

SUPPLEMENTI

Visualizing Past in a Foreign Country:

Schiavoni/Illyrian
Confraternities and Colleges
in Early Modern Italy
in comparative perspective

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Visualizing Past in a Foreign Country: Schiavoni/Illyrian Confraternities and Colleges in Early Modern Italy in comparative perspective

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edited by Giuseppe Capriotti, Francesca Coltrinari,
Jasenka Gudelj

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Visualizing past in a foreign country: image(s) of Schiavoni/Illyrians in Early Modern Italy*

Jasenka Gudelj**

The Ragusan abbot and Vatican library guardian, Stjepan Gradić (1613-1683), acting as president of the Confraternity of St Jerome of Schiavoni/Illyrians in Rome, in 1660 wrote that rebuilding the block of houses next to the national church on Via Ripetta was necessary because «in tutta quella strada questo suo edificio sia il più infelice d'ogni altro, et espressivo di una

* This work has been fully supported by Croatian Science Foundation under the project number 2305 - Visualizing Nationhood: the Schiavoni/Illyrian Confraternities and Colleges in Italy and the Artistic Exchange with South East Europe (15th - 18th c.).

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I would like to thank all the participants in the Zagreb conference and in particular Ivana Prijatelj Pavičić, Igor Fisković, Sanja Cvetnić, Ljiljana Dobrovšak and Dubravka Mlinarić for their precious insights. I would also like to thank Giuseppe Bonaccorso and Anatole Upart for coming from far away to give their papers and share their knowledge with us. All members of the *Visualization Nationhood* project have been extremely stimulating fellow researchers: Anita Ruso, Tanja Trška, Danko Šourek, and Daniel Premerl organized the conference making it a smooth sail, while Francesca Coltrinari and Giuseppe Capriotti edited this volume in the most professional and structured way possible. The financial support for the conference and the publication of the special issue of «Il Capitale Culturale» has been provided by Croatian Science Foundation (HRZZ) and Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia.

certa barbarie, et ineleganza di costumi della quale molti, seben indebitamente, l'incolpano»¹.

A barbaric and inelegant the house or the *natio* itself? Gradić suggested that building a «casamento di qualche eleganza» would be an act of redemption of the very face of *natio* in front of foreign ambassadors, princes, cardinals, pilgrims, and others using Via di Ripetta – one of the streets leading from Piazza del Popolo, the ancient entrance to the Urbe from the north². The architecture and the works of art it contained were obviously considered the collective face of the national confraternity in question, and therefore, a synecdoche for the whole Early Modern *natio* in *Roma communis patria*, the city of foreigners³. Long before the idea of a nation-state had become predominant on a European scale, numerous foreign communities in Early Modern Rome and other cosmopolitan centers of the peninsula, typically organized in confraternities maintaining a chapel or a church, became representative institutions of their “nations”⁴.

The image(s) of this pre-modern *natio*, as envisioned through their historical collectives, i.e. confraternities and colleges for students that existed throughout Early Modern Italy, was examined at an interdisciplinary conference organized by the Croatian Science Foundation research project *Visualizing Nationhood: the Schiavoni/Illyrian Confraternities and Colleges in Italy and the Artistic Exchange with South East Europe (15th - 18th c.)* at Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, Croatia, between 30th and 31st May 2017. It explored both visual and linguistic constructs produced or commissioned by members of Schiavoni/Illyrian institutions, questioning intentions and mechanisms behind their creation, as well as the reverberation of their meaning in different contexts. These phenomena were also regarded in a comparative perspective of similar expressions found in proto-national institutions of other foreign communities on the Apennine peninsula in the same period. The conference brought together scholars working in the fields of art history, history, visual, literary and material culture studies, thus broadening the existing understanding of Schiavoni/Illyrian proto-national identity.

1. *Mapping the Schiavoni/Illyrians/Croatians in Early Modern Italy: towards an image?*

Who were members of the group to whom Gradić suggested a “face-lifting”? They were ethnic Slavs originating from territories roughly corresponding with

¹ Gudelj 2016a, pp. 195, 224.

² *Ibidem*.

³ Salerno 1968, Fosi 2008, Koller, Kubersky 2015.

⁴ Koller, Kubersky 2015.

contemporary Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia, and Montenegro, who moved to Italy for various reasons; many were escaping wars, epidemics and poverty but some were merchants and diplomatic representatives, clergy, intellectuals or artists. These migrations towards what was considered *Italia Felix* have been studied extensively, given the scale and the persistence of the phenomenon from the Middle Ages up to the present, with centuries of Ottoman expansion in the Balkans marking the peak of the exodus⁵.

Between 15th and 16th century, the area of origin of these immigrants underwent important political changes that included the consolidation of the Venetian rule in coastal Istria, Dalmatia and Albania (1409-1420), the gradual retrenchment of territories of the Croatian-Hungarian crown (which was included in the Habsburg crown lands in 1527), and the extinction of the Bosnian kingdom in 1463 as the Ottomans advanced westwards, with minuscule Republic of Ragusa (Dubrovnik) being the only stable entity throughout the said period⁶. These political changes had an obvious impact on economic, social and religious life in the region, whose demographic situation was already weakened by repeating plague epidemics, also provoking further abandonment.

The reformulation of the regional political divisions represented both different points of departure and different treatment of immigrants in various Italian states: for example, Dalmatians from the *Stato da Mar* in Venice were citizens of the *Serenissima*, while in the Papal state their condition was that of foreign subjects. Moreover, the merchant and diplomatic networks developed by Dubrovnik merchants and nobles would have a different standing in the host society than poor immigrants from the Eastern Adriatic, although they spoke the same language and were often members of the same confraternity⁷. The overlapping of these two social networks needs further assessment, but one of the case studies in this volume, the Genoese chapel of Dubrovnik merchants in Santa Maria di Castello studied by Anita Ruso, is a telling example in terms of visual arts.

As was the case with immigrants all over Europe, in order to meet their social and religious needs, Schiavoni/Illyrians organized themselves: the first known confraternities based on the common origin, language and faith are mentioned in Italy from the mid-fifteenth century, the most important ones existing in Venice and Rome, but also in Udine and throughout Marche, Apulia, Abruzzo, and Molise⁸. Moreover, the spiritual attraction of Italian sanctuaries drew pilgrims, while universities and monastic schools attracted students, thus forming a system of short-term mobility between the two shores of Adriatic and beyond,

⁵ Dinić Knežević 1973, Čoralić 1997, Anselmi 1998, Gestrin 1998a and 1998b, Čoralić 2001 and 2003, *Hrvati u Italiji* 2014-2015, p. 368 and the articles in the present volume.

⁶ Čoralić 2003, pp. 184-186, Ivetic 2014 with bibliography.

⁷ On Ragusan diplomacy see Anita Ruso's article in the present volume.

⁸ For a survey of Early Modern Schiavoni/Illyrian institutions in Italy, see Čoralić 1997, Perić 2011, Gudelj 2016b, pp. 5-6.

heavily dependent on “national” colleges and hospices: colleges for formation of Slavic priests were founded in Bologna and Loreto/Fermo in the 16th century, the hospices for pilgrims were maintained by Schiavoni/Illyrian confraternities in Rome and Loreto⁹. Therefore, Schiavoni/Illyrians were present with their rather visible community centers in the territories of the two maritime republics, Venice and Genua, and in the Papal States: in Rome, throughout Marche region and in the university city of Bologna.

Based on the “national” key, such institutions inevitably formulated their identity on their “otherness” in respect to the host society and other groups of foreign origin¹⁰. In the case of Slavic immigrants from South East Europe in important urban centers like Rome, Venice, and Bologna, the question of self-definition inspired the geo-historical research and linguistic inquiries¹¹, but also the formulation of certain narratives constructing the prominence of the nation through deeds of great men and national saints and their relics, and, ultimately, of the national institutions themselves. A particularly fortunate narrative construct for a notoriously ethnically and politically divided area from which the members of these institutions originated, was the Illyrian discourse beautifully analyzed by Zrinka Blažević using, among others, the writings of the early 17th century members of the Roman Illyrian confraternity Ivan Tomko Mrnavić and Jeronim Paštrić¹². Recent interdisciplinary conference organized in Zagreb by Trpimir Vedriš and Luka Špoljarić further questioned the issue of national visions and ethnic loyalties formulated both in the Historical Croatian lands and among the Schiavoni immigrants in various parts of Europe in the Renaissance¹³.

The visual arts, as we have seen from abbot Gradić’s words, played an important part in the fashioning of the identity of the immigrants that chose to live in the artistically most influential region during the Early Modern period. In order to understand the mechanisms of commissions and the politics of the image(s) of the *natio* carefully constructed by Schiavoni/Illyrians collectives across the Apennine peninsula, it was important to compare and contrast different phenomena: a series of case-studies examined by researchers affiliated with the project *Visualizing Nationhood: the Schiavoni/Illyrian Confraternities and Colleges in Italy and the Artistic Exchange with South East Europe (15th - 18th c.)* and other invited

⁹ A short-lived college also existed at Santo Stefano Rotondo (Gargano) between 1636 and 1647, Perić 2011, p. 152.

¹⁰ See Keller, Kubersky 2015.

¹¹ For example, a large map of Illyrian provinces has been drawn in 1660 by Pier Andrea Bufalini as visualization of the sentence of Sacra Rota of the right to use Roman institutions maintained by confraternity of St Jerome. The map became one of the maps of the Illyricum published in the historical study by another member of the confraternity, Ivan Lučić *De Regno Dalmatiae et Croatiae libri sex* (Amsterdam 1666), encountering a considerable fortuna critica, see Gudelj 2016a, pp. 190-191, Mlinarić *et al.* 2012. On the study and the use of the Croatian language in papal universities see Krasić 2009.

¹² Blažević 2008.

¹³ Conference *National Ideas and Ethnic Loyalties in Renaissance Croatia*, Colloquia Mediaevalia Croatica III, Zagreb, 24th February 2017.

scholars at the conference *Visualizing past in the foreign country* thus represent a platform to discuss the Schiavoni strategies of differentiation from the Other in various environments.

The approach owes much to the methodology used by Susanne Kubersky and other members of the *Roma communis patria* research project of the Bibliotheca Hertziana Max-Planck-Institut, and depends on the results of inquiries by Lovorka Čoralić and Jadranka Neralić for the Schiavoni/Illyrian confraternities in Italy¹⁴. The possibility of further comparison between different national groups in Italy and their use of the urban soil is provided in articles by Antal Molnar, Claudia Conforti, Federico Bellini, Donatella Calabi and Giuseppe Bonaccorso¹⁵. Moreover, significant insights for the relationship between confraternities and visual arts are delivered by Barbara Wisch and Diane Cole Ahl, an investigation broadened by Diana Bullen Presciutti¹⁶, and in the “Illyrian” lands, by Egidio Ivetic, Ana Lavrič, and Ivana Prijatelj Pavičić, just to mention a few¹⁷.

The comparative research between different Schiavoni/Illyrians’ built hubs in Early modern Italy has revealed some more nuanced common features and interesting parallels. Namely, exploration of the architecture of their churches and other buildings has brought to light the property systems and esthetic and moral values leading their commissioners. Particularly productive has been the investigation into the existence of a national pantheon of saints and heroes, analogous to explorations by Zrinka Blažević. Moreover, a possible new light might be shed on the artists called Schiavoni, a 19th century constructs deeply embedded into Croatian art history, here re-proposed within the paradigm of its importance for the national character, confraternities and artistic and intellectual exchange.

2. The face of the nation: Schiavoni/Illyrian institutions in Italy and their architecture

Schiavoni/Illyrian institutions in important urban centers of Early Modern Italy, such as Rome, Venice, Bologna and Ancona, invested in churches and surrounding complexes, thus creating the façades representative of the nation in question. A first assessment is now possible thanks to the comparative research of the investments by Schiavoni institutions across Italy.

Studies by Tanja Trška established the chronology of the site of Scuola piccola di San Giorgio e Trifone in Venice, with its uneasy co-habitation with scuola di

¹⁴ Čoralić 1997, 2001 and 2003; Neralić 2017.

¹⁵ Bonaccorso 1997; Calabi, Lanaro 1997; Bonaccorso 1998; Bottin, Calabi 1999; Bellini 2007; Conforti, Sanchez de Madariaga 2007; Molnár *et al.* 2017.

¹⁶ Wisch *et al.* 2000; Bullen Presciutti 2017.

¹⁷ Prijatelj Pavičić 1997 with bibliography; Ivetic 2015, Lavrič 2014, 2016 and 2017.

San Giovanni al Tempio and the new facade built by Giovanni de Zon, also unveiling some previously unpublished drawings¹⁸. Analogous research has been conducted by Danko Šourek for Collegio Illirico Ungarico in Bologna, where Bolognese architect Giovanni Battista Torri has been firmly accredited with the project of the complex, its typology close to Spanish and other national colleges in the university city¹⁹. Giuseppe Capriotti conducted research on the previously unpublished church of St Blasius in Ancona, finding the name of the architect, Giovan Battista Urbini, and establishing the prominence of a confraternity church within its urban context²⁰.

The Schiavoni institutions in Rome were part of the larger system of national churches: here Giuseppe Bonaccorso investigates those of subjects of Serenissima, thus giving the urban and political context for San Girolamo degli Schiavoni at Ripetta, with an interesting literary investigation into possible places of Ragusan visitors to Rome. My own research on Roman community established the importance of the papal interventions for the transformations of the complex of St Jerome at Ripetta, from its compact block containing the single-naved church, hospital, and houses for rent to still-existing church, built between 1586 and 1591 according to Martino Longhi the Elder's designs, and, finally with now lost «casamento di qualche eleganza» wanted by abbot Gradić and designed by Pier Andrea Bufalini²¹. Finally, in the 18th century, Schiavoni invested in rental-apartment blocks planned by Nicola Michetti defined in the confraternity documents as «casamenti per le persone oneste»²².

Therefore, all the investments were made to maximize the functionality of the complexes, using local architects, materials, and typology – but they were also important investments into visibility of the natio, its faces without typical characteristic of the homeland, but clean, elegant, decent: all the characteristic of a good citizen, not an unwanted immigrant or unstructured wandering student.

3. *The National Pantheon: Saints and Heroes*

If architecture commissioned by Schiavoni institutions in Italy tried to construct the image of decent, not an opulence-seeking group, paintings that embellished these architectures introduce eloquent iconographical elements of saints and relics in national key, as well as the great men of the nation, often depicting Illyrians as Catholic Heroes of *antemurales christianitatis*.

Pioneering studies of this matter by Daniel Premerl on the early 18th century

¹⁸ Trška in print.

¹⁹ Šourek in print.

²⁰ Capriotti in print.

²¹ Gudelj 2015, 2016a and 2016b.

²² Curcio 1989.

frescoes of the refectory of Collegio Illirico-ungarico in Bologna are well known: his research of Bolognese images of Croatian past has set a methodological path for the study of Illyrian political iconography, especially for the narratives on the Croatian-Hungarian kingdom and history of Zagreb dioceses. Danko Šourek and Daniel Premerl in the present volume further their investigation in this direction, by examining printed images of Croatian soldier and St Ladislav produced in circles of Bolognese Illyrian college, accentuating the heroic nature of the nation in question but also establishing this Illyrian institution as a hub of circulation of visual models between Central Europe and Central Italy²³.

A military and anti-Ottoman subtext is also recognized by Ana Marinković in her analysis of the relics and hagiographic horizon of Scuola piccola di San Giorgio e Trifone, the gathering place of Dalmatians (and some Ragusans) in Venice, given their involvement in the maritime professions. This collective devotional spirit is somehow given a more personal touch in the *sala superiore* of the school, as arises from Tanja Trška's examination of the paintings representing important scenes from the lives of scuola holy protectors, accompanied by portraits, coats of arms and views of the eastern Adriatic cities, all painted by Venetian (or adopted Venetian, but not Schiavoni) painters.

The civic cults, present as noted already in the name of the Venetian confraternity and indicating that most of its members came from Kotor and Bar in Boka kotorska bay, are also used by Francesca Coltrinari and Giuseppe Capriotti as a key identifier of Schiavoni confraternities in the Marche, enabling them to speculate on the provenance of confraternity's members²⁴, with St Blaise indicating Dubrovnik and St George the town of Bar.

Particularly interesting in this regard is Capriotti's and Anita Ruso's inquiry into the civic cult iconography of St Blaise as Ragusan patron saint outside Dubrovnik, in Ancona and Genua: translated to Italy, the civic cult uses more universal message, understandable both by its Ragusan expatriate commissioners but also by local users of the sacred spaces. Capriotti also suggests that the iconography of Split protector St Doimus has possibly influenced the 15th century representation of St Blaise in Ancona, thus confirming the iconographical overlapping of Eastern Adriatic civic cults within probably mixed confraternity in the most important Adriatic port city of the Papal States.

Nevertheless, the central and most comprehensive regional cult is St Jerome, whose patronage might indicate an even more mixed provenance of members of the immigrant Schiavoni/Illyrian confraternity bearing his name: his cult as national saint is here analyzed by Ines Ivić, who argues that for Schiavoni, the Church Father was a figure legitimizing their origin, language, and alphabet. The protagonist of the Carpaccio's cycle and important yet unofficial cult for Schiavoni confraternity in Venice, Jerome is most notably the patron saint of

²³ Also Šourek 2017.

²⁴ Capriotti 2016a and 2016b, Coltrinari 2016.

the Roman Schiavoni/Illyrian confraternity, the post-Tridentine frescoes in their church showing him winning the discussions with the infidel and the orthodox²⁵. The same visual cycles, executed by Giovanni Guerra and his team of so-called Sistine painters is also featuring Split civic protectors Rainerius and Doimus, but also a pair of Dalmatian popes, St John and St Gaius, likewise present in 18th century Bologna frescoes analyzed previously by Daniel Premerl²⁶.

An interesting pair of interconfessional saints, Cyril and Methodius, suggest an apostolic role in the Slavic lands longed for by the late 16th-century community at Ripetta²⁷, a role also practiced by Ruthenian monks linked to the Roman church of St Sergius and Bacchus, here explored by Anatole Upart. The similarity among Slavonic languages made every Slavic priest a potential missionary, given the political and religious situation in the Eastern Europe.

The national pantheon should also contain a rather specific cult that is Santa Casa of Loreto, the flying architecture connecting the two coasts of Adriatic in a particularly strong manner. Studies by Ivana Prijatelj Pavičić, Francesca Coltrinari and Danko Šourek have shown how this cult was also important for oscillation of the image of the Schiavoni as “bad” people from whom the holy house has escaped towards *Italia Felix*, only to be redefined as saviors of Christianity and courageous warriors, and is one of the most important Marian cults of the Eastern Adriatic coast²⁸.

The presence of relics and different cults, as many of the articles in this volume show, mirror the war for the national prestige, and in some cases, reach the importance of a political program.

4. *A new paradigm for Schiavoni?: Artist&Intellectuals and circulation of (artistic) knowledge*

Books, language, translation, and alphabet were important part of the life of Schiavoni communities in Italy: Roman confraternity financed the publication of translations of the holy scripts, while the Franciscan friar Matija Divković, after printing his catechism in Croatian, entrusted the Venetian confraternity with Illyrian letters for printing books in 1616, reminding us of importance of Venice as printing center. The Holy Mass in “Illyrian” was also an important part of the life of both confraternities and their spaces: the Venetian confraternity was granted the permission to serve mass in “lingua Illirica” shortly after its foundation, while the knowledge of the language was a condition for becoming

²⁵ Gudelj, Trška in print; Gudelj 2015.

²⁶ Premerl 2014, pp. 65-72.

²⁷ Gudelj 2015.

²⁸ Prijatelj Pavičić 1994 and 1998, pp. 64-78; Coltrinari 2016 and 2017; Šourek in print b. On the Slavic Orthodox participation in the Loretan cult see Živković 2017.

the canon in Roman church of St Jerome, as the only national chapter in Rome was established in 1589. Therefore, it is not surprising that their sites feature images of intellectual effort deeply embedded in Catholic culture they so proudly defended: Carpaccio's famous St Augustine in his study in Venice, and St Thomas Aquinas's vision in his study in the Roman church do suggest construction of an intellectual image for the *natio*.

In this context, the article by Neven Jovanović in the present volume, who proposes the study of Schiavoni intellectuals who were also members of Roman confraternity and were writing in Latin (thus becoming linguistically almost as universal as images) does provide an interesting and potentially productive historical framework for literary historians. Reflecting the linguistic turn in historical studies, in her analysis of Illyrian ideogeme, Zrinka Blažević focused on textual material, particularly writings by the members of Roman Illyrian confraternity. Evidently, words, painting, architecture were part of the same intellectual efforts on constructing a decent, Catholic, heroic identity of the Schiavoni/Illyrians in Rome, but also in other confraternities and colleges throughout Early Modern Italy.

Some members of these confraternities were also visual artists: as Laris Borić has shown in his example of Ivan Gapić from the island of Cres, whose activity and circle of important Roman patrons he reconstructs for the first time. In the second part of the 16th century, among active members of the Roman confraternity, there were Gapić, engraver Natale Bonifacio, and sculptor Nikola Lazanić and they all did some work for the confraternity, albeit almost all lost. It is therefore only to be expected, as Francesca Coltrinari proposes, that numerous Schiavoni artists, sculptors, *lapicide* and *tagliapietre*, who also circulated the Eastern Adriatic stone, were members of different "national" brotherhoods in the Marche²⁹. The circulation of artists between the shores of Adriatic and beyond evidently also happened through the social network provided by the national institution, while the same hub has also been used for exportation of Italian models and projects, the example of Dubrovnik cathedral whose ready-made design was sent overseas from Roman confraternity speaking volumes in this regard³⁰.

Yet, no confraternity which would exclusively gather builders or visual artists from Schiavonia existed: there is no evidence that the national group in question has ever created an occupational-national brotherhood, and the visual artists have not appeared in the confraternity membership records in the 17th and 18th centuries. As already noted, all architectural projects for Schiavoni in Italy have been designed by Italian architects and virtually all the existing visual artworks are by Italian artists: the construction of the national image has been formulated through local commissions and visual language, and the stylistic analysis of the

²⁹ Coltrinari 2017 and her article in this volume.

³⁰ Gudelj 2016a. Also on Dubrovnik cathedral now see *The Cathedral of the Assumption of the Virgin in Dubrovnik* (2016).

surviving work of those artists that were confirmed members of the Schiavoni confraternity reveal personalities that blended into host visual culture.

In this regard, it is interesting to compare the characterization of the so-called Schiavoni artists in the sources and art-historical historiography. The embedding of Schiavoni artists into Croatian national art-historiography is generally attributed to 19th century Croatian cultural historian Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski, who included in his *Slovník umjetnikah jugoslavenskih* (Dictionary of Yugoslavian artist, Zagreb 1858) also artists whose Eastern Adriatic origin is rather obscure (like Andrea Meldola) in order to create more cultural heroes for his national political agenda³¹. But much before that, an interesting investigation by Ivana Prijatelj Pavičić of the 16th and 17th century sources on the origin and character of some of the most prominent Kukuljević's Schiavoni (Giulio Clavio, Andrea Meldola, and Niccolo dell'Arca) has revealed typical identity stereotypes of barbaric and choleric character attributed to the artists of known or assumed East Adriatic origin³²: although no known records connect these particular individuals with Schiavoni/Illyrian confraternities existing in Italy, the notion of barbaric, expressed by abbot Gradić in his letter to the confraternity regarding the façade-face of the nation in 1660, returns and becomes more clear in understanding the strategies of confraternities and colleges in visual and textual terms analyzed at the conference *Visualizing past in the foreign country*. Hopefully, the discussion of these strategies has only been tackled by the articles in the present volume.

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Section I

Schiavoni/Illyrians and the Republics of
Venice and Genua

Saints' Relics in Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni: An Anti-Ottoman Pantheon*

Ana Marinković**

Abstract

The intensified military campaigns against the Ottomans in the second half of the fifteenth century palpably influenced the cult of saints venerated in Scuola di S. Giorgio e Trifone in Venice (also degli Schiavoni), both by assimilating new saints, as well as strengthening the existing cults through indulgences and relic acquisitions. The initial pair of patron saints – St George and St Tryphon, the city patrons of Bar and Kotor – delineated the geographical area where the majority of the initial confraternity members originated from, that is, Venetian Albania. The inclusion of St Jerome, the patron of Dalmatia, to the confraternal pantheon by Cardinal Bessarion's indulgence issued in 1464, in addition

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to rounding up the holy patronage to all the Eastern Adriatic Venetian dependencies, also marked the beginning of a strong anti-Ottoman motivation in the Scuola's hagiographic horizon. The triple endowment of the Scuola in 1502 – relic acquisition, granting of an indulgence, and commission of Carpaccio's monumental cycle – continued to work on the same line, and added to the practical aspect of spiritual support to the members of Venetian troops coming from the Eastern Adriatic. However, the saints whose relics are today kept in the altar of the lower hall, including the patron saint of the Republic of Dubrovnik, point to an even wider devotional agenda, possibly arranged after the Battle of Lepanto, as the comparative analysis of the reliquaries show.

Le campagne militari contro gli Ottomani intensificatesi nella seconda metà del XV secolo influenzarono palesemente il culto dei santi venerati nella Scuola di S. Giorgio degli Schiavoni, sia attraverso l'assimilazione di nuovi santi, sia tramite il rafforzamento del culto già esistente verso le indulgenze e l'impulso all'acquisizione di reliquie. La prima coppia di santi patroni – San Giorgio e San Trifone, patroni della città di Bar e Cattaro – delimitano l'area geografica da cui proviene la maggior parte dei membri della confraternita, cioè l'Albania veneta. L'inclusione nell'indulgenza concessa dal cardinal Bessarione nel 1464 di San Girolamo, protettore della Dalmazia, oltre a estendere il patronato del santo a tutte le dipendenze veneziane dell'Adriatico orientale, segnò anche l'ingresso di una forte spinta anti-ottomana nell'orizzonte agiografico della Scuola. La triplice dotazione della Scuola nel 1502 – l'acquisizione della reliquia, la concessione dell'indulgenza e la commissione del ciclo monumentale di Carpaccio – si pose sulla stessa linea, concorrendo al sostegno spirituale verso i membri delle truppe veneziane che provenivano dall'est Adriatico. I santi le cui reliquie sono oggi conservate nell'altare della sala inferiore, tra cui il santo patrono della Repubblica di Dubrovnik, indicano tuttavia un'agenda devozionale ancora più ampia, forse organizzata dopo la battaglia di Lepanto, come mostra l'analisi comparativa dei reliquiari.

The saints venerated in Scuola di S. Giorgio e Trifone (also degli Schiavoni) was a dynamic group assimilating new members as the Ottoman threat advanced along the Eastern Adriatic in the later fifteenth and the early sixteenth century. The anti-Ottoman subtext in devotion to the confraternal patron saints may be observed in the iconography of Carpaccio's fresco cycle today situated in the lower hall of the Scuola, but other means of strengthening the cults (such as papal indulgences and acquiring new relics) played a considerably more visible role in the military agenda of encouraging and rewarding the soldiers coming from the other side of the Adriatic. Moreover, the increasingly even geographical distribution of the Eastern-Adriatic saintly protectors' provenance, as well as the direct impetus for their veneration coming from the major military events in the Eastern-Mediterranean campaigns, indicate the decisive role of the anti-Ottoman context to the formation of the Scuola's devotional horizon.

The importance of saints' cults as a reflection of the social and political backdrop of the Scuola's activities was tangible from its very outset. Namely, the supplication by the brethren to the Council of Ten of 19 May 1451, as well as the immediate Council's decision to confirm the foundation of the new confraternity, expressly refer to two saintly protectors, St George and

St Tryphon¹. The same couple of heavenly protectors appears in the opening chapters of the *mariegola* composed three years later, where the brethren oblige themselves to observe the feast days of their two patrons². The choice of patron saints was related to the provenance of the confraternity's members, who, according to the testamentary legations to the Scuola, in major part (47%) came from the cities of Kotor and Bar in Venetian Albania (today the coast of Montenegro)³. It is important to stress that, whereas the role of St Tryphon as the patron saint of Kotor has largely been recognized in the historiography on the Scuola, the other Scuola's patron, St George, was only sporadically mentioned in the context of his patronage of Bar⁴. This is probably due to the fact that Bar fell to the Ottomans in 1571, and thus, unlike St Tryphon, St George was not present in the subsequent imagery of the Scuola as the civic patron⁵. Nevertheless, the two initial patron saints are clearly localizing the hagiographical horizon of the beginnings of the Scuola in the area of so-called Venetian Albania.

