

ZDENKA JANEKOVIĆ RÖMER

## Ragusan Views of the Venetian Rule (1205–1358)

DUBROVNIK UNDER THE RULE OF THE  
VENETIAN REPUBLIC: 1205–1358

From the beginning of 1205 until the Treaty of Zadar in 1358, Dubrovnik recognized the supreme rule of Venice and received the Venetian count (*comes*) as its representative. In 1204 the Byzantine Empire fell and Dubrovnik was left without a protector. On the ruins of the fallen empire the power of Venice strengthened. Many cities and islands fell under the rule of the Venetian Republic, and the newly consolidated Latin Empire was under its powerful influence. Having blackmailed the crusaders, the Venetians conquered Zadar as early as 1202, and after the fall of the Byzantine Empire tried to conquer Dubrovnik, which they eventually did in 1205.<sup>1</sup> Venetian rule in Dubrovnik between 1205 and 1358 did not threaten the fundamental institutions of the commune, so it can be said that the autonomy of the city was at least partially preserved. The commune was the only form of autonomy tolerated by Venice, in that the appointment of a Venetian count did not affect the structure of the city's government.<sup>2</sup> The Statute of 1272 codified legal norms and, with the closing of the noble rank in 1332, the old communal system was replaced by the institutions of an aristocratic republic. Ragusan nobility retained the right to political decision-making, from day-to-day communal issues to defense and foreign affairs. There were not many Venetian representatives in the city nor were there military or police units, which was of particular importance. The count was accompanied by a smaller armed escort. However, Venetian rule cannot be described as merely nominal. The Venetian-appointed count enjoyed fairly powerful political authority. He was not only the representative of the commune, but

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<sup>1</sup> Vinko FORETIĆ, *Povijest Dubrovnika*. 2 vols., here vol. 1. Zagreb 1980, 57–59.

<sup>2</sup> Ludwig STEINDORFF, *Die dalmatinischen Städte im 12. Jahrhundert. Studien zu ihrer politischen Stellung und gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung*. Köln, Wien 1984, 167.

also an executor of power. This position was usually given to members of the distinguished ducal families, attracted by high pay, various benefits and privileges.<sup>3</sup> During the inaugural ceremony the entire Ragusan commune had to swear loyalty to the count and the Doge. It was the count himself who appointed five judges and six councilors of the Minor Council that constituted the commune's executive authority. The Minor Council he presided over in the sources is commonly referred to as "the count's Council". This body did not pass decisions, but prepared proposals for the Major Council sessions and in that way considerably influenced the outcome of the debates. Since the Minor Council elected members of the Major Council and other magistrates, it is clear that the count was in a position to influence the elections. Apart from being an important step towards autonomy, the 1272 Statute of the City of Dubrovnik was also testimony of the Venetian count's political authority, and the influence of the Republic of Venice.

Venetian tutelage over Dalmatia between the twelfth and the fourteenth century proved less firm than in the century that followed. Yet, even in this earlier period Venice exhibited its strength by ensuring a more favourable commercial position in the Mediterranean. The Ragusans and other Dalmatians, however, had to content themselves with the peripheries of this lucrative great market. Frequent uprisings during the thirteenth century, especially those in the second and third decades, bear witness to the nature of Venetian suzerainty.<sup>4</sup> Attempts to overthrow the Venetian rule, if futile, point to certain guidelines of the patriciate's independent policy and their aspiration for autonomy. But they also undisputedly testify to the strength of the then Venetian rule, confirmed by unfavourable agreements and prohibitions related to Dubrovnik's maritime trade. According to the terms imposed in 1232 and 1236, the Ragusans were to receive the Doge and the archbishop from Venice, sing laudes during feasts and provide military assistance, regalia and certain customs dues. Enemies and allies of Venice were also those of Dubrovnik, regardless of the latter's own interests. Venetian terms of suzerainty contained very strict demands such as those on customs dues, trade restrictions and hostages. The oath of loyalty might also be described

<sup>3</sup> Liber statutorum civitatis Ragusii compositus anno 1272. Eds. Baldo Bogošić/Konstantin JIREČEK. Zagreb 1904 (Monumenta historico-juridica Slavorum Meridionalium, 9). L. 1: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 16, vol. 2: 1, 2, 18, 33, l. 3: 46; Listine o odnošajih između južnoga slavenstva i Mletačke republike. Vol. 1. Ed. Šime LJUBIĆ. Zagreb 1868 (Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium, 1), 36, 40, 46; FORETIĆ, vol. 1, 58, 64–65, 68; Zdenka JANEKOVIĆ RÖMER, Okvir slobode. Dubrovačka vlastela između srednjovjekovlja i humanizma. Zagreb, Dubrovnik 1999, 127–128.

<sup>4</sup> Listine o odnošajih, vol. 1, 33–34, 37–38, 40, 41; FORETIĆ, vol. 1, 59–63.

as a ritual humiliation – all male citizens over the age of 13 had to swear on all the points of the agreement and take an oath of allegiance to the Doge and the count, not once but (repeatedly) every ten years.<sup>5</sup> The question of the agreement's implementation remains, but the mere fact that such demands were imposed speaks of the underlying reality of the relationship between the city and Venetian lordship.

In the second half of the thirteenth century, Ragusan rebellions against Venetian rule gained a new dimension. The change was evident after 1236, when Venetian counts began to serve for two years and swore allegiance to the Ragusan commune, its autonomy and customs. From the hands of the Ragusan noblemen the Venetian count received the flag of St. Blasius and, holding it in his hands, swore on the Bible that he would honour and protect the Ragusan autonomy, laws and customs. He was to repeat this oath on the main altar of the Ragusan Cathedral (of the Assumption of the Virgin), kissing the Gospel.<sup>6</sup> Councilors began to address the count with more self-awareness, and this caught the eye of the Venetian government. Earlier uprisings offered little reason for concern in Venice, but by the second half of the thirteenth century the Venetians interpreted them as a grave breach of their authority.<sup>7</sup> Documents from the end of the century show that in some situations the Ragusan government avoided military and other obligations, and circumvented trade restrictions. Revenues tended to become a frequent cause of contention. Also, Ragusan foreign policy seemed to have little in

<sup>5</sup> Dubrovačka akta i povelje. Vol. 1. Ed. Jovan RADONIĆ. Beograd 1934 (Zbornik za istoriju jezika i književnost srpskog naroda, III, 2), 28–32; Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae. Vol. 4. Ed. Tadija SMICIKLAS. Zagreb 1906, 8–11; Listine o odnošajih, vol. 1, 37, 41; Liber statutorum civitatis Ragusii, vol. 2, 1, 3; Josip ĐELČIĆ, Il conte Giovanni Dandolo e il dominio veneziano in Dalmazia ne' secoli di mezzo, *Archeografo Triestino* 30 (1905), 263–342, 275–276; Gregor ČREMOŠNIK, Odnos Dubrovnika prema Mlecima do godine 1358, *Narodna starina* 32 (1933), 3–12; Josip LUČIĆ, Političke i kulturne prilike u Dubrovniku na prijelazu XII. u XIII. stoljeće, in: *Dubrovačke teme*. Ed. Josip LUČIĆ. Zagreb 1991, 50–79, 54; JANEKOVIĆ RÖMER, Okvir slobode, 74–76, 127–128, 293–295.

<sup>6</sup> Liber statutorum civitatis Ragusii, l. 1, 1, 2, l. 2, 1, 3; Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae. Vol. 4, 32, 60; Monumenta Ragusina. Libri reformationum. Vol. 2. Ed. Josip ĐELČIĆ. Zagreb 1882 (Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium), 322, vol. 5. Ed. Josip ĐELČIĆ. Zagreb 1897 (Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium, 29), 177, 261; Ante CVITANIĆ, Uvod u dubrovačko statutarstvo, kasnije zakonsko pravo, in: *Statut grada Dubrovnika 1272*. Ed. Mato KAPOVIĆ. Dubrovnik 1990, 7–48, 11; FORETIĆ, vol. 1, 63; Zdenka JANEKOVIĆ RÖMER, Višegradski ugovor: temelj Dubrovačke Republike. Zagreb 2003, 52–53.

