

Levente Baján

**THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF VRANA FROM THE 12TH TO 14TH
CENTURIES: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE TEMPLAR AND
HOSPITALLER PERIODS**

MA Thesis in Comparative History, with a specialization
in Interdisciplinary Medieval Studies

Central European University

Budapest

May 2018

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(Hungary)

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Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU.

Chair, Examination Committee

Thesis Supervisor

Examiner

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I, the undersigned, **Levente Baján**, candidate for the MA degree in Comparative History, with a specialization in Interdisciplinary Medieval Studies declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

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Abstract

The following thesis is a contribution to the study of Christian military orders and their landed estates in Europe serving as a supportive framework for the crusaders in the Holy Land. Among these European holdings the preceptory of Vrana, analyzed in this research, located on the Dalmatian coast of Croatia was one of the most important possessions of the Templars and of the later Hospitallers in its surrounding region. The thesis aims to understand the complex sets of relationships around Vrana from the three focal points of the papacy, the Hungarian monarchy, and the locals. It provides answers to the larger questions of how and why did the developments or transformations of this relationship network occur, and how did the power struggles between the above-mentioned parties affect Vrana's territorial layout overtime. By dividing up the analysis according to the preceptory's Templar and Hospitaller periods respectively, the thesis also provides a *longue durée* comparison between the two Orders demonstrating the geopolitical and territorial transformations that Vrana went through over the two and a half centuries under study.

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First and foremost, I would like to give thanks to my supervisors Katalin Szende and József Laszlovszky for their guidance on developing this topic throughout the last two years, and for all of their helpful corrections and suggestions they have provided. Special thanks to Katalin for her tireless help, sacrifice and the many meetings it took for us to process the Latin sources used in the thesis. I would also like to give a shout out to Cristian-Nicolae Gaşpar for his expert aid in Latin translation and in the identification of the Latinized Croatian toponyms. A huge recognition goes out to Ante Vučić for his help in translating the relevant Croatian literature without which this thesis never would have saw the light of day. I would also like to thank Josip Banić for his expert advice on the sources relating to Vrana's Venetian contacts in the 1340s. Also, I should not fail to mention the moral support I have received from my friends Juan and Stephen in those times when I had no one else to turn to. Finally, I would like to thank my parents and relatives who have sacrificed and left everything they held dear behind, so that I could have a better life and follow my dreams they never got to live.

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List of Abbreviations

AOkI. - *Anjou kori oklevéltár. Documenta res Hungaricas tempore regum Andegavensium illustrantia.* Praeside Julio Kristó. Vols. 1-15, 17, 19-34, 38, 40. Budapest-Szeged: 1990-2015.

CD. - Kostrenčić, Marko, and Tadija Smičiklas, ed. *Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae ac Slavoniae.* Diplomatički zbornik kraljevine Hrvatske, Dalmacije i Slavonije. 18 vols. Zagreb: JAZU-HAZU, 1904-1998.

Fejér CD. - Fejér, Georgius, ed. *Codex diplomaticus Hungariae ecclesiasticus ac civilis.* 11 vols. Buda, 1829-1844.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The study of the Christian military orders is steadily becoming a popular research area amongst scholars in the growing field of crusading history. This field of inquiry has broadened our understandings of the complex medieval realities and opened doors for further investigations that have previously fallen to the background especially into the shadows of national histories. The following research will investigate two of the most influential of military orders, the Knights Templars and the Knights of St. John. However, instead of focusing in on their interactions in Outremer since their foundations in the 12th century, the attention will be shifted towards their possessions in Europe that has supported and funded such crusading operations. Although their possessions were significantly fewer in the Kingdom of Hungary, Croatia and Dalmatia than in other Western European kingdoms at the time, their access to the Adriatic ports of Croatia connected them with the rest of their Mediterranean provinces along with those in the Holy Land.

One of the most important preceptories in this region commonly thought to be the headquarters of the Templars in Hungary was Vrana located along the coast close to Zadar, Croatia. Eventually by the 14th century the entire Hungarian-Slavonian Priory was commonly referred to as the Priory of Hungary and Vrana. The next section on the historiography will emphasize that much research has been conducted on the general history of these military orders in the Hungarian Croatian region in which Vrana receives some attention, however never on the level of detail that would emphasize its regional specificities and justify a separate research. In order to fill this research gap, the following thesis aims to unravel the developments and transformations in the complex relationship networks that both the Templars and the Hospitallers were exposed to during their rule of Vrana in the 12th to 13th centuries and in the 14th century respectively. This network will be broken down to Vrana's relations with the papacy, the Hungarian monarchy and the locals allowing the thesis to ultimately reconstruct

the preceptory's geopolitical situation and influences in Dalmatia overtime. In addition, special attention will be paid to Vrana's territorial transformations and changes to its situation in the surrounding landscape.

1.1: Historiography

Before dwelling deeper into the analysis of the Templar and Hospitaller periods of Vrana, it is imperative for this section to establish the state of research from its beginnings up to the present day. This means that Georgius Pray's work will start off the historiographical overview describing how it laid the elementary foundations for further research amongst his contemporaries of the 18th and 19th centuries, including that of Ivan Kukuljević's "Priorat vranski sa vitezi templari hospitalci sv. Ivana u Hrvatskoj."¹ The section will then enter the 20th century state of research with the more extensive Croatian and Hungarian publications on Vrana and the military orders in general.² Lastly, it will conclude with the current 21st century

¹ The state of research on Vrana from the mid-18th to the 19th centuries: Georgius Pray, *Dissertatio historico-critica de Prioratu Auranae in qua origo, progressus, et interitus, ex monumentis nondum editis, compendio a P. Georgio Pray e S. J. explicantur* (Viennae: Josephus Kurzböck, 1773); Ivan Kukuljević, "Priorat vranski sa vitezi templari hospitalci sv. Ivana u Hrvatskoj," [The Priory of Vrana of the Templars and the Hospitallers in Croatia] *Rad Jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* 81 (1886): 1-80; Frigyes Pesty, "A templáriusok Magyarországon." [The Templars in Hungary] *Magyar Akadémiai Értesítő* 2 (1861): 30-152; Antal Karcasu, *Az egyházi és szerzetesi lovagrendek történelme*, [The history of the religious and military orders] (Pest, 1867); János Strázsay, "A Kereszt-Vitézek Magyarországon," [Cruciferi in Hungary] *Tudományos Gyűjtemény* 11 (1823): 68-98. See also for an early report on Vrana: Mihovil Glavičić and Josip Alačević, eds. *Bullettino di archeologia e storia dalmata* (1881): 156-7.

² Croatian research makes headway on Vrana and the military orders in the 20th century: Neven Budak, "Ivan od Palizne, prior vranski, vitez sv. Ivana," [John of Palisna, prior of Vrana, Hospitaller knight] *Historijski Zbornik* 42 (1989): 57-70; Lelja Dobronić, *Posjedi i Sjedišta Templara, Ivanovaca i Sepulkralaca u Hrvatskoj* [Estates and Residences of Templars, Hospitallers and Canons Regular of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem in Croatia] (Zagreb: RAD JAZU, 1984); "The Military Orders in Croatia," in Vladimir P. Goss, ed. *The Meeting of Two Worlds: Cultural Exchange between East and West during the period of the Crusades* (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University, 1986), 431-438; *Viteški redovi. Templari i Ivanovci u Hrvatskoj* [Knightly Orders. Templars and Hospitallers in Croatia] *Analecta Croatica Christiana* 18 (Zagreb: Kršćanska Sadašnjost, 1984); Josip Kolanović, "Vrana i Templari," [Vrana and the Templars] *Radovi Instituta J. A. u Zadru* 18 (1971): 207-226; Lucijan Kos, "Prior vranski i njegove funkcije u našoj pravnoj povijesti," [The prior of Vrana and his function in Croatian legal practice] *Radovi Instituta J. A. u Zadru* 18 (1971): 227-235; Eduard Peričić, "Vranski priori Ivan od Paližne i Petar Berislavic," [John of Palisna and Peter Berislo, Hospitaller Priors of Vrana] *Radovi Instituta J. A. u Zadru* 18 (1971): 239-321. See also Angelo de. Benvenuti, "Il castello di Vrana," *La Rivista Dalmatica* 21:1, 3 (1940): 49-62, 34-44; Karl Borchardt, "Military Orders in East Central Europe: The First Hundred Years," in Michael Balard, ed. *Autour de la premiere Croisade. Actes de Colloque de la Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East Byzantina Sorbonensia* vol. 14 (Paris: Sorbonne, 1996), 247-254; Károly-György Boroviczény, "Cruciferi Sancti Regis Stephani: Tanulmány a stefaniták, egy középkori magyar ispotályos rend történetéről," [Study on the Stephanites, a history of the medieval Hungarian Hospitaller Order] *Orvostörténeti Közlemények*.

publications that, like some of the earlier works, focus more on the larger perspective of the military orders in the region, but are still useful for the comparative study envisioned in this thesis.³ Though it is unreasonable to discuss all the publications or particular ones in great detail, the following section aims to identify the trends of research and briefly discuss the most influential or significant works for the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory.⁴ In the end it will highlight

Communicationes de Historiae Artis Medicinae 133-140 (1991-92): 7-48; László Hársin and Károly Kozák, "A johanniták a középkori Magyarországon," [The Hospitallers in medieval Hungary] *Világosság* 20 (1979): 692-699; Ferenc Patek, *A magyarországi templárius rend felbomlása* [The dissolution of the Templars in Hungary] (Budapest: May János, 1912); Antal Radvánszky, *A Szent János lovagrend története Magyarországon* [The History of the Hospitallers in Hungary] (Paris: Johannita Rend Magyar Tagozata, 1986); Ede Reisz, *A jeruzsálemi Szent János lovagrend Magyarországon*. [The Order of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem in Hungary] 2 vols. (Budapest: Nemzeti Könyvtár, 1925-1928); Željko Tomčić, "Fortifications of Orders of Knights in Medieval Croatia," in Leszek Kajzer, and Henryk Paner, eds. *Castrum Bene: Castle and Church*. Vol. 5 (Gdańsk: Muzeum Archeologiczne w Gdańsku, 1996), 201-218; Szabolcs de Vajay, *A johannita lovagrend tagjai* [The members of the Order of the Hospital] (Munich: Obedientia Brandenburgensis, 1987).

³ Publications in the current 21st century: Karl Borchardt, "The Templars in Central Europe," in Zsolt Hunyadi and József Laszlovszky, eds. *The Crusade and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity* (Budapest: CEU Department of Medieval Studies, 2001), 233-244; Neven Budak, "John of Palisna, the Hospitaller prior of Vrana," in Zsolt Hunyadi and József Laszlovszky, eds. *The Crusade and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity* (Budapest: CEU Department of Medieval Studies, 2001), 283-290; Lelja Dobronić, *Templari i Ivanovci u Hrvatskoj* [Templars and Hospitallers in Croatia] (Biblioteka Povjesnica, Zagreb: Dom i Svijet, 2002); Pál Engel, "The Estates of the Hospitallers in Hungary at the End of the Middle Ages," in Zsolt Hunyadi and József Laszlovszky, eds. *The Crusade and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity* (Budapest: CEU Department of Medieval Studies, 2001), 291-302; Zsolt Hunyadi, "Milites Christi in the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary: A Historiographical Overview," *Chronica* 3 (2003): 50-57; "The formation of the territorial structure of the Templars and Hospitallers in the medieval Kingdom of Hungary," in Karl Borchardt and Libor Jan, eds. *Die geistlichen Ritterorden in Mitteleuropa: Mittelalter* (Brno: Matice moravská für Das Forschungszentrum für die Geschichte Mitteleuropas: Quellen, Länder, Kultur, 2011), 183-197; *The Hospitallers in the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary c. 1150-1387* (Budapest: CEU Department of Medieval Studies, 2010); Miha Kosi, "The Age of the Crusades in the South-East of the Empire (Between the Alps and the Adriatic)," in Zsolt Hunyadi and József Laszlovszky, eds. *The Crusade and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity* (Budapest: CEU Department of Medieval Studies, 2001), 123-166; Anthony Luttrell, "The Hospitallers in Hungary before 1418: Problems and Sources," in Zsolt Hunyadi and József Laszlovszky, eds. *The Crusade and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity* (Budapest: CEU Department of Medieval Studies, 2001), 269-282; Balázs Stossek, "A templomosok Magyarországon," [The Templars in Hungary] in *Magyarország és a keresztény háborúk. Lovagrendek és emlékeik*. eds. József Laszlovszky, Judit Majorossy, József Zsengellér (Máriabesnyő-Gödöllő: Attraktor, 2006), 181-194.

⁴ The thesis will refer to the entirety of the Templar and later 14th Hospitaller possessions in the Kingdom of Hungary, Croatia, and Dalmatia as the 'Hungarian-Slavonian Priory'. This term is frequently used by contemporary scholars, such as Zsolt Hunyadi specially to refer to the Hospitaller priory in Hungary, the military order studied in the third chapter of this thesis. It is slightly more problematic to apply this to the Templars as they held more possessions in Dalmatia and Croatia than their contemporary Hospitallers. The term seems to place less significance to anything that is in Croatia and Dalmatia and emphasizes the more northern possessions. However, it is still more successful than Ivan Kukuljević's use of the 'Priory of Vrana' as the title for his work that also includes a section on the Templar holdings. It emphasizes Vrana as an administrative center for the entire province. This is a controversial historical debate, and the thesis wants to avoid any sort of confusion about the names and functional roles within the province. Thus, the Preceptory or later Priory of Vrana will only refer to Vrana itself, while the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory will refer to the whole province. The latter term will also serve well to provide continuity from the Templars to the Hospitallers, who received their lands and leased many of the southern possessions and shifted the focus towards the north.

the gaps in the research that this thesis aims fill and to clarify its relationship with previous scholarship.

As mentioned above, one of the first major works that specifically discusses the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory was completed by Pray in 1773.⁵ He was a devout and highly educated member of the Jesuit Order, and as such composed numerous historical works about Hungary and its ecclesiastical institutions. Pray's interest in the Priory of Vrana could have been sparked by its later legal roles in the Dalmatian region. It is also equally possible that, as a religious man, Pray was genuinely interested in restoring the memory of the military orders (in the case of Vrana that of the Templars and the Knights of St. John) within the Kingdom of Hungary and Croatia. The work is quite antiquarian that printed entire charters and grants word for word into the main body of the text and left very little room for analysis. Not to mention that the entire *dissertatio* is written in Latin, so it is not as readily accessible as those that followed. In short, this work needs to be mentioned for its foundational value regarding the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory, yet it does not actually offer much value for additional historical analysis.

By the 19th century however, the historiographical trends started to shift towards more analysis and fewer direct quotations. These works were forced to rely mostly on the primary source materials as they were the first to conduct such a research on the topic of the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory. During this period, Kukuljević wrote a successful thesis on the priory that is still highly cited by modern scholarship on the topic.⁶ He starts out by explaining the previous historiography, which in this case meant only the works of Ivan Tomko Mrnavić and Pray. Then Kukuljević focused on the area of Vrana starting all the way from the imperial Roman

⁵ Before Pray, there is a work by the Venetian Catholic bishop Ivan Tomko Mrnavić in 1609 titled *Discorso del priorato della Wrana*, 1609 (MS kept in the Deutschordens-Zentralarchiv, Vienna); also edition in *Glasnik Zemaljskog Muzeja u Bosni i Hercegovini* 18 (1906): 279-305.

⁶ Ivan Kukuljević, "Priorat vranski," 1-80; Kukuljević refers to the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory as the Priory of Vrana, see note 4.

remnants of the settlement. The medieval place name of *Aurana* and *Laurana* was also mentioned, but he did not deal with its difficult etymology. Likewise, the medieval sites and the surrounding environment were briefly described. In the following chapter, Kukuljević backtracked still to describe the emergence and the settlement of the Benedictine monasteries, which are crucial for the understanding of the later priory. He dedicated a chapter to the Templars in Vrana and then a separate one to the ‘Priory of Vrana.’ This implies that according to Kukuljević the priory materializes under the Hospitallers, since that is when the Venetians first called it the ‘Priory’ of Vrana. He was right in this assessment as the prior title only existed for the Hospitallers and not for the Templars.⁷ Naturally, he ends the article with John of Palisna, a prior of Vrana, who was arguably one of the most influential political figures at the time in the Croatian-Dalmatian region.

During the 20th century, especially in the Cold War era, Yugoslavian scholarship produced a series of publications on Vrana, and some on the military orders as a whole. The most notable of these was the 1971 vol. 18 publication by the *Radovi Instituta J. A. u Zadru* [Institute for Historical Sciences of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zadar] that is dedicated specifically to the research of Vrana.⁸ In one of these articles by Josip Kolanović basically took the ideas and source uses of Kukuljević on the Templar period and elaborated on them. The value of this literature resides in the fact that it is one of the only ones that specifically targets the earlier period of Vrana from the 11th to 13th centuries. Kolanović makes

⁷ Although the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory refers to the Hospitaller possessions in the region that existed parallel with the Templars since the 12th century, for the sake of continuity with 14th century Vrana the following thesis will refer to the Templar possessions as the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory. Confusion will be avoided since chapter two does not focus on the Hospitaller developments and Vrana was clearly under Templar rule in the 12th to 13th centuries that was transferred to the Hospitallers in the 14th century. Nonetheless, this needs to be clarified for the second chapter, as the actual Hungarian-Slavonian Priory is governed by the Hospitallers and not by the Templars (using other titles for the Templars such as Hungarian-Slavonian Province for example might confuse the two parallel entities). The major justification for choosing this terminology was from the fact that all of the previous Templar possessions were transferred to the Hospitallers, which allows for a smooth transition from the second to the third chapter; also see note 4.

⁸ Kolanović, “Vrana i Templari,” 207-226; Kos, “Prior vranski,” 227-235; Peričić, “Vranski priori Ivan od Paližne,” 239-321.

a brave effort that tried to trace the order of the charters and royal grants that were more or less in connection with Vrana. He did not waste too much effort in trying to provide a detailed account of the Templar's Slavonian holdings with perhaps the exception of Dubica. He argued that this settlement was connected with Vrana after it was provided as a concession for the Order's loss of Senj. Lucijan Kos, of the same periodical, briefly explored the development of legal traditions and practices of the priory from the Hospitallers all the way to the 18th century. Due to the extreme *longue durée* analysis and the relative shortness of the article, Kos drew more general conclusions and ideas across the various time periods. On the other hand, Eduard Peričić, just like Neven Budak in a later publication, focused specifically on the deeds of John of Palisna as the Prior of Vrana.

This historiographical section also cannot bypass Lelja Dobronić, one of the most prominent scholars on the military orders in Croatia. Though Dobronić's works did not necessarily focus on only Vrana, she does dedicate sections or parts to it within a grander discourse. One of her works, in particular, focused on the estates of the military orders in Croatia.⁹ It tried to map them as much as possible based on the evidence provided by the charters. Although, in my opinion this was a great achievement, she did not provide a detailed description of her thought process behind the borderlines that were drawn in a more general fashion. The difficulty with this kind of mapping process is finding the location of the mentioned medieval toponyms that were often Slavic and could have referred to general terrain features such as a mountain for example. It is especially because of these difficulties that a more detailed explanation and hypothetical borderlines would benefit historical research in this area.

Our current century saw a boom to an already extensive scholarly interest in crusading history as a result of the political turmoil in the Middle East from the beginning of the new

⁹ Dobronić, *Posjedi i Sjedišta*.

millennium. Special attention is paid in particular towards the military orders, and their interactions in the Holy Land and to its supportive roles from Latin Christendom. Areas like the East-Central European region is also starting to receive more attention. The 21st century saw the rise of interesting comparative studies between Central and East Central Europe, and analyses that transcended the traditional divides between nations and national histories. Not to mention that the previously inaccessible histories composed in the local native languages are now more readily available to a wider range of scholars in English. One of these great compiled works was published inhouse at the Central European University called *The Crusade and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity*.¹⁰ The book specifically aims at connecting research in the Latin East with the more peripheral Christian territories of East Central Europe and the Baltics. For example, it includes a chapter by Karl Borchardt on the “Templars in Central Europe”, Neven Budak’s “John of Palisna, the Hospitaller prior of Vrana”, or Miha Kosi’s “The Age of the Crusades in the South-East of the Empire (Between the Alps and the Adriatic)” to name a few.¹¹ An exhaustive bibliography on the military orders was also included at the end of the compilation.

