Norman Housley, 148-162. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

Vedriš, Trpimir. “Martyrs, Relics, and Bishops: Representations of the City in Dalmatian Translation Legends.” *Hortus Artium Medievalium* 12 (2006): 175-186.

Vekarić, Nenad. *Nevidljive pukotine: Dubrovački vlasteoski klanovi* (Invisible Cleavages: The Clans of Ragusan Patriciate). Zagreb–Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2009.

_____. *Dubrovački vlasteoski rodovi, 1: korijeni, struktura i kretanje vlasteoskih rodova kroz stoljeća* (Ragusan Noble Families, I: Roots, Structure, and Changes of Noble Families through Centuries). Dubrovnik-Zagreb: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 2011.

Ventura, Angelo. “Scrittori politici e scritture di governo.” In *Storia della cultura veneta,* tomus III-3, *Dal primo Quattrocento al concilio di Trento*. Ed. Girolamo Arnaldi and Manlio Pastore Stocchi, 513-563. Vicenza: Neri Pozza editore, 1981.

Vinaver, Vuk. *Dubrovnik i Turska u osamnaestom veku* (Ragusa and Turkey in the Eighteenth Century). Belgrade: Naučno delo, 1960.

Vismara, Giulio. *Impium foedus: le origini della respublica christiana*. Milano: A. Giuffre, 1974

de Vivo, Filippo. *Information and Communication in Venice: Rethinking Early Modern Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Vojnović, Kosta. “Crkva i država u dubrovačkoj republici” (The Church and State in Ragusan Republic). *Rad JAZU* 119 (1894): 32-142.

Vojnović, Lujo. *Dubrovnik i Osmansko carstvo* (Ragusa and the Ottoman Empire). Belgrade: Državna štamparija Kraljevine Srbije, 1898.

_____. *Pad Dubrovnika. Knjiga druga (1807.-1815)* (The Fall of Ragusa). Book 2 (1807-1815). Zagreb: authors edition, 1908.

Vučetić, Antonije. “Spomenici dubrovački” (Ragusan Monuments). *Srđ* V/9 (1906): 458-464.

Vratović, Vladimir and Anto Lešić. “Crijević, Ilija.” In: *Hrvatski biografski leksikon*, vol. 2, ed. Aleksandar Stipčević, 716-719. Zagreb: Jugoslavenski Leksikografski zavod “Miroslav Krleža,” 1989.

Witt, Ronald. *Hercules at the Crossroads: The Life, Works, and Thought of Coluccio Salutati.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1983.

Zidić, Igor. “Opsada i rane Dubrovnika” (The Siege and the Wounds of Ragusa) *Dubrovnik* 2-3 (1992): 37-41.

Zlatar, Zdenko. *The Slavic Epic. Gundulić's Osman*. New York: Peter Lang, 1995.

_____. *Our Kingdom Come. The Counter-Reformation, the Republic of Dubrovnik, and the Liberation of the Balkan Slavs*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1992.

_____. *Between the Double Eagle and the Crescent. The Republic of Dubrovnik and the Origins of the Eastern Question.* Boulder, 1992.

Žanić, Ivo. "Simbolični identitet Hrvatske u trokutu raskrižje-predziđe-most" (Symbolic Identity of Croatia within the Triangle Crossroads-Bulwark-Bridge). In *Historijski mitovi na Balkanu*. Ed. Husnija Kamberović, 161-202. Sarajevo: Institut za istoriju, 2003. Also available online at: http://www.iis.unsa.ba/izdavacka_djelatnost/posebna_izdanja/mitovi/mitovi_zanic.html

Žile, Ivica. "Naselje prije Grada" (The Settlement before the City). *Dubrovnik. Časopis za književnost i znanost* 4 (1997): 97–124.

Živković, Pavo. "Ustupanje Konavala Dubrovčanima (The Concession of Konavle to Ragusans)," In *Konavle u prošlosti, sadašnjosti i budućnosti*. *Zbornik radova sa znanstvenog skupa "Konavle u prošlosti, sadašnjosti i budućnosti" održanog u Cavtatu od 25. do 27. studenog 1996. godine. Svezak 1*. Ed. Vladimir Stipetić, 77-99. Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 1998.

Živković, Tibor. "Legenda o Pavlimiru Belu" (The Legend of Pavlimir Belo). *Istorijski Časopis* 50 (2004): 9 – 32.