<sup>7</sup> Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae. Vol. 5. Ed. Tadija SMICIKLAS. Zagreb 1905, 399–400.

common with that of Venice.<sup>8</sup> Court records testify to the conflicts between the Ragusans and count's *socii* that is to say, to the altered attitude of the citizens towards Venetian authorities. Ragusans were known to turn against the counts themselves, and had broken away from the Venetian rule on a number of occasions.<sup>9</sup> Venice supported Ragusan communal institutions, although they represented a real threat to Venetian rule by becoming the source of resistance against it.

In the first decades of the fourteenth century, the power balance changed significantly due to the closing of the communal council. In the 1320s, the Major Council membership stopped being electoral and became hereditary, as finally legislated in 1332. By this, the count lost the right to appoint members of the Major Council, whose support he had heavily relied on. Under the newly formed conditions individuals no longer needed to side with the count to obtain the membership in the council.<sup>10</sup> Restructured and strengthened, the council systematically confronted the count and the Venetian government, and protected *consuetudo* of the city. In the dispute that broke out between the count and the Ragusan commune in 1326, the councilors concluded that the count's demands were "*contra libertatem et franchigiam civitatis*" and unanimously voted against them.<sup>11</sup> In 1328 they voted for the decrease of the count's substantial income, but the Venetian government prevented it.<sup>12</sup> The next year, the Venetian government approved of the reprisals of one of its citizens against Raška (Serbia), which was contrary to the agreement Dubrovnik had with the Serbian king. The councilors' reaction to *ducala* was so severe that they refused to register it officially in the communal records. The Ragusan envoy dispatched to Venice on this matter was strictly instructed not to accept the demands of the Venetian government, since "such a demand places Ragusans in grave danger, and is therefore unacceptable to them and they do not intend to act accordingly under

<sup>8</sup> Josip LUČIĆ, Neobjavljene isprave i akti XIII stoljeća iz dubrovačkog arhiva, *Arhivski vjesnik* 10 (1967), 117–133, 126–127; Codex diplomaticus regni Dalmatiae, Croatiae et Slavoniae. Vol. 4, 61–62, 151–160, 161–162, 168–169, 173, 200–201, 361–362, 449–450; FORETIĆ, vol. 1, 68–74; Bernard STULLI, Povijest Dubrovačke Republike. Zagreb, Dubrovnik 1989, 27–28; Listine o odnošajih, vol. 1: 263, 289; Monumenta Ragusina. Libri reformationum. Vol. 1. Ed. Josip ĐELČIĆ. Zagreb 1879 (Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium, 9), 34, vol. 5, 129–300.

<sup>9</sup> Spisi dubrovačke kancelarije. Vol. 3. Ed. Josip LUČIĆ, Zagreb 1988, 129–131.

<sup>10</sup> Monumenta Ragusina, vol. 2, 340, 353; Listine o odnošajih, vol. 1, 82–85; Codex diplomaticus regni Dalmatiae, Croatiae et Slavoniae. Vol. 5, 399–400; FORETIĆ, vol. 1, 64–65; JANEKOVIĆ RÖMER, Okvir slobode, 61–68, 176–182.

<sup>11</sup> Monumenta Ragusina, vol. 5, 208.

<sup>12</sup> Monumenta Ragusina, vol. 5, 208.

any circumstances.” At the worst, the envoy Junius de Sörgo was to submit a written complaint against “the Venetian government’s violation of the signed and verified agreements, because of which the Ragusans complain before God and justice.”<sup>13</sup> The Venetians gave in to this pressure: in the instructions carried by their envoy to the Serbian court, their government assured that they would not abandon their loyal Ragusans and would provide assistance with all their needs and protect their rights.<sup>14</sup> A dispute of similar nature took place in 1330. The Ragusan council again persevered in implementing its own decision which was contrary to that of the count. They refused to follow the count’s order and imprison some Florentine merchants, citing their “own agreements and the justice of their ancestors and their own.”<sup>15</sup> However, the Venetian government continued to hold a strong rule, best evidenced by customs regulations and trade prohibitions to the harm of the Ragusan trade, which the Major council, albeit reluctantly, had to include in the Statute, 1325 and 1340.<sup>16</sup>

Dubrovnik’s economic growth spurred its desire for independence, but also added tensions to the relations with Venice. Territorial issues, control of revenues and local administration, as well as trade restrictions remained the main points of dispute. Despite the nobility’s attempts at articulating its own policy, views and demands and the change in the power balance, in the first half of the fourteenth century the Lion of Saint Mark still firmly held his paw on their city. Up until the very end, the Venetians tried to rule with the iron fist, showing no signs of giving in to important demands of the Ragusan nobility. Good illustration of the Venetian lordship were the Elaphite Islands, Mljet and especially Lastovo, where they insisted on direct

<sup>13</sup> “[...] *debeat dicere et exponere, quod predicta precepta minime servare tenemur quod si servare teneremur, quod non credimus, propter pericula et dampna importabilia civitatis Ragusii, que sicut melius dicto nostro ambaxatori convenire videbitur, debeat omnia curare et explicare, semper concludendo in omnibus ostendendo ex parte nostre civitatis, quod talia apud nos sunt impossibilia, neque ipsa ullo modo vel ratione aliqua sustinere possemus neque intendimus, pro conservatione nostri status [...] si responsio fuerit nolle revocare dictum preceptum, sed quod robor firmitatis obtineat, idem ambaxator debeat protestare per publicum instrumentum, quod de predictis et multis aliis fecerunt et faciunt nobis contra pacta inita et firmata inter nos, et quod de predictis Deo et iustitie conquerimur.*” Monumenta Ragusina, vol. 5, 173, 278–280.

<sup>14</sup> Listine o odnošajih, vol. 1, 162–163.

<sup>15</sup> Monumenta Ragusina, vol. 5, 285, 286, 287, 290–293.

<sup>16</sup> Listine o odnošajih između južnoga slavenstva i Mletačke republike. Vol. 5. Ed. Šime LJUBIĆ. Zagreb 1875 (Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium, 5), 162, 363–364. Vol. 2. Ed. Šime LJUBIĆ. Zagreb 1870 (Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium, 2), 80–82, 86–87.

governing, without Ragusan mediation.<sup>17</sup> The Venetian rule exhibited equal relentlessness in the customs policy and in military matters.<sup>18</sup>

VENETIAN SOVEREIGNTY IN DUBROVNIK (1205–1358)  
IN THE EYES OF RAGUSAN CHRONICLERS

Venetian rule in Dubrovnik continued to intrigue Ragusan chroniclers and historians over the centuries. The period between the early Middle Ages and the eighteenth century saw about fifteen chronicles, of which here I aim to analyze only a few of the most important ones. The first among them is an anonymous chronicle dating from the end of the fifteenth century, with additions from the sixteenth century. The chronicle of Nicola de Ragnina followed in 1522, succeeded by the chronicle of a Benedictine Ludovicus Cerva Tubero, “*Commentarii de temporibus suis*”, written between 1522 and 1527, “*La storia di Raugia*” of the Dominican Serafino Razzi from 1595, “*Regno degli Sclavi*” of a Benedictine Mavro Orbini, published in 1601, “*Copioso ristretto degli annali di Ragusa*” by Jacob de Luccari from 1606, “*Chronica Ragusina*” of Junius de Resti from the beginning of the eighteenth century, and “*Prolegomena in sacram metropolim Ragusinam*” by Serafin Cerva from 1744. All chroniclers, except Serafino Razzi, were Ragusans, and only Orbini was not of the noble rank.