Finally, in our contemporary time, one of the most prominent scholars in the East Central European region on military orders is Zsolt Hunyadi. An alumnus of the Central European University, Hunyadi has done extensive research particularly on the Knights of St. John in the Kingdom of Hungary, Croatia and Dalmatia. In fact, his PhD dissertation aimed at describing the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory from the angle of its first appearances and the developments that it went through. The work pays particular attention to the Hospitallers’

¹⁰ Zsolt Hunyadi and József Laszlovszky, eds. *The Crusade and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity*. Budapest: CEU Department of Medieval Studies, 2001.

¹¹ Borchardt, “Templars,” 233-244; Budak, “John of Palisna,” 283-290; Kosi, “The Age of the Crusades,” 123-166.

leadership, estates, members, finances, and legal functions within the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory.¹²

It becomes clear that although there are some larger works on the entire Templar province in the Kingdom of Hungary or on the entire Hungarian-Slavonian Prior under the Hospitallers, there are no works that provide a detailed analysis on the preceptory of Vrana and its place within the Orders. This is exactly the research gap that this thesis aims to exploit and fill. Vrana was such an important preceptory in Dalmatia that it truly deserves an analysis on its own to fully understand the specificities and experiences that surrounded it in this coastal region. The relations that this preceptory maintained with the papacy, the monarchs, and the locals many times affected them differently in comparison to the rest of the Order even if they are not always separable. The general mappings conducted by Lelja Dobronić are also in dire need of clarification, which would ultimately provide further information on Vrana's geopolitical developments in the region over the 12th to 14th centuries.

1.2: Methodology

In order to allow for a comparison between the Templars in the 12th to 13th centuries and Hospitallers of Vrana in the 14th century, the chapters will be divided accordingly based on these respective time periods. The chapters themselves will be divided up into subsections to emphasize the developments of each period over time that would allow the final chapter to analyze these developments under both the Templars and Hospitallers and draw conclusions. The thesis is specifically interested analyzing the primary sources from the perspectives of the papacy, the Hungarian monarchy, and the locals. This allows for the reconstruction of Vrana's diplomatic relations with each over time. Finally, in both the Templar and the Hospitaller

¹² Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers in the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary c. 1150-1387* (Budapest: CEU Department of Medieval Studies, 2010).

chapters special attention will be given to Vrana's territorial developments based on the available sources. Accordingly, the thesis will reconstruct the borderlines established in the legal documents as much as it is currently possible. By providing a detailed explanation about the mentioned toponyms and why they were chosen over other possible place markers, the final chapter will be able to provide some conclusions on these aspects as well.

Chapter 2: The Templars in Vrana from the 12th to the 13th centuries

The Knights Templar, a military order founded initially by Hugh of Payns (c. 1070-1136) as early as 1119 to protect the Christian pilgrims in the Holy Land, has expanded its landed possessions exponentially across Latin Christendom from the 12th through the 13th centuries while rapidly growing in its military and political significance. The Order derived its name from the Temple of Solomon, since the brothers believed that their headquarters in Jerusalem was situated above its ruins.¹³ It is not hard to see the reasons why so many legends surround the epic crusading Templars in popular myths and even contemporary fictional works such as Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code*. In the historical academic sense, the military orders also prove to be a unique area of study through which new inquiries can be raised that define the complexities of a medieval reality.

With such an ultimate objective in mind, the following chapter will not bog down in a grand narrative of the Templar deeds in the Holy Land from its inception to its gruesome end. It will rather focus on the preceptory of Vrana located in the Southeastern regions of Christendom in Dalmatia. Although it was a particularly important regional center held by the Templars that would analytically fit well into their general expansion in Europe as a means to finance operations abroad in the Holy Land, the chapter will instead analyze the Order's local operations from Vrana itself. In part this is also, since the analysis of the former would have to be relegated to a more hypothetical level based on the limited information provided by the primary sources.

¹³ For general literature on the Knights Templars see: Malcom Barber, *The New Knighthood: A History of the Order of the Temple* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994); *The Trial of the Templars* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006).

Therefore, the most documented and evidently recurring theme from all of the papal bulls, letters, ecclesiastical and legal documents regarding the Templars in Vrana, Croatia from the 12th to 13th centuries was the balance and exploitation of the power relations between the Pope under whose protection the Order fell as the result of the 1076 donation of King Zvonimir (r. 1075-1089), the Hungarian king who did not always favor them, and the local ecclesiastical institutions as well as the nobles with whom they frequently came into conflict. This overall theme raises questions such as, how and why did the developments or transformations of this relationship network occur? And how did the power struggle between the above-mentioned parties, including the Templars, affect Vrana's geopolitical and territorial layouts as well as the Order's local significance overtime? An analysis of both papal and royal policy towards the Templars in Vrana, as well as the analysis of the knights' legal interactions with the local nobility and other ecclesiastical institutions can find answers to these questions. By the end of this inquiry it will become clear that in fact the existence and survival of the Order of the Knights Templars in the Kingdom of Hungary, Croatia and Dalmatia was closely bound to the steadfast support it had received from the Pope, while the increase in monarchical favor at times expanded their influence over the local nobility and the surrounding ecclesiastical institutions.

The chapter will be broken down into time periods, in order to signify the changes overtime. A grouping of the different interest groups (i.e. the Pope, the Hungarian king, Templars, and the locals) into separate sections in this case would be less successful, since it would result in too many repetitions of the same primary sources from the varying point of views. Therefore, based on the major changes and historical trends it is possible to title a 'Prehistory' dealing with the issue of the Benedictine monastery of St. Gregory in Vrana granted by King Zvonimir to Pope Gregory VII (1073-1085). This is a necessary section to include as it provides the foundations for the analysis of the Templars during the periods that followed. Thus, with the appearance of the Templars the 'Early' period from 1165-1200 was a

time when the Order was less influential in Croatia overall and required frequent papal interventions to aid them in their local legal proceedings ending with King Emeric's (r. 1196-1204) granting of privileges to the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory. A second 'Middle' period is discernible from 1200-1241 with the rise of the crusading sentiments in Hungary after Béla III (r. 1172-1196), especially under Andrew II's reign (r. 1205-1235) when the Templars received the most privileges and possessions. This period marked the potentially 'highest' levels of influence by the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory in the kingdom under the leadership of Pontius de Cruce, the Magister at the time. Finally, a 'Late' period from 1241-1312 marked by the Mongol invasion of Hungary including the Templars' valiant participation at the Battle of Muhi. With Béla IV's (r. 1235-1270) diverted attention to focus on the reconstruction of the kingdom, the Templars in Vrana developed a more local significance, especially in legal proceedings. However, they no longer exercised the same levels of influence on the whole kingdom as before and with the source material disappearing towards the end of the 13th century we must close the period with the Council of Vienne in 1312 that ended the Templar Order as we know it.

2.1 Prehistory

Our story of the Templars' appearance in Croatia must begin nearly a hundred years before the first document in 1169 that unquestionably proves their existence in the region.¹⁴ One of the main reasons for this backtracking to 1076 is due to the fact that the first known possession held by the Templars in the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory was the Benedictine monastery of St. Gregory in Vrana, which was first donated at this time to Pope Gregory VII by King Zvonimir of Croatia.¹⁵ This issue of the ownership of the Vrana monastery will

¹⁴ Appendix, A: CD. II., 125-6.

¹⁵ Appendix, A: CD. I., 139-140.

become significant, since there are historical debates as to who (i.e. the Hungarian king or the Pope) and exactly when have they donated it to the Templars. The papal policy of Pope Gregory VII is another interesting aspect from this document especially regarding the initial function of the monastery, and how such a function might have survived under Templar rule.

Without overbearing in contextual detail, it should suffice to say that the Kingdom of Croatia and Dalmatia during Pope Gregory VII's time in the late 11th century was a contested region between the Byzantine, Hungarian, German, Venetian, and Norman spheres of influence. Understandably so, since Dalmatia was ideally located on the Adriatic Coast from where its lucrative trade opportunities could be facilitated further inland or towards Northern Italy. The pope's concern with the region was twofold, first the church was faced with the difficulties of setting up a metropolitan and diocesan organization, and second that there was a serious growing liturgical divide between the approved Latin and its Slavonic or Glagolitic counterpart.¹⁶

The opportunity presented itself to Gregory when King Peter Krešimir IV (r. 1058-1074/5) of Croatia passed away, leaving the line of King Trpimir without an heir. Authority was initially split between Slavac ruling in the center of the region and who favored the Slavonic liturgies, and Duke Demetrius Zvonimir in the north, a firm supporter of the Gregorian reformed papacy. However, according H.E.J. Cowdrey, Slavac was eliminated by the Count Amicus of Giovinazzo in 1074-5 during his Croatian campaign and was most likely supported by Pope Gregory VII.¹⁷ The pope likewise tried to initiate the Danish King Sweyn II Estrithson (r. 1047-1076) to attack these heretics in Croatia, but the king passed away before anything could materialize.¹⁸ Thus, Demetrius Zvonimir was the next best candidate to take rulership over Croatia and Dalmatia, and establish papal policy across his kingdom.

¹⁶ H.E.J. Cowdrey, "Gregory VII and the Periphery of Latin Europe," in *Pope Gregory VII 1073-1085* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), 440.

¹⁷ Ibid., 440.

¹⁸ Cowdrey, "Gregory VII," 441.

This is exactly what happens in the 1076 document, when Pope Gregory VII sends his papal legate Abbot Gebizo of St. Bonifazio e Alessio to crown Zvonimir King of Croatia and Dalmatia in the church of St. Peter in Split. The document and its translation provided in Appendix A shows that in exchange for Zvonimir's right to rule as king, he had to undertake heavy concessions for the pope that is in line with Gregory's obedient kingship policy.¹⁹ Though the relationship between the Croatian monarch and the papacy would extend the scope of this research, it is important that the monastery of St. Gregory in Vrana was part of the concessions that Zvonimir promises to make and uphold through his successors. In addition, the source also clarifies that in fact the monastery was quite wealthy with its treasures that were legally reinforced to ensure they would always remain in the hands of the monastery and under papal jurisdiction.²⁰ But perhaps what is even more significant is that the donation of the monastery was included so that it may always provide a hospice for the papal legates.²¹ This meant, especially as part of the pre-negotiated requirements for Zvonimir to become king that Gregory VII wanted Vrana to serve as an intermediary point between his legates and Croatia-Dalmatia. Situated between the episcopal sees of Zadar, Nin, Biograd, Skradin and Split with easy naval access from Biograd, Vrana was ideally located to disseminate papal influence across Dalmatia. As the Templars were directly obedient to the pope, a similar pattern could be traced in the next century.

¹⁹ For information on Gregory's reforms see, Jehangir Yezdi Malegam, "Pro-Papacy Polemic and the Purity of the Church: The Gregorian Reform," in *A Companion to the Medieval Papacy: Growth of an Ideology and Institution*, Ed. by Keith Sisson and Atria A. Larson (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2016), 37-65.

²⁰ "*Dono insuper, concedo atque confirmo apostolice sedi sancti Gregorii monasterium, cui Vrana est uocabulum, cum omni suo thesauro. Scilicet cum capsula argentea reliquias sacri corporis eiusdem beati Gregorii continente, cum duabus crucibus, cum calice et patena, cum duabus coronis aureis, gemmis ornatis, cum euangeliorum textu de argento cumque omnibus suis mobilibus et immobilibus bonis,*" Appendix, A: CD. I., 139-140.

²¹ "*ut sancti P. legatis semper sit ad hospitium et omnino in potestate eorum,*" Ibid., 139-140.

2.2 Early Period: 1165-1200

Although some early historiography held that Vrana was donated to the Templars as early as 1138 by Béla II (r. 1131-1141), there is no real evidence to support these claims.²² As we already know from the 1076 document, Vrana was not in the king's possession after Zvonimir has granted it to the papacy; therefore, any argument that is based on a royal donation should be dismissed as the monarch had no rights over the monastery. The first written source that would confirm the Templars existence in the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory was a listing of the preceptory's name by the 19th century historian Georgius Fejér under religious monasteries. It simply records, "Praeceptoratus Templariorum S. Gregorii in Wrana, alias Aurana... 1165."²³ However, Frigyes Pesty rightly observed that he could not find any supporting documents that would complement the year 1165.²⁴ Likewise, other scholars also engaged in a debate over the issue with Fejér's dating, which might very well coincide instead with the 1169 letter from Pope Alexander III (1159-1181) sent to Gerard the Archbishop of Split to act in defense of the Templars.²⁵ Since, Vrana was the first preceptory of the Templars in the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory, it must therefore mark the relative starting point of the Order in the region.

The letter sent to the archbishop of Split is an evident papal intervention on behalf of the Templars in Vrana in a lawsuit against them launched by Lampridius, the Bishop of Skradin, since he claimed that the Vrana monastery along with its lands belonged to Skradin's parochial jurisdiction. The fact that Pope Alexander III found the proof of the papacy's ownership of Vrana in the registers of the previous Pope Eugene III (1145-1153) implies that the monastery was of importance to the latter. Though this notion should not be over

²² Benvenuti, "Il Castello di Vrana," 50; G. Urlič-Ivanoviću, *Vrana: povjestne uspomene iz hrvatske starine* [Vrana: Historical Memories from Croatian Antiquity] (Zadar: Narodni Koledar, 1878), 54; C. F. Bianchi, *Zara Cristiana II* (Zara, 1879), 362.

²³ Fejér, CD. 7/2: 323.

²⁴ "1165. év alatt említi a vránai praeceptoratus templariorum-ot, de megvallom, magában az okmánytárban nem találtam azon évből okmányt, mely a templáriusokról szólna." Pesty, "A templáriusok," 36.

²⁵ Ivan Kukuljević, "Priorat vranski," 10; while Josip Kolanović was supportive of the 1165 dating even without any written proof, and concluded that it means the arrival must predate this, "Vrana," 211-2. Appendix, A: CD. II., 125-6.

emphasizes based on the mere fact that Eugene's registers kept careful record of their rights over Vrana, overall it seems that papal policy towards Vrana in the 12th century was continuous with that of Gregory VII's. Josip Kolanović claims that the events that sparked the heated encounter arose earlier as a result of the Venetian destruction of the Bishopric of Biograd in 1126, which was consequently disintegrated, and its lands and rights were divided between the Bishopric of Zadar and the Bishopric of Skradin. Skradin located towards the Southeast of Vrana, could have understandably believed that in fact the monastery should also belong to their share of the divide.²⁶ Therefore, since the issue arose more than 40 years later, it raises the question as to why the lawsuit happened in 1169 and not right away after 1126. The answer is likely tied to the fact that quite simply the Templars were not present at the time when the initial divide must have happened between Skradin and Zadar. Something obvious (i.e. the papal granting of Vrana to the Templars) must have sparked the feud, especially since Vrana was a new type of ecclesiastical institution that now competed for power against the local bishops. From the letter it seems that the Templars were already present in Vrana at the time when the papal intervention was provoked. This is partially why the 1165 dating by Fejér might work, however as I already mentioned we do not have any sources other than mere speculation to back this theory. Instead, it seems more reasonable to guess the arrival of the Templars perhaps at the most two years, but most probably only a year before the issuing of the papal letter.

It is also debated whether we are talking about the development of two separate provinces at the same time, one in Velebit Croatia (i.e. the area between the coast and the Velebit mountains) and beyond the Velebit in Slavonia and Hungary. In fact, Ivan Kukuljević connects the donation of Bela from Fejér's list to the year 1165, which he believed was the

²⁶ Kolanović, "Vrana," 213.

same Bela that the Hospitallers inherited.²⁷ However, Zsolt Hunyadi clarifies that this Bela, to which Kukuljević refers to in northern Croatia, is not the same and the Templar Bela's location is still uncertain.²⁸ Balázs Stossek confirms this, since there is only one mention of a Templar brother who participated as a witness in a legal proceeding in 1249 titled "fratre Domus Templi de Belo".²⁹ This notion of two Templar provinces is most likely based on Daniele Farlati's ideas, which have also been adopted by Angelo de Benvenuti.³⁰ He, however, goes as far as to say that the province of Vrana was subjected to that of Bela, for which we have no evidence what so ever.³¹ Kolanović rejected the idea of the subordination of Vrana, since the initial donation of Bela near Varaždin already in 1165 by Béla II is highly speculative from Fejér's list.³² In reality, as Stossek already pointed out, we do not know much about the preceptory of Bela, therefore any idea that places heavy emphasis on this *domus* must be scrutinized.

Nonetheless, there is still one issue that remains. Did the Templars spread only from Vrana or from both regions at the same time? It seems highly unlikely to claim that Vrana was the single source of appearance in the Dalmatian-Croatian region. They started to acquire possessions in the Slavonian region around the same time as they have received lands in Velebit, in Croatia. Not to mention, as Kolanović has rightly argued, the title of the Templar magister was usually something similar to 'Ungariae et Sclavoniae,' and the later influential Magister Pontius de Cruce carrying the same title most likely occupied Vrana as his headquarters.³³ Stossek challenges this claim, since in fact until the time of Pontius de Cruce the titles of the Templars were separated between either Hungary or 'Slavonia' (also including Croatia), and its unification was likely tied to Pontius' appointment as governor of Croatia and

²⁷ Kukuljević, "Priorat Vranski," 12.

²⁸ Zsolt Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers*, 138.

²⁹ Balázs Stossek, "A templomosok," 187.

³⁰ Daniele Farlati, *Illyrici Sacri Tomus Primus. Ecclesia Salonitana, ab ejus exordio usque ad saeculum quastum aerae Christianae* (Venetia, 1751), 155-6.

³¹ Benvenuti, "Il Castello di Vrana," 50.

³² However, he accepted Fejér's 1165 entry for Vrana; Kolanović, "Vrana," 212-3.

³³ *Sclavoniae* refers here to the entirety of the Croatian lands instead of Slavonia proper, which is a common usage in the documents; Kolanović, "Vrana," 212.

Dalmatia.³⁴ To me, it seems that Stossek's argument is stronger, however we must take caution in applying too much emphasis on the titles' themselves. It is equally possible that the legal tradition in this early period was less developed in terms of title references, and the Order lacked the influence it exercised over the entire Kingdom of Hungary as it did during Magister Pontius de Cruce. While it is also highly unlikely that there was any sort of real central administration for the entire Hungarian-Slavonian priory during this period.

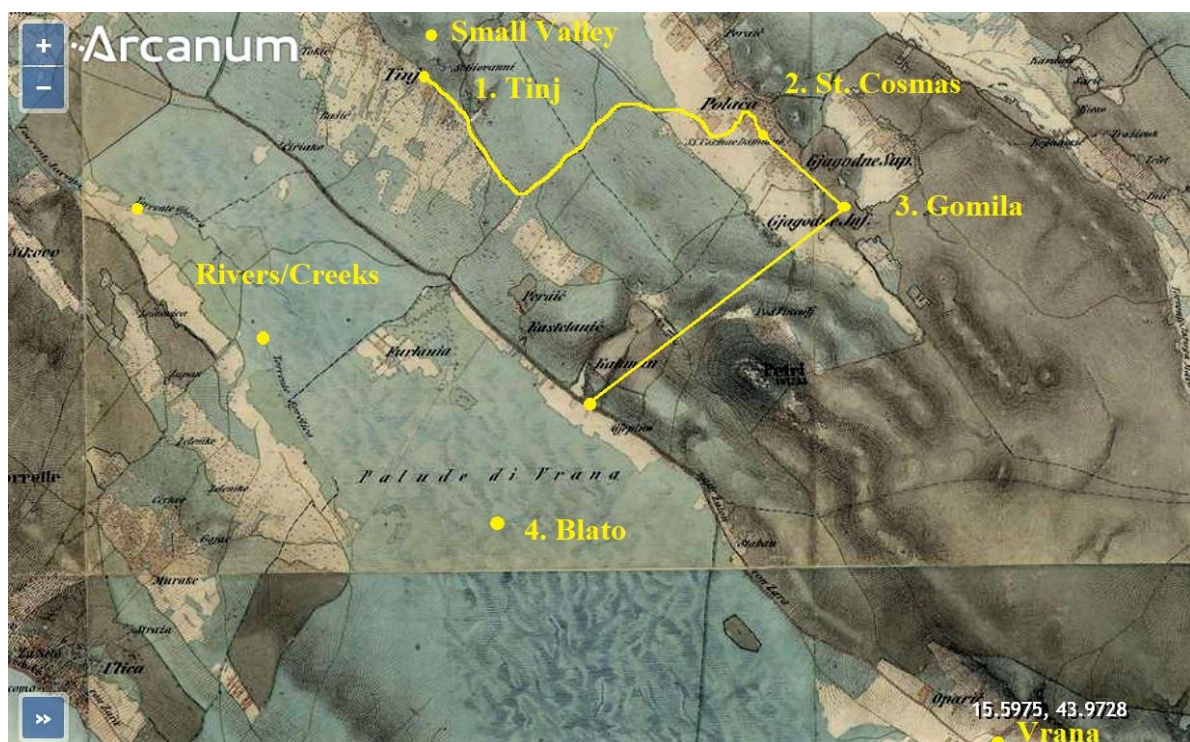
What is most notable from the letter of 1169 sent by Pope Alexander III to Gerard the Archbishop of Split, his legate in the region, is that it was clearly in the pope's best interest to restore the balance of power and peace amongst its ecclesiastical institutions. The Templars submitted their grievances to the papacy, who then conducted a search in its registers to find the proper documentation that would prove the Pope's right to donate the monastery if they wished to do so. This document was included in the letter itself, and then the archbishop of Split was urged to defend the Templars. Such an intermediary role would become common for Split, as it was the most influential ecclesiastical center especially during these events, while the self-interests of the other local bishoprics (in this case the Bishopric of Skradin) made them less reliable allies for the pope. It starts to become clear that the presence of the Templars in Dalmatia and Croatia would provide a more reliable political unit in favor of Rome, even if the immediate motivators for intervention could also be tied to the Crusading efforts towards the Holy Land.