However, as the military activities on the Eastern Adriatic as well as in the Eastern Mediterranean intensified, the 'Christianizing' or 'anti-infidel' potential of these cults soon came to the fore and was used in a context related to the

¹ «Che possa fare una schuola, secondo la condicione dele altre schuole pizole, de questa nostra gloriosa citade, la qual i diti supplicanti intende de fare ad honer de miser san Zorzi, et miser san Trifon, nella chiezia de miser san Zane del tempio» (19 May 1451); Archivio di Stato di Venezia (henceforth ASV), *Consiglio dei Dieci*, Delib. Miste XIV, 47v.

² «De honorar le nostre feste, cioue' el giorno de misier san Zorzi, et il giorno de Misier san Trifon» (26 Jan 1454); ASV, *Provveditori di comun*, Registri, I serie (A-Z), pezzo P. *Matricola* (henceforth *Matricola*), cap. 22, 583v; published in *Il primo statuto* 1975, pp. 5-6. The confraternity's *mariegola*, composed and approved by the Venetian authorities in the year 1454 and regularly updated until the end of the 17th century, together with the catastic and the book of inventories represents the main source for any investigation on the Scuola's history. The most encompassing study on the Scuola remains Perocco 1964 (1975), together with the series of articles by various authors published in the journal «Scuola Dalmata dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone» from the 1960s onwards. More recently, a number of articles by Lovorka Čoralić dealing with various segments of the confraternity's history have been summed up in Čoralić 2001 and 2003.

³ Čoralić 2001, p. 460, fig. 40. Thirty-four percent of the testaments were composed by immigrants from Dalmatia, whereas the remainder was divided between the provenants from *Schiavonia*, Croatia and the Republic of Dubrovnik. The statistics is based on the data from the period of the 14th to 18th century, so it is important to underline that in the earlier part of the analysed period there were more members from Boka and Bar, whereas later on the proportion of Dalmatians grew, which indicates a larger initial participation of the former than the average for the whole period.

⁴ To my knowledge, Čoralić is the only author who relates the choice of St George to the high initial participation of the confraternity's members from Bar; Čoralić 2006, pp. 124-125. In the forthcoming paper I am analysing the motives of the choice of the confraternity's patron saints (notably St Jerome), both with regards to the provenance of its members as well as to the wider military strategies of the Papal State and the Venetian Republic; Marinković 2018.

⁵ However, already the names of the Eastern-Adriatic galleys participating in the Battle of Lepanto are indicative of this development. Namely, the galley from Kotor was named after St Tryphon, the galley from Hvar after St Jerome, and the galley from Šibenik after St George, the patron of Šibenik's cathedral; Kužić 2011, pp. 123-124.

threat posed both to the cities of the Eastern Adriatic and to the Christian world in general. The anti-Ottoman undertow of the Scuola's iconography should not come as surprise, seen not only the provenance but also the occupation of the confraternity's members. Namely, the brethren of the Scuola were dominantly maritime-oriented (32%), whereas a large part of the artisans, as the second most represented occupation (30%), plausibly also participated in the shipbuilding and maintenance industry⁶. The maritime orientation of the Venetian Schiavoni is expressly mentioned in the 1451 supplication to the Council, stating that the Schiavoni frequently joined the Venetian fleet (*nelle armade nostre*)⁷. In the answer to this request, the Council of Ten referred to the members of the Scuola as *marinari schiavoni*⁸. The maritime orientation of the Scuola undoubtedly represented the key interest for the Venetian Republic and its Christian allies in the times of putting together the naval fleet for fighting the Ottoman force on the Mediterranean, as shall be seen from their treatment of the Scuola's saintly protectors' cults.

The cults venerated in the Scuola, that is, the official feasts of its holy patrons were several times granted a papal indulgence for visiting the Scuola's altar on the patrons' feast days, the first among them being the 1464 indulgence by Cardinal Bessarion⁹. Bessarion's indulgence, more importantly, introduced a new cult to the confraternal pantheon – that of St Jerome, the patron saint of Dalmatia¹⁰. I have discussed elsewhere the anti-Ottoman context of the widening of the geographical area of saintly protection under the auspices of the Scuola, but let it suffice here to address the actual military context of the three indulgences issued to the Scuola¹¹. Namely, the first indulgence was granted only months after the fall of Bosnia, the key event which opened the way to the Ottoman troops to Central Dalmatia, and also amidst Bessarion's manyfold efforts in the promotion of crusade. Although St Jerome was never officially included in the Scuola's name, he regularly continued to appear both in the texts related to the confraternity's devotional practices and in its iconography, most frequently featuring the three saints together.

The second indulgence, issued to the Scuola in 1481 by Pope Sixtus IV, was even more directly related to the anti-Ottoman agenda. The indulgence was

⁶ Čoralić 2001, p. 461, fig. 41.

⁷ «Alguni Schiavoni habitadori in Venexia, quali per divina inspiratione mossi da grandissima pieta et compassione, perche molte et infissnite volte achade molti et assai poveri dela dita nazione nelle armade nostre esser feridi a morte e vegnir in questa nostra terra, ocorendo el piu dele volte lor manchar da necessitade per non haver subsidio ni sostegno di persona alguna» (19 May 1451); ASV, *Consiglio dei Dieci*, 47v.

⁸ Copied in the third chapter of the *mariegola*, *Matricola*, cap. 3, 580r.

⁹ On the indulgences see Vidoli Ratti, Giadrossi 1992, and the respective studies by Čoralić.

¹⁰ «In ecclesia Sancti Georgii de sclavonibus Venetiis [...] qui ecclesiam in qua dicta Societas congregabitur in festis sancti Georgii, Corporis Christi, sancti Hieronymi, sancti Triffonis, et in prima Dominica post Ascensionem Domini devote visitaverint (10 Feb 1464)»; Vallery 1973, p. 15; Čoralić 1998a, p. 158.

¹¹ Marinković 2018.

expressly granted as a reward for participation in the military expedition to Rhodes the previous year, that is, to *every person that went to the expedition against the Turks*¹². Although the text of the indulgence does not name particular cults, the continuous veneration of St Jerome is attested by other contemporary documents, as well as by inclusion of his feast in the following indulgences.

The third indulgence, granted in 1502 by the papal legate Angelo Leonini acting on behalf of Pope Alexander VI, mentions again the feast of St Jerome among the main feast days of the confraternity, but also the renovation of the confraternity's building¹³. This renovation is undoubtedly related to the most important among the artistic commissions for the Scuola, the cycle of paintings by Vittore Carpaccio executed in 1502 to 1507. Both the commission of this lavish cycle, as well as the acquisition of the indulgence, should be directly related to possibly the most solemn event in the Scuola's history, which took place in the same year, that is, the translation of the relic of St George. The relic was donated to the Scuola by the Venetian Admiral Polo Valaresso, who obtained it from the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, allegedly on the patriarch's deathbed, as suggested in a description preserved in the *mariegola*¹⁴. Although

¹² «Pro expeditione contra perfidos Turchos, Christiani nominis hostes in deffensionis insule Rhodi et fidei Catolice [...] Omnes illas personas, que aliquid elargite, ibant sanctam contra Turchos expeditionem» (27 Sept 1481); Ćoralic 1998a, pp. 117-118.

¹³ «Qui altare prefactum sancti Georgii situm in dicta scola Sclavonorum in Sancti Georgii, Sancti Ioannis Baptiste, Sancti Triphonis et Sancti Hieronymi festivitibus [...] visitaverint»; «[...] cupientes ut Scola sive Confraternitas Sancti Georgii Sclavonorum [...] nec non altare in ipsa Confraternitate sive Scola sub vocabulo Sancti Georgii constituto et sito in suis structuris et edificiiis debite reparentur conserventur et manuteantur» (22 June 1502); Ćoralic 2000, p. 27. The feast of St John the Baptist was included because of the ties with the priorate and the church of S. Giovanni del Tempio (dei Furlani) as one of the original titulars of the confraternity's building. The fourth indulgence was granted by Pope Urban VIII in 1640 and mentions again the feasts of each of the three saints, with addition of St Nicholas and St Mark; Ćoralic 2015, pp. 84-85.

¹⁴ «Vegnando a' morte el Patriarca de Gierusalemme in Coron uomo de buona vita, e fama, ed era vecchissimo, ed al ponto della sua morte manifesto' havere appresso de lui una reliqua(!) de san Zorzi, et attrovandosi el Magnifico Misier Polo Valaresso fu' de Misier Gabriel della contrada di Sant' Angelo essere in detta terra di Coron delibero' sua Magnificencia de haver e detta reliqua et portarla a' Venetia, et ne ha' fatto un presente alla scuola delli Schiavoni sotto il titolo, et nome de misier san Zorzi, et havuta la licentia dalli Reverendissimi Monsignori el legato del Papa, et el Patriarca de Venetia de portar la detta reliqua alla scuola, onde li fradelli della scuola con gran devotion accettarono con assai Preti, trombe, e Piphari insieme con il magnifico Misier Polo a' levar la reliqua alla giesia de Santo Anzolo, e portarla alla scuola sopradetta, et fu' presentata sopra l' altar di san Zorzi con grandissima devotion, e per segno da carita' li sopradetti fratelli hanno accettato el sopradito Misier Polo in la scuola con li suoi primogeniti, et etiam hanno accettato Misier Nicolo suo fratello, et Misier Luca, et Misier Vettor Valaresso fu' de Misier Zeronimo della detta contrada de Sant'Anzolo, ed essi fradelli della scuola vogliono, che li detti gentiluomeni siano partecipi de tutti li beni saranno fatti per la detta scuola, e portare alla loro casa el suo pan, e candella, et loro accettar la elemosina, che per li stessi gentilhuomeni sara dana, intendando, che le candele de misier Polo debbano essere maggiori dell'altre, et etiam detti fradelli, cioue' quelli, che si ritrovano di tempo in tempo alla banca s'obligano d'andar ad accompagnar li corpi morti alla sepoltura delli detti gentiluomini, che Iddio li doni vita lunga, et alla fine il Paradiso e cosi ancora a' tutti noi» (24 April 1502); ASV, *Matricola*, cap. 66, 595v-596r; published in Perocco 1964, pp. 215-216, and Giadrossi 1984, pp. 11-12.

it was suggested that the patriarch in question should be identified with Cristoforo Garatoni who held this office in the mid-fifteenth century, it seems more plausible that it was Cardinal Giovanni Antonio da Sangiorgio, who carried the title of the patriarch in the period between 1500 and 1503, and was promoted to the cardinalate by Pope Alexander VI¹⁵. The close connection of the relic owner to the Pope who issued the indulgence could explain the coordinated action of the relic translation and the issuing of the indulgence.

Although it does not mention the military merits of the members of the Scuola degli Schiavoni, there are certain elements of the account sufficient to relate the gift to the anti-Ottoman campaign. Firstly, the very status of the donors, the Admiral of the Venetian fleet in the Peloponnese (the forts of Coron and Modon) and the titular Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, residing in the city of Coron, indicate a high-level donation, related to the elite military ambience of the Eastern Mediterranean anti-Ottoman efforts. Moreover, the translation was approved by the papal legate Angelo Leonini – the same who issued the indulgence on behalf of the pope – as well as Venetian Patriarch Tommaso Donà. The recent unfortunate loss of the cities of Coron and Modon – namely, both in 1500 fell to Sultan Bayezid II – is delineating the backdrop of desperate measures for troops' exhortation. Seen that the so-called Second Ottoman-Venetian War ended only in 1503, the gift to the confraternity whose members made an important part of the Venetian fleet might be seen as a sign of reward and consolation, as well as of encouragement for the continuation of the battle. The iconographic choices of the visual narratives regarding its holy patrons, notably their "Christianising" potential, might also be reflecting an anti-Ottoman character of the commission¹⁶.

It was rightfully suggested that the commissioner of Carpaccio's cycle in Scuola degli Schiavoni might have plausibly been Polo Valaresso in person, acting on the occasion of his acceptance to the Scuola as a honorary member¹⁷. The passage in *mariegola* describes not only the solemn translation of the relic from its temporary accommodation in the church of Sant'Angelo, close to the Valaresso palace, to the Scuola di S. Giorgio on the feast day of St George (24 April), but also the ceremony of inclusion of the new members from the Valaresso family: Polo, together with his sons, brother, and cousins¹⁸. Perocco relates the relic gift to the Schiavoni confraternity to the Valaresso family's

¹⁵ While the patriarch's surname also suggests a special connection to the relic, the weak element to the story is that he died only in 1509, and was since 1499 until his death parallelly holding the office of the bishop of Parma. For the argumentation for Garatoni hypothesis, see Giadrossi 1984, pp. 14-16.

¹⁶ See Marinković 2018. On Carpaccio's «orientalism» see Fortini Brown 1992, pp. 211-233.

¹⁷ See Perocco 1975, p. 8 (I am citing the 1975 bilingual Italian-English edition of the original publication Perocco 1964); Fortini Brown 1992, pp. 79-81.

¹⁸ Perocco 1975, pp. 5-7. The close ties of Valaresso with the Scuola are attested also in his last will, where he orders that 125 Schiavoni brethren accompany his funeral; Fortini Brown 1992, p. 8.

connections with the cities on the Eastern Adriatic. Namely, Polo's father's cousin, Maffeo Valaresso, was the archbishop of Zadar in the long period between 1450 and 1496, whereas Maffeo's father and uncle held positions of the potestate of Zadar and the governor of Dalmatia respectively¹⁹. At the time of the relic acquisition, Maffeo's brother Jacopo held the office of the bishop of Koper.

A coat of arms depicted on the first couple of the Carpaccio's panels for the Scuola, *The Calling of Matthew* and *Agony in the Garden*, featuring the reliquary of the *a fiala* type (fig. 1), provided evidence for further speculations on the identity of the cycle's commissioner. Taking into account the similarities of the basic heraldic features of the depicted coat of arms and that of the Vendramin family, Perocco singles out another Venetian nobleman, Andrea Vendramin, knight of the Jerusalem Order and the alleged hero of the Battle of Rhodes, among several other suggestions for the commissioner's identity (including two gastalds and the prior of S. Giovanni del Tempio)²⁰. Such unusual heraldic feature is plausibly referring to the contemporaneous acquisition of St George's relic for the Scuola, and – regardless to which family it belonged – strongly relates both the commission of the cycle and the granting of the papal indulgence to the acquisition of the saint's relic.

The relic of St George was undoubtedly an important addition to the Scuola's pantheon, but the identity of the other saints' bodily remains in the Scuola has yet to be discerned. The founding documents do not refer to any relic on the Scuola's premises, and although according to the initial agreement with the prior of the neighboring church of San Giovanni del Tempio, an altar dedicated to St George was to be built for the confraternity's needs, no special relic was mentioned in connection to this altar either²¹. Thus, not only that the relic of St George was the first mentioned individual relic in the Scuola's quarters, but the description of its translation also provides additional indication as to the relic's original placing at the altar of St George in the Scuola, the same altar that was being granted the indulgence.

However, in the mid-sixteenth century the whole building was restructured, so the original ensemble consisting of Carpaccio's cycle with the altar of St George as the focal point of the upper hall was dismantled and went through several subsequent alterations. Today's setting of the relic features an altar in the ground floor hall, commissioned in 1658, whose arcaded predella contains niches with five reliquaries of *a fiala* type (figg. 2-3). The inscriptions within the reliquaries identify the relics as belonging to the following saints: St George, with the most elaborate among the five reliquaries (fig. 4); St Tryphon (with

¹⁹ Perocco 1975, p. 7.

²⁰ Perocco 1975, pp. 27-28. Providing a brief survey of the hypotheses on the cycle's commissioner, Mignozzi confuses the persons involved, identifying Valaresso with the Jerusalem Patriarch; Mignozzi 1984, p. 106.

²¹ Perocco 1964, pp. 210-211.

the largest, centrally positioned reliquary), possibly existing on the premises of the Scuola before 1502, seen the availability of the relic particles from Kotor; two minor saints, both related to fighting the infidels, namely, St Constant (possibly the seventh-century bishop of Capri, venerated for his anti-heretic actions throughout Italy)²² and St Teonist (a fourth-century bishop-martyr, sometimes referred to as a knight, related to the battles with Visigoths)²³. The fifth reliquary is of a special interest since it contains a relic of St Blaise, who, in addition to being a universal protector, one of the Fourteen Helpers, was also – and in this context more importantly – the patron saint of Dubrovnik (figg. 5-6)²⁴. This reliquary has not been mentioned in the contemporary sources, nor in the scholarship on the Scuola (with the exception of the recent survey of the Scuola's history)²⁵, and is still awaiting an investigation on its commission and relic acquisition, to which I will try to provide a possible historical context in the following passages.

The comparative material for the reliquaries can offer a *terminus ante quem* for the acquisition of the relics, provided they were not moved from a more recent to an older reliquary. The closest analogies are found in the collection of reliquaries kept in the Museo diocesano d'arte sacra Sant'Apollonia in Venice, especially the one dated to the second half of the sixteenth century, made of gilt bronze and attributed to a Venetian workshop (fig. 7). The shape of its *nodus*, as well as the engraving, are almost identical to that of the reliquary of St George. St Blaise's and other three reliquaries are much simpler, but the side tendril-shaped handles are akin to the reliquary at St Apollonia, and also to the Venetian-type reliquaries in the Vodnjan (Istra) parish church collection, all dated to the sixteenth century (fig. 8). Thus, the five reliquaries in the Scuola could be related to the rearrangement of the church after the mid-sixteenth century. Moreover, the arcaded predella could also have been executed for the altar built during the renovation²⁶.

The earliest preserved inventory, composed in 1557, immediately after the main part of the reconstruction of the ground floor took place, mentions three glass reliquaries with the relics of St George and Tryphon: *Tabernacoli tre de vetro con reliquie de ms. S. Zorzi et ms. S. Triphon* (fig. 9)²⁷. In 1567 another hand added a note that one of the reliquaries was made of silver: *delli quali*

²² Roccia 2003.

²³ Borrelli 2001. St Teonist's relics were venerated in the cathedral of Treviso, as well as in the church of San Lorenzo in Venice.

²⁴ I am grateful to Sig. Stefano Rossi from Scuola di S. Giorgio e Trifone for his kind help and for sharing with me the photo of the inscription in the reliquary of St Blaise.

²⁵ Vallery 2011, p. 139. The relic was mentioned in Giadrossi 1984, p. 17.

²⁶ Nineteenth-century descriptions attest that the seicento altar reused a quattrocento polyptych (*tavola antica in campo d'oro*), and it is possible that it also reused the preexisting cinquecento reliquary-predella; on the hypotheses on the Scuola's Quattrocento altarpieces see Trška 2016, pp. 65-66.

²⁷ Perocco 1964, p. 226.

uno è d'ariento. Nothing is said of their placement, but the fact that they were made of glass suggests they were of a *fiala* type. Another added note from 1582 mentions other three glass-reliquaries, six altogether, but unfortunately not individually, indicating that one was missing: *altri tre de vetro del 1582 che sono 6, et uno non sono – manca*. Around 1617, the Scuola was allowed to spend five ducats in the repair of the reliquaries since the glass parts were broken (*si ritrovano li Vasi delle nostre Reliquie rotti, talche non si possono portar in procession*), which suggests the same reliquaries were still in use, though derelict²⁸. The inventory of 1637 finally brings mention of the reliquary of St Blaise (*un Detto dell'Ossa di S. Biasio m.*) among another five listed reliquaries: those of St George, St Tryphon, St Victoria (instead of St Teonist), St Constant, and a reliquary of various saints' relics²⁹. The six reliquaries listed in 1637 correspond to the same number of reliquaries reported in 1582, and can with high certainty be considered the same ones.

Finally, what can be said of the possible context for the acquisition of the relic of St Blaise? The only significant official connection of the Scuola to Dubrovnik is through its gastald Nicolaus Ragusinus (otherwise referred to as Nicolaus à Thure), mentioned in the discussed indulgence of 1481, being the only documented Scuola's gastald originally from Dubrovnik³⁰. However, this might be too early a date for the presumed acquisition of the Ragusan patron's relic, seen that only St George and St Tryphon among the five saints whose reliquaries are placed in the predella were included in the early mentions of saints' feasts observed by the Scuola. It is plausible that the other three relics were obtained rather shortly after the mid-sixteenth century reconstruction. Seen that as much as 7% of the Eastern-Adriatic sailors in Venice came from Dubrovnik, it is not inconceivable that they somehow acquired a relic of their patron saint, even without a direct relation to their military roles³¹.

However, the context of the Scuola's pantheon was expressly military almost from its outset, and the remaining question is on what occasion was the relic

²⁸ «Magnifici Signori, si ritrovano li Vasi delle nostre Reliquie rotti, talche non si possono portar in procession pero' ad honor, e gloria del Signor Iddio, et delli Santi Mette parte Missier Piero quondam Trifon di Santi Sindico, che possi spender il Guardian Novo ducati cinque per una volta tanto per far li detti Vasi come meglio parera' a dette Magnificentie, et che per l'avvenir sia fatta la Procession con esse relique(!) la festa di San Zorzi, et la festa di San Trifon ogni anno in tali feste intorno la riva delli Schiavoni, et che gli sia dato ogni volta a' quelli, che' s' attroveranno a' portare esse relique(!) in detta Procession ducato uno per ogni volta, qual ducato sia diviso tra' d'essi Preti in pena al Guardian, che s' attrovera' di tempo in tempo, che mancasse a' far dette Processioni per ogni volta ducati dieci applicati all' escavation de Rii. Ballottata la sopradetta parte a' bossoli, e ballote hebbe dalla parte de si balle numero 22 – et dalla parte di non balle numero 5» (year 1617?); ASV, *Matricola*, 636r.

²⁹ Vallery 1979, pp. 4-5.

³⁰ The list of gastalds in Perocco 1964, pp. 233-236.

³¹ For the statistics see Čoralčić 2001, 458, fig. 36. The importance of the Ragusan immigrants' devotion to St Blaise is illustrated by their testamentary legations for visiting the church of S. Biagio in Venice; Čoralčić 1999, p. 23.

of St Blaise adopted to this anti-Ottoman support-pantheon. The mentioned additional notes to the 1557 inventory are suggesting that the new reliquaries appeared in the period between 1567 and 1582, that is, roughly around the Battle of Lepanto in 1571. The Republic of Dubrovnik was notoriously hesitant to offer any kind of military help to the Holy League since it was an Ottoman tributary state and a very clever diplomat, so it is puzzling that the relic of this saint is found in such a context. The possible answer could be found in the unofficial realities of Ragusan diplomatic balancing. Namely, in spite of the expressed wish of the Ragusan Republic to remain neutral, there were several dozens of Ragusan private transport ships sailing under the Spanish flag, bringing supplies to the Christian fleet during the Battle of Lepanto³². Although the Ragusan sailors situated in Venice sailed on Venetian (and not Spanish) ships, the unofficial attitude Dubrovnik took towards fighting the Ottoman power in the Mediterranean, could have prompted the acquisition of the relic of Ragusan patron saint as the reward and encouragement for the Scuola's members, sailors originally from Dubrovnik. Just as Scuola degli Schiavoni was rewarded by an indulgence for their members' engagement in the defence of Rhodes in 1481, and similarly in 1502 by a relic for defending Coron, it is possible that the victory at Lepanto brought about the further enlargement of the Scuola's pantheon with three new relics.

A sporadic mention of the obligations for the feast of Candlemas, or Purification of the Holy Virgin, in 1638, possibly indicate another connection to Dubrovnik³³. Namely, the two feasts are strongly interconnected: Candlemas takes place on the eve of St Blaise's feast, that is, on 2 February, and was one of the most important feasts in Dubrovnik. The importance of the Candlemas feast in Dubrovnik official sanctorale did not lie only in the fact of its clustering with the civic patron's feast – the cluster also included St Tryphon whose feast took place on the same day as St Blaise. An additional strong link to Dubrovnik lied in the fact that Dubrovnik Cathedral was housing the relic of the Holy Swaddling Clothes of Christ, which was considered the most important relic in its possession, and one of the major local cults³⁴. Although it has not been confirmed yet that the relic of St Blaise was necessarily brought from Dubrovnik, nor that the relic was an official gift to the Scuola, the circumstantial evidence

³² Harris 2003, pp. 103-105, 112-117. On the political background of the Battle of Lepanto see Malcolm 2015, pp. 151-174.

³³ «Item, che nella solennità della Purification della Beatissima Vergine, che e solito farsi la dispensa delle Candelle a' quelli della Banca, et altri fratelli della detta Veneranda Scuola, et perche non vi e' alcuna limitation di quante Cere si deve dispensare in tal giorno. Per tanto; Mette parte il Magnifico Signor Guardian Grando sudetto, che di cetero nella sudetta festività' nella dispensa delle Candelle, che dovevano farsi nel sudetto giorno non si possi dispensar piu' di lire trenta di Candelle, et dispensandone di piu' il Guardian Grande sia sottoposto a' pagar del suo proprio quello, che spendesse. Ballottata la predetta ballote hebbe dalla parte de si numero 21, et di non ballote numero 1, e presa» (8 Aug 1638); ASV, *Matricola*, 639v-640r.

³⁴ Cf. Belamarić 2014, pp. 171-173.

strongly suggest it could have been related to the rising role of Ragusan sailors in the anti-Ottoman military campaigns. Future research in both the Archives of the Scuola Dalmata dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone (today's official name of the Scuola) and the State Archives in Dubrovnik might bring further insights on the history of the relic.

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Appendix

Fig. 1. Coat of arms, detail of the panel *The Calling of Matthew* by V. Carpaccio (<<http://www.wga.hu>>)



Fig. 2. Altar in the lower hall of the Scuola di S. Giorgio degli Schiavoni (Photo author)



Fig. 3. Reliquary-predella of the altar in the lower hall of the Scuola (Photo author)



Fig. 4. Reliquary of St George in the Scuola (Photo author)



Fig. 5. Reliquary of St Blaise in the Scuola (Photo author)



Fig. 6. Inscription *Sancti Blasii Martyris* on the reliquary of St Blaise (Photo S. Rossi)



Fig. 7. Reliquary, Museo diocesano d'arte sacra Sant'Apollonia, Venice (Photo author)



Fig. 8. Reliquary of St Lawrence, Collection of sacral art at the parish church of St Blaise, Vodnjan (<<http://zupavodnjan.com>>)

Caleci vno d'argento mecan 2 patena 7 cassa 2 do boise una boisa
 Caleci doi d'argento con le patene 7 cassa vno et altri
 Feribolo vno d'argento 7 la sua cassa.
 Mamecla vna d'argento con il cuebier 7 cassa
 Tabernacoli tre de vetro con reliquie de m. S. Zorzi
 et m. S. triphon. velli quali vno e d'argento. altri tre de vetro del ispa et sono d'
 vna bremela con doi ampole d'argento. et vno no sono mmele
 vna sbariegola coperta de veludo eremesin fornida
 d'argento con la sua cassa 7 cussinelo.
 vna pase cioe vno et
 vno panno da morti de veludo eremesin con frisi
 d'oro et figure d'oro 7 cussin del medemo panno 2
 quattro fiochi d'oro 2 panno de lana rosso p sopra 7 la
 sua tela rossa et cassa m. meca il panno rosso 1564
 vna de veludo archio 7 cussi m. meca il panno

Fig. 9. Scuola's inventory from the year 1557, detail (Perocco 1975)

Venetian Painters and Dalmatian Patrons: Minor Masters in the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni between Collective and Individual*

Tanja Trška**

Abstract

The decoration of the *sala superiore* of the Scuola dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone, executed throughout the final decades of the 16th and the first half of the 17th century, coincided with a period of economic prosperity of the Dalmatian confraternity. The decorative programme of the *sala superiore*, considered in the light of the *scuola*'s status of a “small” confraternity (*scuola piccola*), reflects not only collective aspirations of the Dalmatian community within the vibrant Venetian society, but also individual desires of its members to leave a permanent

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mark in the history of their confraternity. The subject matter of canvases adorning the *sala superiore* reveal an eagerness to provide an unambiguous visual connection with the confraternity members' Dalmatian origin, but their stylistic features remain strongly linked to the Venetian painterly tradition of the 16th and early 17th century.