The accounts mainly focus on the early years of Venetian suzerainty, and somewhat less on its end. In doing so, the chroniclers tend to veil Dubrovnik’s inferior position and shift the glory of their Republic to earlier centuries. For that reason, they belittle the significance and the accomplishments of the Venetian count and councils or describe the acceptance of Venetian rule as a prudent choice of the Ragusans themselves. From Anonym and Ragnina to Tubero, Resti and Luccari, the chroniclers, without exception, pointed to the obvious parallels between the two Adriatic Republics that contributed to their almost natural relationship. The chronicles wrapped the first contacts with Venetians in the legend of St. Blasius, who watched over the city and protected Ragusans against deceptive enemies. The oldest, the Anonymous chronicle, written during the fifteenth century, concludes that the Venetian counts ruled over Dubrovnik as tyrants, and usurped Ra-

<sup>17</sup> Liber statutorum civitatis Ragusii, I. 2, 33; Listine o odnošajih između južnoga slavenstva i Mletačke republike. Vol. 3. Ed. Šime LJUBIĆ. Zagreb 1872 (Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium, 3), 195–198; Milorad MEDINI, Dubrovnik Gučetića. Beograd 1953 (Posebna izdanja SANU, 210, Odeljenje društvenih nauka, 9), 24–26.

<sup>18</sup> Listine o odnošajih, vol. 3, 197.

gusan rights. It dates the first Venetian aspirations towards Dubrovnik in the year 971, when the Venetian fleet planned to attack the city, which was miraculously protected by its patron saint, St. Blasius. Alongside an army of angels, he defended the city for three nights and finally appeared before the priest, don Stojko, told him that the Venetians pretended to show a friendly face, and were in fact great enemies of Dubrovnik, wishing to conquer it by trickery. According to the legend, the Ragusans overpowered the Venetians with the help from St. Blasius and the heavenly army. Anonym concludes that the Ragusans owed their fortune to no other but the holy protector when attacked by “*maligna generation Venetiana, quando sono stati venuti sotto specie de amici.*”<sup>19</sup> The same legend has been told by the Ragusan nobleman and chronicler Nicola de Ragnina, who thought the Venetians as of perfidious enemies. Dubrovnik was saved thanks to divine intervention through St. Blasius, its saint protector.<sup>20</sup>

The events of 1205, when Dubrovnik acknowledged Venetian rule, the Ragusan chroniclers interpret differently from the Venetian ones, with whom they only share the view that the city was not conquered, but instead surrendered to the Venetians. While Venetian chronicles falsely report that the city returned under the Venetian rule, Ragusan ones stress that, due to the patriciate’s poor judgment, Dubrovnik accepted foreign rule and lost part of its freedom. On the other hand, they tend to present those crucial events as the choice made by the Ragusans themselves, stating that they alone decided to receive counts from Venice. They substantiate this claim with the story of count Damjan Juda, which interpreted the submission of Dubrovnik to as resistance to tyranny and civic disunity.<sup>21</sup> The legend weaved around count Juda aspired towards a two-fold effect. It explained and justified the change of political orientation in the eyes of future generations - that is, the discontinuation of the relations with Byzantium and the acceptance of the

<sup>19</sup> *Annales Ragusini Anonymi item Nicolai de Ragnina*. Ed. Natko NODILO. Zagreb 1883 (Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium, 14, Scriptorum I), 39, 20–21, 199–201; JANEKOVIĆ RÖMER, *Okvir slobode*, 375.

<sup>20</sup> *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*, 21–22, 199–201.

<sup>21</sup> Damjan Juda, a Ragusan nobleman, was a historical figure. Sources place his rule at the beginning of the Venetian period in Dubrovnik. His descendants can be traced in the sources dating between the thirteenth and the fifteenth century. FORETIĆ, vol. 1, 58; Milorad MEDINI, Damjan Juda, *Dubrovnik* 1 (1929), 4–5, 138–143; Frano Maria APPENDINI, *Notizie istorico-critiche sulle antichità storia e letteratura de’ Ragusei*, divise in due tomi e dedicate all’eccelso Senato della Repubblica di Ragusa. Vol. 1. Dubrovnik 1802, 165. *Listine o odnošajih*, vol. 1, 40, 53; Natko NODILO, *Prvi ljetopisci i davna historiografija dubrovačka*, *Rad JAZU* 65 (1883), 103–104; Šime LJUBIĆ, *Ob odnošajih dubrovačke sa Mletačkom Republikom do g. 1358*, *Rad JAZU* 5 (1868), 44–122, 87.

Venetian rule. According to chronicles, the Ragusans decided to seek help from the Venetians, since the latter's government organization corresponded to that of Dubrovnik. They agreed to receive a Venetian count, in that their freedom was in no way imperiled. According to their interpretation, the count himself had no authority over the citizens, as the nobility continued to rule in conformity with their own laws. On the other hand, the story served as an intimidating example of tyranny and a warning to all noblemen of the potential dangers that may arise from the growing power of an individual. Damjan Juda was stripped of all the virtues expected from a Ragusan nobleman. According to the story, he was so deeply intoxicated with power that he did not want to give up the count's office when his mandate expired. He intended to hold on to power until his death and make it a hereditary title. He banished most capable noblemen and did not summon the council that was to name his successor. This gave rise to dissension in the city, settled down by Juda's son-in-law, Petar de Benessa. He persuaded the nobility to accept the rule of the Venetian count in order to overthrow the tyrant and secure the Republic. He alone lured his father-in-law onto a Venetian ship where, realizing the trap, Juda killed himself. Young Benessa was depicted as an ideal nobleman: wealthy merchant, loyal to the Republic, brave and determined. The relationship between the son-in-law and father-in-law bears another powerful message, this being that family solidarity cannot be above the interests of the Republic.<sup>22</sup>

The Anonymous chronicle sets the story of Damjan Juda in 1260, and interprets it essentially as a struggle of Ragusan noblemen against tyranny, aided by Venetians, who, on this occasion, proved to have been "righteous and generous, and kept their promise." Such a version of the story primarily supports the idea of a free, aristocratic Republic of Dubrovnik, while the justification for the submission to Venetian rule remains in the background.<sup>23</sup> Nicola de Ragnina also dated the tyrant's overthrowing in 1260. In his version, the acceptance of Venetian rule is more accentuated. Namely, Juda's son-in-law Petar de Benessa, a wealthy merchant with good connections in Venice and apparently well acquainted with the situation there, encouraged his fellow citizens to overthrow the tyrant and accept Venetian rule. Ragnina comments that the Ragusans then established new rules for governing the city, so that alongside the Venetian count Ragusan noblemen

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<sup>22</sup> *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*, 33–34, 220–221.

<sup>23</sup> *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*, 33–34.



ruled, primarily the members of the Minor Council and the Senate (*Consilium rogatorum*).<sup>24</sup>

Ludovicus Cerva Tubero approached the story of Juda as a historian, attempting to identify its causes, but concluded it in a manner of a Ragusan nobleman by stating deep resentment to tyranny and civic disunity as the reasons for the acceptance of the Venetian rule. According to his opinion, the Venetians were chosen because they were famous for their civic values and because the Ragusans benefited from their rule on the broader social but also individual level, primarily in trade and local government. However, he criticized the Ragusans for not defending their freedom themselves but instead calling foreigners for help. By submitting their homeland to foreigners, they brought ineradicable shame on them and their descendants, and were unworthy of their own laws. In a slightly milder tone, he admitted that the Ragusans could no longer rely on the help of the Byzantine Empire, hoping to retain their freedom under Venice. The result, however, did not live up to their expectations, “since instead of the permanent rule of their citizen, every year they received a new lord, and a foreign one, for that matter.”<sup>25</sup> He fully accredited the end of Venetian rule to King Louis I Anjou, to whom he expressed gratitude for restoring Dubrovnik’s reputation, freedom and autonomy.<sup>26</sup> Mavro Orbini stresses that the city of Dubrovnik always lived in freedom, and that foreigners had ruled over it only once, “when the Ragusans, with an aim of freeing themselves from the tyranny of the Ragusan nobleman Damjan Juda, unreasonably decided to accept Venetian rule.”<sup>27</sup>

As a foreigner, Dominican Serafino Razzi followed in the footsteps of earlier chroniclers. His interpretation, however, is not based on Ragusan aristocratic ideology, but on the conclusion on the mutual benefit from such a political change. He writes that Venetian modes of government and laws suited Ragusans, who thus expected the new government to support the existing communal institutions. On the other hand, Venetian interests were those of trade, calculating that it would benefit commercially with Dubrovnik firmly under its wing. Razzi concludes that the Venetians got the better end of the bargain, since the Ragusans, instead of a tyrant, got an even more powerful lord and a foreign one, who seriously threatened their free-

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<sup>24</sup> *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*, 220–221.