In 1194 we are confronted by another serious dispute between the Vrana Templars and a local ecclesiastical institution, the nearby monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian located close to modern day Polača, Croatia.³⁵ The source of their problem revolved around the right to

³⁴ Stossek, "A templomosok," 186-7.

³⁵ Although the document does not explicitly name the preceptory of Vrana in this case, it is fairly certain that these are the Templars in question. The only other possibility would be Bojišće further to the north of Polača. However, the boundary described in the document divides the lands in a way that could only have belonged to Vrana. Appendix, A: CD. II., 268-70.

construct and operate water mills on certain rivers and lands that were between Vrana and St. Cosmas and Damian. The profitable occupation of mill working naturally brought competition between the closely located monasteries, especially since the Templars only recently acquired Vrana. It is no surprise then that the monastery of St. Cosmas felt their ancient rights to construct mills on their lands violated. Eventually, it led to the meeting in Tinj to bring an end to the dispute and draw clear boundaries of ownership between the two institutions.



Map 1: 1194, Tinj

Map 1 above shows the general boundary that was laid out in the 1194 document based on some toponymical observations and the help of the Habsburg Second Military Survey of 1806-69. Though they are not shown on the map, Biograd na Moru and Pakoštane are two important coastal settlements, the former of which was the bishopric that was destroyed by the Venetians in 1126. Directly above Lake Vrana is today a nature preserve, but in the medieval period this was an extension of a much larger swamp area marked by number 4 (*Blato*) next to the lake. This is still visible in the military survey, but it was probably a much wilder landscape in the 12th century without the draining or controlling of the swamp. Directly above the nature

preserve is the castle of Vrana marked by the yellow dot. Unfortunately, we do not have the exact site of the destroyed monastery of St. Gregory. Number 1 marks the village of Tinj as it was in the 19th century located slightly more towards the sea than it is today, and number 2 denotes the monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian.

Although we cannot be certain of the exact boundaries that were described in the document, some of the landmark features seem evident enough for a possible reconstruction. The described boundary starts with the village of Tinj trailing along the road that connected it with the monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian. This line is visible between points 1 and 2, which was the 19th century road connecting the two settlements. Following from the monastery, the document clearly mentions that our next reference point is towards the south called lower ‘*Gomila*’ along a straight footpath. The word ‘*gomila*’ in Croatian translates to something of a ‘pile’ or ‘accumulation’ among various other similar meanings, which in geographical terms likely refers to a smaller mound or hill. Likewise, the denotation of “*inferius*” or ‘lower’ seem to confirm that in fact we are dealing with a geographical feature and logic would follow that there must also be an ‘upper *gomila*’ nearby. According to the military survey there are two nearby hills very close to the monastery in the south called Gjagodne Superior and Inferior. Their names are not very telling as it means ‘strawberry’ in Croatian, nonetheless they are smaller hills in the south that would closely fit the description of a ‘*gomila*.’ Another possibility would be Gornj Čeranj and Dolnje Čeranje, which refer to upper and lower Čeranje. However, unlike the previous two, these are towns and are unlikely to be a ‘*gomila*’ described in the document. This point then is marked by the number 3 directly south of the monastery and is connected with a straight line to roughly show the boundary. As the document explains, following from this ‘lower *gomila*’ the boundary goes straight to *Blata* (number 4). In Croatian ‘*blato*’ means mud or bog, and in this situation could only be referring to the swampy area just northwest from Vrana. In fact, the Third Military Survey of 1869-1887 specifically provides

the local name for this swamp as ‘*Vrainsko blato*.’ The document does not explain exactly how far this boundary went as the Blata at that time meant a much larger area than today. Even so, the manner in which they divided the lands between themselves based on this ‘L’ shaped line can clue us in to the westernmost boundary.³⁶

The document stipulated that everything that was south of the drawn line belonged to the Templars, and everything that was west of it now belonged to the monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian. This was essentially a concession from the Templars as they were the previous owners of these lands, including the region of Tinj. However, a so called “*Chriplina*” river had to be shared between the Templars and the monks of St. Cosmas. In my opinion, this river could possibly be the westernmost boundary and is likely a river that flowed across the *Blata*. Even today there is a larger regulatory canal that flows across this area, but it is difficult to say exactly which river was meant in the document. It was likely a larger river that flowed from north-south across the boundary, which would have allowed it to be shared between the two institutions. This was a clear stipulation in the document, since they wanted to ensure that both parties had access to the river for the purposes of constructing mills. The described valley above Tinj that formerly belonged to the Templars is easier to locate, as it is the modern-day location of the town itself. According to the 19th century military survey, the town was located further southwest and a small valley between the two hills could still be visible. These are the only hills in the area that created a valley albeit not a very big one. These lands would have been ideal for pasture lands, which seems to be associated with the area of Tinj in the document.

³⁶ Jelja Dobronić provides a similar boundary, but hers includes the furthest extent of the lands of Vrana. Thus, she also includes the Hospitaller period in her analysis. The boundary described in this thesis is only referring to the one established in 1194. This way it is easier to see the territorial developments that happened after the loss of Rogovo in 1229 for which another map will be provided. Dobronić’s work also lacks a detailed explanation on how she arrived at the said boundary, and what were the driving forces behind it; Dobronić, *Posjedi i Sjedišta*, 81-91.

Interestingly, what historians have failed to investigate so far were the reasons for this legal settlement.³⁷ Judging from all those people who were present at the hearing and the direct royal initiative to bring a fast and peaceful resolution to the dispute meant that it was a further reaching problem, which emerged out of the interruption of the monasteries' mill working activities crucial for the local economy. The central problem in fact revolved around where they could build their mills, which eventually sparked the need to draw up the boundaries. It seems that the issue was very important for the Zaratins and the other noblemen from the nearby hinterlands to serve as witnesses in the case that affected their livelihood. Since, many of them were landowners, they relied on the mill working capacities of both the Templars and the monks of St. Cosmas and Damian to process their grain.

Consequently, we also get a great glimpse at the local economic activities of the Vrana Templars. The royal initiative to settle the dispute through Prince Emeric, son of Béla III, seems as a repercussion to the complaints given by the local nobility. Although, we simply do not have confirmation of any formal complaints, it seems that it was the Hungarian monarch's incentive to support and restore order amongst its subjects in Dalmatia. A region which was already difficult to control by the king, a situation such as this would have given Béla the opportunity to secure the loyalty of the nobility. The heavy presence of the top ecclesiastical leaders in the area also demonstrates that at the very least it was in the best interest of the local church institutions as well to restore peace amongst themselves. Although we do not know what was the papal stance in regards to this dispute, by the year 1200 we have a letter sent by the pope who found it important to reconfirm the decision in 1194 between St. Cosmas and Damian and the Templars.

The letter sent by Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) in 1200 was a response to a petition by the Templars to settle the transgression with their opponents, the monastery of St. Cosmas

³⁷ See Kolanović, "Vrana," 218; Kukuljević, "Priorat Vranski," 13; Pesty, "A templáriusok," 39-40.

and Damian.³⁸ Nothing new was presented, but we can safely assume that during the last six years the monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian was dissatisfied with the decision. This will reflect in the later 1229 legal battle over Rogovo, but it is evident that the Templars found it necessary to petition for papal confirmation in order to secure the final decision. Thus, the pope reconfirmed the original document of 1194, whose letter demonstrates the complex relationships between the monarch, the papacy, and the Templars. First of all, the original 1194 text was included in the pope's letter, which indicates that either the papal registers have kept records of this document or the Vrana Templars included it in their petition. Either way, the pope had significant interests in confirming this decision and to ensure that the Templars of Vrana could maintain a peaceful relationship with their neighbors.

Secondly, this letter is also exemplary of the certain situations the pope decided to get involved in. In this case his intervention was for the protection of the Templars in "Sclavonia" over the monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian.³⁹ It is interesting that the Order felt the need in 1200 to petition for the pope's help, when only six years prior the issue was settled by the royal authority of King Béla III. As already mentioned, the issue encompassed not only the ecclesiastical institutions, but also the local nobility who were reliant on the steady supply of the mill working capabilities of these monasteries. Thus, it makes more sense to involve the highest secular authority of the land, as well as the highest local religious authorities. The Templars evidently feared further concessions to the monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian and required a strong, swift, and unquestionable intervention on their behalf. The pope was their best ally to do this, as his decision is supreme when it comes to ecclesiastical matters. Not to

³⁸ Appendix, A: CD. II., 345-46.

³⁹ Again here 'Sclavonia' or Slavonia is difficult to define in the context of the Templars. It is obvious enough that this legal proceeding mainly affected the Templars in Vrana, so if we understand Slavonia in its strictest sense as the region between the rivers Drava and Sava it could lead, as previously mentioned, to speculations on the primacy of Slavonia over Dalmatia. Or it could simply be an inclusive term used for the entire Templar province in Hungary and Croatia. Unfortunately, this issue will remain unresolved as we can only guess at the actual geopolitical nature of these regional terms that are sometimes used to refer to a very a specific area and other times (perhaps in this case) to a more general location.

mention the fact that the previous king Béla III passed away and was succeeded by his son Emeric whose reign was contested by the future king Andrew II. It is no wonder that the Templars could not rely on the feuding secular lords. As a result, the Templars had to turn to the pope, who simply confirmed the original ruling to their benefit.

2.3 Middle Period: 1200-1241

This second or Middle period from 1200 to 1241 saw the height of Templar authority in the Kingdom of Hungary, Croatia and Dalmatia. Unlike the previous period where we only have documents and letters as primary sources, this period is further illuminated by Thomas of Split's *Historia Salonitana*.⁴⁰ This new source provides information on the regional roles of the Vrana Templars and their relationships with the local ecclesiastical leaders. The title of the Middle period in respect to the idea of an 'early' growth, a 'middle' height and a 'late' stagnation or maintenance proves to be an accurate evolution of the Templars in the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory. During this period under the leadership of Magister Pontius de Cruce they enjoyed the highest levels of responsibilities and favors from the Hungarian monarch, Andrew II. The period ends with the epic battle of Muhi in 1241 against the Mongols where the Templars fought and died alongside the Hungarian knights.

Our first encounter with the Vrana Templars during this period was directly after the disastrous failing of the 4th Crusade in 1202. The military campaign was diverted to siege and capture the city of Zadar on the Dalmatian coast, before it continued on towards Constantinople.⁴¹ The Venetians with their crusading allies managed to accomplish this task rather quickly starting from November 11th until the 18th. Though the majority of the crusading

⁴⁰ Damir Karbić, et al., ed. and tr. *Archdeacon Thomas of Split: History of the Bishops of Salona and Split* (henceforth referred to as Thomas of Split, *Historia Salonitana*), Central European Medieval Texts, Vol. 4 (Budapest-New York: Central European University Press, 2006).

⁴¹ For more information on the siege of Zadar see Vanja Burić, "Reaction to the Siege of Zadar in Western Christendom," MA Thesis (Budapest: Central European University, 2015).

army moved on against Constantinople in April of 1203, some Venetian contingents remained. These forces set up the castle of St. Michael on the island of Ugljan close to Zadar from where they could maintain control of the entire area.⁴² According to the account of Thomas of Split, despite the Zaratins' attacks on the Venetian army, once this fortress was built, their enemy could effectively cut off all naval activity in the area and prevent them from entering Zadar.⁴³

It was under these circumstances that the Archbishop Bernard of Split found it necessary to hire the 10 galleys from the city of Gaeta near Naples that had docked in the port of Split. After agreeing on their payment, the archbishop traveled to Vrana to accept the silver that the Hungarian king had given to the Templars.⁴⁴ Though it is not mentioned for what purpose had the king deposited the silver, from the text it seems evident enough that this exchange between the monarch, the Templars, and the archbishop was a result of a precalculated plan. The English translation understood the word "*accepit*" as 'received' probably as a precaution against adding extra meaning to this exchange, however if the same is translated as 'accepted' that could imply the unfolding of a much larger plan. Judit Gál calls our attention to the royal visits to the Dalmatian coast in the early 13th century. According to her work, during the conflicts between Duke Andrew and King Emeric, the former unlike other rulers, spent much of his time in Dalmatia. Gál points out a royal visit to the city of Trogir around 1200, and she argues that traditionally Hungarian kings visited the region every three years after King Coloman (r. 1095-1116).⁴⁵ If this was in fact the case, a visitation by Duke Andrew in 1203 would prove highly plausible when he could have easily made a stop in Vrana on his way to Trogir or to any other major Dalmatian urban center to deposit the money. Of

⁴² Thomas of Split, *Historia Salonitana*, 148-49.

⁴³ Ibid., 148-49.

⁴⁴ "*Cum ergo Gaetani archiepiscopo acquiescerent, facta pactione de stipendio percipiendo abiit archiepiscopus Vranam, et accepit quandam argenti quantitatem, quam rex apud templarios deposuerat;*" Ibid., 148. "When the Gaetans assented to the archbishop's request, and agreement was reached concerning the payment to be received, the archbishop departed for Vrana and received a certain sum of silver, which the king had deposited with the Templars." Ibid., 149.

⁴⁵ Judit Gál, "Hungarian Horizons in the History of the Church in Dalmatia: The Role of the Royal Grants to the Church," MA Thesis (Budapest: Central European University, 2014), 32 and 27-8.

course, Andrew at the time was still only the Duke of Croatia, Dalmatia and Slavonia, but this could easily be an error or perhaps an honorary mention already by Thomas of Split who wrote about these events in retrospect.

At any rate, it seems very plausible that the Hungarian king (or Croatian Duke) would grant money to the Templars of Vrana for the defense of the Dalmatian coast. This royal policy would fall in line well with Andrew II's policies later with Pontius de Cruce entrusted to defend the region. In fact, the fortress of Vrana with its Templar guardians would prove to be the most logical place to deposit money in the surrounding area. The monarchy could not rely on the loyalties of the Dalmatian towns, which often switched allegiances to serve their own interests. The Templars, however, offered a solid alternative as they represented an international organization loyal first and foremost to the pope and to the Hungarian kings. As outsiders composed of predominantly Italian and French members in Vrana, it is no surprise that they experienced difficulties in dealing with the locals. Thus, both King Emeric and Andrew II reconfirmed the privileges of the Templars to defend their rights and autonomy from encroachments by other regional powers.⁴⁶ Thus, as an essentially independent political entity in Dalmatia, the Vrana Templars with their ideal location and fortifications, would have served well to safe guard funds meant for the fight against the Venetians in the early 1200s. Of course, here I wish to emphasize a general defensive purpose for the funds and refrain from going as far as arguing that the silver deposited by the king were specifically meant for the 10 Gaetan galleys in Split. This is still possible, but the amount of variables are too many to make a solid argument.

About five years later in 1208, we encounter a web of confrontations by the Bishop of Knin, who according to the papal letter had been previously excommunicated by the Bishop of

⁴⁶ For Emeric see: Fejér, CD. II, 329-331. Pesty provides a full translation of this in Hungarian, see: "A templáriusok," 40-1; for Andrew see: CD. III, 84-88.

Nin.⁴⁷ Though the letter does not provide information on why the Bishop of Nin ruled in this manner, it seems evident that Knin wanted something from the Vrana Templars. In terms of geography, Vrana is situated close to the coast while Knin is further inland, however the latter is located on the Krka river that provided fast travel south towards Skradin or Šibenik. From here both the land or sea routes would take less than a day to reach Vrana. Nonetheless, it seems unreasonable to suggest that Knin made territorial demands from Vrana, unlike the neighboring monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian. We can only guess at the initial reasons that sparked this conflict, which could have been economic in nature. Nonetheless, what is evident is that the Bishop of Nin took the Templars' side in the conflict and excommunicated Knin for it. As a result, the Bishop of Knin launched a lawsuit against Nin and the Templars for this unjust ruling, and Vrana was once again forced to turn towards their most reliable ally, the pope, for aid. Pope Innocent III responded to the Templars with his letter, instructing the Bishops of Trogir and Dubrovnik to settle the matter once and for all, and to lift the excommunication if they deem it fit.⁴⁸ As Kukuljević mentioned we do not know the conclusion of this dispute from the written sources.⁴⁹ However, since we do not hear of any further complaints from the Bishop of Knin, it is likely that the excommunication was lifted and the status quo was returned. Once again papal intervention was necessary to protect the interests of the Vrana Templars against a local ecclesiastical authority, not to mention that it was also in the pope's best interest to bring peace amongst the Bishoprics of Nin and Knin.

Two years later in 1210, the monastery and the church of Vrana hosted the consecration of Grupče as the Bishop of Nin and Mikus as the bishop-elect of Knin.⁵⁰ The issue was that the canon of Split elected another candidate for the vacancy in Nin called Nicholas. Archbishop

⁴⁷ Augustinus Theiner, ed. *Vetera Monumenta Slavorum meridionalium Historiam Illustrantia*, Vol. 1 (Romae, Typis Vaticanis, 1863), 44.

⁴⁸ Theiner, ed. *Vetera Monumenta Slavorum*, I: 44.

⁴⁹ Kukuljević, "Priorat Vranski," 15.

⁵⁰ Mikus or Michael would only become bishop of Knin in 1221 until 1226. Archbishop Bernard of Split still could have consecrated him earlier in 1210. Thomas of Split, *Historia Salonitana*, 156-57.

Bernard having disregarded this decision had the archpriest Grupče elected in Nin. Of course, the church of Split refused to accept his candidacy, so Bernard was forced to find a more suitable location for Grupče's consecration. Though the archbishop could have chosen from many other bishoprics to conduct his ceremony, he chose Vrana for one seemingly obvious reason, it was an independent institution that answered only to the pope. This meant that it possessed a high level of church authority but was void of entanglements with local interests. This proved perfect for Bernard since he wanted to consecrate an individual that went against the will of his own church. A costly legal battle pursued between Grupče and Nicholas, but the event's significance for this thesis was the intermediary role played by Vrana as the site for the bishops' consecrations. 10 years later Vrana played a similar role in consecrating Guncel as the Archbishop of Split this time by Grupče himself. Thomas mentions that Guncel was on his way to Split, but supposedly could not contain his ambition and he stopped along the way in Vrana.⁵¹ The reality of the situation was that he probably would not have been consecrated in Split and was forced to choose Vrana instead. Even so the pope accepted his electing and asked Robert the Bishop of Veszprém to conduct the ceremony. The account also mentions that Guncel was disliked in Vrana, which could be reflective on the later 1229 hearings about the lands in Rogovo.

By the year of Andrew II's embarkment on the 5th Crusade in 1217 from the city of Split, the Templar Magister Pontius de Cruce was introduced during the legal proceedings in Bojišće as "*humile maestro della militia del Tempio per Vngaria et Sclauonia et locotenente regio in Croatia e Dalmatia*."⁵² This means that the Hungarian king entrusted the regions of Croatia and Dalmatia under the Templar Magister's governorship (*locotenente*), while he himself was away crusading in the Holy Land.⁵³ Though this came with a huge responsibility,

⁵¹ Thomas of Split, *Historia Salonitana*, 170-71.

⁵² CD. III, 165.