La decorazione della sala superiore della Scuola dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone, eseguita fra gli ultimi decenni del XVI e la prima metà del XVII secolo, coincide con un periodo di prosperità economica della confraternita dalmata. Il programma decorativo della sala superiore, considerato alla luce dello status di *scuola piccola* della confraternita, riflette non solo le aspirazioni collettive della comunità dalmata all'interno della vivace società veneziana, ma anche le aspirazioni individuali dei suoi membri di lasciare un segno permanente nella storia della confraternita. I soggetti delle tele che ornano la sala superiore rivelano l'intento di istituire un inequivocabile collegamento visivo con l'origine dalmata dei membri della confraternita, mentre i loro tratti stilistici rimangono fortemente legati alla tradizione pittorica veneziana del XVI e dell'inizio del XVII secolo.

Among the numerous confraternities that shaped the religious and social life of Venice in the age of the *Serenissima*, a distinct group of charitable associations was formed by the ones whose members belonged to "stranieri" or "foresti"¹. Listed among the *scuole piccole*, the Scuola dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone (historically also referred to as Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni) was founded in 1451 with the purpose of providing spiritual and charitable support to "Dalmati et altri Schiavoni" who arrived to Venice from the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea, mainly from Dalmatia under Venetian rule (fig. 1)². Today named Scuola Dalmata dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone, it remains one of the few Venetian confraternities still active in the religious and social life of the city, next to four still existent *scuole grandi* (Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista, Scuola Grande di San Rocco, Scuola Grande dei Carmini and Scuola Grande di San Teodoro)³.

Founded on 19 March 1451 in the church of St John the Baptist of the Knights Hospitaller (San Giovanni Battista del Tempio) in the Venetian *sestiere* of Castello⁴, the confraternity received official recognition from the Council of Ten on 19 May of the same year⁵. Along with the permission to erect an altar dedicated to their patron saints below the belfry of the church of San Giovanni

¹ On *scuole nazionali*, see Ceriana, Mueller 2014, with previous bibliography.

² For a survey of the artistic heritage of Venetian confraternities, see Pignatti 1981; for *scuole piccole*, see Ortalli 2001; Vio 2004.

³ Key contributions for the history of the Scuola remain Perocco 1961 and 1964, and numerous studies by Lovorka Čoralić collected in Čoralić 2001 and 2003; see also Vallery 2011.

⁴ The date of the foundation of the Scuola di San Giorgio e Trifone is often stated as 24 March 1451: Perocco 1961, p. 67; Perocco 1964, p. 18; however, the 18th century transcription of the *Mariogola* reads: «Fu incominciada questa benedetta Scuola contando gl'anni dello Signore Nostro Giesù Christo Mille, e quatro, e cinquanta uno adi 19 Marzo in questa benedetta Chiesa da Misser San Zuanne del Tempio» – Venice, Archivio di Stato (henceforth ASV), *Proveditori di comun*, Reg. P, Matricole delle scuole – Castello, f. 579r.

⁵ ASV, *Proveditori di comun*, reg. P, f. 580r.

del Tempio⁶, the Prior of Knights Hospitaller Lorenzo Marcello granted the Dalmatian confraternity the right to convene in the hospice belonging to the Priory, already existent in 1358 and dedicated to Saint Catherine⁷. This space, used for both religious services and reunions of confraternity members, was shared with almost a century older Scuola di San Giovanni Battista (founded in 1358 under the invocation of Madonna of Mercy and St John the Baptist)⁸ until the Napoleonic suppression in 1806 and final closure of the older confraternity in 1827⁹.

Gradual interventions in the interior of the old Hospice of St Catherine begun at the beginning of the 16th century and included the narrative cycle by Vittore Carpaccio, originally painted between 1502 and 1507 for the *sala superiore* of the old meetinghouse¹⁰, and were terminated in 1551 with the construction of the new façade, entirely financed by the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni and designed by Giovanni Zon¹¹, master builder (*proto*) of the Venetian Arsenal from 1539¹². The interior decoration, concentrated mainly on the large hall on the first floor intended for official gatherings of confraternity members, continued in the second half of the 16th century. In 1564 the Guardian Grande advanced a proposal to construct a simple wooden ceiling and stalls, which was followed by the 1565 decision of the general chapter to secure two hundred ducats for their execution¹³. The year 1586, recorded in the inscription which dates the wooden stalls commissioned at the time of Guardian Grande Vettor Tromba, can be considered *terminus post quem* for the paintings placed high on the walls below the wooden ceiling (figs. 2-4).

The decoration of the *sala superiore* of the Scuola, carried out throughout the final decades of the 16th and the first half of the 17th century, coincided with a period of economic prosperity of the Dalmatian confraternity: in an entry of the confraternity's *mariegola* dated 6 July 1606, the confraternity members thanked the Lord and their patron saints for the recent increase of the *scuola's* income¹⁴. This encouraged not only significant modifications of the interior of

⁶ The agreement with the Prior Lorenzo Marcello conceded the confraternity a space «sotto el campanil di essa chiesa, per fundar, drizar, et fabricar uno altare ad Nome di Santissimi martiri Zorzi, et Trifon e fare una capella, et adornar quella à spese de ditta scuola e fraternità, e scuola nostra»; Perocco 1964, p. 209.

⁷ On the Hospice of St Catherine, see Luttrell 1970; Semi 1983, pp. 83-85.

⁸ «Madona di santa Maria de Umiltà et sier Zuane Battista». A transcription of the *mariegola* (*Matricola della Scuola di S. Giovanni Battista in S. Giovanni del Tempio*) is in ASV, *Proveditori di comun*, reg. P, ff. 546r-576r. On Scuola di San Giovanni Battista, see Vio 2004, pp. 129-132.

⁹ Perocco 1964, p. 44, n. 24.

¹⁰ For Carpaccio's cycle, see Pallucchini 1961; Perocco 1964; for narrative cycles in Renaissance Venice, see Fortini Brown 1989.

¹¹ Zucchetto 2006.

¹² Concina 1984, p. 103.

¹³ Perocco 1961, p. 80.

¹⁴ «Essendo augmentate nella Scuola nostra per la Dio gratia, e delli Nostri Gonfalonari M.o San Zorzi, e M.o San Triphon le intrade» ASV, *Proveditori di comun*, Reg. P, f. 631v.

the meetinghouse, namely the entire decoration of the *sala superiore*, but also the commission of the new altarpiece for the confraternity's altar in the church of San Giovanni del Tempio, painted by Matteo Ponzone in the second decade of the 17th century and now preserved in the church of Madonna dell'Orto in Venice¹⁵.

Paintings commissioned for the *sala superiore* in the course of several decades of the 17th century reflect a strong shift in perspective from collective to individual. Each painting contains a portrait of the donor, most likely an individual who held a prominent position in the governing bodies of the *scuola*. Differences in style, quality and subjects suggest that there was no unified iconographical programme guided by a single programmatic idea: the only unifying element seems to be the format of the canvases determined by the position of the wooden stalls along each wall, and, naturally, the members' evident desire to leave a permanent mark in the meetinghouse of their confraternity, often complemented by an unambiguous visual connection with their Dalmatian origin.

The stylistic features of canvases in the *sala superiore* remain linked to the Venetian painterly tradition of the 16th and early 17th century¹⁶. The earliest dated painting in the series was formerly attributed to Andrea Vicentino, whose connections to the Dalmatian confraternity are corroborated by a written testimony: Vicentino was present as witness at the signing of the contract for the decoration of the coffered ceiling of the *sala superiore*, stipulated with woodcarver Zuane de Bastian in 1604, which encouraged proposals of his authorship of several canvases, including the painted ceiling¹⁷. The painting representing *Christ calming the waves*, dated 1607 on the rectangular box with votive candles painted in front of the portrait of a confraternity member, has been convincingly associated with the Greek painter active in Venice Antonio Vassilacchi called l'Aliense¹⁸. His connection to the Scuola is testified by Marco Boschini, who in his *Miniere della Pittura* mentioned a now lost processional banner executed by l'Aliense and decorated with figures of the confraternity's patron saints¹⁹.

Another early painting in this setting, dated 1609, represents a continuation of the narrative scheme proposed a century earlier by Carpaccio's cycle now in the *sala inferiore*: the scene of martyrdom of a saint in a traditionally

¹⁵ Prijatelj 1970, p. 33; Pallucchini 1981, p. 86; Trška 2016.

¹⁶ The most detailed contribution on the paintings in the *sala superiore* remains Rizzi 1983 (reprinted in Rizzi 2016). Several paintings have been attributed to Marco Vecellio by Nina Kudiš in an unpublished paper presented at the 2012 *Dani Cvita Fiskovića* conference in Orebić. I am grateful to Prof. Kudiš for this information.

¹⁷ Perocco 1964, pp. 203-204. Ceiling paintings have traditionally been attributed to Andrea Vicentino, with the exception of Juergen Schulz who advanced the authorship of Padovanino. Schulz 1968, p. 84.

¹⁸ Oil on canvas, 100 × 254 cm. Perocco 1964, pp. 198-199; Rizzi 1983, p. 14.

¹⁹ Boschini 1664, p. 192.

conceived composition packed with numerous figures and narrative details, such as spectators on a balcony in the background, which seems to draw on Carpaccio's predilection for detailed rendering of an *istoria*, although much less skilfully²⁰. Besides the date, an inscription on the painting also provides information on the name of its commissioner, Mondo di Battista who served as Guardian Grande in 1609²¹, portrayed holding a set of keys. A still unresolved monogram, inscribed below the body of the reclining saint, consists of letters «CDRF» which might suggest the unknown painter's initials, with the letter F indicating the customary *fecit*. As for the identity of the saint, the scene has been proposed as martyrdom of Saint George²², although the scene of martyrdom with the saint subjected to flagellation and beating does not allude to decapitation as the distinct element in St George's hagiography, or martyrdom by flaming torches or wheel with sharp knives which, according to the *Golden legend*, the saint was put through²³. Instead, the somewhat generic rendering of the scene of martyrdom packed with figures of torturers and spectators in military attire might allude to the martyrdom of St Tryphon, whose life has not been recorded in the *Golden Legend* but sources mention his being beaten with clubs, shown broken below the saint's reclining body. Illustrations in the illuminated manuscript containing the *Legenda de miser san triphone conphalone et protectore dela zitade de Cataro*, dated 1446 and now preserved in the Biblioteca Marciana, represent a rare visual testimony of the *passio* of St Tryphon and include the scene of the saint tied to a column and whipped and beaten with clubs²⁴. The unknown author of the painting has been associated with the activity of painters of Cretan origin active in Venice, often influenced by prints of German provenance²⁵. Although the insistence on solid line and detailed rendering of figures and landscape in the background might suggest a graphic model, the use of Mannerist colour, the arrangement of muscular figures seen from the back and occasional attention for soft rendering of draperies do find parallels in the works of Venetian painters of the period: the figure of the scourger standing next to the reclining saint's head is comparable to the flagellator seen from the back in Aliense's *Flagellation* (before 1594) painted for the church of Santa Croce in Belluno, today in SS. Giovanni e Paolo in Venice²⁶.

Closer to the tradition of Venetian *Cinquecento* are certainly the two paintings grouped by Alberto Rizzi under the common name of «Maestro del

²⁰ Oil on canvas, 100 × 283 cm.

²¹ Perocco 1964, p. 233.

²² Rizzi 1983, p. 24.

²³ de Voragine 1995, I, pp. 240-241.

²⁴ Marcon 1999, pp. 123, 131.

²⁵ Rizzi 1983, p. 24.

²⁶ Pallucchini 1981, I, p. 45.

San Trifone»²⁷, the *Madonna and Child with St George and St Tryphon*²⁸ and *Madonna and Child with St Christopher and a confraternity member*²⁹. The two canvases are undoubtedly testimonies of the continuation of Titian's manner practiced by his numerous followers well after the master's death, especially in the rendering of figures of Madonna and Child. Both paintings include portraits of prominent confraternity members, probable donors of the two respective paintings, but appear in different relations to figures of saints. In a conventional, symmetrical compositional scheme centred around the image of the Madonna unfolding the white veil below the Child's body – reminiscent of Titian's solutions for the *Altarpiece of St Nicholas* now in the Pinacoteca Vaticana and much repeated by members of his *bottega*³⁰, the donor of the *Madonna and Child with St George and St Tryphon* is partially deprived of his role of a spectator and is instead shown as an active (or semi-active) participant in the scene, in the guise of the Scuola's patron Saint George. It is reasonable to assume that the donor was depicted as St George because he was named after the saint; however, his identity cannot be determined with certainty due to the illegibility of the coat of arms painted on the pillar behind him. In the period corresponding to the decoration of the *sala superiore*, the only Guardian Grande named George was «Zorzi de Nadal de Sebenico, cappeller», elected in 1607, 1613 and again in 1620³¹. Unlike the donor of this painting whose identity is yet to be determined, the coat of arms and the view of the city of Rab with three church belfries shown in the background of the *Madonna and Child with St Christopher and a confraternity member* identify the sitter as Nicolò de Dominis de Arbe (fig. 5), Guardian Grande of the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni in 1596 and again in 1606³², which permits to advance a more precise dating of the canvas. The presence of Saint Christopher, patron saint of the island of Rab, on the right-hand side of the painting is once again a reference to Nicolò de Dominis's place of origin. Nicolò de Dominis belonged to the prominent noble family from Rab, patrons of a monumental late 15th-century palace in the city of Rab important for the introduction of early Renaissance architectural decoration³³. Apart from ties to other Dalmatian cities such as Šibenik (fig. 6)³⁴, De Dominis family seems to have had multiple connections to

²⁷ Rizzi 1983, pp. 15, 16.

²⁸ Oil on canvas, 100 × 250 cm.

²⁹ Oil on canvas, 100 × 240 cm.

³⁰ Tagliaferro *et al.* 2009, pp. 222 and ss.

³¹ Perocco 1964, p. 233. In 1613 he was listed as «Zorzi di Nadali», and in 1620 as «Zorzi de Nadal». Nadal (Natale) is a common first name in Šibenik and here probably indicates the name of Zorzi's father, while the Nadal family does not appear among the noble families in Šibenik (Galvani 1883).

³² Perocco 1964, p. 233; Vallery 2011, p. 153. Rizzi 1983, p. 16, identifies the coat of arms as belonging to the Soranzo family.

³³ Domijan 2001, pp. 176-179; Bradanović 2011.

³⁴ Galvani 1883, pp. 94-100.

the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni: around the time of execution of the majority of paintings in the *sala superiore*, the confraternity commissioned a new altarpiece for their altar in the church of San Giovanni del Tempio, painted by Matteo Ponzone, relative of the Dalmatian-born Archbishop of Split Marco Antonio de Dominis who was succeeded at the archiepiscopal see of Split by the painter's brother Sforza Ponzone in 1616. The overall compositional layout of the painting associated to Nicolò de Dominis in the *sala superiore* remains rather simple, but here, again, the typology of Madonna and Child echoes the widely accepted models of Titian's *bottega* in which Rizzi recognized the manner of Cesare Vecellio³⁵.

Titian's models were followed and interpreted in another painting conceived as a direct statement of the donor's origin: the canvas representing the *Crucifixion* and the *Conversion of St Paul and the donor* in front of the view of the city of Zadar³⁶. The central scene of the *Crucifixion* derives from Titian's altarpiece of the same subject painted for the church of St Domenico in Ancona (1557-1558)³⁷, especially in the figure of St John seen almost from the back, his hands widely spread, as well as in the posture of the grieving Virgin. In Ancona, the crucifix is embraced by St Dominic, while that role in the painting in the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni is assigned to Mary Magdalen, whose embrace bears resemblance to a woodcut by Giuseppe Salviati produced in Venice in 1556, which has in turn been associated to Titian's *Crucifixion* in Ancona³⁸. The calm and serene posture of the donor is contrasted to the violent, dynamic action on the right-hand side of the composition showing the *Conversion of St Paul*, which suggests the unknown painter's acquaintance with Mannerist solutions of contemporary painters such as Aliense's *Conversion of St Paul* in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Reims (especially in the figure of Christ appearing from the sky), despite the apparent simplicity of his own style. The scene of the *Conversion of St Paul* might indicate the name of the donor portrayed at the left side of the painting: a name that stands out is that of Paolo de Stefano who served as Guardian Grande in 1582 and again in 1588 or 1589³⁹, and became remembered as one of the benefactors of the Scuola degli Schiavoni. In 1582 he appealed to the general chapter for a permission to construct a family tomb in the church of San Giovanni del Tempio in front of the Dalmatian nation's altar of St George, later adorned by Matteo Ponzone's altarpiece. His request was approved by a majority of votes, but it was specified that the *scuola* should bear no expense for the said tomb and that all costs should be covered entirely by Paolo de Stefano. The Guardian Grande was granted permission to have his family name written on the tomb, but was not allowed to place a coat of

³⁵ Rizzi 1983, p. 16.

³⁶ Oil on canvas, 100 × 238 cm.

³⁷ Rizzi 1983, p. 15.

³⁸ L. Attardi, cat. 31, in Villa 2013, p. 234.

³⁹ Perocco 1964, p. 233; Vallery 2011, p. 153.

arms of any kind or make any other modifications⁴⁰. Furthermore, in the same year, 1582, he arranged for the restoration of the confraternity's processional banner and donated a new, richly ornamented carpet to be placed in church on ordinary mass days, while in 1589, he provided for the gilding of a cross which decorated an indulgence he himself obtained in Rome and donated a finely embroidered cover for a large chalice used at the altar⁴¹. The case of Paolo de Stefano represents an eloquent example of the dynamics of collective and individual in the organization of the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni: the sole permission to construct a family tomb in front of the confraternity altar suggests the importance of Paolo de Stefano in the life of the confraternity, but his possible ambitions of self-promotion were effectively toned down with the general chapter's requirement to omit the family coat of arms from the tomb placed in front of the Scuola's collective property.

Painted further in the 17th century, another group of paintings in the *sala superiore* revolves around the name of «Maestro dell'Annunciazione degli Schiavoni» proposed by Alberto Rizzi⁴², which consists of a total of four paintings named after the *Annunciation with two donors*⁴³ placed on the altar wall, the other three representing *The Holy Trinity with saints and donors*⁴⁴, *Madonna and Child with Saints Francis and Dominic and donors*⁴⁵ and *Madonna of the Rosary with donors*⁴⁶. Approximately the same time of execution of these paintings is suggested by the matching attire of a total of ten portrayed members of the confraternity, as well as by similar setting in all paintings, regularly featuring figures of saints painted against a brown, but still heavenly background. The dating is close to the middle of the 17th century, as suggested by the only dated painting of the group, the *Holy Trinity with saints and four donors* which bears the year 1645.

The remaining three canvases, attributed to the late school of Palma il Giovane (*Madonna and Child with St Roch and Sebastian and donor Giorgio Pallavicino*, 1631)⁴⁷, Giuseppe Heintz il Giovane (*The Holy Trinity with the Virgin and saints and a donor*)⁴⁸ and Gaspar Rem (*St George, St Tryphon and St Jerome*)⁴⁹ respectively are perhaps most illustrative of the inhomogeneity of paintings in the *sala superiore* of the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni. In what seems to have been an ambitious decorative programme for the *sala superiore*, members of the confraternity must have had in mind similar endeavours commissioned

⁴⁰ Discussed in detail in Trška 2016.

⁴¹ Perocco 1961, p. 98.

⁴² Rizzi 1983, pp. 19, 22-23.

⁴³ Oil on canvas, 100 × 94 cm.

⁴⁴ Oil on canvas, 100 × 252 cm.

⁴⁵ Oil on canvas, 100 × 252 cm.

⁴⁶ Oil on canvas, 100 × 96 cm.

⁴⁷ Oil on canvas, 100 × 252 cm.

⁴⁸ Oil on canvas, 100 × 250 cm.

⁴⁹ Oil on canvas, 100 × 283 cm. For attributions see Rizzi 1983.

by other *scuole*, especially those listed under *scuole grandi*, but evidently did not mirror their decision to employ a single artist to execute the entire decoration. More famous examples obviously come to mind – Tintoretto’s grandiose canvases for the Scuola Grande di San Rocco and Scuola Grande di San Marco, but also Palma il Giovane’s position as official painter for the Scuola di San Fantin and his series of paintings executed for that confraternity in 1600⁵⁰. The collective investments of the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni seem to have remained limited to the period between roughly 1500 and 1600, from the commission of Carpaccio’s narrative cycle now in the *sala inferiore* to the contract for the new coffered ceiling of the *sala superiore*. From that moment on, one can notice a distinct shift from collective to individual, reflected not only in the lack of collective investments (an important exception being Matteo Ponzone’s altarpiece commissioned in the second decade of the 17th century) but also in the pronounced desire to leave a personal mark in the premises of the meetinghouse⁵¹. Various modes of representing collective and individual past, with references to specific places, events, and protagonists significant for the history of the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni reflect the desire of the confraternity members to define their position and ensure their visibility within their adopted Venetian environment. Aspirations of the Dalmatian community in Venice were certainly collective when it came to venerating Dalmatian saints and accentuating their origin, but in the 17th century came to be realized as individual commissions from individual painters, connected, as it seems, only by their belonging to the Venetian artistic environment.

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⁵⁰ Pignatti 1981, p. 190.

⁵¹ For the dynamics of public and private in Venetian context, see Mackenney 1998.

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Appendix

Fig. 1. Venice, Scuola Dalmata dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone



Fig. 2. Venice, Scuola Dalmata dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone, view of the *sala superiore*



Fig. 3. Scuola Dalmata dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone, view of the *sala superiore*



Fig. 4. Venice, Scuola Dalmata dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone, view of the *sala superiore*



Fig. 5. Unknown painter, *Madonna and Child with St Christopher and a confraternity member*, detail with portrait of Nicolò de Dominis and view of Rab, Venice, Scuola Dalmata dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone



Fig. 6. Coat of arms of the De Dominis family, Šibenik, Gogala Palace

The community of Ragusa (Dubrovnik) in Genua and their chapel of Saint Blaise in Santa Maria di Castello*

Anita Ruso**

Abstract

The article examines the artworks and architecture of the Ragusan chapel in Dominican church in Genua, dedicated to the Virgin Mary and Saint Blaise, commissioned and maintained by Ragusan merchants and consuls in the Ligurian port. The analysis is based on known documents from Dominican convent archive in Genua and focuses on elements of particular Ragusan identity expressed in visual terms. Moreover, newly discovered archival documents from the Genua and Dubrovnik state archives, enable a better understanding of diplomatic relations between the two republics, therefore shedding new light on the role of the Ragusan “national” chapel in Genua.

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L'articolo esamina le opere d'arte e l'architettura della cappella dei Ragusei nella chiesa domenicana di Genova, dedicata alla Vergine Maria e a San Biagio, commissionata e gestita dai mercanti ragusani e dai consoli della Repubblica di Ragusa nel porto ligure. L'analisi si basa sui noti documenti d'archivio del convento domenicano di Genova e si concentra sugli elementi particolari dell'identità Ragusea espressa in termini visivi. Inoltre, i documenti d'archivio recentemente scoperti negli Archivi di Stato di Genova e Dubrovnik consentono una migliore comprensione delle relazioni diplomatiche tra le due repubbliche, aiutando a capire meglio il significato e il ruolo della cappella "nazionale" ragusea a Genova.

The combination of favorable geographical and navigational elements led to the establishment of the city of Ragusa/Dubrovnik¹ as a commercial center in the Middle Ages and its subsequent emancipation as a semi-independent republic². Dubrovnik had managed to establish lively commercial contacts with a number of Mediterranean cities and the nearby continental powers, Bosnia and Serbia, maintaining the network even when the latter were enclosed within the Ottoman Empire. All this resulted in Dubrovnik's new role as the hub of East-West trade, facilitated through the network of consuls and commercial colonies both in the Balkans and in the western ports.

One of these Ragusan consulates was founded in 1531 in Genua, where Ragusan consul maintained the chapel of Saint Blaise at the church of Santa Maria di Castello³. Being the only known chapel directly supported by exclusively Ragusan merchants in Italy, it is interesting to compare the patronage of the Ragusan community in Genua with similar strategies devised by other Early Modern Schiavoni communities in Italy – which functioned as confraternities or colleges – in order to understand the self-image they tried to construct.

1. *Ragusan consulates and networks in early modern Italy*

The size and the spread of Dubrovnik's trade required the appointment of agents known as consuls to supervise and protect Ragusan ships, merchants and all *nobiles cives de fori* (aristocracy living outside the country) in the ports

¹ Ragusa is the old, Latin and Italian name for the city of Dubrovnik. The city-state was officially called "Repubblica di Ragusa" so we will use here "Ragusan Republic" or "Republic of Ragusa" when talking about city-state. Ragusans were inhabitants of the Ragusan Republic.

² Dubrovnik was under Byzantine protection from 800 to 1205; under Venetian rule from 1205 to 1358; under Hungarian suzerainty from 1358 and under Ottoman Empire from 1442 until the end of its existence in 1808. In 1442 he first agreed to pay tribute, called also *harač*. Dubrovnik always needed outside protection and was always prepared to pay real or symbolic tribute to one of the great powers in order to get protection from them. On Dubrovnik history see: Harris 2003.

³ First Ragusan consul in Genua was a Genoese nobleman D. Daria de Vivaldis. Cf. Mitić 1982, p. 27; On Ragusans in Genua see also: Ivanković 1966; Lupis 2014.

they frequented⁴. The Ragusan government worked very assiduously on the furthering of ties with Italian cities, and over the centuries they developed a large and well-organized network of consulates based on commercial agreements, most of them established in the second half of the twelfth century. Numerous diplomatic letters exchanged between the Senate of Ragusa and its agents in the Italian centers are a testimony of these efficient diplomatic policies.

The consular service was notable for its practical flexibility. Its basic purpose was to serve as an extension of the central government and its members acted as judges, notaries, tax collectors and spies⁵. As the consular service became more and more important for the trading business, the government of the Republic had to regulate it. The Rector of the Republic with its Small Council chose the consuls between the merchants who already lived on the territory of the other states and were often members of Schiavoni confraternities⁶. The priority was given to the members of the aristocratic families, but in the absence of the aristocracy, it was possible to choose among non-noble famous or rich seaman. The consuls were privileged because they were allowed to take a percentage of the commercial taxes. However, Ragusans also had locals in their consular service, as they were familiar with the situation in their hometowns.

2. *Diplomatic relations between Ragusa and Genua*

The intense commercial and maritime relations between Republic of Ragusa (Dubrovnik) and the Republic of Genua are documented from the beginning of the 14th century⁷. The present analysis is based on published and unpublished diplomatic letters from State archives of Genua and Dubrovnik exchanged between the two Republics⁸. In Dubrovnik state archive, the correspondence

⁴ Until the middle of the 15th century Ragusan trade was concentrated towards the Balkans. When Ottoman wars started in the area Ragusans concentrated on the Adriatic Sea. At the end of the 15th century, Ragusans had 23 consulates. The first consulates in Italy were in Syracuse (1390), Messina (1399), Trani (1409), Ancona and Barletta (1441). In the 16th century consulates in many Italian towns were formed: Palermo (1502), Agrigento (1504), Brindisi (1510), Monopoli, Milazzo (1511), Terant (1512), Lacioano (1516), Livorno, Lecce (1517), Vasto (1523), Castro (1529), Pisa, Genova (1531), Mola (1541), Lipar (1519), Sardinia (1541). Cf. Mitić 1982, p. 39.