<sup>25</sup> Ludovik CRJEVIĆ TUBERON, *Komentari o mojem vremenu*. Ed. Vlado REZAR. Zagreb 2001, 91–92.

<sup>26</sup> CRJEVIĆ TUBERON, 95.

<sup>27</sup> MAVRO ORBINI, *Kraljevstvo Slavena*. Zagreb 1999, 249–250.

dom. Indeed, Venetian rule did contribute to the development of Ragusan trade, but in Razzi's eyes it was a disadvantage, as everyone seemed to have indulged in buying and selling, and neglected the studies of a free spirit.<sup>28</sup>

Fear of tyranny continued to haunt future generations, including chroniclers, reason enough to accept Venetian suzerainty. Preservation of the institutions of the aristocratic republic, the Major Council, bastion of the class privileges above all, was the main political priority. This feeling was most clearly expressed by Jacob de Luccari in his interpretation of the Juda affair as a deadly conspiracy against the Major Council that aimed to destroy its traces, name and memory of it. Luccari writes about consequences of the Fourth Crusade on Dalmatia, free cities sacked by Dandolo and his crusaders, yet avoiding to place the change of rule in Dubrovnik into that context.<sup>29</sup>

Junius de Resti spiced up the story of count Juda with an invented Council discussion on whether it would be better to tolerate the tyranny of a Ragusan nobleman and wait for the right moment to overthrow him or freely subject to foreign lordship that would work towards its own goals. Some noblemen participating in the chronicler's imaginary council session believed that it would be hard to defend Ragusan freedom with a Venetian count at the head of the state, for he would always support Venetian attempts to threaten it. The opposition spoke through the young Benessa, and his reassurance that the acceptance of the Venetian count would not endanger the freedom of Dubrovnik. Resti points to the practice of the Italian cities to appoint foreigners for counts, and that Ragusans were occasionally chosen as counts in Dalmatian cities, which did not imply that the Republic had submitted them. In his opinion, it was better to side with Venetian protection than to fear from schismatic rulers from the hinterland or wait hopelessly for the protection from the Byzantine Empire, weakened after the Fourth Crusade. Resti connects the episode of the tyrant Juda with the journey of Patriarch Tommaso Morosini to Constantinople. His ships stopped in Du-

<sup>28</sup> Serafino RAZZI, *La storia di Ragusa: scritta nuovamente in 3 libri*. Ed. Josip ĐELČIĆ. Dubrovnik 1903, 60–63.

<sup>29</sup> "*Ora regnando Michaelae Paleologo, fu tramata da Damiano Iuda, Conte di Rausa, una graue e mortal congiura, per ruinare la memoria, le vestigia e il nome del Consiglio generale, base e sostegno della nostra liberta[...].*" Jacomo LUCCARI, *Copioso ristretto degli annali di Rausa libri quattro di Giacomo di Pietro Luccari, gentiluomo rauseo ove diligentissimamente si describe la fondatione della città, l'origine della Repubblica, e suo Dominio, le guerre, le paci e tutti i notabili avvenimenti occorsi dal principio i essa fino all'anno presente MDCIII dal principio di esse sino al anno presente 1604*. Venecija 1605, 31–32, 40.

brovnik and took part in a trick in which Juda lost his life. Interestingly, Resti is the only chronicler to connect Morosini - that is, the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade with the change of rule in Dubrovnik (Anonym speaks of a Venetian rector whom the young Benessa brought from Venice, and Ragnina about *supracomes* who traveled to the Levant). Resti relates how Morosini set off with four galleys for Constantinople to join Dandolo's fleet, take over his Church and participate in the installment of Baldwin as emperor. According to Resti, Juda let himself be lured on board the galley, because he wished to see the gifts intended for Baldwin.<sup>30</sup> Unlike Ragusan, many Venetian chroniclers and copyists speak of a military campaign that Morosini led against Dubrovnik, as, for instance, Barbaro, Dandolo, P. Dolfin, Sabellico, Biondo, Sanudo, Caroldo, Savina and others. They justify Morosini's campaign with the Ragusan rebellion against Venetian rule; however, this was not the issue, because the city had never recognized Venetian rule before but was under the protection of the Byzantine Empire.<sup>31</sup> Unlike his predecessors, Resti tried to belittle the accomplishments of the Venetian rule in Dubrovnik. Hostile neighbourhood kept the Ragusans occupied with securing and maintaining the minimum of freedom and in doing so, they turned to the Republic of Venice, whose "origin and government system" shared a striking resemblance to their own. In Resti's words, Venetian rule was nominal rather than real, because the Ragusan commune brought its own laws and had its jurisdiction. He explicitly states that the Venetian count was no more than the first man of the Republic who exerted no real authority over the citizens. He makes no difference between the great Venetian Republic and its tiny Ragusan counterpart for the latter's very existence proved that Venice did not survive thanks to its power, but because of its ideal form of government - that is, aristocratic government that also existed in Dubrovnik. The fact that the Republic of Dubrovnik did not rule over vast territories had no influence on its significant international role, for it had *ius gladii* and lived by its own laws: Odysseus was a king, just like Agamemnon, he proudly concluded.<sup>32</sup>

Serafin Cerva, famous and fruitful historian of the eighteenth century, drew many parallels between Dubrovnik and Venice in the organization of

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<sup>30</sup> *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii (ab origine urbis usque ad annum 1451) item Joannis Gundulae (1451-1484)*. Ed. Natko NODILO. Zagreb 1893 (*Monumenta spectantia historiam Sclavorum Meridionalium*, 25), 72-74.

<sup>31</sup> LJUBIĆ, *Ob odnošajih*, 79; FORETIĆ, vol. 1, 58; Marin ŠERBAN, *The First Venetian on the Patriarchal Throne of Constantinople. The Representation of Tommaso Morosini in the Venetian Chronicles*. [http://www.geocities.com/serban\\_marin/marin2.html#\\_ftnref122](http://www.geocities.com/serban_marin/marin2.html#_ftnref122)

<sup>32</sup> *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, 3, 7, 37-38, 72, 96.

the secular and ecclesiastical institutions. Moreover, he concluded that “the Ragusans emulated the structure of the Venetian government,” and that Ragusan society was structured in the same way as that of Venice. But, in view of the independence of the Republic of Dubrovnik and archbishopric, Cerva assumed an anti-Venetian attitude. His opinion was that the Venetians attacked the city because of commercial rivalry, but failed to seize it, for it happily freed itself instead.<sup>33</sup>

Ragusan tradition fosters a two-sided, contradictory attitude towards Venetian rule. On the one hand, the chronicles stress that Venice did not truly rule over Dubrovnik, but only sent its count, as the political power lay in the hands of the nobility. According to the chroniclers’ words, the counts had no true authority in the government. The title brought them no more than a single vote, and their orders were subject to the final decision of the council. In important matters of trade and defense the councilors resisted Venetian rule, which could not fully implement its decisions. They also drew parallels between the institutions and social organization of the two cities.<sup>34</sup> Junius de Resti was aware of the similarity between the two Adriatic republics and noted that “in writing about the beginnings and development of Dubrovnik, one cannot but also talk about Venice [...], since the reasons underlying their foundation as well as government systems are identical in both republics.” Thanks to the perfect form of government, both republics maintained their freedom for more than 1200 years.<sup>35</sup>

At the same time, chronicles provide a contradictory picture, depicting the period of Venetian rule as the time of tyranny and injustice, against which the Ragusans rebelled and managed to overthrow on a number of occasions. Ragnina’s view of the Veneto-Ragusan relationship was black and white, in favour of his fellow citizens. He told a few, mainly legendary episodes, from which it can be deduced that the Ragusans were friendly, sincere and ami-

<sup>33</sup> Seraphinus Maria CERVA, *Prolegomena in sacram metropolim Ragusinam*. Editio princeps. Ed. Relja Seferović. Dubrovnik, Zagreb 2008, c. 14, 304–305; c. 15, 306; c. 24, 372.