⁵³ According to Kukuljević Pontius was also named Ban of Croatia after Berthold, "Priorat Vranski," 18.

it was also a huge step forward for the Order's positive relationship with the Hungarian monarchy. These improvements are likewise highlighted by Thomas of Split's account of King Andrew II's donation of the fortress of Klis near Split.⁵⁴ Initially, the king wanted to give the castle over to the city council, due to its ideal location on higher ground along the road that connected the city with its hinterlands. It would have provided Split with crucial defenses, especially while the king was indisposed on a crusade. However, the council refused the offer for unspecified reasons leaving Andrew in a difficult situation. He understood, according to Thomas of Split, that if he provided the castle to the local magnates it would be devastating for the city. As such, he invited Pontius de Cruce and gave him, and the Templar knights the castle.⁵⁵ Once again the Knights Templars proved to be the best alternative, since they were an independent and reliable military force on whom the king could count on while he was away. Nonetheless, the Templar rule over Klis did not last very long, as Thomas accounts that Domald of Sidraga (c. 1160-1243) eventually managed to besiege and capture the castle.⁵⁶ By November 1st, 1225 Domald was in control of the castle as his cavalry marched out from here to attack Split.⁵⁷

During the same year, Pontius de Cruce acted in the king's name to defend the rights of the citizens of Trogir against the powerful magnate Domald, who apparently tried to gain some sort of economic control over the city.⁵⁸ It seems that it was necessary to appoint the Templar Magister as governor, since almost right after the Hungarian king left for the crusade the local hinterland nobility led predominantly here by Domald found it opportune to expand their influence. The letter from Ugrinus, the chancellor of Hungary, clearly states that the

⁵⁴ Thomas of Split, *Historia Salonitana*, 161-3.

⁵⁵ This was also most likely when he was appointed governor over Croatia and Dalmatia.

⁵⁶ Thomas of Split, *Historia Salonitana*, 194-95; Domald was a member of the powerful Kačić kindred, who became the count of Sidraga, Cetina, Šibenik, and Split; For more information regarding Domald and his feuds with the Šubići see Damir Karbić, "The Šubići of Bribir. A Case Study of a Croatian Medieval Kindred," Ph.D. Dissertation (Budapest: Central European University, 2000), 35-9.

⁵⁷ Thomas of Split, *Historia Salonitana*, 196-97.

⁵⁸ CD. III, 162 and 165.

citizens of Trogir do not have to answer to Domald and they will be exempt from any taxation that the lord may wish to collect from them. As the head of a powerful military order, Pontius had all the respect and the tools at his disposal to uphold such a verdict against the nobility.

As far as Vrana is concerned during the rule of Pontius, it is difficult to prove the Magister's connection with the preceptory. Kukuljević claims that Vrana served as a headquarter for Pontius, from where he could govern the entire region.⁵⁹ Though this would make sense logically, there simply is no proof for this claim in the written sources, which Kolanović had rightly pointed out.⁶⁰ The Magister could have just as easily ruled from Klis, or from any of the Templars' numerous possessions in Slavonia. Therefore, once again we are dealing here with the effects of the Priory of Vrana's historical and legal traditions that stem from the Hospitaller and post-Ottoman period. Kukuljević, who wrote one of the most authoritative theses on Vrana in the 19th century clearly fell into this trap, and ever since then it remained part of popular understanding that Vrana was the headquarters of the Templars in the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory. Questions are rarely asked about this problem, even when Kukuljević formed this argument without citing any reference to back it up. Unfortunately, some modern publications still make the same mistakes that carries on the tradition.⁶¹

The sources fall silent about Pontius de Cruce in the early 1220s, and by 1229 he is already replaced by another magister, Ranardus Argentarius.⁶² However, earlier in 1227 the Templars of Vrana are specifically mentioned in a law suit for the control over the church of St. Peter in Bade.⁶³ Although no town by the name of Bade exists today in Croatia, if Lelja Dobronić is correct in associating it with modern Kamen, then this was the furthest possession

⁵⁹ Kukuljević, "Priorat Vranski," 19.

⁶⁰ Kolanovic, "Vrana," 221.

⁶¹ One of these would be the English edited version of Thomas of Split's *Historia Salonitana*, where it clearly states that "Pontius de Cruce was master of the Knights Templar of the province of Hungary and Slavonia, as prior of Vrana, and was appointed royal lieutenant for Croatia and Dalmatia during the king's absence." 162.

⁶² CD. III, 315-18.

⁶³ CD. III, 267.

of Vrana in the south that was disconnected from its surrounding area.⁶⁴ The issue arose on the grounds that Petrus Stresii, the grandfather of Forminus, built the church of St. Peter in Bade for the Vrana Templars, however the latter objected to their possession of it since it was left vacant and without service to God. Forminus argued in front of Guncel the Archbishop of Split that this violated their promise to Petrus Stresii and thus their right to own the church. The archbishop serving as the judge in this matter, decided to rule in favor of the Templars as long as they promised to hold a service to God. The document goes on to list all the movables and immovables that belonged to the church. Although I wish to refrain from placing too much meaning on this incident, the extent of Vrana's influence seems to be at center here. Kamen, which is further south of Split, was likely too far out of their zone of control that made it difficult to maintain.

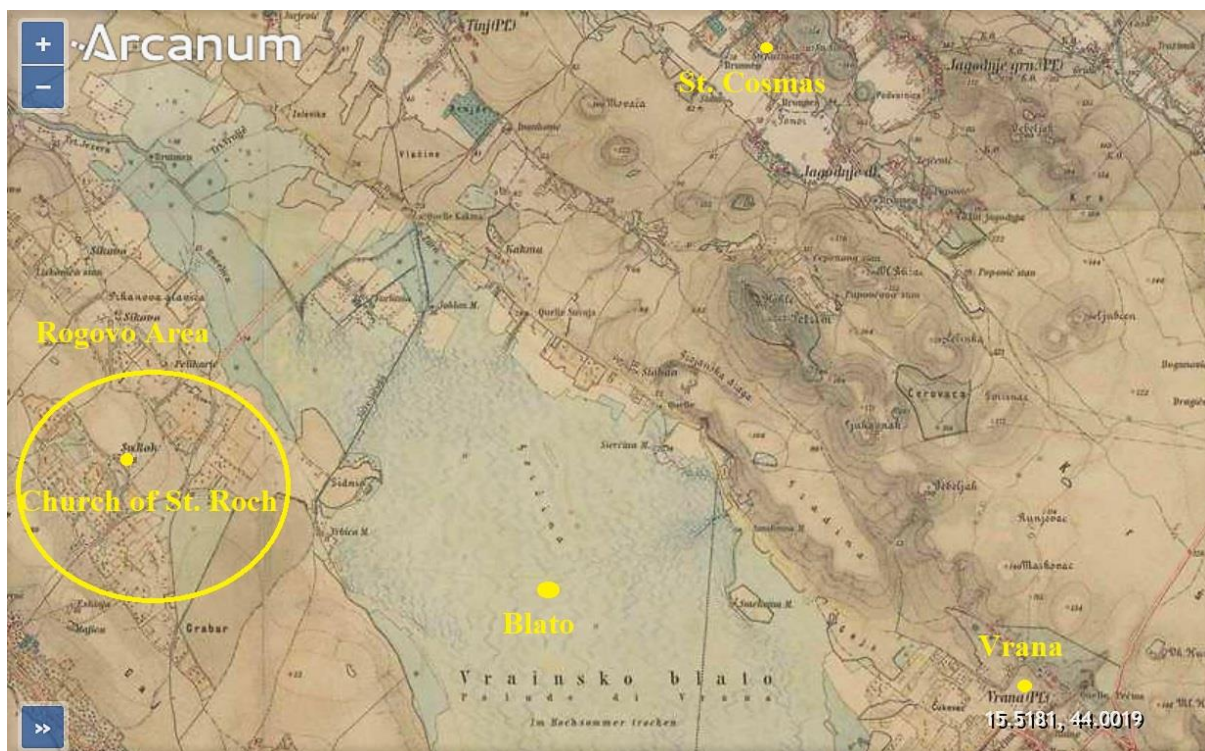
In 1229 under the leadership of Ranardus Argentarus, the Templars of Vrana entered yet another dispute with Robert the abbot of the monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian over the region of Rogovo and its vineyards.⁶⁵ This is crucial information, since the document proves that this area belonged firmly in the hands of the Templars before the verdict of Archbishop Guncel. Unfortunately, this medieval town does not exist in modern toponyms, but it was probably located somewhere between modern Filipjakov and Vrbica around the Church of St. Roch. Thus, Dobronić was right to extend the southwestern-most boundary of Vrana all the way to Filipjakov on the Adriatic coast.⁶⁶ Based on the 1194 document that drew the boundary all the way to the *Blata* and to a '*Chriplina*' river, the medieval site of Rogovo would have been located just south of these. According to the 1229 document, the Templar magister and several other important members of the Order, including their witnesses, failed to show up for the hearing. Meanwhile, Robert produced certain charters that proved the ownership of Rogovo

⁶⁴ Dobronić, *Posjedi i Sjedišta*, 94.

⁶⁵ CD. III, 311-12; 315-18.

⁶⁶ Dobronić, *Posjedi i Sjedišta*, 81-91.

rightfully belonged to the monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian. Since, the Templar leaders were absent from the judicial hearing without providing an excusable reason for such behavior and due to their failure to produce evidence proving ownership, the archbishop of Split ruled in favor of Abbot Robert and passed Rogovo over to his monastery in perpetuity. According to Frigyes Pesty the fact that the Templar magister failed to show up for a lawsuit that directly impacted Vrana proves that it could not have served as their headquarters after all.⁶⁷



Map 2: Rogovo and its surroundings

Perhaps what is most significant about this dispute in 1229 was that in a separate document Abbot Robert swore allegiance to the archbishop of Split, so that he may protect them against any future legal battles the Templars may attempt. This proves first of all the obvious, that the Templars posed a major existential threat to the monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian. The military order was interfering with their daily business. Secondly, the fact that this allegiance was sworn directly after the conclusion of the Rogovo trial, implies that Robert

⁶⁷ Frigyes, "A templáriusok," 53-4.

very much anticipated a retaliation against the verdict from the Templars once they could shift their focus back to Vrana and its local matters. It might also mean that the abbot submitted falsified charters to prove their ownership. The document also specifically mentions that the monastery would provide support for the Archbishopric of Split if the Templars should turn for aid from the papal curia or from the Hungarian king, and they would provide the necessary funds for the archbishop to travel to and from the trial.⁶⁸ Though the papacy proved to be a much steadier ally than the Hungarian monarchy, this is definitive evidence that proves just how much the Templars relied on both of them for legal support in their local claims. It also shows the desperation of Abbot Robert, who was willing to pay the rather expensive travel costs of the archbishop, so they could also have a steady powerful ally in the trials to come.

As a clear result of the intensified legal battles that the Templars faced across the entirety of the Hungarian-Slavonian priory, Pope Gregory IX (1227-1241) found it necessary in 1236 to intervene on behalf of these crusading knights and to force King Béla IV and his brother Coloman to reconfirm the Templar privileges and their land rights.⁶⁹ This intervention was also necessary in the case of Vrana especially after the hearing in 1229, since the Order evidently did not have the adequate levels of leadership to effectively engage with multiple problems across its province. The granting of these privileges solidified the relationship between the Hungarian monarch and the Templars, which becomes evident in their support during the Battle of Muhi in 1241.⁷⁰ Though the account of the battle is beyond the scope of this research, it must have measured a devastating impact on the Templars of Vrana as well. Thomas mentions that the Magister of the Templars, who at the time was James of Monte Regali, along with his fellow knights all perished during the fight against the Mongols. Though

⁶⁸ “*quod si Templares pro sententia contra ipsos data dominum archiepiscopum appellaverint ad curiam domini papae vel regis Ungariae, expensas sufficientes sibi dabo in eundo et redeundo.*” CD. III, 327.

⁶⁹ CD. IV, 1-3, 3-4, 80-1.

⁷⁰ Thomas of Split, *Historia Salonitana*, 261-69; Pesty, “A templáriusok,” 65-68; Kukuljević, “Priorat vranski,” 24.

we do not know if there were Vrana Templars at the battle, nonetheless from this moment onwards the Order entered into a stagnation and maintenance phase due to their loss of personnel. Thus, this event effectively closes off the Middle period of the Templars in the Hungarian-Slavonian priory.

2.4 Late Period: 1241-1312

After the devastating losses incurred by the Templars during the Battle of Muhi in 1241, it is no small wonder that the source material dwindles regarding the legal battles against other church institutions. It was during this period that the crusaders had finally lost their last outpost in the Holy Land at the siege of Acre in 1291. The Knights Templars as a whole now faced an existential threat across the entirety of Latin Christendom. Unlike their counterparts the Knights of St. John, the Templars did not focus much of their attention on maintaining hospitals for the needy. Over the years they had grown into a predominantly military fighting organization focused around a single purpose, to provide support of the crusading movement. After 1291, the Templars could not redefine themselves with a new purpose, which resulted in the Council of Vienne of 1312 that brought an end to their Order.

Although, this period does not involve the Vrana Templars with any new legal conflicts, there is sufficient evidence to prove that this was also a period when Vrana enjoyed a particularly high level of monarchical favor compared to the Early period and probably paralleled the time of Magister Pontius de Cruce. After the fight in 1241, Béla IV must have realized the true potential and advantage of these crusading military orders who had fought and died by his side. For instance, he later used the Knights of St. John as a defensive measure against any future Mongol incursion. They were to provide garrisons in all major Hungarian castles and towns, and the king even donated a large piece of land in Severin close to the border

from where the knights could quickly react in defense of the realm.⁷¹ Though his plan ultimately failed, Béla's intentions were clear.

Such a close relationship was also fostered towards the Templars, but after the battle they no longer had the same potential for defending the kingdom as the Hospitallers did. However, they seem to have provided shelter in Dalmatia for the king who was fleeing from the Mongols soon after the battle. Although we do not have clear evidence of this, the Vrana Templars were on a very personal basis with the Hungarian king. In 1245, Thomas of Split mentions that Béla IV spent the Easter celebrations in Vrana, which seems to imply that this was not his first time there and he probably frequented the place during his stay in Dalmatia.⁷² Not to mention that the fortress of Vrana provided excellent shelter against potential attacks. This was the same reason why the king also took up in Klis for a while during his escape, but as mentioned earlier this castle no longer belonged to the Templars.

Evidently, in 1255 the Templars came into conflict with the citizens of Šibenik, who attacked and damaged their fortress there.⁷³ The Vrana Templars involvement is not clear in this situation, but it would be logical to assume that they must have interacted on some level with the castles' defenses and at the very least in the legal conflict that ensued. The pope, Alexander IV (1254-1261), interfered on behalf of the Templars after they have complained to him about their situation. Alexander's letter makes it clear that the Templars informed him about the fact that Andrew II provided the castle of Šibenik in exchange for the castle of Klis, which Domald took by force, therefore they had every right to own it. The pope urged the Archbishop of Zadar to settle the issue quickly without a prolonged trial, to force the townspeople to give up the castle, and to make them pay for the damages. The sources fall silent after this letter and we do not know the exact outcome. It seems probable that the pope's

⁷¹ Jenő Szűcs, *Az utolsó Arpádok* [The Last Arpadians] (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 1993), 3-32; Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers*, 39.

⁷² Thomas of Split, *Historia Salonitana*, 350-51.

⁷³ CD. IV, 602-3.

threats of excommunication would have been motivation enough for the citizens to execute his will, however the Templar rule over the castle was unlikely to have lasted very long. The people of Šibenik were obviously hostile towards the knights that could have forced the Templars to eventually hand over the castle. Šibenik was later consecrated as a bishopric in 1298, thus it would seem that their political ambitions affected their attitudes against an autonomous military order entrenched next to their city.⁷⁴

Towards the end of the century, the Templars started to develop closer ties with the Šubić noble family in Croatia, in particular with Ban Paul Šubić (r. 1275-1312). With the Arpadian dynasty dying out, other than the ecclesiastical institutions, the Templars and the Šubić formed the most influential political powers in Croatia, Slavonia, and Dalmatia. For instance, in 1298 Vrana played a key role in the local political life, as it hosted the reconciliation between Paul and members of the Gušići clan.⁷⁵ Their close bond is also evident in the support of the same heir nominees to the Hungarian throne. Initially, the Templars backed Andrew III (r. 1290-1301) against the wishes of the pope and the Šubići, but later they switched their allegiances to accept the claim of the Angevin Charles Robert (r. 1301/8-1342) from Naples. The Templars along with the Šubići played a central role in aiding and defending Charles to become the king of Croatia in Zagreb, much to the praise of Pope Boniface VIII.⁷⁶ After the Council of Vienne in 1312, the Templars were abolished and we do not hear again of Vrana in the source materials until 1328 by which time it was already in the possession of the Hospitallers. Since there is no evidence to support a mass execution of the Templars in the region, their previous members were probably merged with the Knights of St. John.

⁷⁴ For information about the developments of the bishopric of Šibenik see: Mišo Petrović, "Popes, Prelates, Pretenders: The Role of the High Clergy of Croatia, Dalmatia and Slavonia in the Fight for the Hungarian Throne in the Fourteenth Century," MA Thesis (Budapest, Central European University, 2015), 32-3.

⁷⁵ Sime Ljubić, *Listine: Odnosajih Izmedju Južnoga Slavenstva I Mletačke Republike*. (from now on referred to as Listine) Vol. III, (Zagreb, Jugoslavenska Akademija Znanosti I Umjetnosti, 1872), 432.

⁷⁶ Kukuljević, "Priorat Vranski," 33; For information on the Šubići's ambitions in Dalmatia see: Damir Karbić, "The Šubići of Bribir. A Case Study of a Croatian Medieval Kindred," Ph.D. Dissertation (Budapest: Central European University, 2000).

2.5 Conclusion

The roughly one and half centuries that the Templars spent in Vrana was full of turbulent legal battles usually against their neighboring ecclesiastical institutions and noblemen. These engagements constantly tested the Templars' relationships with the pope who provided them with legal aid, the monarch who had the power to confirm their privileges, provide them with new lands and likewise to interfere in the legal proceedings, and lastly with those they were disputing against. Some answers can now be concluded for those questions that were raised initially in the introduction.

Firstly, the developments and transformations of the relationship between these parties largely depended on the political contexts that they were exposed to. The pope remained a firm supporter of the Vrana Templars ever since he has donated the monastery to them sometime in the mid-1100s. Their relationship was only tainted by a minor bump when the Templars chose to support Andrew III over the Angevin party in Naples, but this too was quickly rectified by the wishes of Pope Boniface VIII. The Hungarian monarch on the other hand was never outright hostile to the Templars, in fact it would be a mistake to understand the king's lack of support at times as a dislike towards the Order. As far as Vrana is concerned, its location was generally far away from the Hungarian throne and would only come into view every three years or so when there would be a royal visit to that region. This made the king a less reliable ally for the Templars' local activities in Vrana. However, other times the Templars and Vrana in particular enjoyed a significant level of royal favors. The physical presence of the king in the area in the case of Andrew II or Béla IV definitely affected Vrana, especially during the crusading fervor of the former. It was then that a Templar Magister could be named governor in the king's absence. Likewise, during Béla IV's stay in Dalmatia, Vrana hosted the king and enjoyed a special prestige. Other times required direct papal intervention on behalf of Templars. In 1236 Pope Gregory IX directly forced Béla IV and Coloman to reconfirm the Order's privileges.

Vrana and the Templars' monarchical favor returned after the tremendous support they have provided against the Mongols during the Battle of Muhi, and even afterwards to house the king in Dalmatia.

The locals that the Vrana Templars came into conflicts with generally remained enemies throughout the decades. This is most glaringly obvious in the case of the monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian with whom they repeatedly fought for their lands along the established boundary. The wealthy nobleman Domald remained a firm enemy of the Templars. He took Klis by force from them, slandered their good Christian mission for the crusades, and even faced Magister Pontius de Cruce in the legal defense of the citizens of Trogir. The local ecclesiastical authorities on the whole seemed supportive or they at the very least obeyed the commands of the pope to support the Vrana Templars. The Bishop of Knin however had a very serious issue with them, which eventually earned him his excommunication by the Bishop of Nin. Similarly, Guncel the archbishop of Split, was disliked by the Vrana Templars, which was probably further entrenched after the archbishop ruled in favor of the monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian for the lands in Rogovo.

The chapter also made it clear that over the years the physical boundaries of Vrana were altered as a result of the legal battles that took place mostly against the monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian. In 1194 the northern boundary of Vrana that it shared with this monastery can be drawn based on the established outline in the legal document. Later in 1229 the Templars had to make a serious concession to give up Rogovo along this border. We can only guess at the southern extent of Vrana under the Templars, and we only encounter partial information regarding this during the Hospitallers that followed. Also, it is difficult to know, what influence if any, did Vrana play in the Order's surrounding possessions, such as Bojišće or Šibenik.