⁵ Mitić 1982, pp. 29 and 37; Varezić 2014, p. 90.

⁶ Some distinguished Ragusans were members of Confraternity of Saint Gerome in Rome: Stjepan Gradić (1613-1683), Pietro de Bosdari (1647-1684) who was also sent to Genua as an ambassador to collect the money from the banks in order to help Ragusans after the great earthquake in 1667, Benedikt Stay (1714-1801).

⁷ Mitić 1982, p. 21.

⁸ Dubrovnik State Archive (hereinafter ASD), *Diplomata et acta*, 16th century: Lettere di vari corrispondenti da Firenze degli anni 1571 e 1572 e da Padova, Lucca, Genova, Urbino e Malta degli anni 1570, 1588, 1591, n. 462; *Diplomata et acta*, 17th century: Lettere di vari corrispondenti da Genova degli anni 1642, 1625, 1632, 1659, 1660, 1666, 168, 1674, n. 2200; Lettere di vari

with Genua in 16th and 17th century appears in four archival series: *Diplomata et acta*⁹, *Lettere e commisioni di Levante*¹⁰, *Lettere e commisioni di Ponente*¹¹ and *Miscellanea sec. XVII*¹².

While Dubrovnik and Ancona collaborated in order to limit Venetian supremacy on the Adriatic Sea, Dubrovnik and Genua tried to put under control Venetian ambitions in the Levant, especially after the 1433 council of Basel, when Ragusans, Venetians, and Genoese all obtained the permission to commerce with the Levant. This also induced Ragusan trade with Alexandria in the beginning of the 16th century. Genua and Dubrovnik also jointly limited French ambitions in the Levant¹³.

In addition, Genoese fleet used Dubrovnik as a base for its operations in the Adriatic¹⁴. The two maritime powers, Genua and Venice, had long been leading commercial powers with ties to Constantinople. Already at the end of the 14th century, Republic of Genua realized they needed representatives in the Ragusan Republic, so they started sending their consul to Dubrovnik. It is interesting to notice that *Il Serenissimo* Giovanni Agostino Giustiniani Campi (1538-1613), the doge of the *Repubblica di Genova* from 1591 to 1593, started his career as a merchant trading with the Republic of Dubrovnik. He is mentioned as «protector ac patron» on the epitaph in the Ragusan chapel in Santa Maria di Castello¹⁵.

Ragusan merchants supplied Genoese mostly with grain, salt, sugar and wool¹⁶ and they bought arms from them already in the 14th century; they even invited blacksmiths from Genua to work for the Republic¹⁷. Furthermore, many Ragusan letters were forwarded from Genua towards other western countries and vice versa¹⁸. Finally, the Genoese *Banco di San Giorgio* was very important for Ragusan investors, as famous Ragusan merchant Miho Pracat (1522-1607) has put his deposit in the said bank. His wife was to benefit from the interest

corrispondenti da Genova dell'anno 1618 al 1698, n. 2969; *Lettere e commisioni di Ponente* 1585-1588, 1588-1592, 1587-1689 and 1592-1598; *Miscellanea*, 17th century, Venetia litterae FV and FVI; Genua State Archive (hereinafter ASG), *Lettere principi*: Lettere della Republica di Ragusa alla Serenissima Republica di Genova 1519-1622 in 1681 a 1762.

⁹ ASD, *Diplomata et acta*, 16th century, n. 462; *Diplomata et acta*, 17th century, nn. 2069, 2200.

¹⁰ ASD, *Lettere e commisioni di Levante*, vol. 1587-1589.

¹¹ ASD, *Lettere e commisioni di Ponente*, vol. 1592-1598.

¹² ASD, *Miscellanea*, 17th century, Italia litterae VI.

¹³ Mitić 1982, p. 25.

¹⁴ Ivi, p. 20.

¹⁵ Ragusans gave him and his wife a burial place in the chapel as a gift for his protection and support: «...BE / NEFICIORUM MEMORES EORUM PROTECTORI AC PATRONO ILL(USTRISSIMO) D(OMINO) IO(ANNI) AUGUSTINO IUSTINIANO EIUSQ(UE) UXORI...». See the whole transcript of the epitaph in the note 35.

¹⁶ Ivančević 1966, p. 348.

¹⁷ Mitić 1982, p. 22.

¹⁸ Ivančević 1966, p. 351.

and the principal was to be inherited by the Ragusan government after his wife's death¹⁹. This deposit of 1000 *luoghi* (stocks) was used by the government after the great earthquake in 1667²⁰.

The first Ragusan consul in Genua was nominated in 1531, thanks to celebrated admiral Andrea Doria (1466-1560)²¹. Over 268 years (except for the years after the great earthquake, from 1667 until 1675) Ragusans had 21 consuls in Genua. They were all not-Ragusan; many of them were Genoese merchants and members of rich families. Just three last consuls in Genua were Ragusans (1787-1808)²².

The artistic exchange between Dubrovnik and Genua is rather scarcely documented, and consulted diplomatic letters contain no information on Ragusan chapel in Genua, but what has resurfaced during the archival research is an important testimony on recovery after 1667 earthquake in Dubrovnik. Unpublished letters from the *Archivio di Stato di Genova* reveal that Ragusans intervened to bring back the reliquary of the left hand of their saint protector Saint Blaise stolen from the city after the great 1667 earthquake and brought to Genua²³. On 5th July 1675, the saint's left hand was brought back to Dubrovnik²⁴. To commemorate that day Ragusans even celebrated the feast called "Translatio Sancti Blasii"²⁵. Unfortunately, on its way back home the reliquary was damaged and the jewelry it was covered with – disappeared. Today's appearance of the reliquary held in Dubrovnik's cathedral treasury under the number IV is a work of Venetian goldsmith Francesco Ferra (1712)²⁶.

¹⁹ Ivi, p. 350.

²⁰ Vojnović 1983, pp. 52-58.

²¹ He also prevented Holy League from the idea of overtaking Ragusa and in 1538 he sent to Dubrovnik engineer Antonio Ferramolino who worked on Dubrovnik city walls. Cf. Mitić 1982, p. 25; Edoardo 1992.

²² Mitić 1982, pp. 30-31.

²³ «Una di queste che è la Reliquia del gloriosissimo Santo Biago nostro Protettore involataci dall'empia perfidia d'uno de nostri Vassalli, e sacrilagamente venduta, è capitata in cotesto Serenissima e dopò varij accidenti per commandamena di Vostra Servità levata dalla casa, ore si tenea, occultata è stata riposta nella loro Real Capella...», Lettere della Republica di Ragusa alla Serenissima Republica di Genova Ragusa, li 16 Agosto 1672, in ASG, *Lettere Principi 1519-1622 in 1681 a 1762*.

²⁴ «...siammo voluto consolarci col rimettere à nostra disposizione la Reliquia del glorioso Santo Biago nostro Protettore: per godere intieramente del favor con cui si sono compiacciate le S. Servità V.V. contribuire alle nostre sodisfationi; frà breve s'invierà da noi costà un Sacerdote chi haverà cura di trasportarla à Ragusa... Ragusa, li 10 gennaio 1675». From the next letter we know the exact name of the person who was in charged of this important mission: «Riverirà in nome nostro [?] Servità V.V. D. Andrea Resti, à cui dà noi è Stato data l'incumbenza di ricevere la sacra reliquia per trasportarla à Ragusa... 30 gennaio 1675»: Lettere della Republica di Ragusa alla Serenissima Republica di Genova, in ASG, *Lettere Principi 1519-1622 in 1681 a 1762*.

²⁵ This feast was celebrated in the same way as the feast of St Blaise. "Translatio" feast was practiced until 1808. Cf. Nodari 2014, p. 107.

²⁶ Lupis 2014, p. 468.

3. *Ragusan chapel in Santa Maria di Castello*

The Ragusan protector-saint, St Blaise was worshipped wherever the Southern-Adriatic merchants established themselves, and his feast was especially celebrated in cities hosting Ragusan consulates²⁷. In Genua, they had a chapel dedicated to the Virgin and St Blaise inside the Dominican convent complex, situated in the harbor, handy for Ragusans sailing into the city²⁸.

The convent of Santa Maria di Castello dates from the 7th century. In the mid-15th century, Pope Eugene IV (1431-1447) entrusted the church to the Observant Dominicans of the Lombardy Congregation due to the circumstances of religious (Council of Basel-Florence) and political character (conflicts between Campofregoso and Adorno families)²⁹. Dominicans immediately began purchasing the surrounding land and houses. They added a new cloister adjacent to the Romanesque one and the second cloister founded by brothers Grimaldi³⁰. In the last decades of the 16th century, following the orders of the apostolic visitor Francesco Bossi, the choir screen and the four adjacent altars of the church were demolished. Between 1589 and 1594, the church was enlarged with the construction of the dome and the new apse, while the interior was renovated between 1590 and 1604, specifically the marble fronts with broken tympana of seven chapels: four in the right-hand nave, two at the top of the smaller naves.

The construction of the chapel of the *Ragusei* in the Dominican complex started in 1581 and the works lasted until 1600. The chapel was inserted next to the post-Tridentine apse, in a part of the complex that once had belonged to Embriaci family, who sold it to Dominicans. The chapel had simple rectangular form. Today it is divided into two levels and the original vault of the Embriaci family room is brought to light by demolishing the ceiling that had been built when the room was transformed into a chapel³¹.

In the chapel, there was the altar dedicated to the St Blaise and to the Virgin Mary. The marble altar was finished in 1595 by Giovanni Maria Pambio³². Two columns in black marble on high, monumental plinths supported “broken”

²⁷ Even in Venice, where they were not allowed to have a consulate, and in Levante: Salonicco, Smyrna, Constantinople, Alexandria. Cf. Ivančević 1966, p. 352.

²⁸ Costantino Gilardi suggested that the foundation of the Ragusan chapel in this complex is related to the Council of Basel-Florence (1431-1449), as it resulted in the reunification with several Eastern Churches. The task of Dominicans was to improve contacts with Greece and Middle East that may also refer to Dubrovnik. Cf. Gilardi 2005, pp. 205-209. However, as explained, history of intense relations between two republics goes back to 14th century, and the construction of the chapel happened in the late 16th century, making this argument rather difficult to accept.

²⁹ Ivi, p. 206.

³⁰ Besides Romanesque one the complex had two more cloisters. In 1445 Dominicans begun building the second cloister while the third one was built between 1445 and 1452 by Emanuele and Lionello Grimaldi. The last one contained a library, the Grimaldi chapel, and sacristy. Cf. Gilardi 2014, pp. 9-10.

³¹ Ivi, p. 53.

³² Ivi, p. 37.

pediment decorated with three figures – Eternal father and two angels. The front side of the altar mensa is divided into three fields; the black marble antependium is decorated with red marble *cartouches* that flank the middle field with a quatrefoil and a lily.

The altar was dismembered and transferred to the church in 1874. The altar itself was moved to the current chapel of San Tommaso (fig. 1), while the Aurelio Lomi's altarpiece was collocated in the second chapel of the right-hand nave³³. Three sculptures of the Eternal Father and the two angels were transferred to the pediment of the second chapel of the right-hand nave, replacing other three statues (fig. 2)³⁴.

The Ragusan chapel also contains the epitaph on the left side wall, recalling the space is dedicated to St Blaise and to the Virgin Mary and that every Ragusan ship that comes to Genoese harbor has to pay a fee for the maintenance of the chapel (fig. 3). Moreover, the Dominicans have to bury every Ragusan who dies in Genua and have to serve the holy mass every week for the souls of the dead and for their families. In addition, they have to celebrate the mass on 3 February, the feast day of St Blaise. The text also mentions the name of the notary Giovanni Augostino from Parma, who obviously styled the document signed on 15 September 1581³⁵. The same wall still features the stone crests of Dubrovnik

³³ The chapels of the right-hand nave are: the *Assunta* chapel, the *San Pietro da Verona* chapel, the *Sant'Antonio* chapel; the *San Pio V* chapel, the *San Biagio* chapel. Ivi, pp. 25-27.

³⁴ Ivi, p. 27.

³⁵ The transcription of the text of the epitaph: INCLYTA RAGUSEORUM GENS QUAM OLIM ALEXANDER ILLE MAGNUS TOT TERRA MARINQ(UE) PRIVILEGIIS / DONAVIT TITULISQ(UE) PRAECLARIS FIDEI ET FORTITUDINIS INSIGNIVIT NINC MARITIMIS ITINERIBUS ILLUSTRIS SED / CHRISTIANA PIETATE CLARIOR SACELLUM HOC DEIPARAE AC D(IVO) BLASIO TUTELARI DICAVIT ET AUXIL PUBLICA / FIDE POLLITICA SE PRO QUALIBET EIUS NAVI GENUAE APPELENTE QUAUOR EIUS MONETAE LIBRAS PATRIBUS HUIUS / CONVENTUS S(ANCTAE) MARIE DE CASTELLO COLLATURAM OMNI MUNERUM IURE LEGATAEQ(UE) CERAE SE ABDICANS EA / TAMEN LEGE UT PATRES HII RAGUSEOS SINGULOS QUI PIE OBIERINT GENUAE PROPRIIS OMNINO SUMPTIBUS HUMENT / FUNUS HONORIFICE EXEQUENTES SACRO EADEM DIE AD ARAM PRIVILEGIIS INSIGNITAM SOLEMNI POMPA PERACTO / ALIISQ(UE) MISSIS AD SUBLEVANDAS EAS ANIMAS ADIUNCTIS CETERUM SINGULIS HEBDOMADIBUS IN EIUS ALTARI PRO/DEFUNCTIS SEMEL BIS PRO NAVIGANTIBUS EIUSDEM GENTIS CELEBRENT QUOTANNIS VERO IN FESTIVIS ASSUMPTAE B(EATAE) / MARIAE SEU OCTAVA SS.(ANCTORUM) BLASII HIERONYMI NICOLAI DIEBUS MISSAM IBI DECANTENT CUI REI ANNUENTE G(E)N(ER)ALI MAG(IST)RO / ORD(INIS) PRAEDIC(ATORUM) SIXTO FABRI LUCEN(SI) PATRES OMNES ASSENSERE EISDEM RAGUSEIS ARCULAM OBLATIONUM HOC LOCO / CONCIDENTES QUAE DEPUTATORUM ARBITRIO RESERVATA EIQUOQUE NATIONI SIT COMMODO QUAE PUBLICO INSTRUMEN / TO IO (ANNIS) AUGUST(INI) PARMARI NOTARII RATA SUNT OMNIA SUB ANNO MDLXXXI DIE XXV SEPTEMB(RIS) DENIAUE RAGUSEI BE / NEFICIORUM MEMORES EORUM PROTECTORI AC PATRONO ILL(USTRISSIMO) D(OMINO) IO(ANNI) AUGUSTINO IUSTINIANO EIUSQ(UE) UXORI NON AUTEM / POSTERIS ULLIS SEPULCHRI LOCUM HOC EODEM IN SACELLO IMPARTIUNTUR ANNO SALUTIS MDC MENSE DECEM(BRI) DIE VII. The transcription was published in Ivančević 1966, pp. 357-358.

formerly at the sides of the altar (fig. 4), which survived the three-year rule of the Ligurian democratic republic (1797-1799), when most of the other noble coat-of-arms in the city were canceled³⁶. The idea to connect directly the chapel with the church was present in the second half of the 18th century, but given a decrease of the number of Ragusan ships in Genoese port in that period, the means were reduced and the costs of that kind of intervention were too high, so the project was abandoned³⁷.

Today, the chapel of Dubrovnik merchants hosts a small museum, opened in 1966. The names of the two current museum rooms maintain the memory of the presence of the Dubrovnik merchants in Genua. In order to gain more space for the museum display, the chapel was divided into two levels (fig. 5); the upper level is a reconstruction of the 14th century room of an Embriaci family home, while at the lower one the quoted marble epitaph, with traces of gilding, still commemorates the founding of the chapel in 1581, thanks to the mediation of Giovanni Agostino Giustiniani Campi.

4. *Aurelio Lomi's altarpiece Martyrdom of St Blaise in the presence of the saints Nicholas, Peter, Dominic, and Jerome*

The large altarpiece by Aurelio Lomi from Pisa (1556-1622)³⁸, originally situated in the Ragusan chapel, was transferred in the 19th century to the chapel of Assumption in Santa Maria di Castello, built by Vincenzo Odone in 1591 (fig. 6). The painting was placed on the existing altar featuring two columns carrying a broken pediment and decorated with five statues (two in the niches flanking the painting and three on the pediment) by Taddeo Carlone and Battista Baguti, executed between 1591 and 1593³⁹. It is possible that Giovanni Agostino Giustiniani Campi, “protector” and “patron” of Ragusan merchants, commissioned this painting as a sign of gratitude for the burial place Ragusan gave to him and his wife in their chapel. The commissioning of altarpieces was already a popular and common practice both in Dubrovnik and by Dubrovnik commissioners abroad⁴⁰.

³⁶ Gilardi 2014, p. 52.

³⁷ Ivanković 1966, p. 356.

³⁸ Oil on canvas, 340x218 cm. Cf. Bernardini 2010. On Lomi see: Ciardi *et al.* 1989 and Bortolotti 2005.

³⁹ Gilardi 2014, p. 27.

⁴⁰ The pioneer of this practice was a commissioner Alvise Gozze (Lujó Gučetić), Ragusan merchant who lived in Ancona. In 1520 he hired Tizian Vecellio to paint him an altarpiece representing Virgin Mary with little Jesus, St Blaise, St Francis and himself. This Anconitan case can be related to Genoese one. In both cases, we have rich merchants as commissioners on one side and renewed painters, as executors of their wishes on the other side. On Gozze commission see: Gudelj 2010, p. 82, and the contribution by Giuseppe Capriotti in this volume.

The painting for the Ragusan chapel is signed and dated 1601 and shows the Martyrdom of St Blaise in the presence of the saints Nicholas, Peter, Dominic, and Jerome. It was painted during Lomi's Genoese period (1597-1605) and is one of the two paintings the Pisan master executed in the same year for the Dominican convent, the other being the Assumption⁴¹. Besides two paintings in Santa Maria di Castello, he was also responsible for some other commissions in Genoa and Liguria: in Ss. Annunziata di Portoria; in the church of the monastery of barefoot Carmelites dedicated to St Anna; in the church of the convent St Francesco in La Spezia and in the church St Siro⁴². Lomi was familiar with post-Tridentine iconography and composition and his engagement in the chapel of *Ragusei* was a strong message from the commissioner who obviously wanted a piece of art from a prominent artist.

The painting is divided into two horizontal zones, forming a typically Florentine composition⁴³. The lower one shows two groups of figures: St Blaise, his three torturers, and two standing witnesses are placed on the left side of the lower level. On the right side, the Roman general is represented with his three guards (fig. 7). All participants are communicating with each other by lively gestures of their hands, which are also used to accentuate communication between Heaven and Earth.

While the group of the lower level is reserved for the scene of the torture, the upper level shows the Heaven with Virgin Mary, saints, and angels (fig. 8). It is possible that the image of the *Madonna della Misericordia* appeared in the center of the upper level of the composition. Was it directly painted on the canvas or it was placed within an oval frame supported by the group of little angels – remains unknown for the moment⁴⁴. We know that the table with the *Madonna and Child* by Barnaba da Modena (1375) was part of the altarpiece until the restoration of 1977 when it was finally removed (fig. 9)⁴⁵.

The subject of the painting represents the scarification of the saint with iron combs for wool, which the torturers use to wound Saint Blaise's right ankle and chest⁴⁶. Simultaneously, from the sky, the apostle Peter, the saints Nicholas, Jerome, and Dominic with angels and Virgin Mary with baby Jesus witness the terrible torture. The marine landscape in the background can be explained as a reference to the Genoese port where Ragusan ships were often anchored.

Saint Blaise, as already mentioned, is saint protector of the Republic of

⁴¹ Gilardi 2014, p. 27.

⁴² Bortolotti 2005.

⁴³ Ratti 1768, p. 450; Pareto *et al.* 1846, p. 138.

⁴⁴ Bernardini 2010.

⁴⁵ Today the painting is exhibited in the upper hall of the *Ragusei*. For restorations of the altarpiece see: Rotondi Terminiello 1978, pp. 278-281. A similar case of the Byzantine icon inserted into baroque altarpiece is the one in Dominican convent, in Dubrovnik – a painting of an unknown painter from Naples showing St Antonin Pierozzi, St Raymundus from Peñafort and Hyacinthus Cracoviensis has also a Byzantine icon painted by Donato Bizman inserted in the upper part of its baroque composition. Cf. Demori Staničić 2008, p. 127.

⁴⁶ Da Varagine 1990, pp. 174-178.

Dubrovnik⁴⁷. According to the legend, St Blaise saved multiple times Ragusans from Venetians and Turks. He became the symbol of Dubrovnik and an inseparable part of its urban and spiritual tissue. From the 15th century, the saint is shown locally with a model or some more complex depiction of the city, which he proudly holds in his hands. From the 16th century, the city became a veduta in the background of the painting, while the patron is placed in front of it, on his own or with other saints, the Virgin or Christ. Moreover, the bishop of Sebasta is shown in the paintings in his ceremonial robes, with attributes – mitre and crosier. The figure of St Blaise with depictions of Dubrovnik can also be found in Barletta, Aquileia, Ancona, Palma de Mallorca and Barcelona, all important seaports for Dubrovnik trade⁴⁸.

An interesting case for discussing this civic iconography of Saint Blaise is represented by three altarpieces for Dubrovnik commissioners by Titian and his workshop. The two paintings that were destined for South-Adriatic city, the polyptych from the former church of St Lazarus – *The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary*⁴⁹, today on the high altar of the cathedral in Dubrovnik and *St Magdalene with St Blaise, Tobias and the Archangel Raphael* in the Dubrovnik Dominican convent, contain models of the city⁵⁰. The earliest Titian altarpiece for Dubrovnik commissioner is *The Virgin Mary with Child, St Francis and St Blaise*, painted for the Franciscan observant convent in Ancona in 1520, San Francesco ad Alto and commissioned by Dubrovnik merchant Alvise Gozze (Lujó Gučetić). Here St Blaise is in his bishop vestments, but the city in the background is Venice, possibly indicating the origin of the painter⁵¹.

While the specific Dubrovnik attribute of the saint is the model of the city, in the rest of Europe it is generally the carder's comb – the instrument of one of his martyrdom. The very scene of the martyrdom becomes more common in the post-Tridentine period, even in Genua itself⁵². Only one painting in Dubrovnik

⁴⁷ Blaise, who lived between the 3rd and 4th centuries, was born in a noble family and raised in the Christian faith and was elected bishop of Sebaste, today's city of Sivas in eastern Turkey. Instead of living in the city Blaise preferred to go to the mountains, in a sort of hermitage where he welcomed many wild animals and treated them with respect and took care of them when injured. At the outbreak of the persecution, the soldiers discovered the cavern where Blaise dwelled with animals, so they arrested him. He was tortured by beheading after a series of tortures, the most famous of which is the scarification with an iron comb for wool carding inflicted by the Roman governor Agricola in 315 or 316, during the empire of Licinius. Cf. Da Varagine 1990, pp. 174-178.

⁴⁸ Lupis 2014, pp. 140-146.

⁴⁹ It was in January 1574 when the polyptych was mentioned for the first time in the report of the apostolic visitor Giovanni Francesca Sormano who wrote that the painting was signed by Titian: «figura assumptionis gloriosae virginis ac multorum sanctorum depictis (!) manu (ut legitur titiani pictoris celeberrimi)». Cf. Tomić 2013, pp. 289-292. See also: Liepopili 1930, p. 10; Marković 1987, pp. 174-175.

⁵⁰ Bralić 2008, pp. 39-75; Gjučić-Bender 2014, p. 301.

⁵¹ Tomić 2010, pp. 93-101; Gudelj 2010, pp. 81-93; Gjučić-Bender 2014, p. 313.

⁵² For example: Caspar de Crayer (1582-1669), *Martyrdom of Saint Blaise*, St Martin,

shows the martyrdom of the Saint, as Ragusan painter Petar Matejević-Mattei (1670-1726) painted the scene of the Saint kneeling in front of his torturers before the beheading. It is placed on the front side of the wooden choir above the main altar in the Saint's church in Dubrovnik⁵³.

St Jerome is usually depicted dressed as a cardinal, beating his breast, working in his study. He is accompanied by usual attributes: a lion, a book, and a cardinal hat. On this altarpiece, St Jerome is shown with his common attributes – cardinal costume and opened book. His birthplace of Stridon, a town in the Roman province of Dalmatia, made Jerome the saint representative of the Illyrian nation. He is especially venerated in Rome where Schiavoni confraternity dedicated him their church in Ripetta, the smaller of the two Roman fluvial ports. The complex of Saint Jerome of the Schiavoni/Illyrians at Ripetta represents an important feature in the life and presentation of Slavic Catholic immigrants from the Balkans⁵⁴. Thus, it is not surprising that St Jerome was a titular of Schiavoni confraternity in Udine and in Pesaro where the confraternity was under his and St Peter's protection from 1453⁵⁵.

On Lomi's painting, St Peter is holding keys of Heaven, his traditional attribute while St Dominic is depicted in a brown habit holding a flame. As the founder of *Ordo Prædicatorum*, St Dominic represents one of those saints whose iconography went through some changes after the Council of Trent. If before the Council he was a contemplative middle-aged man in a brown habit with a stalk of lilies, a book or a star above his head or on his front, in the post-Tridentine paintings he became a more active participant⁵⁶. Finally, St Nicholas is depicted holding a crosier in his right hand and wearing a mitre. St Peter and St Dominic have their eyes on the Virgin Mary while St Jerome is looking at the spectator and St Nicholas at St Blaise. Finally, St Peter is showing with his left hand St Blaise's martyrdom on the Earth.

The choice of the depicted saints was not accidental. Firstly, the inscription in the Ragusan chapel indicates that the Holy Mass had to be celebrated on the holidays of the Assumption, St Blaise, St Jerome and St Nicholas⁵⁷. In Dubrovnik context, these saints, with St Peter and St Dominic, often accompany St Blaise. For example, Virgin's polyptych from the gothic church of St Blaise in Dubrovnik (1440) displays all of them together⁵⁸. Furthermore, on the main polyptych of

Zaventem; an Anonymous Roman follower of Caravaggio, *The Scourging of St Blaise*, Tweed Museum of art, University of Minnesota Duluth; Carlo Maratta, *Martirio di san Biagio*, (1680), Genua, basilica di Santa Maria Assunta in Carignano.

⁵³ Gjukić-Bender 2014, p. 306.

⁵⁴ On Schiavoni/Illyrian confraternity and St Jerome's church and complex in Rome see: Gudelj 2016a, pp. 5-30.

⁵⁵ Ivić 2016, p. 79.

⁵⁶ Cvetnić 2010, p. 8.

⁵⁷ «...eiusdem gentis celebrent quotannis vero in festivis assumptae b(eatae) / Mariae seu octava ss.(anctorum) Blasii Hieronymi Nicolai diebus missam ibi decantent...»

⁵⁸ The polyptych was partly damaged in the fire in 1607. Today, the polyptych is on display in Dubrovnik Cultural history museum. See: Gjukić-Bender 2014, p. 315.

the Dominican church in Dubrovnik painted by local painter Lovro Dobričević (1420-1478) St Blaise is accompanied by St Dominic, St Nicholas, and St Peter⁵⁹. The cult of St Jerome was on the list of mandatory holidays of the Republic from 1445 to 1552 and on St Jerome's feast day September 30, Ragusans celebrated Saint as "all other Dalmatians, his compatriots"⁶⁰. However, this feast was not accompanied by official procession⁶¹. The Ragusan government showed special devotion to St Jerome in 1510 when they commissioned from local painter Nikola Božidarević (1460-1517) the depiction of the Saint for the Great Council's hall, which is not preserved⁶². Finally, large figures of St Jerome and St Blaise were commissioned for the church of St Blaise in Dubrovnik from sculptor Nikola Lazanić (second half of the 16th century), previously active in Rome and member of St Jerome confraternity (he made now lost reliefs with St Jerome for houses belonging to confraternity)⁶³.