<sup>34</sup> *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*, 29, 31, 41, 215; RAZZI, 33; LUCCARI, 41, 114; *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, 8–9; FORETIĆ, vol. 1, 62–63, 73–75.

<sup>35</sup> *Scrivendo della fondazione e progressi della repubblica di Ragusa, spesso vien in taglio di parlare anche di quella di Venezia. [...] la causa della fondazione e il sistema del governo esser il medesimo d’ambe le repubbliche [...]. Roma, la più illustre di tutte, appena s’è conservata cinquecento anni; dove che queste due repubbliche di Venezia e di Ragusa, con una medesima forma di governo, dopo mille e duecento anni [...] al presente anche sono libere, e la conservazione della libertà di quella di Ragusa, repubblica piccola, mostra chiaramente, che quella di Venezia non s’è conservata per mezzo della sua potenza, ma puramente a causa della perfetta forma del suo governo*. *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, 37–38.

cable towards the Venetians, greeted and treated them with joy, “in a Slavic manner”. On the other hand, the Venetians responded by looting, deceits and evils of all kinds. He even noted that the Wednesday agenda of the Venetian councils regularly included the discussion on how to harm Dubrovnik. Equally interesting is yet another legendary episode, taken from the Anonymous chronicle, according to which two Ragusan envoys to Venice shouted out loud in the middle of St. Mark’s square: “You Venetians are mighty at sea, and we are on land, you have many treasures, and we have many stones and rocks, you have many galleys, and we have many boats, you do us every possible harm in return for our hospitality. That is why we declare you our enemies [...]”<sup>36</sup>

Ludovicus Cerva Tubero wrote of Venice with undisguised resent. He referred to the Venetians as cowards, debauchers, braggarts and arrogant people lusting for power and wealth. He believed that they only pretended to be Christian, “as for them, justice, piety and honesty mean nothing. Deception is their trade, they always go back on their word and never honour an agreement, all to their own advantage.” He held against them the fact that they had seized power over the whole of the Mediterranean, although the sea is “a gift from God to all nations living on its coasts.” He writes that they spread their empire unjustly, deserving thus contempt and hate of the rest of the world. He holds that they should be stopped, because “if the resistance fails to be offered on time, the Venetians will turn the whole world upside-down.” Moreover, “[...] there is no Christian leader, however soft-hearted, who does not think that the Venetians, whose city is known as the manufactory of demise, ought to be destroyed. They plague the nobility, and their city is a nest of deceit and treachery, from where the entire neighbourhood is looked upon as prey exposed to plunder.”<sup>37</sup>

Luccari attacked Venetian historians, particularly Francesco Sansovino, pointing that in their works they showed envy towards “our Republic and the whole Slavic world”, about which they actually knew fairly little. Not only was their knowledge modest, but they wrote in such a “confusing manner, contributing to even greater confusion.”<sup>38</sup> Similar opinion about Vene-

<sup>36</sup> *Annales Ragusini Anonimi*, 24–26, 204, 205, 212.

<sup>37</sup> CRIJEVIĆ TUBERON, 165, 171, 174, 182, 186, 190, 191, 192, 193, 196, 204; Vlado REZAR, Uvodna studija, in: CRIJEVIĆ TUBERON, VII–LXXXVIII, XXXI.

<sup>38</sup> [...] *ne hanno scritto acciecati con proprio interesse [...]. E questo medesimo è intervenuto per appunto a Francesco Sansovino e ad altri, che hanno tocco qualche cosa della nostra Repubblica di Ragusa [...]. E pure per essere tali scrittori forestieri, che però poca o niuna contezza avevano de’ governi e delle azioni nostre, e per essersi messi a scrivere ciò per esaltare solamente le cose loro, o forse anco per invidia che hanno*

tian historians and their knowledge of Ragusan history was presented by Mavro Orbini, who says that in his accounts of Dubrovnik, Sabellico is “very much mistaken, unless he wrote all that just to sing a song (as commonly put) to someone’s tune.”<sup>39</sup>

Even the objective, open-minded Resti mentions Ragusan dissatisfaction with the Venetian counts and frequent rebellions against Venetian rule during the thirteenth and the first half of the fourteenth century. He explains that the Ragusans wanted to restore the power of its citizens and that they took every opportunity to banish the Venice-appointed count. According to him, the roots of Ragusan disunity should be sought in their inability to maintain their own government. The days of Venetian rule were a period of hardship for Dubrovnik, marked by unfair agreements and trade restrictions. Most of all, they were a threat to Dubrovnik’s freedom.<sup>40</sup>

As witnessed by Anonymous, the shift of Dalmatian cities under the rule of Louis I in 1358 was as a triumph and liberation, exulting over the fact that the Venetian counts and governors had to leave Dalmatia.<sup>41</sup> Ragnina, too, speaks of the liberation of Dubrovnik from the Venetians, of the freedom and peace in the city under the rule of their own rectors and the protection of King Louis I. The Ragusan chronicles enthuse about the noble conduct of their ancestors towards the Venetians once their rule was over. Anonymous has it that the Ragusans freed themselves of the Venetian count upon the order of King Louis, giving the former a dignified and friendly farewell when he sailed for Venice. Ragnina mentions that almost all Venetian counts in Dalmatia were “*ammazzati e da vita privati*”, except for the Ragusan count who was honourably sent off to Venice. On account of such befitting treatment, Venice granted them most favourable trade privileges. Ragnina says that Dubrovnik could build friendly relations with Venice only as a free city.<sup>42</sup> Luccari, too, agrees that it was only after the end of the Venetian rule that the relationship between Venice and Dubrovnik gained in quality. He also stressed the similarities between the political institutions of the two republics.<sup>43</sup> Resti mentions a letter the Ragusans sent to the Venetian government, justifying their position of not wanting to be losers, since they were

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*portato alla nostra Repubblica e nazione Slava in universale, ne hanno detto poco, e quel poco sí sconciamente, che maggior confusione di prima hanno generato nelle menti degli uomini.* LUCCARI, VII.

<sup>39</sup> ORBINI, 254.

<sup>40</sup> *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, 79, 81–82.

<sup>41</sup> *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, 79, 81–82.

<sup>42</sup> *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*, 41, 231–233.

<sup>43</sup> LUCCARI, 114, 124.

neither conquered nor subjugated. If the king was to take them from the hands of the Venetians by force, that would threaten their freedom and that is why they wanted to surrender voluntarily and negotiate with him. According to Resti's interpretation, the Ragusans even apologized to the Venetians and ask them not to hold their actions against them, since they had to follow the example of the rest of Dalmatia. They could not just sit and watch the whole of Dalmatia liberate itself and come under the protection of the Hungarian king who restored its reputation and strength. His words reflect the clearly defined Ragusan *superbia*, when he says that genteel Ragusans, preparing the negotiations with the King, sent their envoy Jacob de Menze to Venice, wishing to end the relationship with the former rulers in a friendly fashion, not only because of trade and other interests, but to distinguish themselves from the other Dalmatians who "with rustic arrogance and in an unbecoming and rude manner sent off the Venetian counts."<sup>44</sup> He does, however, say that Louis gave the Ragusans a chance to free themselves from the Venetian count, "a snake in the bosom", and bestow dignity upon the patricians who served their state with devotion. According to his words, the Ragusan Senate never did show greater political competence than in the maneuverings during the shift of allegiance from Venice to the King of Hungary.<sup>45</sup>

#### TWO ADRIATIC REPUBLICS AFTER 1358

During the first half of the fourteenth century, the ideas of siding with Hungary were beginning to gain a clearer framework in Dubrovnik, as well as popularity. The city still acknowledged Venetian rule and wanted to maintain neutrality in the war between Venice and Louis I, despite the growing anti-Venetian feelings.<sup>46</sup> In 1356 the Major Council passed a long-wished decision on the reduction of the count's allowances. It was decided that the incomes formerly claimed by the count were to be collected by the commune's treasury from then on. Favourable news from the war front further encouraged them to demand equal terms in the Adriatic maritime trade with the Venetians. Thus they conditioned their loyalty to the Venetian Republic. Land and maritime trade, defined by the agreements with Italian cities and Slavic rulers, brought Dubrovnik into a competitive position in the Adriatic and beyond. Venetian monopoly in the "Gulf", which, through the customs policy attracted all trade to Venice, became an obstruction to the ambitions

<sup>44</sup> *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, 136–137.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibidem*, 125–136.