Chapter 3: The Knights of Saint John in Vrana during the 14th Century

Although the Templar Order was eliminated during the Council of Vienne in 1312, their possessions at least in the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory simply passed over to the Knights of Saint John commonly referred to as the Hospitallers. This must have been a relatively smooth transition, since the alliance between Charles I and the pope were on firm grounds and the military orders showed their support during the new king's ascension. This Order, unlike the Templars, was able to adapt to the changing political landscape of Latin Christendom. Even though both orders were founded around the same time in the 12th century, the Hospitallers as their name suggests invested most of their initial efforts in the founding of hospitals for the sick and needy. Eventually, they also took on a military role much like the Templars, their founding purpose provided the perfect failsafe to fall back on after the loss of the Holy Land. There was no longer a need for these orders' military functions, and in fact they would prove to be a danger against the powers of the local authorities. Thus, the Templars were turned into scapegoats and King Philip IV of France (r. 1285-1314) managed to neutralize the potential threat that this order might have posed.⁷⁷

The following chapter seeks to continue on into the 14th century where the previous chapter left off and explore how the Hospitallers dealt with both the local and state-level power structures that Vrana was exposed to. In this regard, the argumentation will follow the same guiding principles as before, yet as it will become evident the end results are quite different from the Templar predecessors. Vrana, which was left isolated in this period from the rest of the Priory's possessions, had to balance between the feuding Venetian and Hungarian secular rulers all while physically fending off multiple sieges by the Croatian magnate family of the

⁷⁷ For information regarding the trial of the Templars see: Malcom Barber, *The Trial of the Templars*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006).

Šubići. Since, as far as the documentation shows, the pope no longer played a major role in the defense of Vrana, these Hospitallers had to be self-reliant and accept secular support whenever the opportunity presented itself.

Much like the previous chapter, the following analysis will be broken down according to chronological periods of development. The first period titled “Takeover and Maintenance” is marked precisely by these factors. The initial takeover, which we do not have an account of, happened sometime before the first document in 1328. From this point on Vrana generally fought to maintain its autonomy and its influence over the local Dalmatian region against both the Šubići kindred and the Venetian Republic. The second period titled “John of Palisna’s Rule” is a period that is characterized by the Hungarian-Slavonian Prior’s direct involvement in the succession wars that followed the death of Louis I. During this period Vrana grew to become the center of the prior’s operations and took on a more privatized role. Though we do not know for sure when Palisna’s appointment as prior began, we hear of him already in 1379, which provides a rough estimation of the beginning of this period. The period will close with Queen Mary’s (1382-1395) confiscation of Palisna’s possessions in 1387. Of course, the story of Vrana does not end here, but this chapter will provide sufficient content to allow for a thematic comparison with the Templars in the next chapter.

3.1 Takeover and Maintenance: 1300s-1379

The nature of the Hospitallers’ takeover of Vrana from the Templars is difficult to describe since we do not have sufficient sources from the early 1300s. Therefore, we are forced to judge Vrana’s situation in comparison with the rest of the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory. Previous scholarship had already explored this topic well, thus there is not much more that this

thesis could add to their discourse.⁷⁸ From 1308 the Templar properties began to be sequestered in part by the Hungarian king himself.⁷⁹ This was evidently a trend during the Templar trials when secular administration was established over their goods and possessions.⁸⁰ A more significant element of the consolidation of the Templar properties was the financial difficulties it apparently posed to the Hospitaller Order in the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory. According to Hunyadi, the sudden influx of these possessions was initially a burden for the priory leaving them with no choice but to lease quickly in order to generate at least some income.⁸¹ In addition, in 1322 the pope also granted the Hospitallers the right to alienate the properties if necessary.⁸² Although they generally preferred to lease them instead, the fact that they would receive a privilege like this from the pope speaks of a desperate situation in the priory. The Order did however show a methodical selection of those possessions that were least profitable for them and offered them up to lease by laymen.⁸³

With this general context in mind of the early 1300s, the first source on Vrana in 1328 already proves that the Hospitallers received possession of it sometime before the events described in the document.⁸⁴ For the first time in the recorded history of Vrana, a layman is attested to have helped the Hospitallers of Vrana in the fortress' defense during its besiegement by the "Croats" or in other words by the Šubići.⁸⁵ This was a significant development in Vrana's policy towards the local population. As we have seen from the previous chapter, the Templars were not on the best of terms with the local landowning nobility. Here however there

⁷⁸ Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers*, 49-56; also specifically on this topic see Ferenc Patek, *A magyarországi templárius rend felbomlása*. [The dissolution of the Templars in Hungary] (Budapest: May János, 1912), 28, 46-7.

⁷⁹ Ljubić, *Listine*, Vol. I, 224.

⁸⁰ Malcom Barber, *The Trial of the Templars* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006), 60, 84, 90.

⁸¹ Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers*, 53-4.

⁸² G. Mollat and G. de Lesquen, ed., *Registres de Jean XXII, Lettres communes analysées d'après les registres dits d'Avignon et du Vatican* (Paris: 1904-1920), nos. 16591, 16602; AOkl 6: 306.

⁸³ Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers*, 54; AOkl 10: 111-2.

⁸⁴ See Appendix, B: Fejér, CD. 8/3: 341-343; AOkl 12: 146

⁸⁵ The document does not specifically say that they were the Šubići, but this would make the most sense given the context of the situation.

is an explicit directive from the Hospitaller leadership to ensure that the said layman named Codulus would get properly compensated:

so that both Codulus and other among our subjects or the faithful to our house should be moved with even greater force to defend our above-mentioned house, following the request and the insistence of our reverend brethren in Christ that is of Guirardus of Gragnana our above-mentioned Vice Prior, of Brother Francis of Gragnana...⁸⁶

It is obvious from this that by the 14th century Vrana developed local allies, such as Codulus as they could no longer rely on the Hungarian king for aid. Even though, the Hospitallers probably supported the ascent of the Angevin Charles Robert to the Hungarian throne much like the Templars, the king was occupied in his fights against the oligarchs until 1323.⁸⁷ This situation placed the Vrana Hospitallers in an extremely difficult position as the Šubići, though they also supported the Angevin party initially, now felt the political pressures of a unified Hungarian kingdom and chose instead to expand their own influence over Dalmatia. This initiative manifested in the siege of Vrana in 1328 severing the Hospitaller ties with the Šubići family for the rest of the period.

With Codulus' aid the Hospitallers managed to successfully defend the fortress, however as a retaliation the Croatians plundered and burnt his hinterland estate. Thus, the objective of the document itself was to provide a suitable replace property for Codulus' heroic deeds. As it is customary in legal documents they provided a detailed description of the extent of the donation's boundaries. These are as follows:

first there is a small mountain called Ostringus⁸⁸ then it goes to Dobridol⁸⁹ from there it goes straight to the place called Blato⁹⁰ then turning back it returns to Ozring⁹¹ from there south towards Planizhnh, from there over the mountain

⁸⁶ “*volentes ipsum Codulum ac eius haeredes in aliquantulum remunerare, vt ad supradicta tam ipse Codulus, quam alii nostri vel domus nostrae fideles fortius ad exhibitionem supradictam animentur, ad instantiam et petitionem fratrum nostrorum in Christo reuerendorum scilicet fratris, Conradi de Gragna Vice Prioris nostri superius nominati, fratris Francisci Cgregna,*” Appendix, B: Fejér, CD. 8/3: 341-343.

⁸⁷ Pál Engel, “Charles I of Anjou (1301-1342),” in *The Realm of St. Stephen: A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526* (London-New York, I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2001), 132-4.

⁸⁸ Could also be read as Ozren.

⁸⁹ Meaning ‘good valley’ in Croatian.

⁹⁰ ‘marsh,’ which likely refers to the same Blato as in the previous chapter.

⁹¹ Very likely the same as the first Ostringus.

called Visoqui⁹² from there to the mountain called Cosmati vrh⁹³, then in between two mountains called Visoque, from there to the place called Stenize⁹⁴ from there returning towards another hill towards the south called Murna, then towards the spring called Triglan⁹⁵ then to the place where in the past used to be the mill of a man called Obrad Hroničić⁹⁶ and of his sons, then going straight on the road that leads from Ritičlan⁹⁷ to Vrana, then beyond the already mentioned road up the hill and beyond the hill straight to the mountain called Gora⁹⁸ and straight to the above mentioned place.⁹⁹

Though it is impossible to locate all of these toponyms, the following two maps have attempted to trace this boundary as much as possible. Map. 3 uses the Second Habsburg Military Survey (1806-1869), and Map. 4 uses the Third Military Survey (1869-1887) that provides more in-depth information.

⁹² Meaning ‘tall one’ in Croatian.

⁹³ Meaning ‘peak’ in Croatian.

⁹⁴ Stenice- ‘little rocks’ which is very close to ‘Stenize.’

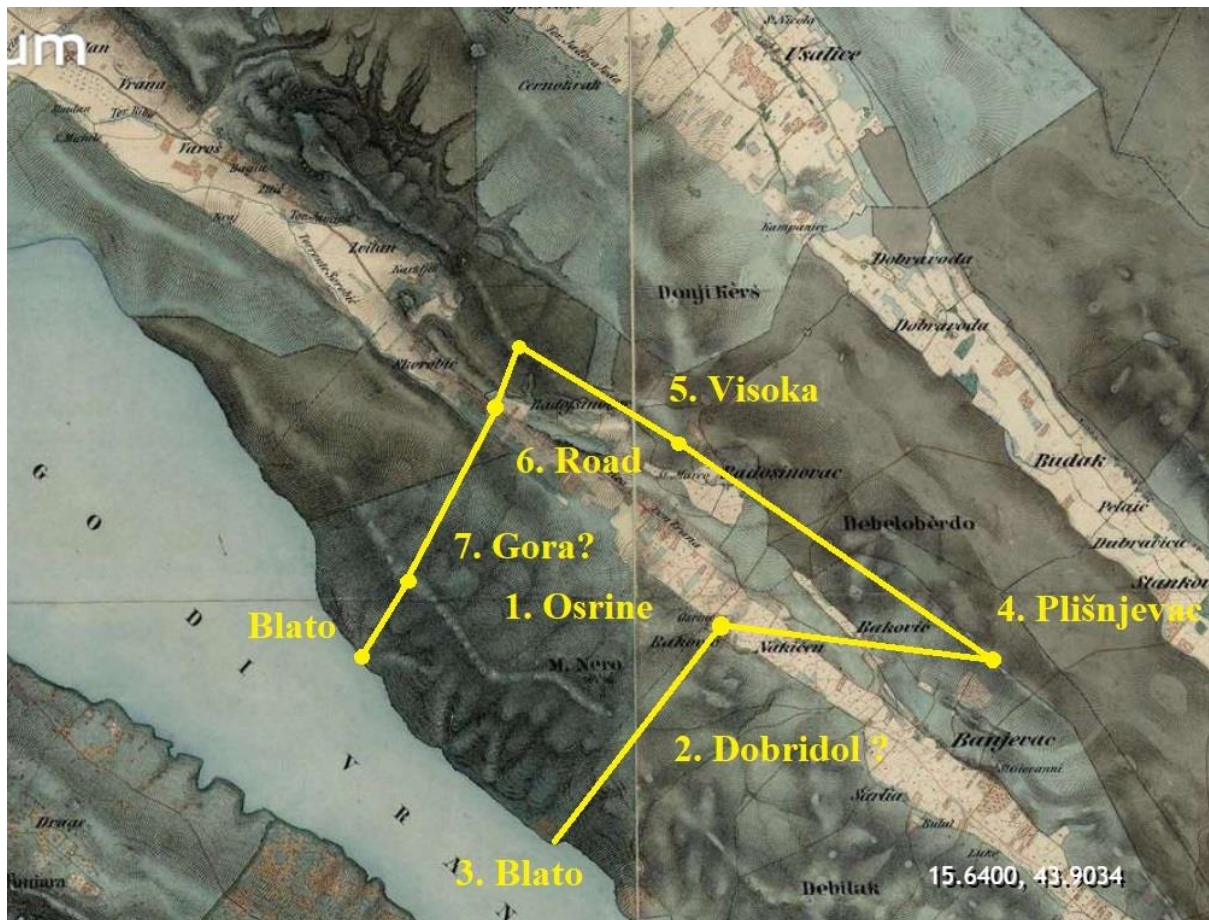
⁹⁵ Triglav; Triglar- ‘three heads’ though this could be a stretch here.

⁹⁶ ‘Obradi Cronichig’ in AOkl 12: 146.

⁹⁷ Ritičgran according to AOkl 12: 146.

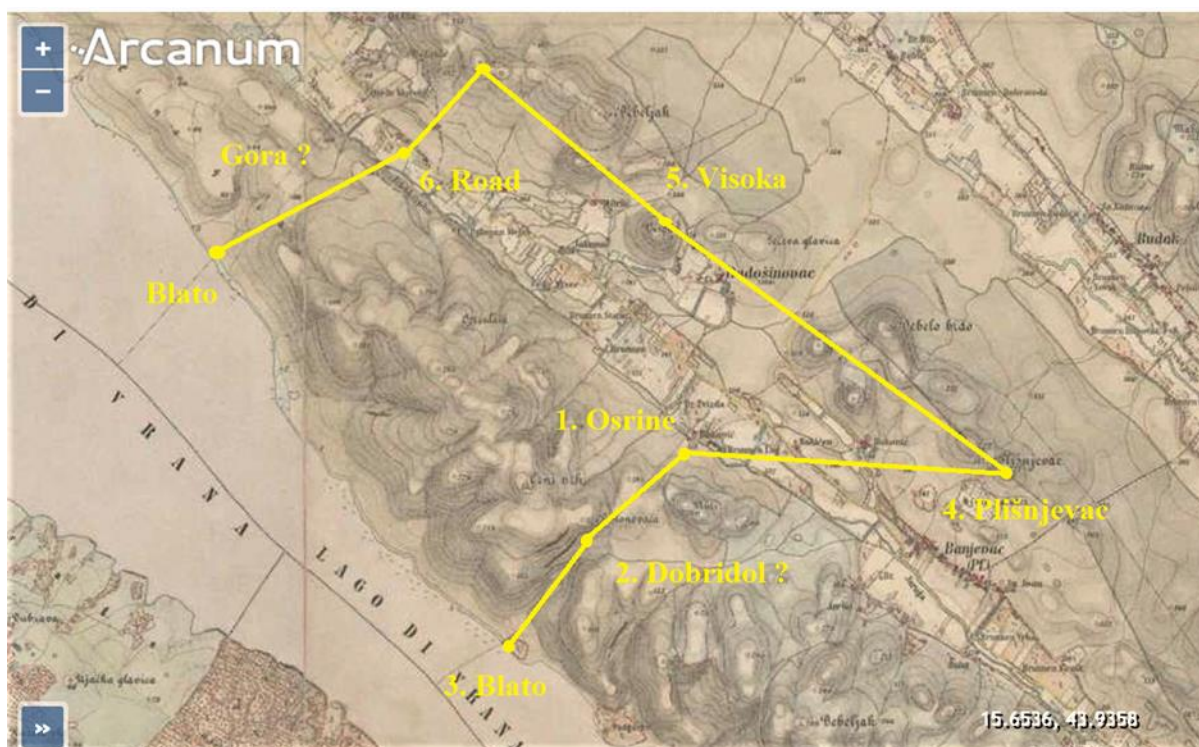
⁹⁸ Meaning ‘mountain’ in Croatian.

⁹⁹ Appendix, B: Fejér, CD. 8/3: 341-3.



Map 3: The land granted to Codulus plotted on the Second Military Survey (1806-1869)

The first marker is Osrine from the Second Military Survey, which bears a strong resemblance to “*Osringus*” or “*Ozring*” described in the text. If this means something close to a ‘small mountain’ in Croatian, then its location makes perfect sense. From there the line goes to “*Dobridol*”, but unfortunately there are no toponyms with this name. However, it could be assumed that if the borderline is going towards the “*Blato*” then this must be the valley cutting across the mountain range hence its name of ‘good valley’ in Croatian. The third mark is the “*Blato*” that proves slightly problematic, since theoretically the ‘marsh’ or Blata is due Northwest from this location, however here this could only be Lake Vrana. This issue might mean that in fact the land given to Codulus was somewhere between the monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian and the monastery of Vrana, which was the boundary established in the previous chapter.



Map 4: Codulus' land on Third Military Survey (1869-1887)

However, other than the “*Blata*” toponym, none of the other indicators could be found, which reinforces the selection of this southern area instead. Another indication that this was indeed the location of the property was from the fact that Tolsan, the judge of Skorobić, was assigned by the Priory to introduce Codulus to his new land and subjects. This man needed to be strongly acquainted with the local population and could not have been a dignitary from a distant land. The judge of Skorobić, a town which is located just north of this property, would have provided the best knowledge of the area. In this respect, “*Blata*” could have very well been a general referral to the entire lake region with its marshy shorelines here and there. Therefore, following this rationale, the third mark would go straight to the lake.

After returning to the initial “*Ostringus*” along the same line, the border goes towards the south to “*Planizhnih*”, which vaguely resembles the toponym Plišnjevac found on Map. 4. Even if this placement is incorrect the border definitely moves in that direction and establishes the property's southernmost boundary. Likewise, Map. 4 shows a Visoka, which probably refers to one of the “*Visoqui*” described in the text. But name “*Visoqui*”, which means

something close to the ‘tall one’ in Croatian, was a general name given to taller mountains or hills. This poses a problem, but we can be rather certain that Visoka that is in fact a very obvious and rather isolated mountain was one of the border markers mentioned in the text. Unfortunately, the other mountain or hill names are lost to us, but based on the border’s direction we can assume that it followed the path of the mountain range. This establishes the Northeast boundary of the property.

From here the border once again returns towards the south that would establish the Northwest boundary. The difficulty with establishing this line was that there are no signs of the “*Murna*” hill or the “*Triglan*” spring that indicated the shift in the border’s direction. Therefore, for the purposes of this thesis, the Northwestern line is set to border Skorobić closely. This assumption is definitely in the realm of possibility, since there are numerous hills that followed towards the North. Also Map. 4 names dozens of ‘brunnen,’ which is the German word for ‘fountain’ or ‘spring.’ This is not surprising, since there was also the Skorobić creek that flowed through the area, and many more springs could be found on the other side of the mountain in the North, including a town named Dobravoda meaning ‘good water’ in Croatian. The next definitive place marker that is possible to identify is the road that connects this area (i.e. “*Ritiljan*” or “*Ritihgran*”) with Vrana. Although, more than 500 years have passed before these military surveys were conducted, it is obvious that the document is referring to the road located in the valley between the two mountain ranges. The mill that belonged to Obrad Hroničić was probably located nearby. At any rate, the border then crosses this road and once again increases in elevation indicating that the line has reached the mountains along the lake. One of these must have been named “*Gora*”, or perhaps the entire area was called this as it is a general name for ‘mountain’ in Croatian. After this it likely returned to the lake completing the border.

Overall, it seems that the property correlates to some extent with the more agricultural parts of modern day Radošinovci and Banjevcı. In fact, the former might be related to the

medieval “*Ritiljan*” or “*Ritihgran*” though this is difficult to prove. According to the document this was the name of the area outlined where even the modern boundaries seem to match the extent stretching from the lake all the way to the northern mountains and hills. There are roads that connect Dobra Voda and Stankovci with the road that lies in the valley towards Vrana. These could have also been located along the established border even if not explicitly stated. At any rate, this region definitely still resembles those economic activities that were outlined even if these are in line with the traditional legal formula, such as:

...vineyards, gardens, vegetable patches, with the fruit bearing trees, and those that do not bear fruit, forests, meadows, pasture lands, woodlands, waters, and the waterbeds with all the privileges and all the honors and incomes, with all the rights of jurisdiction of levying tolls, without any exception.¹⁰⁰

The region is full of fruit trees, vineyards, crop fields, sheep flocks, etc. If we include the potential to raise tolls along the trade routes that cut across this property and those that connected it to the previously mentioned settlements, it is possible to conclude that in fact this was a wealthy piece of land with much potential for lucrative activities.