5. *Ragusan community or Ragusan confraternity in Genua?*

In order to understand the visual language of the chapel in Genua, we have to compare it with other places of worship with Schiavoni patronage in Italy. Unlike other cases in this volume, the Ragusan presence in Genua was not the product of the immigration provoked by epidemics or Ottoman invasions, but was the consequence of the diplomatic and economic networking. Nevertheless, the two phenomena intersect and entwine, as Ragusan merchants were present in other seaports and trading centers, often interacting with Schiavoni/Illyrian institutions.

One of the signs of the Ragusan presence in these groups is a devotion to St Blaise. In Ancona, for example, Schiavoni founded the Confraternity of St Blaise already in the 15th century, responsible for an altar in the Dominican church. Documents published by Giuseppe Capriotti in this volume show that from 1444, this Schiavoni altar featured an altarpiece, described in an inventory of 1728 as representing at the center the Madonna with Child, on the right St Blaise and St Mary Magdalen and on the left St Jerome and St Lucy⁶⁴. Here, as in Genua, St Blaise is accompanied by St Jerome, the presence of the protectors of Dalmatia and Dubrovnik signaling the presence of Dubrovnik expatriates.

The other documented case of the Confraternity of St Blaise in Italy is the one in Ascoli Piceno⁶⁵. Capriotti noticed that Schiavoni in Ascoli worked mostly in

⁵⁹ Ivi, p. 297.

⁶⁰ Lonza 2009, pp. 257-259.

⁶¹ Ivi, p. 422.

⁶² Marković 1987, p. 352.

⁶³ Ivić 2016, p. 51.

⁶⁴ Cf. Capriotti 2018; Capriotti forthcoming.

⁶⁵ On Schiavoni confraternity in Ascoli Piceno see: Capriotti 2016, pp. 30-46.

the wool business as weavers or dyers or were carrying out hard and humble jobs. Their confraternity named *Societas illiricorum sive sclavorum scole sancti Blaxii* was connected with the church of Santa Maria della Carità, where most of them were to be buried. The 1489 contract with the prior of the said church obliged him to sing a mass on the feast days of St Blaise, St Jerome, St Michael the Archangel and St Nicholas, for the fixed payment of one *bolognino* for each mass. In Genua, almost the same demand was written on the epitaph of the foundation of the chapel.

In Ascoli, the priest had to administer the sacraments to members of the confraternity, those alive and those who were about to die. In Genua, Dominicans had to bury Ragusan who would die in Genua, but there is no mention of sacraments: this may be a signal that no permanent community was present in the Ligurian port. In addition, the Genoese Dominicans have to pay all the costs because Ragusan ships paid them “quatuor libras” every time they came to the port of Genua.

Unlike other mentioned Schiavoni confraternities, the Ragusans in Genua never had the official association with a name, as they seem not to have immigrated permanently to the Ligurian port. They formed a fluid community of Ragusan merchants and businessmen who stayed in Genua just for few days before continuing their business in other countries.

Nevertheless, Ragusans who came to Genua as merchants had a place to gather and worship their patron saints – it was their chapel in the Dominican church of Santa Maria di Castello dating from 1581. Their diplomatic representatives assured the basic spiritual service and a burial to wondering merchants of the Republic, the contract with Dominicans carved on the big epitaph situated on the lateral wall of the chapel. Moreover, their chapel with the altarpiece of Martyrdom of their saint protector represented an important identity marker; a place that Ragusans felt as their own, but also comprehensible to the local community. The Lomi's painting made a spiritual connection between their patron saint, painter's own visions of the scene of his martyrdom (influenced by Florentine mannerism) and maritime landscape that evokes Ragusan merchant network.

Ragusan community in Genua represents some kind of fluid society out of their *Patria* and their chapel was founded under circumstances that were different from those of immigrants organized in Schiavoni confraternities. Important patronage of Giustiniani Campi, who even rose to prominence of Genovese doge between 1591 and 1593, demonstrates the level of diplomatic exchange between two maritime republics. Therefore, the chapel provided a familiar place of worship for Dubrovnik merchants, embellished by artists important in Genoese context, who enriched the visual culture of Ragusan and Schiavoni/Illyrian patronage in Early Modern Italy.

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Appendix

Fig. 1. Giovanni Maria Pambio, *The marble altar*, 1595, Genua, church of St Maria di Castello, San Tommaso d'Aquino chapel (originally situated in the Ragusan chapel) (Photo A. Ruso)



Fig. 2. Giovanni Maria Pambio, *Figures of Eternal Father and the two angels*, 1595, Genua, church of St Maria di Castello, San Biagio chapel (originally situated in the Ragusan chapel) (Photo A. Ruso)

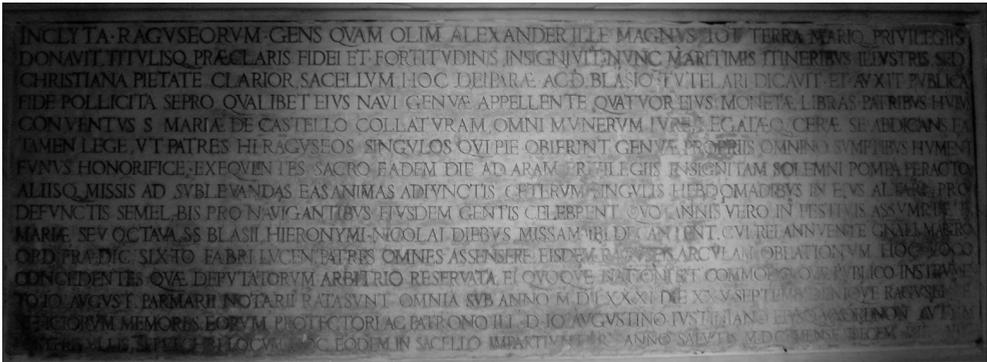


Fig. 3. Inscription on the epitaph of the foundation of the chapel, 1600, Genua, former Ragusan chapel, today museum of the convent of St Maria di Castello (Photo A. Ruso)



Fig. 4. Reliefs of the crests of Dubrovnik, Genua, former Ragusan chapel, today museum of the convent of St Maria di Castello (Photo A. Ruso)

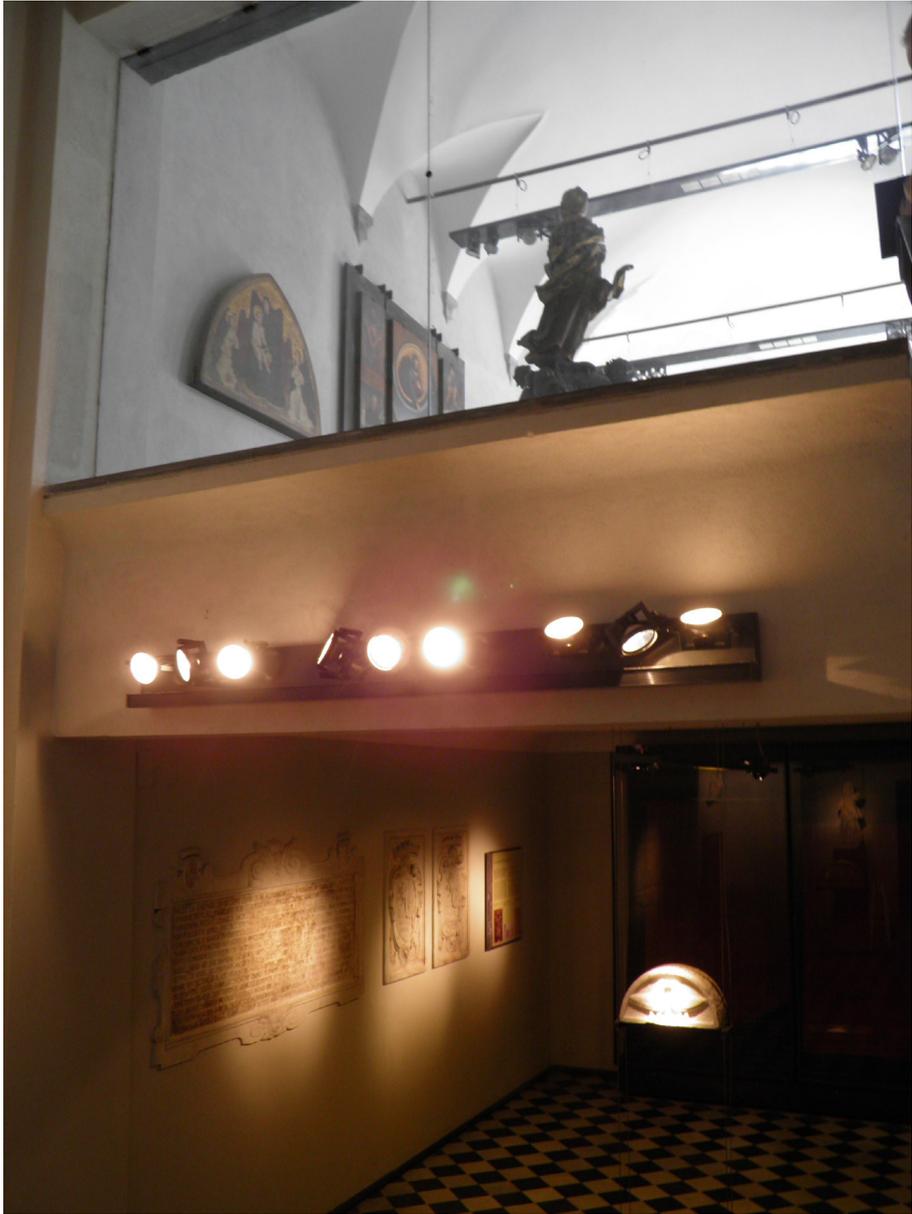


Fig. 5. Former Ragusan chapel transformed in 1966 into museum on two levels, Genua, the convent of St Maria di Castello (Photo A. Ruso)



Fig. 6. Aurelio Lomi, *Martyrdom of St Blaise in the presence of the saints Nicholas, Peter, Dominic, and Jerome*, 1601, Genua, church of St Maria di Castello, San Biagio chapel (originally situated in the Ragusan chapel) (Photo A. Ruso)



Fig. 7. Aurelio Lomi, *Martyrdom of St Blaise in the presence of the saints Nicholas, Peter, Dominic, and Jerome*, 1601, detail, Genua, church of St Maria di Castello, San Biagio chapel (Photo A. Ruso)



Fig. 8. Aurelio Lomi, *Martyrdom of St Blaise in the presence of the saints Nicholas, Peter, Dominic, and Jerome*, 1601, detail, Genua, church of St Maria di Castello, San Biagio chapel (Photo A. Ruso)



Fig. 9. Barnaba da Modena, *Madonna and Child*, 1375, detail, Genua, museum of the convent of St Maria di Castello (originally situated in the Ragusan chapel, then transferred into San Biagio chapel with Lomi's altarpiece) (Photo A. Ruso)

Section II

Schiavoni/Illyrians in the Papal city: Rome

L'Urbe e l'Adriatico orientale: i cittadini e le chiese nell'orbita della Serenissima e della Repubblica di Ragusa/Dubrovnik a Roma nel primo evo moderno*

Giuseppe Bonaccorso**

Abstract

Nella letteratura diaristica romana, edita tra il Quattrocento e la fine del Settecento, viene spesso usato il termine “veneziano” per identificare i cittadini della Serenissima residenti nell'Urbe, provenienti da qualunque città o territorio soggetto alla giurisdizione della Repubblica. Tale specifica è necessaria per districare l'articolato puzzle della presenza delle diverse comunità e delegazioni politiche veneziane a Roma, tra cui anche gli Schiavoni/Ilirici provenienti dalle aree della costa orientale dell'Adriatico sotto il controllo veneto.

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Infatti se da un lato è noto come la Serenissima per tutto l'evo moderno si identificasse con una rappresentanza religiosa e istituzionale allocata nel complesso architettonico di San Marco, meglio noto come Palazzo di Venezia, dall'altro è meno distinguibile la localizzazione della variegata comunità dei sudditi veneziani che, prevalentemente artigiani e mercanti, si insediarono nell'itinerario ideale che portava da Campo dei Fiori, attraverso via del Pellegrino, sino a Borgo e poi direttamente a San Pietro. Nel presente contributo si cerca quindi, da un lato, di riordinare le diverse testimonianze che si sono sovrapposte nei secoli circa le porzioni di città abitate dai cittadini originari della Serenissima tracciandone una possibile mappa insediativa e, dall'altro, di individuare le istituzioni e le chiese a essi collegati. Infine, per completare il quadro degli immigranti di lingua a estesa maggioranza slava originari della costa orientale dell'Adriatico si propongono alcuni suggerimenti sulla possibile ubicazione dei cittadini della Repubblica di Ragusa/Dubrovnik a Roma.

In the Roman diaristic literature, published between the fifteenth and the end of the eighteenth century, the term “Venetian” is often used to identify the citizens of the Serenissima residing in Rome, coming from any city or territory subject to the jurisdiction of the Republic. This specification is necessary to untangle the complex puzzle of the various Venetian communities and political representatives in Rome, including the Schiavoni / Illyrians coming from the areas of the eastern coast of the Adriatic under Venetian control. In fact, if on the one hand it is known that in the Early Modern period the Serenissima identified itself with a religious and institutional representation allocated to the architectural complex of San Marco, better known as the Palazzo di Venezia; on the other, the localization of the variegated communities of Venetian subjects is less distinguishable, with many artisans and merchants settled in the ideal itinerary that led from Campo dei Fiori, Via del Pellegrino, to Borgo and then directly to San Pietro. The present contribution is focused on reorganizing the different testimonies over the centuries on the portions of cities inhabited by the citizens of the Serenissima thus tracing a possible map of their settlement, as well as on identifying the institutions and the churches connected to them. Finally, to complete the picture of Slavic-speaking immigrants originating from the eastern coast of the Adriatic, some suggestions are proposed on the possible location of citizens of the Republic of Dubrovnik in Rome.

1. *Venezia e i veneziani a Roma*

Il concetto di “nazione” era in uso sino dal Medioevo per contraddistinguere raggruppamenti di persone di analoga lingua, origine geografica e religione¹. Queste comunità nazionali, sorte inizialmente per scopi filantropici, si consolidarono con il tempo e, gradualmente, si trasformarono e rappresentarono le istituzioni nazionali di provenienza, facendosi promotrici della realizzazione di chiese significative a esse collegate e dotandosi di statuti fortemente strutturati. Esse acquisirono gradualmente una considerevole forza politica nei rapporti

¹ Per una sintesi sul fenomeno delle chiese nazionali a Roma si vedano i recenti: Koller, Kubersky 2015; Molnár *et al.* 2017, con bibliografia.

sia con la città che li ospitava sia con le altre comunità straniere, divenendo nei fatti l'emanazione diretta anche dell'azione diplomatica nei confronti della curia romana.

Diventando punti di riferimento per i diversi gruppi di “forestieri residenti” a Roma, le cosiddette “comunità nazionali” si identificavano con la propria chiesa di pertinenza, spesso dedicata ai santi che ne rappresentavano la storia religiosa “nazionale” (fig. 1), trasformandola sovente in un complesso più ampio costituito anche dal convento, seminario, ospedale e convitto per i pellegrini in visita nella città eterna. Queste comunità rafforzarono il loro ruolo politico nell'Urbe anche grazie all'acquisizione di immobili, alla consistenza demografica o all'importanza delle professioni che i loro componenti ricoprivano nello scacchiere sociale romano e internazionale. I gruppi “stranieri” più grandi erano collocati in un isolato ben preciso e definito, e avevano la possibilità di godere della cosiddetta libertà di quartiere, che gli permetteva di esercitare commerci senza pagare dazi doganali e di non essere perseguiti all'interno del loro isolato dalla giustizia capitolina.

All'interno di questo quadro generale, il caso dei veneziani è piuttosto atipico e singolare². Intanto la comunità si presentava piuttosto vasta in termini numerici, principalmente per il fatto che per “veneziani” non si consideravano solo le popolazioni provenienti da Venezia e dalla laguna, ma anche da tutte le altre città e regioni che erano sotto il controllo della Dominante³. Quindi, solo per fare un esempio, a Roma venivano considerati forestieri e genericamente veneziani i seguenti cittadini: patavini, veronesi, vicentini, bresciani, bergamaschi, ma anche friulani, istriani, dalmati. Tutte queste variegata comunità esercitavano mestieri artigianali di grande qualità e singolarità e per tale motivo erano molto consistenti e ricercate. La loro presenza era quindi piuttosto diffusa in tutto il territorio comunale, con una concentrazione maggiore all'interno dei rioni Pigna, Campo Marzio, Parione, Regola e Ponte (fig. 2). L'area di via del Pellegrino si distingue come la zona dove la loro presenza era numerosa, spesso dovuta al raggruppamento delle botteghe di bigiotteria, oreficeria, ebanisteria, vetreria, articoli religiosi e ricami; tutte professioni verso le quali i cittadini della Serenissima esercitavano una sorta di monopolio⁴. Per tale motivo, i veneziani appaiono con frequenza in connessione con le chiese che rappresentano le loro attività artigianali.

E così la maggior parte dei confratelli di Sant'Eligio degli Orefici era di origine vicentina o veneziana. Oppure per la presenza nell'area adiacente al

² Per quanto non direttamente giustificato si fa riferimento agli interventi di Giuseppe Bonaccorso e di Fabiana Ciafrei presentati al convegno annuale del 2015 della “The Renaissance Society of America” tenutosi a Berlino presso la Humboldt-Universität (cfr. Bonaccorso in corso di stampa a e Ciafrei in corso di stampa).

³ Sulla presenza dei veneziani a Roma cfr. Bonaccorso 1998 e 1999; Scarpa 2011; Nicolai 2015.

⁴ Per studi e documenti si rimanda a: Bertolotti 1884.

rione Regola dei fabbricatori di armi, corazze e coltelli (fig. 3), professioni quasi esclusivamente esercitate da bresciani e bergamaschi, i confratelli della chiesa dei SS. Faustino e Giovita erano prevalentemente di provenienza bresciana (fig. 4)⁵. E non è un caso che ambedue queste confraternite di mestiere si trovassero nell'area circostante via del Pellegrino. E non è ancora un caso che i fedeli della chiesa di Santa Lucia della Chiavica, che insiste nella stessa zona, fossero ancora in buona parte veneziani⁶.

Molti altri artigiani originari della Serenissima (in particolare patavini, veneziani e zaratini) erano specializzati nell'editoria e diverse botteghe tipografiche si trovavano lungo l'itinerario che conduceva, attraverso via del Pellegrino, direttamente ai borghi. Anche per questo motivo una contenuta presenza veneta era individuabile anche nel rione Borgo⁷. Una loro significativa concentrazione era ravvisabile anche nella zona dei Coronari, proprio per la dislocazione dei fabbricatori di oggetti di vetro e di rosari lungo l'arteria che conduceva da piazza Navona a ponte Sant'Angelo e poi a San Pietro.

Anche nel rione Campo Marzio (nello specifico, nell'area comprendente via del Corso e piazza Colonna), la presenza veneta era consistente, proprio per la permanenza di artigiani collegati all'edilizia tradizionalmente provenienti da comunità collegate alla Serenissima. Tali gruppi sono individuabili nell'ambito professionale dei falegnami, ebanisti e muratori di origine bergamasca o dalmata, come pure degli stuccatori di origine friulana. La provenienza geografica di questi addetti all'edilizia cambierà tuttavia (e non poco) dopo l'ondata migratoria delle maestranze edili lombarde e ticinesi dalla fine del Cinquecento fino alla prima metà dell'Ottocento, seppure permarrà una forte presenza bergamasca nei lavori inerenti la falegnameria e carpenteria. Come noto, questi professionisti del cantiere erano soliti allocare nei rioni periferici della città e in particolare a Monti, Campitelli e Campo Marzio.

Ancora veneti erano riuniti poi, e in buon numero, anche all'interno dell'isolato di palazzo Venezia. Si ricorda che il complesso edilizio, ubicato sotto le pendici del Campidoglio, conteneva il palazzo (sede dell'ambasciata) e la residenza del cardinale titolare dell'annessa chiesa di San Marco. Quindi la sede diplomatica, identificabile con il cosiddetto Palazzo di Venezia, non solo non era separata dall'edificio sacro, ma inglobava strutturalmente la chiesa stessa (fig. 5). La realtà edilizia quindi sembra configurarsi come un vero e proprio

⁵ Sulle vicende della chiesa e della comunità dei Bresciani a Roma si veda Bonaccorso in corso di stampa b.

⁶ Nell'ambito degli appartenenti alla Serenissima, bisogna ancora menzionare la presenza nei cantieri barocchi di falegnami e muratori bergamaschi, che sovente vengono contemporaneamente inclusi sia nell'ambito delle maestranze lombarde sia nell'orbita della Serenissima. Ancora bergamaschi erano pure i lavoratori della seta. Bergamo (come Brescia tra l'altro), nel Seicento e Settecento è all'interno dei confini giurisdizionali della Serenissima. Per studi e documenti si rimanda a Bertolotti 1881.

⁷ Bertolotti 1884, pp. 11-13, 24-42, 70-80.

quartiere, abitato e frequentato da molti veneziani occupati nel palazzo, come parte considerevole della servitù dell'ambasciatore, ma anche della circoscritta schiera di rivenditori ambulanti che nell'area dell'attuale piazza Venezia e della piazzetta antistante la chiesa di San Marco vendevano sale e tabacchi a un prezzo inferiore rispetto alle altre rivendite romane, poiché, per le prerogative della libertà di quartiere, non erano esigibili i dazi doganali. Da tenere presente che la Serenissima (i cui cittadini erano considerati forestieri, e non stranieri) era l'unica entità politica di lingua italiana (e non di lingua straniera) che per la dimensione chiusa del suo insediamento e per la ricchezza multi-culturale delle sue città e provincie godeva della summenzionata libertà⁸. La difesa di tali prerogative di "quartiere", spesso messa in discussione dalla politica cittadina pontificia, esigeva anche la presenza di un nutrito contingente di soldati di guardia, nelle cui fila trovarono generalmente impiego bresciani, bergamaschi e dalmati (fig. 6).

2. *L'isolato di San Marco*

Il quartiere di palazzo Venezia accorpava quindi due piazze che godevano di una giurisdizione autonoma e al suo interno comprendeva botteghe, fontane, lavatoi, officine e piccole residenze di veneziani che lavoravano in diverse mansioni domestiche nel palazzo stesso⁹. La franchigia doganale e l'asilo ai criminali erano solo alcune delle specificità dell'insediamento veneto che per tali rivendicazioni era sovente al centro di frizioni tra l'amministrazione capitolina e la delegazione veneziana.

Da uno schematico riesame storico si evince come la prima confraternita dei veneziani sorgesse all'interno dell'antica basilica di San Marco¹⁰, in una zona caratterizzata da una contrazione abitativa particolarmente intensa fin dall'alto Medioevo. Nell'area, identificabile con l'antica *platea nova sancti Marci*, esisteva l'ospedale del SS. Salvatore per veneziani bisognosi, oltre a una modesta casa adibita ad alloggio dei cardinali titolari.

La struttura della chiesa attuale risale però al XV secolo e si deve all'intervento del cardinale Pietro Barbo, il quale riedificò la basilica e si

⁸ Le altre nazioni che tradizionalmente avocavano a sé i diritti di Quartiere erano la Francia e la Spagna. Per un esempio di violazione della libertà di quartiere intorno al complesso di San Marco, cfr.: Barberini *et al.* 2011, pp. 220-221.

⁹ L'isolato di palazzo Venezia, veniva anche identificato come quartiere di San Marco. Per un'analisi delle sue trasformazioni si veda di Apricena 2002. Per un approfondimento delle dinamiche residenziali interne al palazzo e della libertà (o Franco) di quartiere, cfr. Bonaccorso 1998.

¹⁰ Un antico oratorio venne trasformato in basilica da Papa Marco, nel 336, con l'aiuto dell'imperatore Costantino. La chiesa venne poi di nuovo riedificata nel IX secolo da Gregorio IV.

preoccupò di ricostruire una nuova dimora cardinalizia, inglobando l'antica torre della Biscia e giungendo alla metà della facciata dell'attuale palazzo. Divenuto papa nel 1464 con il nome di Paolo II (1464-1471), Barbo trasformò l'abitazione del cardinale titolare in un'articolata dimora pontificia (fig. 7), promuovendo l'edificazione di un nuovo edificio quadrilatero, comprendente un ampio cortile che cinto da un doppio ordine di arcate incorporava quella che doveva, in un certo senso, definirsi la chiesa nazionale. L'intervento probabilmente coordinato e progettato da Francesco del Borgo (1415 c.-1468) prevedeva il completamento del prospetto sulla piazza, il proseguimento del lato settentrionale lungo la via *Papalis* (poi terminato dal nipote Marco Barbo e da Lorenzo Cybo) e un giardino recintato (il cosiddetto Viridario) collegato di spigolo al nucleo originale in corrispondenza della torre angolare¹¹.

Solo nel 1468, Paolo II elesse ufficialmente la basilica a chiesa rappresentativa dei veneziani, donando così alla sua patria uno dei più rilevanti titoli cardinalizi¹². Prima di questo momento i residenti veneziani non avevano mai gestito direttamente uno spazio sacro. Con la concessione della basilica si riconosceva indirettamente la costituzione di un sodalizio nazionale con l'obbligo anche della manutenzione della chiesa, impegno però mai rispettato fino in fondo, forse perché tale imposizione non si conformava alla politica ufficiale della Serenissima orientata a una gestione autonoma del sacro. Quindi per quanto ormai la chiesa di San Marco si andasse progressivamente identificando come l'antenna religiosa della comunità veneta a Roma, il palazzo rimaneva un luogo di rappresentanza e dimora estiva dei pontefici, avendo ospitato negli anni principi, sovrani e alti personaggi della politica internazionale. Anzi dopo il Sacco del 1527 il palazzo divenne gradualmente la sede di un'intensa attività diplomatica e religiosa, ospitando spesso concistori pubblici e segreti, udienze generali e private.

Il palazzo restò una residenza papale sino al 1564, quando Pio IV de' Medici (1559-1565), per propiziarsi le simpatie della Repubblica di Venezia, offrì il palazzo di San Marco alla Serenissima¹³, affinché questo diventasse dimora esclusiva degli ambasciatori veneziani residenti a Roma (fig. 8). Ma la donazione si sarebbe concretizzata a patto di rispettare due vincoli: l'ala dell'edificio prospiciente l'attuale via del Plebiscito doveva essere destinata a uso abitativo del cardinale titolare della chiesa; mentre gli ambienti principali che si affacciavano sopra la piazza grande (detta anche della Conca per la presenza di una fontana) venivano assegnati alla Repubblica che tuttavia si doveva far carico del mantenimento delle due intere fabbriche del palazzo e della chiesa¹⁴.

¹¹ All'interno della vastissima bibliografia su palazzo Venezia, si segnalano almeno i classici: Dengel *et al.* 1909; Hermanin 1948; Casanova Uccella 1980; Frommel 1983 e 1984; Casanova Uccella 1992; Barberini *et al.* 2011; Furlan, Tosini 2015.

¹² Gullino 2015.

¹³ Bonaccorso 1998.

¹⁴ Cfr. almeno Casanova Uccella 1980, pp. 151-153.

Questo editto ricopre una grande rilevanza per la storia della città, poiché nessun altro stato in quel periodo era in possesso di una sede permanente per la propria ambasciata, tra l'altro, nel caso in esame, strettamente connessa con la chiesa nazionale di pertinenza.