<sup>46</sup> *Monumenta Ragusina*, vol. 2, 114, 198; JANEKOVIĆ RÖMER, *Okvir slobode*, 233–234.

of the Ragusan merchants. They preferred direct trade connections with other cities in the Adriatic, to which Venetian policy became an increasing obstacle. The pride of the nobility, which had evolved into a clearly defined political class, was also threatened by Venetian dominance. They tried to make the best of every situation anticipating change. As the royal army advanced, the idea of the city's surrender to Louis I became a reality in Dubrovnik. Documents speak of this very sparsely and indirectly, as everything was conducted in secrecy, but there is reason to believe that the city witnessed the activity of a group of pro-Hungarian noblemen. By 1357 the anti-Venetian atmosphere was evident in the discussion in the Major Council.<sup>47</sup> The stirring events in Split and Trogir also reflected in Dubrovnik, prompting the Venetian government to dispatch the ambassadors Paolo Loredan and Andrea Contarino to see to the situation in the city. That mission was the last, unsuccessful attempt of Venetian government to preserve the loyalty of the Ragusans.<sup>48</sup> Commenting on these events, Resti notes that the ambassadors received a warm welcome, despite the host's real intentions. He says that the two republics "mocked each other and through diplomatic signs of good faith hid the real goals and interests: the Venetians actually wanted to chain the Ragusan freedom, while the Ragusans' only concern was how to eject the Venetians not only from their own city, but from the whole of Dalmatia, so that they would not have to put up with them in their neighbourhood."<sup>49</sup>

This stratagem is best reflected in the agreement signed between Venice and Dubrovnik on January 25, 1358. The Venetian Doge acted as protector and defender of the city, and the Ragusans showed him unquestionable loyalty and regret for the loss of Zadar. At the moment when the Venetian rule was losing positions on the eastern coast of the Adriatic, the Doge remembered the two-year-old Ragusan request and rewarded them with trade and maritime privileges and Venetian citizenship for their "great loyalty and true allegiance". According to this decision verified by the Venetian councils, the entire city of Dubrovnik and all its citizens were, from then on, to be considered as "part of Venice", with rights and freedoms of Venetian citizens. This privilege was so important to the Ragusans that they included it in their Statute as a law. Military luck was unpredictable, but this privilege, so important to fundamental Ragusan interests, reminded the councilors of

<sup>47</sup> Monumenta Ragusina, vol. 2, 114, 198; JANEKOVIĆ RÖMER, *Okvir slobode*, 233–234.

<sup>48</sup> Ivan LUCIĆ, *Povijesna svjedočanstva o Trogiru*. Vol. 1. Ed. Cvito FIŠKOVIĆ. Split 1979, 590–593; Monumenta Ragusina, vol. 2, 201, 202, 204–208, 219–220.

<sup>49</sup> *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, 135–136.



the centuries-old Venetian “affection and concern”. However, by the time this significant concession arrived, Ragusan policy had already taken a different course, the concession being more of a provisional, desperate measure, quite contrary to true Venetian aspirations. That soon became evident after the signing of the Visegrad Treaty, when the Venetians breached the agreement on citizenship and friendship, having undertaken a number of measures aimed against Ragusan trade in the Mediterranean.<sup>50</sup>

The successes of Louis’ army on Venetian *terrafirma* and that of the ban in Dalmatia brought Venice into dire straights. But up until the very end, the Venetians hoped to hold Dalmatia. By employing all means, from diplomatic negotiations to bribery, they tried in the least to maintain hold over Zadar, the key to the dominance of “their Gulf”.<sup>51</sup> Although the king’s allies had already won victories at sea, in Italy and in the Dalmatian hinterland, Venetian diplomacy still tried to befriend Louis to receive a financial compensation of 60,000, and later even 100,000 ducats in the name of territorial demands. On the other hand, they demanded of the Dalmatian subjects to resist the advancements of the *ban*’s army. Mounted mercenary troops, ambassadors encouraging the Dalmatians to loyalty, the incitation of popular discontent against the nobility, learned lawyers who tried to enlighten Louis about the legal grounds for the Venetian ownership of Dalmatia all proved in vain.<sup>52</sup> According to the words of his biographer and secret notary, Archdeacon John Thúroczy, the king viewed the conquest of Dalmatia as the liberation of his estates that Venice had illegally claimed for a long time.<sup>53</sup>

By the end of 1357, Dalmatian cities, following each other’s example, banished Venetian counts and accepted Hungarian rule, which culminated with the Hungarian army entering Zadar, as agreed with the pro-Hungarian

<sup>50</sup> Liber statutorum civitatis Ragusii, vol. 8, 98; Monumenta Ragusina, vol. 2, 168; Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii, 135; LUCIĆ, 593; LJUBIĆ, Ob odnošajih, 13; Jorjo TADIĆ, Pisma i uputstva Dubrovačke republike. Beograd 1935 (Zbornik za istoriju, jezik i književnost srpskog naroda, III, 4), 152, 153; FORETIĆ, vol. 1, 80, 242–243.

<sup>51</sup> Dane GRUBER, Borba Ludovika I. s Mlečanima za Dalmaciju (1348–1358). Zagreb 1903, 138–139, 152; Nada KLAJČ, Povijest Hrvata u razvijenom srednjem vijeku. Zagreb, 1969, 619; Nada KLAJČ/Ivo PETRICIOLI, Zadar u srednjem vijeku. Zadar 1976 (Prošlost Zadra, 2), 315; Listine o odnošajih, vol. 5, 318–319, 324–326, 334–336.

<sup>52</sup> GRUBER, 33–34, 38–46, 61, 82; Listine o odnošajih, vol. 3, 257, 315, 325; Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae. Vol. 12. Ed. Tadija SMIČIKLAS. Zagreb 1914, 424–425.

<sup>53</sup> Johannes THÚROCY, Chronica Hungarorum, in: Scriptorum rerum Hungaricarum veteres et genuini. Vol. 2. Ed. Johannes SCHWANDTNER. Vindobonae 1748, 39–211, c. VIII, 178–179, c. XXVI: 187, c. XXVII: 187, c. XXVIII, 188–189.

faction in the city.<sup>54</sup> The king's triumphant entry into Zadar, eternalized on the relief of the silver coffin of St. Simeon in the same church, was the basis of his demands towards Venice. In the negotiations leading to the Treaty of Zadar in 1358 he insisted that Venice renounced all its claims to Dalmatia, from the Kvarner region to the borders of the province of Durrës, and excluded Croatia and Dalmatia from the Doge's title. Venetians saw Dalmatia as a province consisting of distinct, administratively separate cities, connected by the common Roman tradition, similar social relations and Venetian rule. By contrast, King Louis viewed Dalmatia as a cohesive territory, which he, as the Hungarian king, claimed. Whether his predecessors ruled over the entire region and under whose rule it was at the moment of conclusion of the Treaty of Zadar mattered little to him. His exclusive starting point was the fact that, at the coronation of King Coloman in Biograd in 1102, Dalmatia entered into the royal title and heritage of the Hungarian kings as a separate province. No doubt, skilled Venetian diplomats anticipated the king's intentions, but up until the very end resorted to all the means possible. The final position they tried to defend was the statement that Dubrovnik, Korčula and Mljet had never recognized the lordship of the Hungarian kings, so that they could remain Venetian strongholds in the Adriatic. The king, however, did not wish to discuss the Dalmatian borders in legal terms, "the way it is usually discussed in courts"<sup>55</sup>, because under the term "Dalmatia" he meant everything Venetians owned on land and at sea from Istria to Durrës. It was upon this that he claimed his sovereignty over Dubrovnik, despite the fact that Dubrovnik had never been the subject of the Hungarian crown. With no odds against the victorious king, Venice renounced all its claims to Dalmatia by signing the Treaty of Zadar on February 18, 1358.<sup>56</sup>

Acceptance of Hungarian rule was not only desirable but the only possible choice for Dubrovnik. What followed was a silent annulment of the

<sup>54</sup> Jakov STIPIŠIĆ/Miljen ŠAMŠALOVIĆ, Zapisnici Velikog vijeća grada Splita 1325–1354, 1357–1359, *Zbornik Zavoda za pov. znanosti JAZU* 12 (1982), 65–263, 75, 139, 140–141, 149, 161–162, 167–168, 170–171; *Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*. Vol. 12, 442–445, 506–507, 589–592; *Acta exera Andegavensia*. Vol. 2. Ed. Guzstav WENZEL. Budapest 1875 (*Monumenta Hungariae historica*, Ser. IV b, Vol. 2), 489–490; *Codex diplomaticus Hungariae ecclesiasticus ac civilis*. Vol. 2. Ed. György FEJÉR. Budapest 1839, 647–649; GRUBER, 131–134; Nada KLAIĆ, *Trogir u srednjem vijeku*. *Javni život grada i njegovih ljudi*. Trogir 1985 (*Izdanja Muzeja grada Trogira*, 5, II/1), 295–308.