After the document established the property’s borders, it stipulated Codulus and his heirs to pay 10 pounds of Venetian denarii every Christmas as rent. Although we do not know of this layman’s exact relationship with Vrana before this incident other than that he was somehow their follower or subject, from this point on the document makes it clear that he owed money and his services in perpetuity to the Hospitallers. This fits in well with the Order’s general policy of leasing out their new lands across the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory. Perhaps Vrana made less money from the rent than directly administering it, but this also resulted in less of a hassle and lower costs overall. We cannot know for sure what motivated Codulus in the first place to assist the Hospitallers, but as the son of a citizen of Zadar he probably saw the Hospitallers in the hinterland as an opportunity to expand his influence there when this proved

¹⁰⁰ Appendix, B: Fejér, CD. 8/3: 341-3.

difficult in the city. He could have also had difficulties with the Šubići already, and instead of dying in the fields he chose to fight alongside the Hospitallers in the fortress.

The sources fall silent regarding the Hospitallers in Vrana until a certain Giovanni de Camporiano catches the eye of Pope Benedict XII (1334-1342) in 1337.¹⁰¹ Apparently, this was a case of discontent with the Hospitaller habit, a way of life that is not meant for everyone. Giovanni, despite serving mostly with his fellow countrymen and brothers from the Italian peninsula, chose instead to run away with a sizable loot from Vrana, changing his name and marrying his beloved. Unfortunately for Giovanni, he made the mistake of escaping towards Zadar, which was still very much in the reach of Vrana as well as the pope. Therefore, the pope granted the rights to the Bishops of Zadar, Nin and Skradin to intervene in this situation along with the Hungarian-Slavonian Prior. Although the document does not inform us of the issue's resolution, we can safely assume nothing good happened to Brother Giovanni after this point. Here Hunyadi engaged in a debate with Anthony Luttrell, another distinguished historian of the Hospitaller Order, and challenged the latter's argument regarding the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory serving as a "place of punishment."¹⁰² This idea is based on the unusual activity of Giovanni including other instances of Hospitaller brothers being sent into exile to Hungary. However, Hunyadi convincingly argues that Hungary instead was merely a distant place far removed from the brothers' committed sins, but nonetheless a place where they could still serve together with their own countrymen.¹⁰³

The 1340s and 50s proved much more eventful for Vrana as this was the period of the renewed Venetian-Hungarian conflict over the Dalmatian region that tested all the established diplomatic ties of the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory. Not only did Vrana face the direct hostilities

¹⁰¹ Jean-Marie Vidal, ed. *Benoît XII, 1334-1342, Lettres communes analysées d'après les registres dits d'Avignon et du Vatican*, 3 vols. (Paris: A. Fontemoing, 1902-1911), 1: no. 5031.

¹⁰² Anthony Luttrell, "The Hospitallers in Hungary before 1418: Problems and Sources," in Zsolt Hunyadi and József Laszlovszky, eds. *The Crusade and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity* (Budapest: CEU Department of Medieval Studies, 2001), 273-4.

¹⁰³ Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers*, 55-6.

of Venice and their local Šubići allies, but they were also pressured by the pope to engage in the crusading movement against the Turks in the south that grew ever more menacing. While at the same time they tried to maintain steady relations with the Hungarian monarch that was passed on to Louis I succeeding to his father's throne. Royal policy was generally not too keen on confronting with the Turks directly, which made the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory's situation precarious with the papacy.

In order to untangle the complexity of these relations, it is necessary to rewind a couple of years before the conflict erupted against Venice. Already in 1343, we have proof that Mladen Šubić III (1315-1348) became a Venetian citizen, thus allying himself with the republic.¹⁰⁴ Although we cannot be certain that it was in fact the Šubići who invaded Vrana in 1328, as the source only mentions that they were Croats, they were the most likely candidates. If this was the case, then already in the early 1300s their family's policy was evidently bent on expanding their influence over Dalmatia even if it meant to become a citizen of Venice. The Šubići were ready to sever any positive ties they had from supporting Charles Robert's early years and to eliminate every royal opposition in the region. In the case of Dalmatia, this mainly meant the elimination of Vrana as this was a political unit that remained loyal to the crown, and one that possessed a significant fortification as well as a superb fighting force.

The difficulty lies in the fact that the Venetians actually had a good relationship with the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory. For example, in July of 1345 the Venetian Senate has agreed to provide two galleys for Vrana to transport their produced oars from Zadar to their Master in Rhodes. However, as a stipulation they have requested a confirmation letter from the Master that was supposed to be relayed back to the senate once the shipping was delivered.¹⁰⁵ This is a slightly different interpretation from Hunyadi's, who added the word 'non' to imply that there

¹⁰⁴ Gusztáv Wenzel, *Diplomáciai emlékek az Anjou-korból. Monumenta Hungariae Historica: Acta Extera Andegavensia*. (henceforth referred to as *Acta Extera*) 3 vols. (Budapest: MTA, 1874-1876), 2: 34-5.

¹⁰⁵ Wenzel, *Acta extera* 2: 75-6.

was no need for a letter in reply to the Hospitaller Master's receiving of the oars.¹⁰⁶ Nonetheless, it seems that infact this part of the text should be emphasized as it symbolized a level of distrust by Venice towards the Hungarian prior or towards the captain of the ships. Since the oars were regarded as a strategic military commodity, the Venetian Senate were probably extra careful to ensure that they would actually reach their desired target and not fall into hands of the wrong people or the highest bidder. Their absolute operational control over this transaction seems logical, yet their willingness to fulfill and execute it still speaks of friendly relations between Venice and Vrana. It is even more interesting that this was the first document that titled the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory as "*Priori Vngarie et Laurane*."¹⁰⁷ The question is what could explain this close relationship and their choice to address the priory as the Priory of Hungary and Vrana? According to Hunyadi this could be because the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory was probably linked with the Priory of Venice and belonged to the Italian Langue.¹⁰⁸ The Republic's closeness with the Hospitallers was evident in their cooperation during the crusade in Smyrna.¹⁰⁹ The use of the 'Priory of Vrana' is much more difficult to understand. Overall, it seems logical to assume that since the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory was leasing out most of its newly acquired Templar possessions, Vrana was in fact the last Hospitaller stronghold on the Dalmatian coast. This created a huge land gap between Vrana and the rest of the preceptories in Slavonia and Hungary. Also, since the earlier Hospitaller preceptories in Hungary were combined with the Templar ones in Slavonia, a larger more unified network was created. Unlike during the Templar period when most of their possessions were in Slavonia and only a few were in Hungary, perhaps now the whole Hungarian-Slavonian region could be referred to collectively as Hungary at the very least from the Venetian

¹⁰⁶ Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers*, 58.

¹⁰⁷ Wenzel, *Acta extera*, 75-6.

¹⁰⁸ Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers*, 58.

¹⁰⁹ Kenneth M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, Vol. 1: *The Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1976), 195, 199.

perspective. Although this is mere hypothesis, the title of the Priory of Vrana continued on even to this day in Croatian legal traditions.¹¹⁰

By December of the same year their good standing was stirred up by the Venetian invasion and siege of Zadar with the leadership of Mladen Šubić (III).¹¹¹ In fact, the Venetian Senate seemed to be in a state of confusion as to why Mladen decided to take a portion of the men away from the siege and instead invade Vrana burning its fortress, killing its brothers, and taking loads of loot for his soldiers. Failing to inform the senate about this operation beforehand, some seemed to mistrust his motives. As mentioned earlier, Vrana maintained a good relationship with the Venetians, and some senators deemed that Mladen attacked an ally of the Republic and should stop immediately from causing further damages to the fortress. While others argued that Vrana was loyal to the Hungarian king and ruled those lands as a fief by him.¹¹² Although Vrana definitely took advantage of the opportunities to improve its stance with Venice, overall Vrana still belonged to the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory and remained loyal to its king. In this respect, Mladen was strategically smart to quickly pacify a potentially troublesome enemy in the region, especially if the Order chose to garrison some of Louis' troops in the future campaigns.

It seems that the Order has grown into the local political structure following royal policy much closer than papal directives. As mentioned earlier, the growing problem of the Turks caught the eye of the pope and he wished to mobilize the military orders against these heathens. Thus, in 1343 Pope Clement VI (1342-1352) went as far as to threaten the Order with withdrawing the newly acquired Templar properties and to create a new military order for

¹¹⁰ For information regarding the development of the Priory of Vrana's legal practice in Croatia see: Lucijan Kos, "Prior vranski I njegove funkcije u našoj pravnoj povijesti," [The prior of Vrana and his function in Croatian legal practice] *Radovi Instituta J. A. u Zadru* 18 (1971): 227-235.

¹¹¹ Wenzel, *Acta extera* 2: 124.

¹¹² "*dicti Hospitalarii illum locum tenent in feudum a Regibus Hungarie*;" Wenzel, *Acta extera* 2: 124.

them.¹¹³ However, as we could tell from the local context, these threats were far too distant for the case of Vrana when only two years later their fortress was burnt by the Šubići and his Venetian allies. The conflicts that would follow against Venice made the fight against the Turks irrelevant for both Louis I and the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory. Even after the conclusion of the Treaty of Zadar in 1358, royal policy was generally defensive against the Turks. Louis sought to create buffer zones instead by conquering regions in the Balkans and focused most of his attention to expanding his royal domain and influence towards the North and towards Italy.¹¹⁴

Although King Louis I attempted to liberate Zadar from the Venetians, he ultimately failed in 1346 and his attention was already distracted after the assassination of his brother Andrew in Naples. Hunyadi calls our attention to the fact that once Louis shifted his foreign policy against Naples to take revenge, not even the news of 1348 from the Viceprior Baudoin Cornuti regarding the Venetians' defensive preparations in Zadar would change his mind.¹¹⁵ Eventually however, Louis did return and defeated the Venetians resulting in the Treaty of Zadar 1358. Here Baudoin Cornuti played major role as a witness for the Hungarian king during the peace conference, which further reinforces the idea that the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory held a solid relationship with the monarchy.¹¹⁶ On the opposing side, the Venetian Prior also served as a witness of the oaths a couple of days later.¹¹⁷ Overall, this demonstrates that each priory was very much part of the local politics and conflicts, and had difficulties breaking out of its bonds for a more international cause such as a crusade.

¹¹³ Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers*, 57; Anthony Luttrell, "Emmanuele Piloti and Criticism of the Knights Hospitallers of Rhodes: 1306-1444," *Annales de l'Ordre Souverain Militaire de Malte* 20 (1962): 11; *Idem*, "The Hospitallers at Rhodes, 1306-1421," in Kenneth M. Setton, ed. *A History of the Crusades*. Vol. 3 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975), 294; Helen Nicholson, *The Knights Hospitaller* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2001), 52.

¹¹⁴ For information of the later encounters see Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers*, 59-60.

¹¹⁵ Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers*, 59; CD. 11: 444-445.

¹¹⁶ Wenzel, *Acta extera*, 2: 501-4.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 2: 513-18.

For the remainder of this period from the 1300s to 1379 there are only two more published documents issued from Vrana itself, though these only deal with the preceptory indirectly.¹¹⁸ The first document from 1350 in the presence of Baudoin Cornuti the Vrana Hospitallers served as witnesses in a transaction of land from Hranus to Francisco.¹¹⁹ The issue was that the former was imprisoned and the Cosmas party acted on behalf of Hranus taking the 30 ducats from Francisco. In order to avoid future legal battles over possession rights the Hospitallers issued this charter to provide proof of the transaction. Though this does not say much about Vrana's bigger diplomatic connections, it does provide proof of the preceptory's local legal developments. The military order provided a relatively independent political body from the authority of city communes, and other instances, thus gaining the local's trust in such legal matters. The second document from 1371 also issued from Vrana gave the Bánfi in Csurgó the rights to administer justice in certain types of legal cases such as bloodshed, violence and theft.¹²⁰ In exchange for these profitable rights, the Bánfi owed a yearly 14 marks for the Priory. Csurgó is very distant from Vrana, so it is interesting to see that this was in fact the location chosen for the issuing of this charter. But since the Hungarian-Slavonian Prior was located here at the time, it makes sense for him to provide these privileges.

3.2: John of Palisna's Rule 1379-87

Towards the end of the Angevin dynasty in the 14th century and during the succession crisis that would directly follow, the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory found itself directly engaged in the kingdom's power politics choosing alliances that sided with the candidate best suiting their needs for the Hungarian throne. Perhaps it was at this point in the history of Hungarian-

¹¹⁸ There are also several unpublished charters that this thesis does not deal with including DL.106196, DL.87423, DL.6237 and DL.6238 (DL. are the original charters in the National Archives of Hungary, Budapest, *Collectio Antemohacsiana*); for more information on this see Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers*, 152-4.

¹¹⁹ CD. 11: 566-7.

¹²⁰ Fejér CD. 9/4: 263, 371-2.

Slavonian Priory that it reached its fullest immersion in the local political structure. As we shall see the issue of who becomes the Hungarian prior became a matter of national and international importance. The priory represented the conglomeration of their many wealthy preceptories and hosted some of the most professional soldiers in the kingdom making them a power to contend with.

In the upcoming period from roughly 1379 to 1387 the Order followed the personal ambitions of their prior, John of Palisna, who evidently had ideas of his own and wanted to support the candidate that would provide the most for him and the Hospitallers. Yet in reality this situation was not so different from both the Hospitallers' and Templar's earlier support for the Angevin party to succeed to the Hungarian throne. It seems that since the end of the real crusading roles of the military orders towards the Holy Land, they were increasingly tangled up in local conflicts such as this succession dispute in Hungary. Their attention, men and materials no longer needed to be used elsewhere resulting in a more powerful political unit at home. Previous scholarship for this time period has already dealt extensively with John's deeds, nonetheless the following section is necessary to highlight Vrana's position during his campaigns even if most of the time this has fallen to the background.¹²¹

Basically, one of the issues that caused problems within the Hungarian priory was the schism of the papacy. The Avignon Pope Clement VII (1378-1394) supported John of Palisna, while the Provencal Raymond de Beaumont remained loyal to Louis I and to the Roman Pontiff Urban VI (1378-1389).¹²² Thus, the schism within the papacy created a competition in which

¹²¹ Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers*, 62-4; Neven Budak, "Ivan od Palizne, prior vranski, vitez sv. Ivana," [John of Palisna, prior of Vrana, Hospitaller knight] *Historijski Zbornik* 42 (1989): 57-70; *Idem*, "John of Palisna, the Hospitaller prior of Vrana," in Zsolt Hunyadi and József Laszlovszky, eds. *The Crusade and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity* (Budapest: CEU Department of Medieval Studies, 2001), 283-290; Anthony Luttrell, "The Hospitallers in Hungary before 1418: Problems and Sources," in Zsolt Hunyadi and József Laszlovszky, eds. *The Crusade and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity* (Budapest: CEU Department of Medieval Studies, 2001), 269-282; Kukuljević, "Priorat Vranski," 63-80. Eduard Peričić, "Vranski priori Ivan od Paližne i Petar Berislavic," [John of Palisna and Peter Berislo, Hospitaller Priors of Vrana] *Radovi Instituta J. A. u Zadru* 18 (1971): 239-321.

¹²² Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers*, 62

only the candidate with the most local support would survive to become the Hungarian-Slavonian Prior. In addition to the papal schism, the later schism within the Hospitaller Order itself in 1383 resulted in an additional anti-master Riccardo Caracciolo. Though we should not bog down in detail on this issue it matters for the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory, since the previous prior Raymond de Beaumont would become loyal to this party. In 1386, Riccardo Caracciolo would nominate Gerardo de Cornuto as the new prior, but since he did not enjoy the same levels of support as Palisna not much has changed.¹²³ As Neven Budak argues, this basically created a situation where the Provencal and Italian nations were competing to secure the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory for their candidate.¹²⁴

Without providing a full biography of John it should suffice to say that he came from a noble family in Slavonia, and according to Budak began his early career joining the Hospitallers and taking part in the campaigns against Venice in 1372.¹²⁵ Since his family fortune was divided over the generations, the military order provided him with immense opportunities. Over the years he managed to work his way up to eventually be nominated and recognized as the ‘Prior of Vrana’ in April 1379 at the earliest.¹²⁶ It seems evident from his campaigning in Dalmatia that the fortress of Vrana must have served as the center of his operations. It was a highly defensible position far removed from Hungary allowing John to easily command the entire region and keep the coastal towns under his domain. As a consequence, in 1381 we have an account of complaints from the citizens of Zadar that John simply repossessed two villages, which the previous prior Raymond of Beaumont had sold to them.¹²⁷ According to Budak, Palisna was likely already trying to prepare for the wars to come after Louis I’s (r. 1342-1382) death.¹²⁸ At any rate, Palisna received official recognition as the

¹²³ Budak, “John of Palisna,” 286.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 285-6.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 283-5.

¹²⁶ Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers*, 62; Budak place this date to 1381.

¹²⁷ CD. 16, 190.

¹²⁸ Budak. “John of Palisna,” 285.

Hungarian-Slavonian Prior by Master of the Hospitallers Juan Fernández de Heredia in 1382.¹²⁹

In fact, in 1382 Heredia granted Palisna his rightful properties that had been lost under Raymond and bestowed him with the special privilege to erect new fortresses both on the priory's and on his own private estates.¹³⁰ Of course the latter could only be granted by the king, so this was a dissident move on his part.

After the death of King Louis I in 1382, his daughter Mary was crowned Queen of Hungary and her mother Elizabeth ruled as regent. Budak mentions that we cannot be certain why Palisna decided to join the rebellion that erupted against the newly crowned queen. The glaringly obvious reason could have been because he was opposed to female rulership. But another possibility could be related to his loyalty to Charles of Durazzo (1385-1386), the Angevin male claimant to the Hungarian throne. Budak argues this point based on his interpretation of John of Palisna's participation in the 1370s Italian campaign where he fought alongside Charles.¹³¹ While Hunyadi seems to argue that there were no signs of a political connection and agreement between them. Instead, he suggests that Palisna could have been trying to please the Avignon Master.¹³² Whatever the reason, Palisna's goal was definitely to expand his influence over the Dalmatian region. Thus, when the queens were in Dalmatia in 1383, Palisna made an alliance with the Bosnian King Tvrtko (r. 1377-1391) and rose up in rebellion. This attempt failed, since we have information already in the same year that the queen's troops captured the fortress of Vrana.¹³³ Shortly after in 1384 Raymond of Beaumont was already acting as the Hungarian-Slavonian Prior.¹³⁴ After Raymond, the Queen-mother

¹²⁹ Dobronić, *Viteški redovi. Templari i Ivanovci u Hrvatskoj* [Knightly Orders. Templars and Hospitallers in Croatia] *Analecta Croatica Christiana* 18 (Zagreb: Kršćanska Sadašnjost, 1984), 171, doc. 5.

¹³⁰ Dobronić, *Viteški redovi*, 128-9, 172, doc. 6; Idem., 174, doc. 8.

¹³¹ Budak, "John of Palisna," 286.

¹³² Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers*, 63.

¹³³ Fejér, CD. 10/1: 136.

¹³⁴ Fejér, CD. 10/1: 179-82.

Elizabeth appointed John of Hédervár as the prior.¹³⁵ Meanwhile Palisna sought shelter at the Bosnian court to escape the queen's grasps.

In 1385 Charles was invited and crowned as the King of Hungary with the aid of the Horváth party, however we do not have evidence of Palisna's contribution in this. Nonetheless, this relative peace did not last long for Palisna as Charles was murdered in February of 1386. Though it's debatable when did Palisna actually join the Angevin party, he definitely rose up in rebellion with them to take revenge against the queens in 1386.¹³⁶ Although the anti-master Riccardo Caracciolo appointed Gerardo Cornuto as prior around this time, it had no effects on John of Palisna. In fact, he aided the Angevin party in the capture of the queens enroute to Gorjani in Slavonia. Queen Elizabeth was taken to Novigrad castle, one of Palisna's possessions. Here she was strangled, but according to Hunyadi it was not of Palisna's doing.¹³⁷ Ultimately however, Sigismund gained power in Hungary over the rebels, and his wife Queen Mary repossessed all of Palisna's possessions in 1387.¹³⁸ Then a couple of weeks later Albert of Losonc, whose kindred were faithful supporters of Sigismund was chosen as the Hungarian-Slavonian Prior.¹³⁹ According to Budak during these conflicts the Dalmatian cities tended to side with either Palisna named ban of Croatia and Dalmatia and the Bosnian King Tvrtko, or with Sigismund's (1387-1437) party.¹⁴⁰ Yet, Palisna's influence over the Dalmatian region from the fortress of Vrana must have been significant enough, since he tended to win the coastal cities over fast despite Albert of Losonc's recent appointment as prior. Palisna passed away in 1389 having spent the last two years of his life essentially in constant fighting, whether against

¹³⁵ CD. 16: 518.

¹³⁶ Hunyadi dates Palisna's joining with the Angevin party to the Spring of 1386, *The Hospitallers*, 63; while Budak dates it to 1385, "John of Palisna," 286.