La situazione che si generò è quindi piuttosto singolare: nonostante che i cittadini veneziani fossero prevalentemente residenti lungo la direttrice Campo dei Fiori-Vaticano, la Serenissima venne in possesso di una chiesa e di un palazzo diplomatico, dipendente direttamente dal Senato, posto in un'area significativa di Roma, dove però la presenza dei suoi concittadini era piuttosto rarefatta. Dal punto di vista politico-amministrativo questa situazione di multiforme condominio generò diversi contrasti che si concretizzarono nella rinuncia dei papi a risiedere stabilmente nel palazzo e nell'acuirsi di un duraturo contrasto tra i cardinali residenti e gli ambasciatori veneti, causato dall'uso comune della scala, del cortile e della sala Regia. Progressivamente la basilica fu assunta a luogo deputato alle cerimonie della Serenissima in onore della Repubblica, che vi esercitava il diritto di alto patronato¹⁵. Alla fine del Cinquecento la graduale realizzazione della nuova residenza papale sul Quirinale coincise con la corrispondente perdita di interesse per il palazzo di San Marco. Sia Sisto V Peretti (1585-1590) sia Clemente VIII Aldobrandini (1592-1605) risiedevano sempre più saltuariamente negli appartamenti riservati ai cardinali protettori di San Marco. Tale disaffezione per il palazzo divenne sempre più evidente dopo l'ultimo Concistoro del 1597, tanto da portare alla decisione da parte di Clemente VIII di affidare l'intero complesso edilizio all'ambasciatore di Venezia.

Ma se da una parte l'allontanamento della corte papale consentì il consolidamento della diplomazia veneziana ai piedi del Campidoglio, proprio questa localizzazione aveva da sempre alimentato un ulteriore contrasto: l'area del complesso di San Marco era circondato dalle residenze delle più antiche famiglie della nobiltà romana (fig. 9). Tale sovrapposizione di tradizioni e di reciproche subordinazioni è evidente nella struttura della basilica marciana, nella quale le tombe dell'aristocrazia veneziana non trovano spazio nelle cappelle poste lungo le navate laterali, di proprietà delle famiglie romane, ma sono allocate nelle porzioni disponibili tra una cappella e l'altra¹⁶. Si possono così individuare, in una sequenza che conduce dalla porta di entrata lungo tutta la navata destra, i monumenti funebri realizzati da Cosimo Fancelli per i cardinali titolari della chiesa Francesco Pisani e Cristoforo Vidman; mentre nel percorso della navata sinistra si possono osservare le architetture commemorative del procuratore di San Marco, Pietro Basadonna (opera di Filippo Carcani) e quello del titolare di San Marco, Marcantonio Bragadin (opera di Lazzaro Morelli). A questi sovrapposti interessi identitari tra la nobiltà romana e le famiglie dei cardinali veneti residenti nel palazzo di San Marco, si aggiungono

¹⁵ Bonaccorso 1998, p. 197.

¹⁶ Parlato 2015.

poi i rapporti conflittuali tra la Serenissima e il governo di Roma¹⁷. La politica della Repubblica intrapresa verso il papato è infatti storicamente divergente da una linea diplomatica concorde, seguita dalle famiglie “filo papaliste” (rappresentate dai Barbaro, Corner, Grimani e Pisani), e da una linea critica, alimentata da diversi esponenti della nobiltà veneziana che consideravano il dialogo con il governo della chiesa di Roma come nocivo alle politiche autonome nella politica estera e nella gestione del patrimonio immobiliare della chiesa nella Serenissima (Badoer, Contarini, Donà, Gritti, Zen)¹⁸. In tale prospettiva, anche una carriera cardinalizia a Roma era vista con pregiudizio, in quanto allontanava da Venezia uomini brillanti e ingegnosi, rendendoli più fedeli alla causa religiosa che a quella della politica lagunare. Queste posizioni critiche verso la corte romana rendono a tutt’oggi non completamente chiara la decisione, da parte dei cardinali veneti, di realizzare i propri monumenti funebri nella chiesa di San Marco. In particolare non si comprende se la motivazione si debba ricercare nell’ottica di raffigurare degnamente la Serenissima a Roma o piuttosto nella volontà di testimoniare, per i cardinali defunti, la chiusura ideale del loro percorso religioso con la sepoltura nell’Urbe¹⁹.

Confronti, contraddizioni e atipicità del caso si evidenziano ancora di più se si considera la chiesa come un prolungamento del palazzo (e non viceversa). Questa situazione indirizza fatalmente gli sforzi economici impiegati dalla Repubblica veneziana nella manutenzione del solo complesso edilizio coincidente con la porzione residenziale dell’ambasciatore. Ma nonostante queste diatribe, il palazzo, sebbene fosse in condominio tra i rappresentati del potere statale e religioso, restò per la Serenissima un’importante occasione per manifestare la propria identità nazionale nella città eterna. Ma anche in questo caso, l’immagine di una diretta emanazione della politica veneziana nell’Urbe fu ostacolata da una serie continua di rivendicazioni tra cardinali titolari e ambasciatori che portarono nel 1565 alla realizzazione di una serie di lavori atti a delimitare lo spazio residenziale del cardinale a favore di quello occupato dall’ambasciatore. Come giustamente ha notato Fabiana Ciafrei: «L’operazione restituisce l’intento, da parte del governo lagunare, di riproporre a Roma il modello applicato in patria, dove il potere religioso era subordinato a quello politico»²⁰. Il complesso puzzle della suddivisione per zone di competenza tra gli oratori e i prelati di San Marco è mostrato in una nota pianta conservata nell’Archivio del Vicariato (fig. 10) degli inizi del Seicento²¹. Queste suddivisioni si rilevarono presto effimere, in quanto già Gregorio XV Ludovisi (1621-1623) dovette intervenire per dirimere successive controversie riguardanti l’uso delle sale di rappresentanza e delle scale. In questo caso, il papa ribadì d’autorità

¹⁷ Furlan, Tosini 2015, pp. 6-13.

¹⁸ Gullino 2015.

¹⁹ Ciafrei in corso di stampa.

²⁰ *Ibidem*.

²¹ Casanova Uccella 1980, p. 152; Bonaccorso 1998, p. 193; Bonaccorso 1999, p. 112.

l'uso comune dello scalone posto a settentrione sulla via Papale, del cortile grande e della sala Regia. Dalla frequenza di tali dispute si può facilmente dedurre come la manutenzione dell'edificio fosse circoscritta a interventi minimi e indispensabili.

Altre divergenze riguardavano anche la quotidiana macchina organizzativa della parrocchia, in quanto la chiesa era officiata prevalentemente da canonici romani, che gestivano in modo autonomo le attività liturgiche e sociali della chiesa.

Per tutte queste ragioni, non è inusuale che sia il palazzo sia la basilica non recassero i simboli caratterizzanti dell'identità veneziana, seppure fossero presenti stemmi che rimandavano a papa Barbo o alla rappresentanza cardinalizia veneta (fig. 11)²². Solo molto tempo dopo saranno inseriti stemmi ed epigrafi che rimandano direttamente alla proprietà della Serenissima.

Questa incongruenza, identificabile nella latitanza di contrassegni che riaffermavano il ruolo del palazzo come strumento di rappresentazione dell'identità secolare veneziana, è già colta dall'ambasciatore veneziano Niccolò Sagredo, quando il 9 marzo 1652 scrivendo al Doge osserva: «[...] che in tutto questo insigne palazzo nelle parti esteriori non vi è segno della nobile Repubblica. All'incontro vi restano le arme et i stemmi ponteficii»²³. Sembra che questo appello dell'ambasciatore sia stato in parte ignorato dal Senato veneziano, in quanto nessun nuovo simbolo venne collocato nelle facciate esterne dell'edificio. L'indicazione di un parziale diniego, però, fu contraddetta dal probabile finanziamento di una grande campagna di restauro dell'intero complesso. Sagredo aveva compreso, forse, come il restauro dell'imponente palazzo potesse allo stesso modo manifestare emblematicamente il potere della Serenissima a Roma, in un ambito cittadino dove l'emergenza veneta era comunque limitata dagli interessi delle principali famiglie capitoline.

3. *Gli altri sudditi veneziani presenti in città*

Precisata quindi la difficile coesistenza tra i cardinali di San Marco e gli ambasciatori della Serenissima, va sottolineato come fosse comunque numerosa la presenza a Roma di nobili e alti prelati veneti²⁴, che possedevano alloggi e palazzi altamente simbolici, come pure mirabili cappelle localizzate in chiese significative nel centro della città. Si ricordi almeno il pregevole palazzo Grimani

²² Sul ruolo che rivestono alcuni cardinali veneziani per lavori e progetti destinati al palazzo di Venezia e ad altri luoghi nell'Urbe, si veda: Tosini 2015.

²³ La testimonianza è citata da: Barberini *et al.* 2011, p. 174.

²⁴ Gli investimenti dei cardinali veneti nella Roma del Cinquecento sono analizzati in Fontana 2015.

realizzato nella seconda metà del Seicento da Carlo Fontana oppure la celebre cappella funebre della famiglia Cornaro commissionata a Gianlorenzo Bernini in Santa Maria della Vittoria che ne eternerà la fama genealogica a Roma. E, ancora, la presenza della famiglia Corner nella realizzazione del complesso dei Crociferi di Santa Maria in Trivio²⁵. Si rammenta, inoltre, la settecentesca residenza dei Vidman, la quale diverrà successivamente l'Ospizio secolare nazionale dei vescovi veneti e che, come tutte le opere precedenti, è ubicata nel rione Trevi²⁶. A chiusura di questa panoramica nobiliare, si segnalano le residenze degli Ottoboni, partendo da quella collocata tra la centralissima via del Corso e via della Vite, per terminare alla nota corte settecentesca del cardinale Pietro Ottoboni (1667-1740) nel palazzo della Cancelleria, anch'esso ubicato, forse non a caso, nel rione Parione, una porzione di città caratterizzata da un'alta densità di residenti veneti²⁷.

Analizzando meglio l'ampia area comprendente i contingenti rioni Parione, Regola e Ponte, si può così ulteriormente precisare la presenza dei cittadini veneziani, rammentando ancora che con tale definizione si intendeva la popolazione che proveniva dall'interno dei confini politici e giurisdizionali della Serenissima e che comprendeva pure i residenti originari delle aree limitrofe che erano influenzate culturalmente e visivamente dalla stessa Repubblica (fig. 12).

Come già accennato, per tutto l'evo moderno, venivano considerati veneziani molti artigiani, quali orafi, vetrai, argentieri, armigeri, indoratori e merciai, anche se provenienti da città diverse, quali veneziani, vicentini, veronesi, bresciani e bergamaschi (fig. 13). Le testimonianze archivistiche, informandoci della consuetudine dei conduttori delle botteghe di oreficeria e di bigiotteria ad abitare negli stessi stabili (probabilmente per controllare i forni da fuoco che occorre per produrre tali prodotti), indirettamente ci confermano come questi artigiani dimorassero nell'area dell'ansa destra del Tevere, dato riaffermato anche dagli stati delle anime²⁸. I laboratori di oreficeria erano talmente numerosi lungo via del Pellegrino che la strada venne paragonata nell'Ottocento a quella di Rialto a Venezia²⁹.

Non si possono quindi trarre delle conclusioni definitive, ma sembra evidente come diverse chiese legate alla cultura religiosa dei domini veneti, si affacciassero verso il fiume Tevere. Si pensi a Santa Lucia della Chiavica per i veneziani, a Sant'Eligio degli Orefici per tutti i veneti³⁰, a Sant'Egidio dei Ferrai per i bresciani e i bergamaschi, a Ss. Faustino e Giovita per i bresciani; ma anche al posizionamento nei pressi delle ripe teverine di San Crisogono (patrono di Zara). Tutto ciò ci induce a pensare a un progetto coordinato e

²⁵ Nicolai 2015, pp. 392-396.

²⁶ Micalizzi 2003, in particolare la scheda di T. Manfredi sul palazzo Vidman alle pp. 34-35.

²⁷ Per un profilo del cardinale Pietro Ottoboni si veda il recente: Matitti 2013 e la bibliografia ivi contenuta.

²⁸ Bertolotti 1884; Bonaccorso 1998, p. 204.

²⁹ Bertolotti 1884, pp. 30-31.

³⁰ Ivi, pp. 11-13, 28-39, 71-77, 84-85.

non a una semplice casualità. Forse sono solo sorprendenti congetture, tuttavia andrebbero verificate.

Il Tevere come rappresentazione dell'Adriatico dunque? Probabilmente no, ma come una rappresentazione aulica e fantasiosa del Canal Grande forse sì. E così si riesce anche a comprendere perché nel Settecento il cardinale Pietro Ottoboni si fece portare una gondola direttamente da Venezia per celebrare un sacro connubio tra le acque fluviali e lacunari. Come noto, fu una celebrazione fallita, poiché la forte corrente fece rovesciare subito la gondola. E allora questa riproposizione del matrimonio tra Venezia e il mare, in questo caso tra Venezia e Roma, attraverso il Tevere, non potrà che essere rappresentato solo dalla bella fontana fatta realizzare nel 1729 dagli ambasciatori della Serenissima all'interno del cortile di palazzo Venezia per opera dello scultore Carlo Monaldi (1683c.-1760c.). La fontana dedicata allo *Sposalizio di Venezia con il mare* era stata collocata al centro del cortile semi-pubblico del palazzo, in uno spazio chiuso alla polizia pontificia, ma aperto per feste e sollazzi all'allegria popolazione romana.

4. *I Dalmati a Roma: una possibile topografia sacra*

Anche San Girolamo degli Schiavoni (oggi dei Croati), chiesa di riferimento dei residenti originari della costa orientale dell'Adriatico, è inseribile in un discorso logistico (e occupazionale) analogo a quello esposto per gli altri sudditi veneti. La chiesa, dedicata al santo patrono della Dalmazia, era posizionata in diretta prossimità del porto di Ripetta (fig. 14)³¹. Anche in questo caso si prospetta una faccenda piuttosto complessa, poiché, come noto, nel rione Regola esisteva un'altra chiesa dedicata a san Girolamo. Molto nota per essere stata la prima dimora romana di san Filippo Neri e per i capolavori artistici in essa contenuti, la chiesa di San Girolamo della Carità è ancora oggi da indagare circa l'origine dei suoi frequentatori, identificabili all'interno di un'ampia casistica che comprendeva romani, toscani (in parte fiorentini, senesi e aretini)³², ma (forse) anche dalmati.

Data l'importanza dei santi patroni delle maggiori città dalmate per la loro identità comunale, non vanno escluse a priori possibili contiguità tra le chiese romane dedicate agli stessi santi e le comunità degli immigrati dalla costa orientale dell'Adriatico residenti a Roma. In questa sede ci si limita solo a segnalare una possibile rete di riferimenti incrociati che, partendo proprio dall'individuazione delle chiese dedicate ai santi protettori delle città

³¹ Gudelj 2015, 2016a e 2016b; Neralić 2017 con bibliografia.

³² Per un'analisi della presenza fiorentina e senese nei rioni Regola e Ponte a Roma, si veda almeno Conforti 1998; ma anche i recenti Cicconi 2015 e Gianfranchi 2015. Per un inquadramento generale invece è ancora oggi imprescindibile il classico: Salerno *et al.* 1975.

dell'Adriatico orientale, potrebbe portare a rintracciare l'esistenza di piccole comunità adriatiche in prossimità della chiesa di riferimento.

Un santo collegato alle comunità dell'Adriatico sud-orientale e in particolare alla regione delle Bocche di Cattaro è san Trifone. Una chiesa a lui intitolata è ancora presente nel rione Ponte, in un'area dove vi erano venditori di souvenir religiosi in prevalenza di origine veneta e legati alla Serenissima; per queste congetture forse andrebbe verificata la provenienza dei suoi fedeli.

Altro santo legato alla costa adriatica è senz'altro san Venanzio Delminium, vescovo e martire in Dalmazia nel 250. Come noto, alcune reliquie dei santi martiri istriani e dalmati furono collocate da Giovanni IV (640-642) nella cappella consacrata proprio a san Venanzio nel Battistero Lateranense. Una chiesa dedicata ai santi Venanzio e Ansuino si trova invece a stretto contatto con la basilica di San Marco ed è praticamente all'interno del quartiere dei veneziani, essendo contigua al complesso di palazzo Venezia. Nonostante si trattasse in questo caso di un differente san Venanzio, morto martire a Camerino nel 250 (ma anch'esso sotto l'imperatore Decio) e, per questa ragione, la chiesa viene associata alla comunità camerte, una verifica sull'origine dei suoi parrocchiali anche in questo caso forse andrebbe eseguita per verificare come oltre ai fedeli originari dalle Marche non vi fossero anche cittadini di provenienza dalmata.

Altri santi intimamente connessi con la Dalmazia sono senz'altro san Crisogono e sant'Anastasia. Come è noto sant'Anastasia di Sirmio, il cui culto è molto popolare a Zara, secondo una consolidata tradizione era allieva di san Crisogono, quest'ultimo patrono di Zara (e per molti della Dalmazia). Anche in questo caso non si può completamente escludere che nell'orbita della chiesa di Sant'Anastasia vi sia stata la presenza di una comunità di dalmati impiegati forse in mestieri fluviali come manodopera specializzata per lo scarico e il carico dei materiali da costruzione che potevano giungere nel popolare rione Ripa attraverso il Tevere (coincidente con l'area dell'ex foro Boario e non troppo distante da Marmorata) o anche dal vicino porto di Ripa Grande. Analoghe considerazioni si possono fare anche per San Crisogono (fig. 15), chiesa parrocchiale con titolo cardinalizio ubicata nell'altra sponda, nel cuore del rione di Trastevere e praticamente frequentata da famiglie anch'esse impiegate soprattutto nell'economia fluviale³³. Del resto anche nel vicino colle Aventino insisteva la basilica di Santa Sabina, una chiesa pure legata a una tradizione dalmata, essendo costruita tra il 422 e il 432 grazie a una donazione del sacerdote Pietro d'Illiria. Si tratta quindi di una possibile rete di riferimenti che va ulteriormente verificata, incrociandola con le ricerche d'archivio.

³³ Secondo una consolidata tradizione, nell'antica basilica di Sant'Anastasia predicava il santo dalmata Girolamo. Una serie di interessanti considerazioni sui santi dalmati sono contenuti in Labus Bačić 2013.

5. *I Ragusei a Roma: una topografia letteraria*

Questa concisa panoramica sulla presenza dei sudditi veneziani va integrata con una piccola riflessione sui residenti ragusei a Roma. Nelle testimonianze diaristiche romane sono infatti pressoché assenti le associazioni di Ragusa con Venezia. Queste due repubbliche nelle testimonianze scritte sono sempre ben distinte, tant'è che è frequentissimo trovare l'appellativo "raguseo". La comunità ragusea a Roma, probabilmente di piccole dimensioni, non è tuttavia associata a una chiesa in particolare, mentre la loro presenza all'interno della confraternita di San Girolamo degli Schiavoni fu sempre notevole. Il tentativo di collegare i ragusei con le due chiese dedicate al santo patrono della città adriatica a Roma, ovvero San Biagio della Pagnotta, chiesa ubicata nel perimetro frastagliato della non conclusa fabbrica del palazzo dei Tribunali³⁴, e la chiesa dedicata a san Biagio della Tosse, sempre posizionata nello stesso rione Ponte, ma collegata maggiormente alla confraternita degli Osti³⁵, per il momento non ha avuto dei riscontri positivi, seppure le due chiese dedicate a san Biagio (fig. 16) insistano comunque nell'area tra via Giulia e via del Pellegrino, zona tradizionalmente abitata dai sudditi veneziani, alcuni provenienti dalla Dalmazia.

C'è inoltre da registrare che a Roma non c'è solamente una realtà ragusea popolare, ma ve ne è anche una colta e diplomatica, che aveva avuto come personaggio più influente Stefano Gradi (Stjepan Gradić, 1613-1683)³⁶. Questo piccolo gruppo di notabili risiedeva anch'esso nella zona di Schiavonia e si presuppone che, per essere quotidianamente collegati con la diplomazia vaticana, alcuni di loro potessero alloggiare in prossimità di Borgo, come peraltro attestato anche da recenti studi³⁷.

Una fonte particolare per il discorso sui ragusei dimoranti a Roma è la commedia *Zio Maroje* del raguseo Marino Darsa (Marin Držić), ambientata alla metà del Cinquecento³⁸. Per quanto la Roma raccontata da Darsa sia in definitiva piuttosto reale³⁹, dalle sue descrizioni non si riesce a percepire dettagliatamente le zone residenziali romane occupate dai suoi connazionali. Premettendo che le ricostruzioni topografiche, molto labili invero, potrebbero essere frutto della fantasia del commediografo, dalla trama della commedia si potrebbero individuare due possibili localizzazioni della comunità ragusea, entrambe caratterizzate da un'ampia diffusione del meretricio: 1) l'area di Schiavonia; 2) l'area del Pozzo Bianco (nel rione Parione, tra San Girolamo della Carità e la

³⁴ Per una rilettura dei progetti per il palazzo dei Tribunali si veda da ultimo: Butters, Pagliara 2009, con bibliografia precedente.

³⁵ Tuttavia di osti che parlavano anche il "croato" ne parla anche Držić 1989, p. 22.

³⁶ Gudelj 2016a, pp. 191-192.

³⁷ Gudelj 2016a; Neralić 2017, pp. 134, 137.

³⁸ Držić 1989.

³⁹ Darsa infatti cita dei personaggi storici effettivamente esistiti e in contatto con i ragusei. Dai Cesarini agli Olgiati, l'elenco è abbastanza interessante.

Chiesa Nuova). Su questa base si può argomentare qualche considerazione, pur se con tutte le precauzioni del caso. Nella commedia si evidenzia come Maro (il protagonista, insieme con suo Zio Maroje) frequentasse la casa di Laura, una delle cortigiane più avvenenti della città, in un'area caratterizzata da una diffusa prostituzione. Nella Roma cinquecentesca i luoghi deputati al meretricio erano principalmente a Schiavonia, al Pozzo Bianco e poi ai margini della città, nei rioni Monti e Campitelli, in contesti coincidenti con i grandi ruderi antichi. Dalla commedia si evince che nell'area erano presenti molti dalmati, ragusei e cattarini (comunità ben distinte da Darsa), che si comprendevano tra loro, probabilmente sapendo parlare bene e simultaneamente l'italiano (il dialetto romano e veneziano) e l'illirico (o raguseo), eccetto il servitore Bokčilo che non riesce a comprendere la lingua locale⁴⁰. Essendo questa comunità piuttosto numerosa, la localizzazione dell'area si potrebbe restringere a Schiavonia e al Pozzo Bianco, escludendo i margini della città piuttosto isolati e frequentati solo nella notte. Tale osservazione sembra poi suffragata dalle diverse citazioni che Darsa fa delle tante osterie per i forestieri, dei pregi della cucina romana e straniera rispetto a quella ragusea, ma soprattutto di come un oste tentasse di parlare un croato stentato, e per questo motivo forse la localizzazione potrebbe coincidere con Schiavonia⁴¹. Vi è poi un altro passaggio in cui Darsa racconta dell'arrivo della fidanzata di Maro, Pera, e di suo cugino Dživo. I due cugini sono molto vicini a San Pietro, ma il commediografo non fa riferimenti se poi giungessero nel vicino rione Parione⁴² o se continuassero sino a Schiavonia: tutte le ipotesi sono aperte, ma circoscritte a queste due aree cittadine. Altra interessante considerazione è che Darsa scrive che Laura aveva depositato i suoi risparmi presso il banco Olgiati⁴³, banco che aveva intrapreso diverse speculazioni finanziarie con la Repubblica di Ragusa⁴⁴ e con la famiglia Orsini, anch'essa impegnata in passato in operazioni commerciali con la vicina Dalmazia.

E da qui si potrebbe ripartire in altre considerazioni (seppur possibili) che entrano nel campo della pura illazione se non suffragate da altre, al momento non rintracciabili, documentazioni archivistiche.

⁴⁰ Držić 1989, pp. 22, 27, 28, 30, 31, 36, 46.

⁴¹ Ivi, pp. 22, 87.

⁴² Ivi, p. 31. Che l'area di Parione e Ponte sia stata abitata da comunità "Sclavone" è stato anche riconosciuto da uno studio della Neralić 2017.

⁴³ Držić 1989, p. 66. La bibliografia croata su Držić è molto vasta, ma per i suoi rapporti con Roma si veda la voce *Rim* del Leksikon Marina Držića (2009), <<http://leksikon.muzej-marindrzic.eu/rim-tal-roma/>>.

⁴⁴ Giannini 2013.

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Fig. 3. Hartman Schopper, *Panoplia*, Frankfurt 1568, fabbricante di armi da fuoco

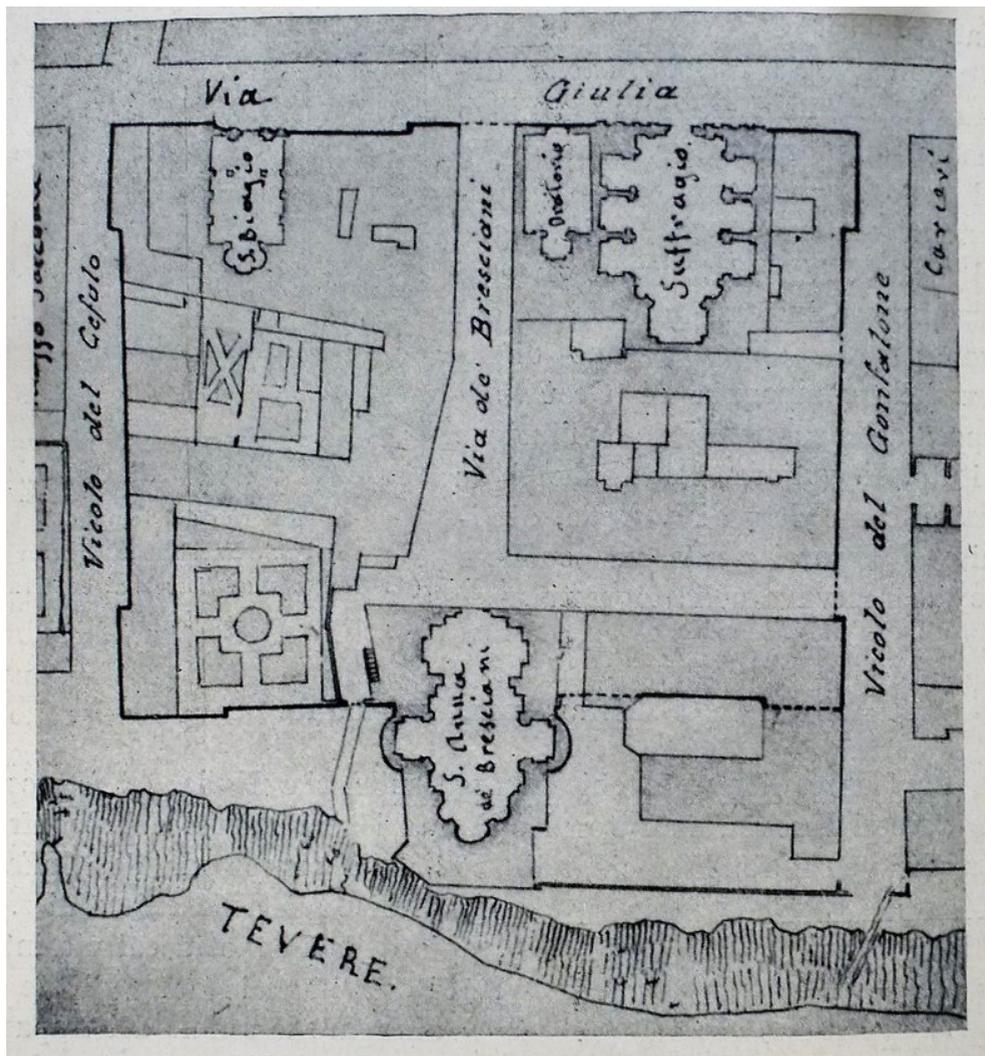


Fig. 4. Area del palazzo dei Tribunali a Roma poco prima della demolizione della chiesa dei SS. Faustino e Giovita (o S. Anna) dei Bresciani per la realizzazione degli argini del Tevere, 1866 (da D. Gnoli, «Nuova Antologia», 16 aprile 1914)

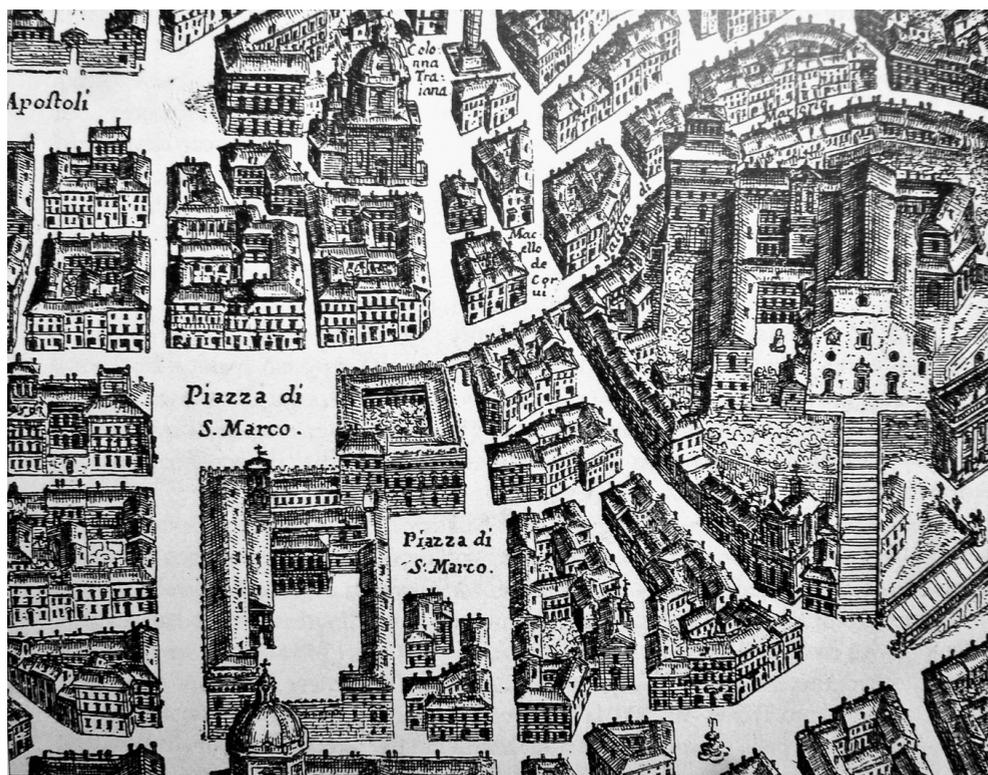


Fig. 5. Giovanni Battista Falda, *Pianta di Roma*, particolare del quartiere di San Marco, 1676



Fig. 6. Giambattista Piranesi, *Palazzo degli “ambasciatori di Venezia” a Roma*, s.d. (1750-70 c.)