<sup>55</sup> LUCIĆ, 593.

<sup>56</sup> *Listine o odnošajih*, vol. 3, 368–371; JANEKOVIĆ RÖMER, *Okvir slobode*, 64–68.

agreement with Venice and the first diplomatic steps towards the Hungarian king. By the privilege granted in Visegrad, the king's seat, on May 27, 1358, Dubrovnik became a city of the Hungarian crown, retaining important self-governing jurisdictions. Under the nominal protection of the crown of St. Stephen, from then on the Ragusan nobility was granted the right to choose the count by themselves, bring laws, control the army and police, and run the city's internal and foreign affairs. The change was so important to the Ragusans that they regarded this document as a turning point in their history, as one of the milestones of their freedom. By asserting Hungarian rule for the first time in its history, Dubrovnik joined the political community with Croatia, Dalmatia and Slavonia. That political bond, in addition to other elements of the commonwealth, became the foundation on which the feeling of common belonging and identity was built in the centuries to come.<sup>57</sup>

It was upon the Ragusan commune to decide how it would act towards the last representative of the old rule. Wanting to retain business interests in Venice and fairly good relations with the *Signoria*, the Ragusans were benevolent towards the last Venetian count. Dubrovnik, unlike Split and Trogir, did not witness armed rebellions or secret conspiracies of the citizens and the clergy.<sup>58</sup> The Last Ragusan count from Venice, Marco Superanzio, did not flee from the city but was kindly sent off and sailed out peacefully with his company.<sup>59</sup> The chroniclers' accounts, as well as several preserved letters to Superanzio, show that the relations between him and the Ragusans were good and remained so to the last day.<sup>60</sup>

With the Treaty of Visegrad Dubrovnik's gains were evident, and which, together with the city's particular economic potentials, gave way to a new story of the republic, immune from the Venetian early fifteenth-century conquests in Dalmatia. Upon the recognition of the Hungarian crown, the international position of Dubrovnik saw a fundamental change. The city became an important political factor not only to the Hungarian king and

<sup>57</sup> JANEKOVIĆ RÖMER, *okvir slobode*, 69–85, 136–141.

<sup>58</sup> A. CUTHEIS, *Tabula*, in: *Legende i kronike*. Ed. Cvito FISKOVIĆ. Split 1977, 185–202, 197–198; STIPIŠIĆ/ŠAMŠALOVIĆ, 145, 148–149, 150, 152–153, 154, 182–183; *Acta externa Andegavensia*. Vol. 2, 487–490.

<sup>59</sup> *Monumenta Ragusina*, vol. 2, 215, 230; TADIĆ, 19.

<sup>60</sup> State Archives of Dubrovnik (SAD), *Lettere di Levante*. Ser. XXVII. 1, vol. 2, 10'–11; *Diversa notarile*. Ser. XXVI, vol. 7, 164'; *Diversa cancellariae*. Ser. XXV, vol. 18, 67', 82; *Monumenta Ragusina*, vol. 2, 219, 234, 244, 253, 266–267, 272; *Listine o odnošajih između južnoga slavenstva i Mletačke republike*. Vol. 4. Ed. Šime LJUBIĆ. Zagreb 1874 (*Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium*, 4), 1.

Venice, but also to the Pope, Dalmatian cities, strengthened Bosnia, and the lords from the hinterland, strengthened by the weakening and decay of Serbia. In the new circumstances of the early fifteenth century, Dubrovnik considerably gained in significance, when, due to Venetian conquests, it remained the southernmost point of Hungarian sovereignty in the Adriatic. During Hungarian rule, the Ragusan commune consolidated itself territorially through the acquisition of Primorje in 1399, and Konavle in 1419 and 1426. The city's overall prosperity, its growing significance and self-awareness mirrored in the title "*res publica Ragusina*" that appeared in the second half of the fourteenth century. True, a new page of the history of the city could not have been turned more magnificently. Up until the fall of the Hungarian Kingdom in 1526, Dubrovnik prospered under royal protection, after which it proved prepared to survive on its own, as witnessed by the centuries that followed.

The two Adriatic republics were not only connected through a two and a half century political relationship, but by the analogy between their social structure and relations. Although the *Serenissima* represented a political threat to Dubrovnik, the latter needed it in many ways. That is why the political rift between Dubrovnik and Venice took a peaceful course and did not result in the cessation of their relations. Even after the changes of 1358, the Ragusan councilors, sincerely or not, tried to maintain peace and commercial ties with Venice. Not even the ambitious Hungary under King Louis could seriously compete with Venice at sea. That was the weak spot of the king's campaigns that tended to overshadow all the conquests and victories, turning the defeated Republic into a victor. Venetians remained the lords of the Adriatic Sea, resulting in another subjugation of Dalmatian cities to the Venetian rule at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Political circumstances aside, Venice remained the centre of the Adriatic, the city that attracted trade from the East and West, in which Dalmatian merchants pursued their share too. Dalmatian cities, Dubrovnik in particular, satisfied with as little as the crumbs of this big cake. Dubrovnik was already benefiting significantly as an intermediary in the trade between Venice and the Balkans. In pursuit of profit, Ragusan merchant venturers, like other Dalmatians, traded with Venice, seeking new business connections and broader commercial markets. Their business deals often amounted to thousands of perpers.<sup>61</sup> Despite the restrictions, the volume of Ragusan maritime as well as

<sup>61</sup> *Diversa cancellariae*, vol. 18, 82<sup>o</sup>, 120, XX: 34; *Diversa notariae*, vol. 7, 28, 33; *Monumenta Ragusina*, vol. 1, 29–30, 36–38, II: 253; *Listine o odnošajih*, vol. 1, 202, vol. 3, 224–226; *Codex diplomaticus regni Dalmatiae, Croatiae et Slavoniae*. Vol. 9. Ed. Tadija

land trade witnessed an upward trend. Entrepreneurship was followed by intensive credit activity. The peak of commercial prosperity of the 1330s coincided with substantial, strategically important territorial acquisitions of Pelješac and Ston, where the construction of the fortifications was under way. Economic conjuncture also reflected in more extensive construction works in the city and advancement of the cultural and social standard. This greatly accounts for the absence of a dramatic turn of events after the end of Venetian rule in Dubrovnik. Thus the Ragusans continued to recruit doctors, teachers, notaries, musicians and other communal magistrates from Venice. The Ragusan colony in Venice was its diplomatic mission at the same time. Ragusan citizens, particularly noblemen, apart from attending to their business, acted as diplomatic representatives of the Republic.<sup>62</sup> Similarly, after 1358 the Venetians continued to travel to Dubrovnik on business. Some of them stayed in the city over longer periods of time doing business with Ragusans. Merchants, artisans, teachers, musicians and other professionals from Venice often bought real estate and settled in Dubrovnik for good. First decades of the Hungarian rule in Dubrovnik brought no changes in terms of property ownership. It was not until the end of the fourteenth century that Dubrovnik and its surroundings saw a marked drop in the Venetian real estate investments, whereas Ragusan interest in the Lagoon increased. The reasons for such activities were of purely economic and not political nature.<sup>63</sup> Rare were the Ragusans who could afford real estate in Venice, but there were individuals, mainly wealthy noblemen, who had houses there. One should add that the business and political connections between the two cities also resulted in personal ties – friendships and marital relationships. Moreover, besides the nobility of the Dalmatian cities, only the Venetian nobles had the privilege to bind with the Ragusan nobility

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SMIČIKLAS. Zagreb 1914, 9; Irmgard MAHNKEN, *Dubrovački patricijat u XIV veku*. Beograd 1960 (Posebna izdanja SANU, 340/1, 2, *Odeljenje društvenih nauka*, 36), 143, 147, 203–204, 213, 240, 243–244, 264–265, 295, 299–300, 307, 329, 334, 367, 441–442.