¹³⁷ Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers*, 63.

¹³⁸ CD. 17: 87.

¹³⁹ Fejér, CD. 10/1: 394.

¹⁴⁰ Budak, "John of Palisna," 286.

the Turks in Kosovo or breaking John of Frankopan's siege of Vrana and subduing the constantly disloyal Dalmatian cities.

3.3: Conclusion

Overall the Hospitaller period of Vrana can generally be understood in terms of a gradual integration of its initial stance as an independent political unit that the military order was into the very framework of the local power structure within the Kingdom of Hungary, Croatia and Dalmatia. Starting from the 1328 land grant to Codulus has demonstrated a development of a closer bond with the laity. The nobleman helped the Hospitallers at Vrana risking his life to defend the fortress against the invading Croatians. In exchange, he was given a wealthy estate close to the fortress in order to replace his losses suffered at the hands of the invading force. Vrana's policy, as far as one could generalize from this case, evolved towards encouraging the nearby hinterland nobility to ally and fight for them if need be.

This integration and further involvement in local politics become prevalent after the loss of the Holy Land. The priory was in danger of being eradicated similarly to the fate of the Templars. In order to avoid this, they had to increasingly become more self-reliant and balance their politics between the Hungarian monarchy, the papacy and the growing dominion of Venice and its local allies. Of course, following papal directives to join crusades against the ever-growing threat of the Turks became difficult for Vrana due to the local conflicts it found itself in against Venice and the Šubići kindred. Inadvertently this caused a rift with the pope or popes during the period of schism, who no longer functioned as one of Vrana's chief allies. Thus, the priory as a whole followed royal policies much closer and remained loyal to the Hungarian crown, which is also signified by the Hungarian-Slavonian prior's appearance on the Hungarian side whereas the Priory of Venice appeared on the Venetian side of the peace conference during the Treaty of Zadar in 1358.

Finally, Vrana has reached a stage of essential privatization by a nobleman named John of Palisna, who out of obscurity worked his way up to be nominated as the Hungarian-Slavonian Prior and used the priory's wealth and power along with his own possessions to carve out the Dalmatian region for himself after the death of Louis I. The priory under his leadership no longer functioned as an independent international Order, but simply as the possession of a wealthy nobleman trying to make a name for himself when the opportunity presented itself. During his reign Vrana became a powerhouse on the Dalmatian coastline, and probably served as his center of operations. This becomes evident whenever the Hungarian queens or John of Frankopan tried to supplant him as they would besiege Vrana signifying that the loss of this fortress would be detrimental to Palisna. Ultimately this proved true in 1383 when he sought shelter at the Bosnian court. In the end, we should not fall into the misunderstanding that the 'Priory of Vrana' was a completely rogue entity within the Hungarian kingdom. Palisna was very much in support of the ascension of Charles of Durazzo, the male heir in the Angevin line for the throne. As a consequence, although Palisna undoubtedly had his personal ambitions, he never stopped supporting the candidate who in his opinion would have been the rightful heir of the Kingdom of Hungary.

Chapter 4: Comparative Conclusion

The preceding two chapters allow to draw conclusions based on the relationships that Vrana maintained with the papacy, the Hungarian monarch and the locals by comparing its Templar period in the 12th to 13th centuries with the Hospitaller period in the 14th century. This way the thesis will provide answers to how and why these relationship networks developed and transformed over the more than two centuries of Vrana's activity under these two orders. At its core these questions bring us closer to the essence of the Templar and Hospitaller experience in governing Vrana. The preceptory's functions evolved within the local framework. The ever-changing political realities that engulfed it was a constant test and one that affected the geopolitical layout of Vrana over these periods. This also meant the alteration of the estate's physical borders it shared with feuding institutions. Fortunately, it is possible to at least partially reconstruct these developments as well, and to make sense of them in the grander contexts of diplomatic relationships.

The first angle of analysis on Vrana's functioning at the local scale is from the papal perspective. It became evident from the previous chapters that the Templars of Vrana experienced a much closer relationship and reliance on papal authority than did their later Hospitaller replacements. Although the chapter on the Hospitallers was generally faced with the difficulty of fewer primary sources, this notion in itself also highlights the changes that took place. Already from the century preceding the appearance of the Templars, Pope Gregory VII established a strong diplomatic bond with the monastery of Vrana. This was then translated over to the Knights Templars during the rise of the crusading fervor across Europe. In order to help this cause and to maintain some level of influence over the Dalmatian region, the papacy was generally protective of Vrana's local interests. These as we have seen typically boiled down to the legal battles against other church institutions, such as the monastery of St. Cosmas

and Damian. Papal privileges favored the military order, and even intervened on their behalf against the Hungarian king to confirm their special rights and autonomy within the kingdom.

It seems that many things have changed at the turn of the 14th century for the papacy. One of the most obvious issues that arose was the loss of the Holy Land at the end of the 13th century and finding solutions for the military orders' future purpose in Christendom. The Templars simply could not rise to the challenge fast enough and were basically doomed from the start, yet the Hospitallers managed to redefine themselves around their charitable function of managing hospitals.¹⁴¹ This diplomatic fight for survival resulted in the transformation of papal relations that was defined by the alliance and support it had provided for the Templars, to the now pressuring authoritative overseer of their activities. With the increasing problem of the advance of the Ottoman empire and with it, Islam in the south, the papacy using a scare tactic that essentially threatened the survival of the Hungarian-Slavonian Priory tried to force the Hospitallers to take the fight to their enemies. The only problem was that the pope requested something that was not really in synch with the political realities of the priory, especially around Vrana. It seems that the Hospitallers of Vrana were on the defensive against their dangerous enemies of the Šubići already in 1328, and especially in 1345 when the Venetians allied with the Croatian kindred. Although the pope's cause might have been noble for a brother of the Order, it simply was not pragmatic from the standpoint of the preceptories' survival as an independent unit.

From the perspective of the Hungarian monarchy a similar pattern can be witnessed that was also affected by the loss of the Holy Land in the 13th century as well as by the changes in the local politics of the 14th century with the end of the Arpadian dynasty. During the Templar period of Vrana, it is possible to trace a steady relationship with the Hungarian

¹⁴¹ Vrana was located close to Bojišće as we have seen in the second chapter that could have functioned as a hospital under the umbrella of the Vrana Templars. Its disappearance from the source materials however does not allow for a further analysis.

monarchs, and generally witness an increase in favors bestowed on them whenever the king was in Dalmatia. This was the most evident during the reign of Andrew II, when the rise of the crusading sentiment within the kingdom gave significance for the Templars. This was the period when Pontius de Cruce was appointed as the governor (*locotenente*) of Croatia and Dalmatia while the king was away on the crusade. The monarchy felt obligated to compensate and replace the losses suffered by the Order when, for example, they have lost the fortress of Klis to Domald. In exchange, the Templars also seemed to support royal politics, especially evident in their funding of a resistance fleet against the Venetians in Zadar during the 4th Crusade. These developments also mark the gradual integration of Vrana within the political structures of the kingdom.

During the Angevin period of Vrana it is also possible to conclude that the Hospitallers' relationship was steady with the Hungarian monarchs; however, it must be clarified as previously mentioned that the circumstances of the 14th century overall were very different from the previous centuries. Therefore, the 'good' relationship of this century should not be confused with the idea that in fact the relationship itself with the king was the same for the Hospitallers as it was for the Templars. Nothing could be further from the truth. The very character and nature of their bond have changed as well as the circumstances that surrounded it. Since, the Hospitallers of Vrana could no longer effectively count on the help of the pope they were resolved to maintain an alliance with the king, even if royal grants have virtually ceased under the reign of Louis I. Such an alliance was imperative for Vrana during this period not necessarily to win legal cases or to be compensated for their losses, but truthfully to have a larger power to cover their backs against the real problems that the Venetians and the Šubići posed against them. It is not surprising then that the Hospitallers followed royal policy much closer than the papal directives to crusade against the Turks. Similarly to the Templars, taking direct action on behalf of the king symbolized the closeness of their relations, especially in the

case of the Hospitallers when their prior acted as a witness on the Hungarian side during the Treaty of Zadar in 1358.

Vrana's experience from the local perspective also saw major transformations from the Templar to the Hospitaller period. Generally, the Templars predominantly faced legal battles against other local competing institutions like with the monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian. With perhaps only a few exceptions of Klis and Šibenik, we do not have supporting evidence of physical warfare in which the Vrana Templars were engaged in. During the rule of Pontius de Cruce, Domald who was a member of the Croatian nobility became a major thorn in the Order's shoes. However, other than the takeover of the fortress of Klis, this competition was mostly resolved through judicial hearings rather than open warfare. Other than the local nobility and neighboring church institutions, the major ecclesiastical centers of Split, Zadar, Nin, etc. were generally supportive of the Vrana Templars. Though here we have to be careful, since at times it is hard to separate the Bishops' loyalty towards the papal directives commanding them to show their support for the knights during the legal battles from the genuine signs of loyalty and supportiveness towards the Order. Overall, Vrana under the Templars was slowly moving away from being an independent entity still within the Templar Order obedient only to the papacy towards a more integrate political unit in Dalmatia.

This process really seems to have materialized during the Hospitaller period. We can already see that in 1328, the Hospitallers benefited from the support of a local nobleman in defending the fortress of Vrana against the Croatians. In fact, they compensated him lavishly in order to help promote further help from these hinterland nobles. This closer bond with the locals secured another form of alliance needed to ensure the independence of Vrana during a much more hostile period. The Šubići allied with the Venetians posed a serious threat to the existence of the preceptory. Vrana was viewed as a strong supporter of Hungarian royal authority in an area that was otherwise more autonomously minded. Thus, it makes logical

sense that this fortress would become a natural target during the invasions of the Venetian-Hungarian wars.

Finally, the rule of Prior John of Palisna is an era that is equally important as the other ones are, yet harder to categorize since his career was deviant in terms of the relationships it shared with the papacy and the monarch. The first real issue is that King Louis I died in 1382, and Palisna eventually chose to support Charles of Durazzo for the Hungarian throne instead of Queen Mary and Sigismund. Nonetheless, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the fact that Palisna does support an heir for the Hungarian throne proves that the priory under his leadership was not entirely a rogue element within the kingdom. Since, he enjoyed a strong base of local support, no papal candidate for the priory could succeed in tipping the scale against his rule. It was during this period that Vrana reached perhaps its highest levels of integration as a Croatian estate serving as Palisna's power center on the Dalmatian coast. Vrana under Palisna did not function as the autonomous preceptory of a military order, but rather as the capital of one of the most influential Croatian nobleman of the period who sought to expand his authority. The preceptory along with title of the priory was essentially privatized under his command and played a key role in this process. It is safe to say that this was a unique situation for Vrana's history up to this point, therefore caution should be taken with placing too much emphasis on this notion. Since Palisna overall behaved more according to his noble status rather than as a Hospitaller prior, it is difficult to actually connect this era with the previous periods.

Assessing Vrana's territorial changes and its situation in the surrounding landscape over time is partially possible from the information provided by the source materials. Based on the documents regarding the legal battles against the monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian during the Templar period two changes took place along the preceptory's north and northwest borders. The first agreed upon borderline was a compromise between the two institutions in a way that was mutually beneficial to both, especially in regards to their mill working activities.

The second 13th century dispute regarding Rogovo was a complete loss for the Templars, though given the circumstance they might not have cared enough about these lands to put up a proper fight. Under the Hospitallers we do not have any further information regarding the northern borderline, however there is a glimpse at Vrana's southern extents with their grant to Codulus. It provides information at least on the areas that belonged to them along with its potential economic activities, however it should not be assumed that this was the furthest extent of the preceptory towards the south.

During the next centuries the 'Priory of Vrana' became increasingly titular in nature, and in the 15th century the priors tended to be from local appointments rather than from members of the Hospitaller Order. The preceptory of Vrana itself was lost to the Hospitallers forever early in this transition after the coastline's subjugation by the Venetians in 1409. It was granted by Emeric Bwbek, the Prior of Vrana, to Ladislaus, son of Charles of Durazzo, who sought to take Croatia and Hungary. When Ladislaus gave up his claims to the throne, Vrana passed over to Venice, who then appointed civil administrators over it instead of selecting a brother from the Knights of St. John. Nonetheless, the title lived on far removed from the actual location of Vrana, especially after the Ottoman conquest of the region. Special privileges came with the title such as the right to maintain their own *banderia* of 400 men, have a seat in the Croatian *sabor* or parliament, hold a rank equivalent to a bishop, and have a large feudatory support system. From 1651 onwards, it is granted as a benefice to a member of the cathedral chapter of Zagreb and came with a hefty sum of 50,000 florins till its last record in 1880. The Priors of Vrana continued to exercise their medieval legal rights in the Croatian *sabor* until the very end of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Today it is still held as a dignity of the cathedral chapter of Zagreb.¹⁴²

¹⁴² For more information and references on the later period see: H.J.A. Sire, "The Priory of Vrana: The Order of St. John in Croatia," in *The Military Orders: On Land and by Sea* Vol. 4 ed. by Judi Upton-Ward (Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), 221-228; also for the legal traditions see: Lucijan Kos, "Prior vranski I njegove funkcije u našoj

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Appendices

Appendix: A

CD. I., 139-140, 1076

Donation of the monastery of St. Gregory in Vrana to the Pope.

In nomine sancte et indiuidue trinitatis. Anno dominice incarnationis MLXXVI, indictione XIII, mense octobri. Ego Demetrius, qui et Suinimir nuncupor, dei gratia Chroatie Dalmatieque dux, a te, domine Gebizo, ex apostolice sedis legatione domini nostri pape Gregorii potestatem optinens in Salonitana basilica sancti Petri sinodali et concordii totius cleri et populi electione de Chroatorum Dalmatinorumque regni regimine per uexillum, ense, sceptrum et coronam inuestitus atque constitutus rex, tibi deuoueo, spondeo et polliceor me incommutabiliter completurum omnia, que mihi tua reuerenda iniungit sanctitas, uidelicet ut in omnibus et per omnia apostolice sedi fidem obseruem; et quicquid hoc in regno tam apostolica sedes quam sui legati sanxerunt aut sanxerint, irreuincibiliter custodiam, iustitiam excolam, ecclesias defendam, primitie, decime omniumque ad ecclesias pertinentium procurator existam; uite episcoporum, presbiterorum, diaconorum, subdiaconorumque, ut caste et regulariter uiuant, prouideam; pauperes, uiduas atque pupillos protegam; parentele illicitam copulam destruens legitimam dotem anulo sacerdotisque benedictione constituam et constitutam corrumpi non permittam; hominum uenditionem contradicam atque in omnibus, que ad rectitudinis statum congruunt, deo auctore me equum exhibeam. Ducentorum quoque bizantium tributum meorum omnium consultu primatum (!) sancto P. per singulos annos in resurrectione domini de mihi concesso regno persoluendos statuo; et ut post me regnaturi hoc idem perpetuo seruent, censeo, corroboro atque sanxio. Dono insuper, concedo atque confirmo apostolice sedi sancti Gregorii monasterium, cui Urana est uocabulum, cum omni suo thesauro. Scilicet cum capsula argentea reliquias sacri corporis eiusdem beati Gregorii continente, cum duabus crucibus, cum calice et patena, cum duabus coronis aureis, gemmis ornatis, cum euangeliorum textu de argento cumque omnibus suis mobilibus et immobilibus bonis, ut sancti P. legatis semper sit ad hospitium et omnino in potestate eorum, hoc tamen interposito tenore, ut nulli alii potestati detur, sed omni tempore sancti P. sit proprium, et a me meisque successoribus defensum atque ab omni homine liberum et securum. Cuiuscumque autem audacia temerario ausu prefatum monasterium ex assignato thesauro priuauerit, terribilem illam iudicis uocem, quam diabolus cum suis angelis auditurus est, audiat. Preterea, cum deo seruire regnare sit, uice beati P. et domini nostri pape Gregorii atque post se sessurorum in apostolica sede me tuis manibus committo et committendo hanc fidelitatem sacramento stabilio: Ego, inquam, Demetrius, qui et Suinimir, dei gratia et apostolice sedis dono rex ab hac hora in antea, sancto P. et domino meo pape Gregorio suisque successoribus canonice intransibis ero fidelis. Et ut ipse siue post eum futuri pontifices siue legati eorum uitam aut membra perdant aut capiantur, neque in consilio neque in facto ero; et consilium, quod mihi crediderint, ad illorum dampnum scienter nulli intimabo. Regnum autem, quod mihi per manum tuam, domine Gebizo, traditur, fideliter retinebo et illud suumque ius apostolice sedi aliquo ingenio aliquando non subtraham. Dominum meum papam Gregorium et suos successors atque legatos, si in meam potestatem uenerint, honorifice suscipiam et honeste tractabo et remittam; et undecumque me inuitauerint, prout potero, eis simpliciterque seruiam.

In the name of the Holy and Indivisible Trinity. In the Year of the Lord's incarnation 1076, in the 14th indiction, in the month of October. I Demetrius, who is also called Svinimir

(Zvonimir), Duke of Croatia and Dalmatia by the grace of God, by you, Lord Gebizus, legate from the apostolic seat of our lord Pope Gregory obtaining the power in Split, Basilica of St. Peter, by the synod and concord of all the clergy and chosen by the people of Croatia and Dalmatia, for ruling the realm, to be invested and constituted king through the banner, the sword and the crown, to you I'm devoting, pledging, and promising myself without change being about to fulfill everything, which from your honorable holiness is imposing upon me, in order that I shall clearly observe good faith in all things and through everything to the apostolic seat; and I shall irreversibly guard whatever in this kingdom the apostolic seat or its legate confirmed or rather will confirm; I shall observe justice, I shall defend the churches, I will become the overseer of the revenues of the first crop and the tithes and of all other things belonging to the churches; I shall provide for the livelihood of bishops, presbyters (priests), deacons and of subdeacons, so that they may live chaste and according to the rules. I shall protect the poor, the widowed, and also the orphans; I shall decree and decreed [that] I will not permit the illegal relationship of close relatives ruining the lawful dowry established by the ring and from the blessing of the priest to be corrupted; I shall oppose the selling of people and in everything that are corresponding according to position of correctness, from divine authority I shall behave in full fairness. Likewise, I oblige myself to pay after the kingdom granted to me with the consent of all the mightiest men a tribute of 200 Byzantine *solidi* for St. Peter through each year on the resurrection of the Lord; and I'm decreeing, strengthening, and sanctioning [this payment] and that those who will reign after me shall preserve the same forever. In addition to the payment, I'm conceding and confirming for the apostolic seat the monastery of St. Gregory, which is called Vrana, with all of its treasure. Meaning with the silver reliquary case/casket preserving the relics of the sacred body of the same blessed Gregory, with two crosses, with a chalice and a paten, with two gold crowns decorated with gems, with the book of the Gospels of silver, and with all of its movable and immovable goods, in order that for the legate of St. Peter may always provide lodging and it may always be entirely in their power, nevertheless this condition having been inserted that it must not be given/granted to any other power, but St. Peter may own it for all time, me and my successors to be free and safe from any people. Whoever may deprive with audacity and reckless daring declaring the monastery from the assigned treasure, he must hear the terrible voices of the judge that the Devil with his angels will be hearing. Thereafter, since reigning means service to God, I'm entrusting and must unite myself to your hands, establishing this fidelity by oath of allegiance in your hands, representing the blessed Peter and our lord Pope Gregory and his successors who will sit after him in the apostolic seat:
[oath follows]

CD. II., 125-6, 1169-70

Letter sent to Split to settle dispute between the Templars and the Bishop of Skradin.

Alexander episcopus seruus seruorum dei venerabili fratri G(erardo) Spalatensi archiepiscopo apostolice sedis legato salutem et apostolicam benedictionem. In registro patris et predecessoris nostri Eugenii pape annotatum inuenimus Demetrium quondam Dalmatie Croatieque ducem monasterium beati Gregorii, quod Vrana uocatur, tempore bone memorie Gregorii septimi predecessoris nostri romane ecclesie obtulisse et cum universis mobilibus suis et immobilibus. Unde quoniam inter fratrem nostrum L(ampridium) Scardonensem episcopum et dilectos filios nostros fratres militie templi super monasterio prescripto controuersia est suborta, presertim cum idem episcopus hoc ad se iure parochiali spectare proponat, fraternitati tue per apostolica scripta mandamus, quatenus iam dictum monasterium, quemadmodum beato Petro et ecclesie romane fuit a prefato duce oblatum,

liberum facias permanere et memoratos fratres a prelibato episcopo super hoc de cetero molestari nequaquam permittas. Transcriptum autem illius, quod in suprascripto registro inuenimus, tibi presentibus litteris inclusum transmittimus.