Fig. 7. «Selecta Pauli II Veneti Numismata», da *Pauli II. Veneti Pont. Max. Vita*, Roma 1740

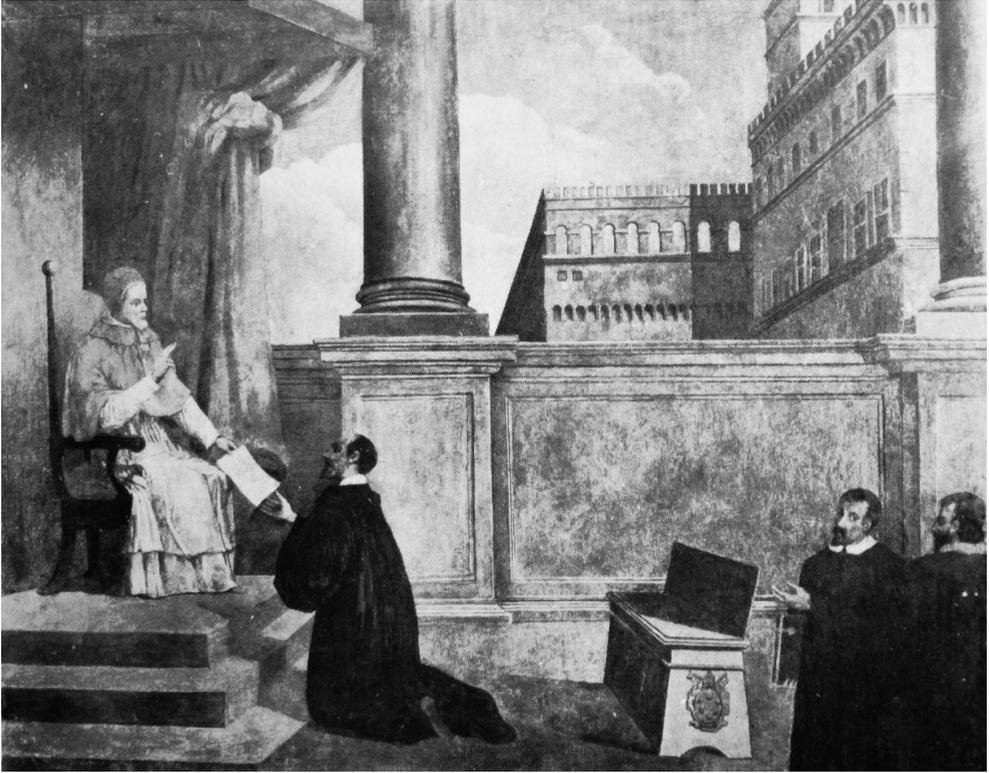


Fig. 8. La donazione del complesso di San Marco alla Serenissima, 1564 c.

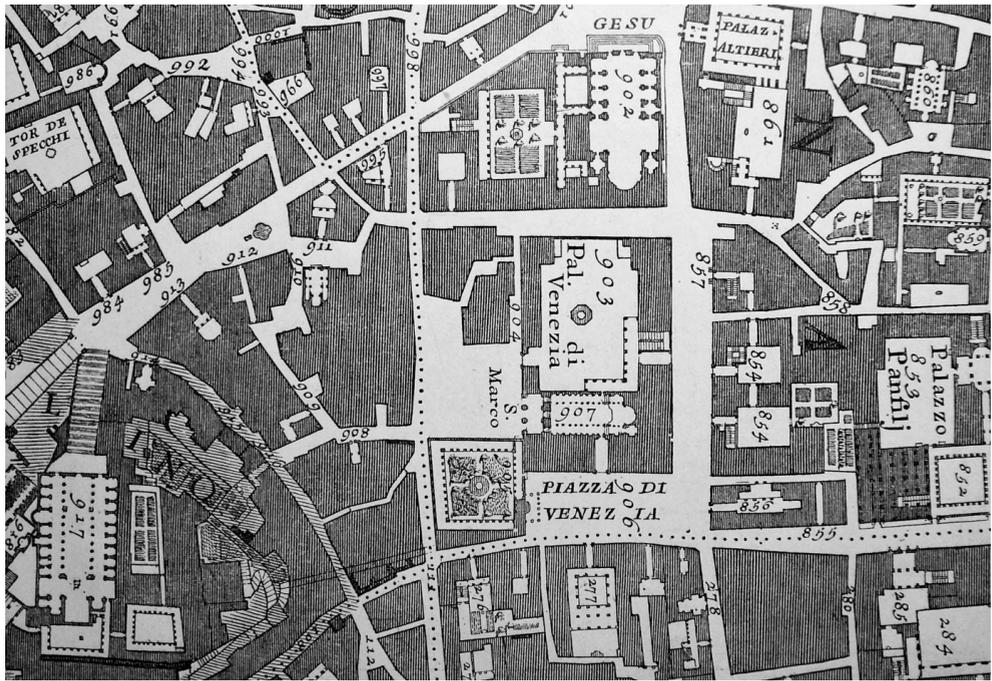


Fig. 9. Giovanni Battista Nolli, *Pianta di Roma*, 1748, dettaglio dell'area comprendente il complesso di palazzo Venezia e il Campidoglio

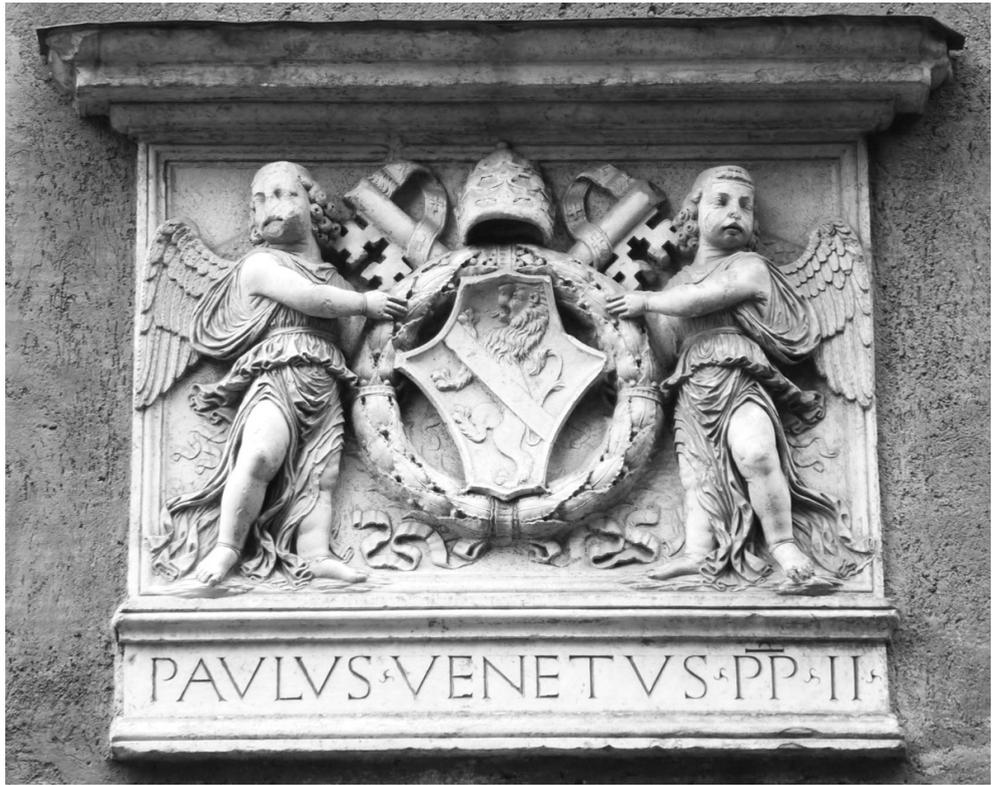


Fig. 11. Stemma di papa Paolo II Barbo, palazzetto di Venezia, Roma (foto G. Bonaccorso)

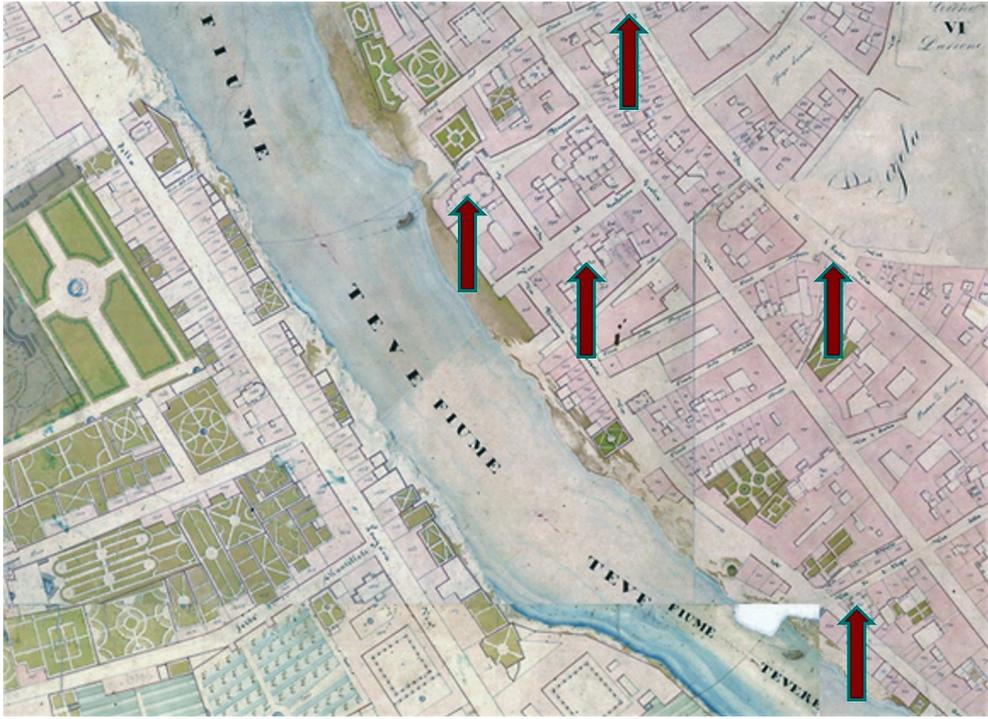


Fig. 12. Pianta di Roma, particolare del Tevere e dell'area compresa tra il rione Ponte e Regola con indicazione di alcune chiese frequentate dai veneziani, 1824, Archivio di Stato di Roma, Presidenza Generale del Censo, Catasto Urbano di Roma



Fig. 13. Hartman Schopper, *Panoplia*, Frankfurt 1568, fabbricante di vasi



Fig. 14. Tommaso Cuccioni, Veduta con il porto di Ripetta e San Girolamo degli Schiavoni, 1830

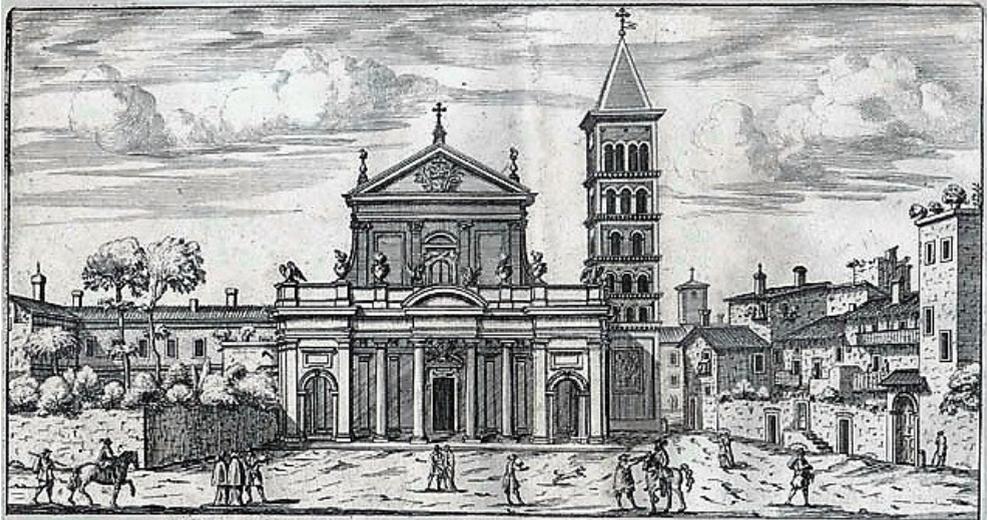


Fig. 15. Giovanni Battista Falda, Veduta della chiesa di San Crisogono a Trastevere, 1669



Fig. 16. Bassorilievo rappresentante San Biagio, sec. XIV, Museo civico di Stagno (Ston)

Forgotten “Schiavone”: A Reconstruction of the Artistic Profile of Ivan Gapić (Giovanni da Cherso), Vasari’s «*assai buon maestro delle grottesche*» *

Laris Borić**

Abstract

Paper presents a number of archival data related to grotesque painter and stucco master Ivan Gapić, known in late Roman Cinquecento as Giovanni da Cherso or Giovanni Schiavone. His career has been closely related to the circle of Taddeo and Federico Zuccari in whose bottega Gapić may have received his elementary training. Working within closely interrelated artistic networks employed on large-scale decorations of mid-to late 16th century Rome, Gapić remained in close relation with Federico’s circles, sharing several of

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his commissions, while even Vasari dedicated him few words of appreciation. Born in the insular town of Cres (Cherso) in northern Adriatic, during his Roman years, Gapić became a member of St Jerome's confraternity for which he also painted a (lost) figure of the patron. Paper will outline this forgotten Schiavone's career within complex artistic networks of Roman Cinquecento, particularly in relation to the position of associates within greater masters' orbits. Paintings that should be attributed to Gapić indicate a style that expectedly comes out of Zuccari's models, while his later stucco works reflect the iconographical and formal impact of the Tridentine shift.

L'articolo si basa su una sequenza di dati archivistici relativi al pittore di grottesche e maestro di stucco Ivan Gapić, meglio noto nel panorama tardo cinquecentesco romano come Giovanni da Cherso, oppure Giovanni Schiavone. La sua carriera è stata strettamente legata all'appartenenza al circolo di Taddeo e Federico Zuccari, nella cui bottega Gapić ricevette la prima educazione artistica. Ben integrato nei principali laboratori artistici romani e impiegato sovente nelle grandi campagne decorative nella seconda metà del Cinquecento, Gapić rimase in stretto rapporto con gli ambienti artistici di Federico, e persino Giorgio Vasari gli dedicò parole di apprezzamento. Provenendo dalla città insulare di Cherso nell'Adriatico settentrionale, durante tutta la sua carriera romana, Gapić fu membro della confraternita di San Girolamo, per la quale dipinse anche una perduta figura del patrono.

Il contributo ridefinisce questa trascurata carriera dello Schiavone da Cherso, all'interno di una complessa rete artistica del Cinquecento romano, in particolare legata alla posizione degli artisti attivi nell'orbita dei grandi maestri. I dipinti che si attribuiscono a Gapić indicano uno stile che prevedibilmente deriva dai modelli dei fratelli Zuccari, mentre le sue opere in stucco riflettono l'impatto iconografico e formale del cambiamento tridentino.

The art-historical phenomenon of *Schiavoni* – early modern painters, sculptors, and architects who moved from eastern Adriatic towns to Italian artistic centers – has been the subject of extensive and pervasive mythologization during the mid-to late 19th-century processes of Croatian national awakening and corresponding art historical methods¹. In spite of subsequent critical deconstruction, re-evaluation and integration into contemporary art historical narratives and interpretations, some important corrections and demystifications by art historians are still needed to reduce the dominant mythological aura of the phenomenon, deeply rooted in the said public construct.

A particularly interesting question related to Schiavoni and their artistic careers is their social integration, definition of their artistic and personal identities, their education and subsequent networking and patronage. Since the establishment of proto-national confraternities is contemporary with the emergence of Schiavoni artists, it is interesting to examine the role the confraternities played in the formation of these masters of design and, vice-versa, how these creative individuals participated in the visual definition of collective proto-national identity. Though many of these questions are elaborated in this volume on a much more refined methodological level, it should also be pointed

¹ Prijatelj Pavičić 2008, 2012; Dulibić 2015.

out that there are still grey areas, and even forgotten artists and obscure careers, commissions and artistic networks.

The case of late-Cinquecento painter and stucco master Ivan Gapić (also known as Giovanni Gapei, Giovanni da Cherso *venetiano* or Giovanni Schiavone) provides an appropriate example of such situation. He had been part of a larger group of artists within the orbit of Zuccari brothers, and though employed by some of the highest ranked Roman patrons, Gapić's name does not appear in any of the surveys of Roman Cinquecento visual culture. Even in some of the studies related to Zuccaris' *entourage* and other interrelated artistic circles, his name appears marginally within the context of associates and assistants of similar status. Moreover, Gapić had been overlooked even within the aforementioned context of Croatian art historical mythologization and subsequent re-constructions of Schiavoni phenomenon, even though he had been introduced in the mid-19th century by one of the pioneers of Croatian national awakening, Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski, in the first volume of his *Slovník umjetnikah jugoslavenskih*². This lexicon, published in 1858, was the first compendium of Croatian and Slovenian artists that intended to establish a foundation for the construction of national cultural identity within the context of Croatian version of Risorgimento³.

Kukuljević's research in the archives of Croatian confraternity in Rome, more precisely *Libri degli Decreti della Congregazione Illirica di s. Girolamo*, revealed information related to our Schiavone, born in the town of Cres (Italian: Cherso) around 1540, on a homonymous island in Quarnero bay in the northern part of the eastern Adriatic. According to *Slovník*, painter Ivan Gapić (erroneously named Agapić) became confraternity member on the 12th of April 1562, while the ultimate mention in congregation's archives according to Kukuljević was in 1576. He has also remarked on the conspicuous absence of our painter from these archives between years 1564 and 1568, which might indicate a sojourn outside of Rome⁴.

Kukuljević's archival reports should be supplemented with regesta published by Vinko Kisić that give evidence of Gapić's presence (mentioned as Giovanni Capiccio) at an extraordinary session of St Jerome's congregation on 30th of August 1589, when it was decided to appoint clergy «nella Chiesa noua fatta da Sua Santità»⁵.

Finally, and far more important for the outline of Gapić's artistic profile is Kukuljević's report that on January 3rd, 1563, the Illyrian confraternity registered a payment of 12 *scudi* to Gapić for a painting that had originally been placed above the portal of the hospice. In the mid-19th century, Kukuljević thought that

² Kukuljević Sakcinski 1858, p. 1.

³ Mance 2008.

⁴ Kukuljević Sakcinski 1858, p. 1.

⁵ Kisić 1902, p. 138; Burić 1966, p. 13.

it might have been the painting he saw in confraternity's storeroom. He describes it as a wooden panel depicting St Jerome in full height holding the crucifix in his hands, while in the upper part of the composition there was Madonna with Child surrounded by angels. The drawing was – in Kukuljević's opinion – «good, and coloring quite vigorous and natural»⁶. Although the painting is today lost, we may be able to draw some initial hypotheses on the style and the quality of the painting. Kukuljević didn't see himself as an art connoisseur and – according to his own words – avoided qualitative judgements of artworks⁷ yet his esteem of Gapić's drawing leads to an initial hypothesis that Gapić's painting of Madonna with Child and St Jerome paid for in 1563 followed the general eclectic post-classical stream of contemporary Roman style.

Intriguingly – and absolutely unknown to Kukuljević as well as to the whole subsequent Croatian art history – our Schiavone from Cherso had also been mentioned by Vasari, in his chapter on the life of Taddeo and Federico Zuccari, brothers whose style epitomized contemporary Roman painting through reinterpretation of classical elements that restrained mannerist tensions. Speaking about Federico's early works, whom he knew personally, Vasari takes the reader through rooms of the Casina in Belvedere gardens, a small villa commissioned from Pirro Ligorio by Pope Paul IV but accomplished under Pope Pius IV in 1563 (fig. 1)⁸.

Elaborated and sophisticated humanist iconographical programme of villa's façades combine pagan and Christian references in stucco grotesques, as well as lavish painting decoration and stucco decoration of its rooms⁹, were at least partly conceived by the erudite Venetian cardinal Marcantonio da Mula who was also responsible for the decorative concepts in Sala Regia¹⁰. Vasari states that the cardinal himself «diede a dipingere a molti giovani (acciò fosse finito tostamente) il palazzetto, che è nel boscho di Belvedere», and continues naming them and their respective rooms:

I giovani dunque, che in detto luogo con loro molto onore lavorarono, furono Federigo Barrocci da Urbino, giovane di grande aspettazione, Lionardo Cungi e Durante del Nero, ambidue dal Borgo Sansepolcro, i quali condussono le stanze del primo piano. A sommo la scala, fatta a lumaca, dipinse la prima stanza Santi Zidi, pittore fiorentino, che si portò molto bene, e la maggior, ch'è a canto a questa, dipinse il sopra detto Federigo Zuccherò, fratello di Taddeo, e di là da questa, condusse un'altra stanza Giovanni dal Carso Schiavone, assai buon maestro di grottesche¹¹.

⁶ Kukuljević Sakcinski 1858, p. 1.

⁷ Mance 2008, p. 289.

⁸ Smith 1977, pp. 8-15 with detailed chronology of construction between 1558 and 1562.

⁹ Frommel 2011, p. 42. Author defines the iconographical program of Casina decoration: «come se avesse avuto due anime: una ancora rinascimentale un'altra con tendenze già riconducibili alle linee del Concilio di Trento». This notion adequately defines the period as well as iconographical and stylistic transformations in which will strongly influence Gapić's artistic career.

¹⁰ Smith 1977, pp. 5 and ss.

¹¹ Vasari 2007, p. 1184. This record appeared in the second edition of Vite (1568), five years after the execution of these works that were probably reported to Vasari by Federico himself.

Vasari enlists artists who executed painting and grotesque decoration of its rooms under the supervision and partly after designs by Taddeo and Federico Zuccari. He claims that decoration of the ground floor rooms had been entrusted to the promising youngster from Urbino, Federico Barocci with associates Leonardo Cugni and Durante del Nero from Borgo San Sepolcro. Vasari then leads the reader upwards, through the spiral staircase with vault painted by Florentine Santi di Tito, into the *piano nobile* central room decorated by Federico Zuccari himself¹². The last room in Vasari's account is the first-floor front façade room, right above the entrance porch, painted by an artist whom Vasari names as *Giovanni del Carso Schiavone* who is an «*assai buon maestro delle grottesche*».

The toponym of his origin – Carso – may seem to relate to the area of Carso Triestino, but already Friedlaender's very first monograph on Casina recognized Vasari's misspelling of the town of Cherso/Cres¹³. We may now also add that Giovanni del Carso Schiavone responsible for the overall decoration of the front room of the Casina is none other than Ivan Gapić, registered as a member of the St Jerome's Roman confraternity between years 1562 and 1589.

Friedlaender's 1912 study also lists a number of payments between October 1561 (six months before Gapić became a member of St Jerome's confraternity), and 8th September 1563¹⁴.

a m.o Giouannj da Cherso Venitiano pittore [...] p resto, et compito pagamento del suo lauoro fatto di pittura, stucco et doratura nella quarta stanza ouero galeria di sopra alle stanze del boschetto in Belu.re¹⁵.

This final document determined that twelve previous payments added up to 260 scudi, which accounts for another 221 scudi owed to Gapić to cover the total expense of 481 scudi for his works on the decoration of *galleria*. Except for these documents that testify to Gapić's work in the upper *galleria*, there is an 18th-century report by Agostino Taja who claimed that Schiavone also worked in its ground floor porch¹⁶. This might not refer to the vestibule of Casina but

¹² Smith 1970, p. 109 correctly interprets Vasari's somewhat confusing sequence of the rooms.

¹³ Friedlaender 1912, p. 129.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*. Author also points out to a still unknown painter mentioned by Bertolotti 1884, p. 24, under the name of Giovanni de Franciscis who was the member of Accademia di San Luca, who might be Giovanni da Cherso. Taja also adds that Giovanni da Cherso had been payed in August of 1563 for some works at "loggia superiore".

¹⁵ Friedlaender, 1912, p. 129. Smith (1977, p. 72) indicates new collocation for the final document: Archivio di Stato di Roma, Camerale I, Fabbriche 1520, f. 77v.

¹⁶ Taja 1750, 503. «La volta di questo portico e dipinta di grotteschi, d'istorie tratte al principio di Genesi nel fregio, che circonda, nelle testate, e din moltri altri siti, ma d'una eccellenza incredibile. Queste pitture, benci è abbiano assai patito, pure si riconoscono risolte, e ben mosse nella composizione, ne' contorni, e nel impasto del colorito, tanto che si può credere essere state da Giovanni Schiavone, peritissimo maestro non pure in grotteschi, ma in figure piccole, e in ornati». Taja's statement is probable source for the publication of a large reproduction of Creation of Adam attributed to Giovanni Schiavone in Piazzoni *et al.* 2016, pp. 99-100.

to Loggetta, whose decoration has also been attributed to Federico Zuccari¹⁷. However, since the question of attribution in these areas is still questionable, Taja's notion doesn't add to the clearer understanding of Gapić's work, except for his closeness to Federico.