<sup>62</sup> *Diversa cancellariae*, vol. 18, 82<sup>o</sup>, 120, XX: 34; *Diversa notariae*, vol. 7, 28, 33; *Monumenta Ragusina*, vol. 1, 29–30, 36–38, II: 253; *Listine o odnošajih*, vol. 1, 202, vol. 3, 224–226; *Codex diplomaticus regni Dalmatiae, Croatiae et Slavoniae*. Vol. 9, 9; MAHNKEN, 143, 147, 203–204, 213, 240, 243–244, 264–265, 295, 299–300, 307, 329, 334, 367, 441–442.

<sup>63</sup> MEDINI, *Dubrovnik Gučetića*, 29; Bariša KREKIĆ, *Venetians in Dubrovnik and Ragusans in Venice as Real Estate Owners in the Fourteenth Century*, in: Bariša KREKIĆ, *Dubrovnik: a Mediterranean Urban Society 1300–1600*. Aldershot et al. 1997 (*Variorum*, XI), 1–48.

through marriages.<sup>64</sup> The connections were not limited by political borders.

There were periods of friction, conflicts and trade restrictions, particularly during the wars between Venice and Genoa, when the Ragusans, as King Louis' allies, found themselves among Venetian enemies. In addition, a rapid bloom of Ragusan maritime trade became a threat to Venetian monopoly. The Ragusans were thus forbidden to sail on Venetian ships as well as to trade with merchants in Venice. Venice increased the customs tax and often declared Ragusan trade as contraband. Ragusan merchants were particularly affected by the prohibition to trade with foreigners in Venice in 1368. On that occasion, otherwise tolerant Ragusans, returned the blow and revoked the privileges granted to Venetian merchants in Dubrovnik, uncurtailed until then. With King Louis' blessing and approval of their vindictive reaction, the Ragusans responded that in their actions they were guided by king's honour and the prosperity of their city, since the privileges of the Venetian merchants were harmful and of little benefit to Dubrovnik. Consequently, the relationship deteriorated to such an extent that the Ragusans had to abandon Venetian territories. As a result, they petitioned the king for intervention, as he seemed "*post Deum unica spes*". During the War of Chioggia, the Ragusans used Hungarian forces and the Genoese fleet to achieve their own interests: economic domination over Kotor, expansion of trade in the Levant and the spread of influence in the Adriatic. But in less than a week following the news of the Peace of Turin in September of 1381, they resumed commercial relations with Venice.<sup>65</sup> Conflicts continued to mark their relations, being particularly fierce during Venetian wars with the Kingdom of Naples and the Ottoman Empire. Yet both republics concluded that good relations were to the mutual benefit. Venice was not only a commercial but also the main intelligence centre, where the news from Europe and from the East were collected. On the other hand, Dubrovnik had an important role as a stopover for Venetian convoys on their way to the East, and as an intermediary in the trade with the Balkans. The passage of Venetian convoys

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<sup>64</sup> Zdenka JANEKOVIĆ RÖMER, Rod i grad. Dubrovačka obitelj od 13. do 15. stoljeća. Dubrovnik 1994, 73–74; IDEM, Okvir slobode, 72–73.

<sup>65</sup> LJUBIĆ, Ob odnošajih, 15; FORETIĆ, vol. 1, 243–244; Dušanka DINIĆ KNEŽEVIĆ, Dubrovnik i Ugarska u srednjem veku. Novi Sad 1986 (Monografije, 28), 31–34; TADIĆ, 255; Diplomatarium relationum Reipublicae Ragusinae cum regno Hungariae. Eds. Lajos THAL-LÓCZY/Josip ĐELČIĆ. Budapest 1887, 66, 69–71; Monumenta Ragusina, vol. 3, 111–112, 168.

contributed to the commercial and credit activities in the city, and Ragusan merchants strived for their own right to participate in *mudae*.<sup>66</sup>

In the centuries following the Visegrad Treaty, political relations between the Republics of Dubrovnik and Venice were subject to oscillation, but in the other fields they blossomed. The *Serenissima* never recognized Dubrovnik as a republic, but the Ragusan government, freed from political subordination, focused its attention on new diplomatic relations built on equal terms. Although the two republics were constantly on the verge of conflict, economic relations were always maintained. Under the rule of the Hungarian king, the Ragusans freed themselves from the trade and sailing restrictions imposed by Venice, creating favourable grounds for economic upswing and political independence, and at the same time kept good and useful relations with Venice.<sup>67</sup> The end of Venetian rule gave a fresh impetus to Ragusan shipping and maritime development, so that in the 1370s more extensive construction of larger vessels took place. Also, new opportunities for the Ragusan trade in the Levant emerged.<sup>68</sup> Pragmatic Ragusan politics towards Venice is described in the letter of the Ragusan government drafted on August 8, 1461, during the upheavals in the southern Adriatic and the growing Ottoman menace. Requesting protection of Ragusan ships en route to Apulia and help against the Turks, the Ragusan government gave the Venetian *Signoria* the satisfaction of acknowledging their lordship over the Adriatic Sea. The Venetians attached such grave importance to this letter that they registered it under the title *Exemplum quarundam litterarum communitatis Ragusii, quibus fatentur, culphum esse illustrissimi domini Venetiarum*.<sup>69</sup> In the course of the sixteenth century, the relations remained more or less the same. Venice did not dare to go directly against Dubrovnik, as it was protected by Spain, the Ottoman Empire and the Pope, but persisted in integrating it into its trade system, since it could not establish colonies on

<sup>66</sup> Bariša KREKIĆ, Le rôle de Dubrovnik dans la navigation des mudae vénitiennes au XIVe siècle, in: KREKIĆ, Dubrovnik, 247–254. 248–254.

<sup>67</sup> JANEKOVIĆ RÖMER, Višegradski ugovor, 123–136.

<sup>68</sup> Bariša KREKIĆ, La navigation ragusaine entre Venise et la Méditerranée orientale aux XIVe et XVe siècle, in: Economies méditerranéennes: équilibres et intercommunications, XIIIe–XIXe siècles. Ed. Loukia DROULIA. Athéna 1985 (Actes du I<sup>e</sup> Colloque International d'Histoire), 129–141.

<sup>69</sup> “[...] immo si nostrorum aliquem ad ipsius regni partes navigare contingat, capitur, dero-batur et male tractatur per triremes et biremes, que culphum dominationis vestre audacissime excursitant [...]” Listine o odnošajih između južnoga slavenstva i Mletačke republike. Vol. 10. Ed. Šime LJUBIĆ. Zagreb 1891 (Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium, 10), 178–179; FORETIĆ, vol. 1, 246, vol. 2, 39–42, 56–60, 79.

the European territory of the Ottoman Empire. The Ragusan government tried to avoid such control and achieve political and economic independence, in which it proved successful.<sup>70</sup> On that and many other occasions, the Ragusan government was mostly concerned with the maintenance of good relations with the Republic of Venice and all the benefits it implied. Remaining loyal to the Hungarian crown, Dubrovnik never discontinued its relations with Venice, which occasionally provoked tensions with the Hungarian court. The sea both republics were wedded to, gave them life, economic prosperity and unavoidable communication with each other. Alongside seafaring and trade, similar social relations and cultural atmosphere of that part of the Mediterranean contributed significantly to their closeness.

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<sup>70</sup> Toma POPOVIĆ, *Turska i Dubrovnik u XVI veku*. Beograd 1973, 383–391.