Datum Beneuenti XII. kalendas martii.

Na ledjima:

Spalatensi archiepiscopo apostolice sedis legato pro fratribus militie templi.

Alexander, Bishop, servant of the servants of God, to the venerable brother Gerard Archbishop of Split legate of the apostolic seat, salvation and apostolic benediction. We have discovered in the register of the father and our predecessor Pope Eugene that Demetrius (Zvonimir), formerly Duke of Dalmatia and Croatia had presented the monastery of St. Gregory that is called Vrana with all its movables and immovables during the time of Gregory VII of good memory our predecessor, to the Roman Church. However, since from this, a controversy came into being over the above-mentioned monastery between our brother Lampridius, Bishop of Skradin, and our beloved sons, the brothers of the Knights Temple, particularly with this same bishop who proposes that it belongs to him by parochial right, we are ordering your brotherhood [i.e. you, the archbishop of Split] through apostolic letter, because the monastery has already been offered/granted by the above mentioned Duke to the Blessed Peter and the Roman Church you should make sure that it remains free, and do not allow that the said brothers be burdened/disturbed in any way. Also enclosed for you in the present letter, we are transmitting a transcription of that, which we have found in the above noted register.

To the Archbishop of Split, legate of the apostolic seat, for/in favor of the brothers of the Knights Temple.

CD. II., 191, 1184-85

The Pope confirms Béla III's donation of Senj and the monastery of St. George to the Templars.

Lucius episcopus seruus seruorum dei dilectis filiis magistro et fratribus militie templi salutem et apostolicam benedictionem. Justis petencium desideriis dignum est nos facilem prebere assensum et vota, que a rationis tramite non discordant, effectu prosequente complere. Eapropter dilecti in domino filii vestris iustis postulationibus grato concurrentes assensu vilam Signye a charissimo in Christo filio nostro Bela illustri Hungarie rege cum omnibus pertinenciis pia domui vestre liberalitate collata cum ecclesia sancti Georgii et omnibus, que in eodem loco de donatione regia rationabiliter possidetis, vobis et successoribus vestris apostolica auctoritate confirmamus. Nulli ergo omnino hominum liceat hanc paginam nostre confirmationis infringere vel ei ausu temerario contraire. Si quis autem hoc attentare presumserit, indignationem omnipotentis dei et beatorum Petri et Pauli apostolorum eius se nouerit incursurum.

Lucius, Bishop, servant of the servants of God, to his beloved sons, the master and brothers of the Knights Templars, salvation and apostolic benediction. To the just desires of petitioners, it is worthy of us to afford easy assent, and to give effect to wishes which do not disagree with the bounds of reason. Wherefore, beloved sons in the Lord, to your just requests concurring an agreeable assent, the town of Senj by our most beloved son, in Christ, Bela, the illustrious king of Hungary, conferred the gift to your holy house with all the appurtenances, with the church of St. George and everything else that is in the same site of the royal donation in accordance with reason you all should take possession of them, we

confirm this gift to you and to your successors with apostolic authority. Therefore, no man shall infringe this charter of our confirmation, or contravene it by rash daring. And if any presume to attempt this, let him know that he will incur the indignation of Almighty God, and of Peter and Paul, His blessed apostles.

CD. II., 268-70, 1194

Dispute between the Templars and the monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian.

In nomine sancte et indiuidue trinitatis. Anno ab incarnatione domini nostri Jesu Christi millesimo centesimo nonagesimo quarto, mense iulii die nono intrante, indictione duodecima, apud Tinum, regnante domino nostro Bela serenissimo rege Hungarie, Dalmatie, Chroatie atque Rame, et Almerico filius eius super Dalmatiam et Chroatiam. Cum nos nempe Petrus Spalatine sedis archiepiscopus una cum Matheo Nonensi episcopo et Damiano Jadertino comite ac Grubescia Spalatino comite ceterisque nobilibus, quorum nomina inferius subscribentur, in ecclesia sancti Johannis de Tino ad controuersias, que inter templarios et monasterium sanctorum Cosme et Damiani pro terris et aquarum decursibus vertebantur, resecandas de mandato regio resideremus, post multas altercationes et verba, que memorate ecclesie inter se habebant, guadias ab utraque parte per stipitem de voluntate utriusque partis suscipientes, pro bono pacis et concordie talem inter utrasque ecclesias diuisionem auctoritate regia composuimus: incipiente a via, que inter villam Tini et villam sanctorum Cosme et Damiani est, et eundo versus meridiem recto tramite usque ad Gomilam inferius et ab inde usque ad Blatam, quicquid in austro in terris et aquis est, quod ad monasterium sancti Damiani pertinuit, domui Templi remaneat perpetuo possidendum, preter aquam Chriplinam, quam communem esse decernimus utrisque ecclesiis, et quicquid a prefata via in partibus occidentis in terris et aquis ac pascuis etiam ultra vallem Tini habetur et ad templarios spectauit, prefato sancti Damiani monasterio sit amodo in perpetuum. Aqua(m) vero Kicme cum aquarum decursibus templarios habere statuimus tali videlicet ordine, ut in ea molendina faciant quotquot possunt, tamen quod molendino sanctorum Cosme et Damiani de Virbiza, quod est ultra Blatam, non noceant in aliquo. Volumus etiam et sancimus, ut prefata sancti Damiani ecclesia omnes terras illas, quas ultra Blatam antiquitus possedit et etiam si qua molendina sub suo molendino in austro fecerit, habeat et possideat semper, sine omnia templariorum calumnia. Stabilimus etiam, ut si qua utriusque partis antiqua testamenta preter hanc nostre constitutionis paginam reperta alicubi fuerint, quod irrita maneant et inania. Si autem alterutra pars contra hanc nostre constitutionis cartam ire presumpserit, omnipotentis dei sanctorumque apostolorum Petri et Pauli ac omnium sanctorum ac nostram maledictionem incurrat, fiatque anathema maranatha, et super hoc pena duarum librarum auri mulctetur. Que omnia firma et rata esse volumus presente Gualterio magistro, fratre Azzo preceptore et omnibus fratribus, et Dominico abbate, Priuonia monacho, Dminoscia monacho et cunctis fratribus. Coram hiis ydoneis testibus: Petro Sagarelle et Tolmatio ac Burello presbiteris Spalatinis, Petronia Cucille, Petrizo Vitaze, Petrizo Michaelis, Georgio Soppe, Bitte de Juda, Bitte Prestancii et Grisogono fratre eius, Petro Sloradi templariorum aduocato, Coscia Gregorii sancti Damiani aduocato, Jadertinis et multis aliis, Dedomiro iuppano, Vilcomiro iuppano, Berriscio, Rilizo Chroatis et multis aliis. Fuerunt preterea testes ibidem hi venerabiles viri: Gregorius Antiuarensis archiepiscopus et Vincentius sancti Grisogoni abbas testes. Et ego Blasius sancte Anastasie diaconus et Jadrensis notarius, qui interfui, hanc constitutionis et concordie cartulam iussu iam dicti archiepiscopi Spalatensis et Nonensis episcopi et comitum prescriptorum ceterorumque testium rogatu, ut audiui, compleui, roborauit et signo consueto signauit.

In the name of the Holy and Indivisible Trinity. In the year from the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ 1194, month July beginning on the 9th day in the 12th indiction, at Tinja, during

the reign of our lord Bela serene King of Hungary, Dalmatia, Croatia and Rama, and his son Emeric over Dalmatia and Croatia. When we, namely Archbishop Peter of the seat of Split along with Bishop Matthew of Nin and Damian, Count of Zadar and also Grubescia, Count of Split and the remaining nobles, whose names will be noted below, [met] in the church of St. John of Tinj about the dispute that has been going on between the Templars and the monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian because of the lands and the flow of rivers, according to royal mandate we held a session to cut-short this dispute, we would settle it after many arguments and words, which the aforementioned churches had between each other; we have composed with royal authorization the following legal contracts through the stem of good will of each party accepting for the good of peace and of mutual agreement, we settled such a great division between both churches: beginning from the road that is between the village/town of Tinj and the village of St. Cosmas and Damian, and going towards the south by the straight footpath all the way to lower Gomila(?) and from that place all the way to Blata, everything that is in the south in regard to the lands and waters that pertained to the monastery of St. Damian, would remain for the house of the Templars to be held without interruption, except the Chriplina (?) water/river/lake, which we are settling for both churches to be shared. And everything that is in the western regions from the above-mentioned road in regard to the lands and waters and also pasture-lands, also beyond the valley on the other side of Tinj had been held by the Templars should belong to the above-mentioned monastery of St. Damian henceforth in perpetuity. However, the Templars have the Kicme river with its tributaries namely in the way that they might be able to build however many mill-houses in it, nevertheless by no means (in regard to anyone) might they harm that mill-house of St. Cosmas and Damian of Virbiza, which is beyond Blata. In addition, we are willing and confirming the rights for the lands, in order that the above-mentioned church of St. Damian possesses all those lands that are beyond Blata from old times possessed, and if any mill-house will be built south of their own mill-house it may always build, hold and possess it without any objection of the Templars. Indeed, we are confirming, in order that if either one of the parties should find a testimony contrary to this charter of our decree, that would remain invalid and void. [here comes the sancio part...]. We are wishing that everything be valid and fixed, in the presence of Master Gualterius, Brother Preceptor Azzo and all the brothers, and Abbot Dominic, Monk Privonia, Monk Dminoscia and all the brothers. In the presence of these qualified witnesses: Peter Sagarelleus and Tolmatius and also Burellus presbyters of Split, Petronia Cucille, Petrizus Vitaze, Petrizus Michaelis, Georgius Soppe, Bitte of Juda, Bitte Prestancii and Grisogonus his brother, Peter Sloradi counselor/advocate of the Templars, Coscia Gregory counselor of St. Damian, Zadrans and many others, Zupan Dedomirus, Zupan Vilcomirus, Berriscius, Rilizus of the Croats and many others. In addition, these venerable men were in that very place: witnesses Gregory Archbishop of Antivari and Vincent abbot of St. Grisogono. And I Blasius deacon of St. Anastasia and notary of Zadar, was present, completed, strengthened, and sealed with the customary seal this charter of decree and mutual agreement, of the mentioned Archbishop of Split and the Bishop of Nin and of the above-listed counts and the other invited witnesses, as I heard it.

CD. II., 345-346, 1200

The Pope settles the dispute between the monastery of St. Cosmas and Damian, and the Templars. He reconfirms the 1194 agreement.

Innocentius episcopus servus servorum dei dilectis filiis . . . magistro et fratribus militie templi in Sclavonia constitutis salutem et apostolicam benedictionem. Cum a nobis petitur quod justum est et honestum, tam vigor equitatis quam ordo exigit rationis, ut id per sollicitudinem officii nostri ad debitum perducatur effectum. Eapropter sicut vestra petitio

nobis exhibita continebat, nos vestris supplicationibus grato assensu annuentes, compositionem inter vos et monasterium sanctorum Cosmae et Damiani factam super terris et aquarum decursibus et aliis, de quibus inter vos quaestio vertebatur, sicut rationabiliter et absque pravitate facta est et ab utraque parte recepta et in authentico exinde confecto plenius continetur, auctoritate apostolica confirmamus et praesentis scripti patrocinio communimus. Ad maiorem autem evidentiam huius rei ipsum authenticum de verbo ad verbum presentibus litteris duximus inserendum, cuius tenor ita se habet:

In nomine sancte et indiuidue trinitatis . . . (*slijedi listina pod br. 253*).

Decernimus ergo, ut nulli omnino hominum liceat hanc paginam nostre confirmationis infringere vel ei ausu temerario contraire. Si quis autem hoc attemptare presumpserit, indignationem omnipotentis dei et beatorum Petri et Pauli apostolorum eius se noverit incursurum. Datum Laterani VIII. kalendas februarii (pontificatus nostri anno secundo).

Innocent, Bishop, servant of the servants of God to the beloved sons...Master and brothers of the Knights Temple set up in Slavonia, greetings and apostolic benediction. When from us it is desired what is right and honest, both vigor for fairness and the order of reason requires it that it be taken into effect through the concern of our office for duty. Therefore, as your petition presented for us contains, we are agreeing to your supplication with graceful consent, we are confirming this with apostolic authority and strengthening with the protection of the present letter the agreement made between you and the monastery of Saint Cosmas and Damian over the lands and the flow of waters and other things, about which a discussion between you had emerged, as it is made in accordance with reason and without depravity and by both parties' acceptance and is being described in great detail in the original document composed about it. For the more powerful evidence of this issue we have ordered inserting the original document word for word to the present letter, of which the contents are the following:

[Includes original 1194 Document translated above]

[Sanctio]

Appendix: B

1328, May 26th- Fejér CD. 8/3: 341-343; AOkI 12: 146

Nouerint vniuersi, praesentes litteras inspecturi, ac etiam audituri, quod nos Frater Philippus de Gagna, sanctae domus hospitalis Beati Iohannis Ierosolymitani Prioratus Hungariae et Capuae humilis Prior, attendentes grata et fidelia seruitia, quae nobilis vir Codulus, olim Lucae de Spinagarol, ciuis Iadrae, nobis et domui nostrae iam dictae fideliter exhibuit et exhibet contra aemulos domus nostrae supra notatae, specialiter tempore, quo exercitus Croatorum venit in obsidium Auranae, eam recipiendi, et eam domum nostram destruendi et deuastandi; ipse dictus Codulus vna cum suis fratribus in defensione dictam domum nostram, timore omnium Croatorum postposito, cum fratre Gerardo ac Gagna Vice-Priore nostro in Prioratum Hungariae, et cum aliis fidelibus nostris se inclusit, per quod damnum non modicum passus fuit; scilicet domibus cunctis concrematis, iumentis, pecoribus et aliis animalibus atque praedis in praedam conuersis, apud dictos de Croatia; volentes ipsum Codulum ac eius haeredes in aliquantulum remunerare, vt ad supradicta tam ipse Codulus, quam alii nostri vel domus nostrae fideles fortius ad exhibitionem supradictam animentur, ad instantiam et petitionem fratrum nostrorum in Christo reuerendorum scilicet fratris, Conradi de Gagna Vice Prioris nostri superius nominati, fratris Francisci Cgregna, fratris incolae de Caran, fratris Marci de Bononia, Fratris Bonacursii de Fulingo, fratris Gerardini de Massadeloren, et aliorum fratrum nostrorum, nobiscum Auranae tunc temporis existentium, quoddam praedium nostrum nomine Mihagram, cuius praedii vel villae confines tales sunt: primo est quidem monticulus vocatus Asringo; deinde vadit in Dobridol, abinde vadit recte in locum vocatum Blato; deinde reuertendo tendit in Ocring; porro in planitiem; deinde super montem vocatum Visoqui; deinde in locum vocatum Stenice; deinde reuertendo in quoddam celsum ad austrum, vocatum Murna, deinde in fontem vocatum Triglan; deinde in locum, vbi tempore praeterito solebat esse molendinum cuiusdam Obradi Cronichig ac filiorum eius; deinde recte tenendo ad viam, iacentem de Ritoligian Aurana; deinde vltra viam iam dictam in collem et vltra collem recte in montem vocatum Gora, et recte in locum iam dictum, eidem Codulo, ejusque haeredibus et successoribus supradictis circumclusum, dedimus et contulimus, et perpetualiter confirmauimus ad habendum, tenendum, vsu fruendum, atque perpetuo pacifice possidendum, cum cunctis domibus, terris vineis, hortis, jardenis, arboribus fructiferis et infructififeris, syluis, pratis, pascuis, nemoribus, aquis, aquarumque decursibus, membris, honoribus, vniuersis et singulis redditibus, cum vniuersis, iurisdictionibus, ingressibus et egressibus, omni excepta remota, praecipientes nos omnibus et singulis iobbagionibus, in praedicto praedio morantibus, vt praefato Codulo, et eius haeredibus vel successoribus obediant, pareant, ac si nobis vel domui nostrae, et intendant in omnibus. Volumus autem, quod praefatus Codulus ejusque haeredes vel successores pro praedictis persoluant annuatim domui nostrae scilicet libras decem pernorum Venetorum vel Bagactianorum, in festo Natiuitatis Domini. Donamus autem ad hoc opus eidem Codulo bonos prestaldos fide dignos, qui ipsum iussu nostro introducant in possessionem corporalem supradictam, scilicet Constisan, iudicem Auranae, Bugium Iamomet, et Bergendam Bosanig, atque Tolsan, Iudicem de Scororit, vna cum fratre Conrado, nostra vice Priore superius nominato. Ista autem volumus esse firma et rata, vsque dum dictus Codulus et sui haeredes fideles permanebunt domui nostrae, et dum censum supradictum plenarie annuatim domui nostrae persoluerint. In cuius rei testimonium et certudinem plenior, vt praedicta robur obtineant firmitatis, praesentes litteras fieri fecimus, sigillo pendente Prioratus nostri Hungariae munimine roboratas, Datum in domo nostra de Aurana. Anno Domini Millesimo trecentesimo vigesimo octauo, die vigesimo sexto mensis May.

Let all who will read or even listen to the present document know that we, Brother Philip of Gragnana, the humble Prior of the Priory of Hungary and of Capua of the Holy House of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, considering the graceful and faithful services which the nobleman Codulus, the son of the late Luke of Spingarol, a citizen of Zadar, rendered and is still rendering to us and to our already mentioned House, against the enemies of our already mentioned House, especially at the time when the Croatian army came to lay siege to Vrana, to occupy it, and to destroy and plunder our House. The above mentioned Codulus locked himself in [the castle] together with his brothers in order to defend our above-mentioned House, leaving aside all fear of the Croats together with Guirardus of Gragnana our Vice Prior in the Priory of Hungary and with our other faithful. Because of this he suffered not a little damage: that is to say, all his houses were burnt, his chattel, his sheep, and his other beasts, as well as his estates were subjected to plunder by the above-mentioned men from Croatia. Wishing to offer him at least some compensation to the said Codulus and his heirs, so that both Codulus and other among our subjects or the faithful to our house should be moved with even greater force to defend our above mentioned house, following the request and the insistence of our reverend brethren in Christ that is of Guirardus of Gragnana our above mentioned Vice Prior, of Brother Francis of Gragnana, of Brother Nicholas of Campo Iugiano preceptor of Vrana, of Brother Mark of Bologna, of Brother Bonacursus of Fulingo, of Brother Gerardinus of Massadeloren, and of other among our brothers who were then in Vrana. We gave and granted to Codulus and to his heirs and successors one of our properties Ritoljan whose neighboring estates and villages are as follows: first there is a small mountain called Ostringus then it goes to Dobridol from there it goes straight to the place called Blato then turning back it returns to Ozring from there south towards Planizhnihi, from there over the mountain called Visoqui from there to the mountain called Cosmati vrh, then in between two mountains called Visoque, from there to the place called Stenize from there returning towards another hill towards the south called Murna, then towards the spring called Triglan then to the place where in the past used to be the mill of a man called Obrad Hroničić and of his sons, then going straight on the road that leads from Ritoljan to Vrana, then beyond the already mentioned road up the hill and beyond the hill straight to the mountain called Gora and straight to the above mentioned place. We gave and granted the property included in the above mentioned boundaries, and we have confirmed his rights of ownership, possession, use, and perpetual property over it together with all the buildings, lands, vineyards, gardens, vegetable patches, with the fruit bearing trees, and those that do not bear fruit, forests, meadows, pasture lands, woodlands, waters, and the waterbeds with all the privileges and all the honors and incomes, with all the rights of jurisdiction of levying tolls, without any exception. We order to all and every bondsmen who live on the above mentioned estate to obey, serve, and follow the above mentioned Codulus and his heirs or successors in the same way they would us or our House. And we wish that the above mentioned Codulus and his heirs or successors should pay our House in return for all of the above namely 10 pounds in Venetian denarii, also known as Bagatinus, every Christmas. For this purpose, we also assign to the above mentioned Codulus these good and trustworthy pristaldi who should introduce him to the property above mentioned on our authority namely Constisa, the judge of Vrana, Bugius Iamomet, and Bergenda Bosanić, and Tolsan the judge of Skorobić together with Brother Guirardos the above-mentioned Vice Prior. We wish these things to remain firm and definitive as long as the above mentioned Codulus and his heirs will remain faithful to our house and as long as they will pay in full the above-mentioned tax to our house every year. As further testimony and confirmation, in order to corroborate all of the above, we had the present document drafted and confirmed by the appended seal of our Priory of Hungary issued in our House in Vrana, in the year of the Lord 1328 on the 26th day of the month of May.