Vault of Gapić's *galleria* is decorated with grotesques developing around the central iconographical program that consists of the depiction of the Marriage of St Catharine flanked by two smaller fields with St Paul and (lost) St Peter. Lateral fields are divided from the central scene with grotesque bands, representing Heracles and Apollo accompanied by muses. The omnipresent permeation of Christian and pagan iconography is evident in smaller fields within grotesque frieze that runs below the vault. It consists of the scenes of St Peter kneeling before Christ after the miraculous fishing, Christ and Peter walking on water above the north-eastern wall, and old-testament scenes with David and Abishai, Crossing of the Red Sea and Judith with a maid and Holofernes' head on the opposite side. Above the north-western wall, there are hermits; a scene with Jonah and the whale flanked with St John the Baptist and St Jerome in the wilderness, while on the opposite wall there are the Flood, a topographical view, and a lost scene¹⁸.

Since particular elements of Gapić's hand still need to be identified among numerous Zuccari's associates, paper will focus on archival records in order to define his biography and visual context as the basis for future research. Scholars who researched Casina or Federico Zuccari's opus mention Gapić in various manners. Graham Smith's 1977 monograph on Casina and Cristina Acidini Luchinat's 1998 comprehensive volume on Zuccari brothers have taken the quoted archival data cautiously, assuming that Schiavone worked exclusively after designs by Federico, probable author of the overall program. Taddeo, who seems to be the chief organizer of the project, was at the time at Caprarola, commencing the complex project of villa Farnese decoration. Even though Gapić was the single receiver of considerable payments for the decoration of *galleria*, Smith disagreed with Friedlaender's proposal that Schiavone executed the entire decoration except for the central composition with St Catharine, thus reducing his role to a mere executor of younger Zuccari's decorative programme, whose highly elaborated academism shows similarities with some of the Federico's known paintings¹⁹. Acidini Luchinat accepted Federico's involvement in *galleria* as well as that of his associate Lorenzo Costa, however with no further analysis of the style or attribution of scenes. Regarding Giovanni da Cherso, Luchinat also noticed the high quality of the grotesque programme and its «consciously archeologic» character. The Italian scholar judged them directly related to those of Raphael's Loggia, cardinal Bibiena's *stufetta* and Perin del Vaga's decorations

¹⁷ Volpi 2011, p. 47. This might also be the «loggia superiore» mentioned in Friedlaender's document, see note 15.

¹⁸ Smith 1977, p. 88.

¹⁹ Ivi, p. 73.

in Castel Sant'Angelo²⁰. Caterina Volpi, on the other hand, seems to reattribute at least some of the painted compositions in galleria to Giovanni, agreeing with earlier Friedlander's suggestion on his Venetian education because of certain chromatic and landscape values in smaller biblical scenes. Moreover, she also recognizes his hand in the figure of St Paul²¹. Nevertheless, all these scholars agree in seeing Gapić's contribution as a master of grotesques who worked exclusively after designs provided by Federico Zuccari, some of them recognizing his contribution in painted scenes that indicate Venetian atmosphere. Following Friedlaneder's and Smith's suggestions that only the scene with St Catherine should be attributed to Federico, future analysis should pay attention to St Paul's figure, whose stiff impostation indicates a less skilled follower of Zuccari's style, while some flowing qualities of the design indicate author's experience with the grotesques.

Still, Federico's authorship of the overall concept and particular details is corroborated by Vasari whom Federico himself informed that he prepared *disegni* for other artists. This should not be questioned since all the participants of the project, like Federico Barocci, were quite young and still anonymous at the time or, like Santi di Tito, Tuscans in Rome temporarily. Speculating on the gathering of such a heterogeneous group of painters, Smith pointed to relations of Pope Paul IV with Duke of Urbino, Guidobaldo II della Rovere, whose daughter Vittoria had been married to pope's nephew Federico Borromeo. Zuccari brothers descend from Sant'Angelo da Vado near Urbino, the birthplace of Barocci, while two of the stucco associates came from Borgo Sansepolcro, place of origin of Santi di Tito²². This conspicuously excludes Giovanni da Cherso *venetiano* from the group, implicating that he might have already been part of Taddeo's circle (and hence experienced in grotesques) or might have been invited from Venice, perhaps through abovementioned Venetian cardinal da Mula whom Vasari gave a prominent role in the invention and organization of villa decoration. Gapić's Venetian artistic provenance would not exclude probable previous experience with grotesques, which were quite popular in Veneto from the 1520s on²³. This would also corroborate "Venetian mood" recognized in landscapes of the smaller scenes below the *galleria* vault²⁴.

On the other hand, confidence that was shown to Gapić with his earlier Roman commissions, and close relationship with Zuccari brothers as well as the skilled execution of grotesques that was noted by Vasari, may imply his education in Roman circles which cherished this particular visual culture elaborated by Raphael's workshop and developed by artists like Polidoro da Caravaggio, admired by Taddeo²⁵.

²⁰ Acidini Luchinat 1998, vol. I, p. 138.

²¹ Volpi 2011, p. 55.

²² Smith 1977, p. 65.

²³ Zamperini 2013, pp. 148 and ss.

²⁴ Volpi 2011, p. 55.

²⁵ In Federico's painterly mythologization of his prematurely deceased older brother's life,

Immediately after the accomplishment of Casina decoration in October of 1563, Federico Zuccari left Caprarola where he had been working with Taddeo and assistants on the decoration of Villa Farnese and went to Venice where he stayed until the summer of 1565 when he returned to Rome just before Taddeo's death. Patriarch Giovanni Grimani invited him to finish the deceased Battista Franco's altarpiece and stucco decoration, probably modelled after Alessandro Vittoria's design, for the family chapel in San Francesco della Vigna²⁶. Gapić's absence from the archives of Roman Illyrian confraternity between 1564 and 1568, noted by Kukuljević, partially coincides with the later part of Federico's Venetian sojourn. Therefore, one should consider the possibility that Francesco invited Gapić to Venice as an experienced associate, skilled in the execution of Casina grotesques, in order to work on the decoration of Grimani chapel as well as the exquisite staircase vault in patriarch's palace near Santa Maria Formosa also commissioned from Federico²⁷.

Presently there is no evidence that Gapić's association with Federico was continued after the latter's brief return to Rome from Venice in September of 1565 since Federico soon went to Florence. In the meantime, Taddeo had been working at Villa Farnese in Caprarola, and, from 1564 until his premature death in 1566, on *Fasti Farnesiani* at Palazzo Farnese. However, there is no known archival record that would indicate Gapić's collaboration on elaborated grotesque decoration at Caprarola or palazzo Farnese during mid-to late 1560s.

Gapić probably remained related to Federico's circles, since we find him again associated with Cesare Nebbia during 1572 and 1573 on the decoration of cardinal Ippolito d'Este chapel in his delightful villa at Tivoli. The decoration of the villa began in 1565, led probably by Girolamo Muziano and Cesare Nebbia. Muziano's associate was recorded in Tivoli in 1568, while Federico first appeared in 1566 and 1567 on the decoration of the Rooms of Nobility and the Glory and returned to Tivoli for the decoration of villa's chapel in

there is a scene (also mentioned by Vasari) in which young Taddeo was fascinated by Polidoro's decorative programmes. Besides, Taddeo's early commissions mostly consisted of decoration of Roman palaces' façades as part of that tradition. Brooks 2007, pp. 46 and ss.

²⁶ Acidini Luchinat 2001.

²⁷ Future research of Gapić's life and work should also consider brother Zuccaris' circle of patrons. They are in contact with cardinal Alessandro Farnese from 1561 at Caprarola and subsequently on the decoration of palazzo Farnese while Federico enters the service of patriarch Giovanni Grimani. Both commissioners were also related to another Schiavone, Giulio Clovio, who might also have connected Federico to Cornelis Cort, as he who exactly in mid-sixties began making prints after Federico's works exactly in mid-sixties. Clovio was by then already in life-long service of cardinal Farnese and he must have known Gapić. On the other hand, Clovio seems to have had no relation to the Illyrian confraternity. Acidini Luchinat (1998, p. 227) supposed that Clovio, previously in service of the Grimani, might have been the original link between Federico and the patriarch. Moreover, there are circumstantial links with yet another Schiavone, Andrea Meldola. While in Venice, Federico worked on the decoration of villa Pellegrini between Monselice and Chioggia where Meldola previously worked with Lambert Sustris (Acidini Luchinat 2001, p. 237).

1572²⁸. In Tivoli, Giovanni Gapei is recorded in 1569 as an associate of Cesare Nebbia, though the degree and the form of his participation are still vague. David Robbins Coffin – who published this archival reference in his 1960 monograph on Tivoli villa – suggested without further elaboration that Gapić worked at the Room of the Glory²⁹, while Acidini Luchinat implied that Federico – who according to Vasari's report, again took the role of the chief organizer of the project, similarly to his previous experience in Caprarola – had employed Schiavone on the decoration of the chapel fresco cycle with the Life of the Virgin, adorned with grotesque decoration (fig. 2)³⁰. This hypothesis opens yet another necessary field of research in an attempt to define Gapić's profile. Such densely intertwined networking of artists who execute previously elaborated compositions obstructs attempts to determine individual artistic involvement and to define Gapić's artistic abilities, particularities of style or at least features of his *ductus*.

Presently there are no other known Italian archival records related to Gapić's work after Tivoli, yet quite unexpectedly, the most revealing and previously unpublished archival sources that indicate his works during the 1570s and the early 1580s come from the archives of his native town of Cres. Certain Giovanni Gapich is recorded in *Libbri delle fabbrica delle mura*, book of expenses for the construction of towns new fortifications, on February 21st, 1587 when he received 68 liras for the execution and gilding of St Mark's winged lion relief installed at the façade of recently reconstructed Pretorial (Rector's) palace, the seat of Venetian administration of the community of Cres and Osor (Cherso and Ossero)³¹. However, this particular Ivan Gapić is not Federico's Roman associate but his nephew. In the second volume of Book of Communal Council's assemblies, there is a note related to the gilding of Andrea Vicentino's altarpiece, that had been recently been acquired for the high altar of the reconstructed collegiate church in Cres³². On May 5th, 1596 the younger Ivan Gapić applied for this task previously commissioned by the communal council, advertising his skills with the experience acquired during seven years he had spent with his uncle, «a famous painter» at several places in Rome:

p. servizio della Chiesa, et p. mostrar p. honor mio, ch. no ho speso indarno sette anni co'tinui, ch. so. stato in Roma co.il a Zio famoso pittore, nel qual tempo ho sfuito co.lui, et

²⁸ Tosini 1999 and 2010 with the thorough elaboration of complex attributional situation, particularly in Room of the Fountain and in Noah's and Moses' rooms of villa d'Este. However, lack of any reference to Gapić probably implies that author regarded him as an assistant of a lesser significance. This view is probably reflected in D. Catalano (2013) overview of villa decoration.

²⁹ Coffin 1960, pp. 61-62.

³⁰ Acidini Luchinat 1998, vol. II, p. 6.

³¹ State Archives in Rijeka (Državni Arhiv Rijeka), JU 28 - XXXVII/4, *Libbro de conti della fabbrica dele Mura di Cherso per essecutiem della deliberation del Senato 1509. 24 Septembris, f. 96r, sub diem.*

³² Gudelj 2008, p. 164.

di pittura, et d'indoratura nella Capella gregoriana, nel soffita d'Arancelli, nel palazzo del gia Ill.mo cardina farnese a'Patto (or a'Pallo, unreadable), et ad altri Ssmi

and continues:

l'esperienza dell'indoratura ch. ho fatto del sa. Marco nella facciata dell pallazzo gia nove anni ch. par fatto feri, nella Chiesa della Ma. di Nerese, et in altri luochi, et a Cavisole, et altorve, et non ma.caro anco di fedelta' nel maneggio dell'oro nel quale si potria far dell'inganno³³.

Leaving aside the interesting fact that Gapić junior had already executed several gilded stucco reliefs around the island, on the façade of Pretorial palace in the town of Cres, in the church of St Mary of Nerese and in the small town of Beli (Caisole), his description of activities during his Roman education with his uncle provide a number of important information on the older Schiavone's works in Rome after Tivoli. Moreover, along with all of the previously mentioned works, these documents delineate an interesting artistic career. They suggest that in the 1570s Gapić worked on the decoration of Capella Gregoriana within St Peter's Basilica and the decoration of the ceiling of Santa Maria in Aracoeli, also commissioned by Pope Gregory XIII. Moreover, he did some works in the palace of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese as well as the decoration of some other, unspecified Roman churches. It is not clear whether nephew's record of Roman experience is arranged chronologically or the papal chapel has been put first because of its plausible resonance with the local community.

The most precise dating can be related to their probable contribution to the decoration of wooden ceiling at Santa Maria in Aracoeli (fig. 3) after the decision by Roman Senate on November 21st, 1571 to adorn the church with new *soffito* dedicated to the recent Victory of Lepanto in which Christian allies (Venice, Papal States, and Habsburg Spain) defeated Ottoman fleet. The woodworks by Flaminio Boulangier – who previously worked for Cardinal Ippolito d'Este and on a number of papal and communal assignments – was probably accomplished by 1574 when Cesare Trappasi from Foligno and his assistant Girolamo Siciolante from Sermoneta³⁴. The whole ceiling consists of three longitudinal sections divided into rectangular fields with the central relief of Madonna, coats of arms of Gregory XIII and Pius IV, Roman communal insignia and a number of trophies and arms related to the naval battle. Subsequently, in February of 1576, Boulangier's offer to execute a decorative frieze below the ceiling has been accepted. It also carries a number of gilded maritime and naval symbols (dolphins, naval rostra, sirens) intermingled with papal and ecclesiastical references (Boncompagni heraldic dragon, Mary's crown, etc.) The decoration

³³ Lemessi 1979, pp. 501-502. The third and the fourth book of Cres Communal council with records between 1556 and 1622 are missing. However, their regesta have been transcribed by Stefano Petris at the end of the 19th century, and subsequently published by N. Lemessi.

³⁴ Anderson 2013, pp. 133-134; Simone 2013, pp. 290 and ss.

of the ceiling was finished in June of 1578 by Nicola de Amicis and Daniele da Volterra's pupil Giacomo Rocchetti, who also collaborated with Boulangier on the ceiling decoration of nearby Palazzo dei Conservatori³⁵. Recent publications by Paul Anderson and Gianluigi Simone re-evaluated archival data published by Ottaviano Caroselli, whose regesta give no mention either of the Gapić uncle or nephew³⁶, but there is no reason to doubt nephew Gapić's Cres statement. If future research confirms that they have indeed been a part of the network of painters and stucco masters engaged on this project of considerable proportions between years 1574 and 1578, it would indicate the possible descending path of Schiavone's career after Tivoli, to that of a minor co-worker. Such a course had probably been already indicated at Tivoli, especially when such engagement is compared with his work at *Galleria of Casina of Pius IV*. Reasons can be seen in new circumstances that may have destabilized Gapić's career. Federico Zuccari, the central figure of previous Schiavone's commissions and collaborations, spent much of the 1570s outside of Rome, in France, Flanders, and England. After Pope Gregory XIII exiled him from Rome because of satirical cycle *Porta Virtutis* he moved to Loreto and then Spain³⁷. Besides, and probably even more importantly, the most notable of Gapić's artistic skills, that of an «assai buon maestro delle grottesche», became outdated in the terms of style³⁸, as towards the end of Cinquecento it became more of synthetical nature. Moreover, Cardinal Carlo Borromeo wrote against grotesque decoration in ecclesiastical areas in his *Instructiones fabricae et suppellectilis ecclesiasticae* (Milan, 1577)³⁹. Such a shift may already be recognized in Aracoeli ceiling, where decorative schemes were transformed from free-flowing, organic rhythm of grotesques that quote and emulate patterns of classical antiquity to geometrically organized fields transferred from an early-Christian pattern such as that at Sta Constanza, particularly emphasizing cross-like patterns as crucial elements of the grid⁴⁰.

Similar patterns have been applied to another decoration for the same commissioner, Pope Gregory XIII, whose chapel is mentioned by Cres document immediately after the Aracoeli ceiling. (fig. 4) The decoration of the dome of Giacomo della Porta's chapel must have been accomplished by 1583, by which time Federico Zuccari had returned to Rome, probably expecting a commission for the decoration of the chapel. However, the invention of cartoons for the decorative mosaics was attributed to Muziano – whom Gapić must have known from Tivoli years⁴¹. Gapić junior testifies to working only on gilding of chapel

³⁵ Simone 2013, p. 291.

³⁶ Caroselli 1922, pp. 31-45; Anderson 2013; Simone 2013.

³⁷ Acidini Luchinat 2001, vol. II, p. 237 and ss.

³⁸ Zamperini 2013, p. 197.

³⁹ Volpi 2011, p. 52.

⁴⁰ Simone 2013, p. 136.

⁴¹ Acidini Luchinat 1998, vol. II, p. 122; Papoulia 2015, p. 176. It is also interesting to mention that the woodcarver F. Boulangier was commissioned with the organ case for the chapel in 1582 (Simone 2013, p. 298).

decoration, but that does not necessarily exclude that his uncle's tasks included an individual more significant contribution to the decoration of the chapel's vault. Nevertheless, it must have been again within a larger group of masters and according to Muziano's design⁴².

A particularly interesting, though the most enigmatic element of the Cres document, is the mention of uncle and nephew Gapić's works for the palace of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese. Again, this most probably refers to them being part of a larger group of artists who decorated some of the rooms in cardinal's palace. Certainly, understanding of still obscure location «a' Patto» or perhaps «a' Pallo» (if either the Cres notary or one the regesta transcribers were mistaken), would help to solve the problem. Ultimately, Gapić junior's document also gives mention of «altri santissimi», implying that during the 1570s and early 1580s Schiavone continued to work on a number of other commissions that junior probably thought would not be of a particular interest for Cres public.

There is no doubt that Ivan Gapić senior remained in Rome after his nephew returned to Cres when his seven years long Roman education had been completed. The ultimate Schiavone's appearance in Rome is in the aforementioned assembly of the Illyrian congregation in 1589. However, another Cres document testifies to his death in Rome; on June the 9th 1595, Cres notary C. Colombis introduced Katarina and Nikoleta Gapić, daughters of late Frane, into the property bestowed to them by the testament of their uncle Ivan Gapić, «excellentissimo picture Giovanni Capicio, morto a Roma in questi giorni»⁴³.

This profile, or rather a *bozzetto*, of Ivan Gapić's life, a forgotten Schiavone, indicates that his Roman career didn't take a progressive path. Vasari's reference adequately describes his early skills in grotesque decoration displayed in Casina and indicated by his position within the orbit of Taddeo and Federico Zuccari. After Taddeo's premature death and Federico's absence from Rome in 1570s, Gapić continued with commissions, most probably still related to Federico's circles, such as works for Cardinal Farnese and Ippolito d'Este. However, years of his artistic maturity coincided with the post-Tridentine shifts in trends, forms, and contents, which consequently allowed fewer possibilities to develop his visual imagery. Future research of this, still quite mysterious Schiavone, should continue to develop and question the hypothesis brought here and based on Cres archival documents, particularly one in which his nephew specifies Gapić's previously unknown Roman works.

⁴² Some of the already published researches were, unfortunately, unavailable to the author by the completion of the paper.

⁴³ Mitis 1927, pp. 99-100.

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Appendix



Fig. 1. Giovanni da Cherso, Federico Zuccari, *Casina di Pio IV*, Vault of the *galleria*, Rome (foto Fototeca Hertziana, Max-Planck Institute for Art History, Bibliotheca Hertziana Rome)

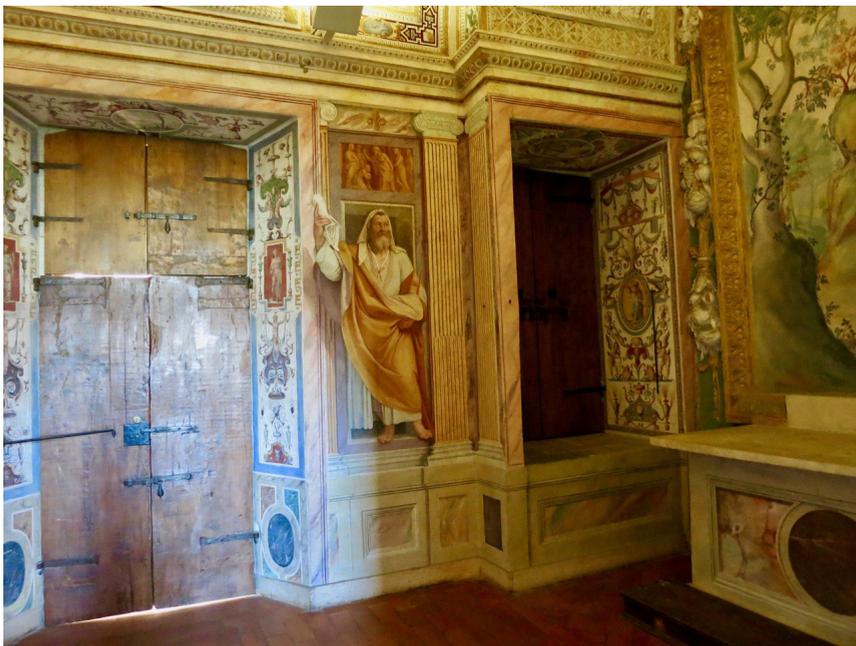


Fig. 2. Giovanni da Cherso?, *Decoration of the chapel of Villa d'Este*, Tivoli (foto L. Borić)



Fig. 3. *Soffitto of Santa Maria in Aracoeli, Rome* (foto L. Borić)



Fig. 4. *Vault of the Cappella Gregoriana, Vatican, St Peter's* (foto L. Borić)

«Rito greco, lingua dalmatica»: Ruthenians in Early Modern Rome*

Anatole Upart**

Abstract

In 1639, Pope Urban VIII entrusted the church of Santi Sergio e Bacco in Rome to the Byzantine-Rite Basilian monks from regions that now form part of Belarus, Lithuania, and Ukraine. The essay briefly outlines how this national church differed from others that predated it. Besides being the church for the Ruthenians, themselves subject to the Polish king, the place served as the seat for the representative of the Basilian Order, who also

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acted as procurator of the Ruthenian Greek-Catholic Church to the Holy See. Relying on the combination of their own Marian imagery and oversight by local architects, SS. Sergio e Bacco presents us with a rare scenario of how a small community forged its own identity while carefully navigating a complex world of church hierarchies, institutions, and cross-national politics in Early Modern Rome. The article draws on a careful investigation of the extant primary sources found in the Roman archives and forms part of a larger doctoral dissertation.

Nel 1639, Papa Urbano VIII affidò la chiesa dei Santi Sergio e Bacco a Roma ai monaci basiliani di rito bizantino provenienti da regioni che ora fanno parte della Bielorussia, della Lituania e dell'Ucraina. Il saggio descrive come questa chiesa nazionale differiva da altri che la precedettero. Oltre ad essere la chiesa per i ruteni, essi stessi soggetti al re polacco, il luogo serviva come sede per il procuratore dei basiliani e della Chiesa greco-cattolica rutena presso la Santa Sede. Basandosi sulla combinazione delle proprie immagini mariane e della supervisione degli architetti locali, SS. Sergio e Bacco ci presenta uno scenario raro di come una piccola comunità abbia forgiato la propria identità mentre navigava attentamente in un mondo complesso di gerarchie ecclesiastiche, istituzioni, politiche transnazionali nella Roma moderna. L'articolo attinge ad un'attenta investigazione delle fonti primarie trovate negli archivi romani e fa parte di una tesi di dottorato.

For the study of early modern art and architecture, national churches in Rome offer us solid evidence of stable expatriate Slavic communities that also include the relatively small community of Slavic Greek-Catholics. Currently, the scholarship of national churches moved well beyond its initial focus on communities that were represented by foreign or native states in the Italian peninsula, toward a study of the *nationes* that were smaller or less politically and artistically influential. Slavic presence in Rome has now been carefully reconsidered yet much remains understudied. The church of Santi Sergio e Bacco (fig. 1) and its *Ospizio* provide the earliest examples of a small but continuous Eastern Slavic presence in the city.

Built in the ninth century in the *rione* Monti (fig. 2), the church of SS. Sergio e Bacco had been overseen since 1639 by the order of Byzantine-Rite Basilian monks from the regions that are now part of Belarus and Ukraine. The church houses a miraculous copy of the fifteenth-century icon of Our Lady of Żyrowice, known by its Italian name, *Madonna del Pascolo* (fig. 3). Since its foundation, the church has been redecorated and renovated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, remaining typologically always Roman in appearance (figs. 4-5). I argue that the construction of a “Byzantine” devotional space by Greek-Catholic Ruthenians (that is Belarusians and Ukrainians) within the larger built fabric of Rome was integral to Pope Urban VIII’s project in creating an architecturally unified yet liturgically diverse Rome. In effect, Orthodox Ruthenians not only became fully absorbed into Marian spirituality of Post-Tridentine Rome, but they carefully integrated themselves into pre-established relationships between various Slavs in the city, specifically Latin-Rite Schiavoni/Illyrians and Poles. Ruthenians quickly got involved in a push for the production of the Church Slavonic Missal, in

the missionary activity that promoted a union with Rome among the Slavs in the Balkans and Russia, internationally among the Christians in the Middle East, and internally, among the Slavs and Armenians in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. However, a Ruthenian community in Rome has never been able to attain the scope and the extent of say Schiavoni/Illyrians or Poles, instead retaining its primarily ecclesiastical character. In hopes that the example of SS. Sergio e Bacco would allow us to expand our understanding of Post-Tridentine Catholicism and reconsider the character of liturgical diversity and non-Latin identities within the newly “global” Church, this article will address a few aspects pertaining to the question of a Ruthenian presence in Rome. Namely: the location of the church – corresponding to the question of why there and not elsewhere; the space’s functionality – corresponding to the question of the state of Byzantine Church-Slavonic liturgy in Rome of early modern period; and visual culture of the Ruthenians in Rome, its mobile character and its relation to the missionary activity.

1. *Location(s)*

The church of SS. Sergio e Bacco (fig. 1) was not the first building offered by church officials to the Ruthenians. Initially, as reported by Bishop Ivan Khoma, the church of S. Lorenzo in Fonte, also in Monti, was assigned in 1627 for the use of Slavic Greek Catholics. However, at the time, the monastic owners of the church refused to give it up to the Basilian confreres. The issue remained unresolved, and on 28 May 1637, a letter from Cardinal Antonio Marcello Barberini offers to Ruthenians the church of Santi Quaranta Martiri in the rione Trastevere¹. Yet only a week later (6 June 1637), a letter from the same cardinal informs that the Archconfraternity of Gonfalone, the owner of SS. Quaranta, has refused to give up the church, and, instead, another church – San Giorgio in Velabro – is being offered to the Ruthenian use². Cardinal Barberini mentions that the church has the relics of Saint George, and he would personally order the necessary renovations and improvements (e.g. raising the floor level etc.)³. It is unclear why the S. Giorgio offer did not materialize for the Ruthenians, though Cardinal Barberini did indeed finance the remodeling of that structure⁴, just as he would a few years later pay for the remodeling of SS. Sergio e Bacco. By 1639 the name of the church of SS. Sergio e Bacco appears

¹ Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (henceforth BAV), Vat. lat. 8473, vol. 1, fol. 86rv.

² BAV, Vat. lat. 8473, vol. 1, fol. 92v.

³ BAV, Vat. lat. 8473, vol. 1, fol. 92v.

⁴ The renovations of the Baroque period of the church of S. Giorgio in Velabro were removed at first in the nineteenth-century “restorations,” and later by Antonio Muñoz, in 1923-26. That latter work reversed the floor level changes done according to Cardinal Barberini’s wishes.

in the renewed discussions over Ruthenians' own church in Rome. By 1641, the church is officially theirs, passing to Basilians from the hands of the Minims of St Francis of Paula that nevertheless retain a large presence in the area of Suburra.

The seemingly haphazard placement of the churches (fig. 6) offered to Ruthenians during negotiations may hold the key to answering a larger question: why this particular church in Monti, and why not another elsewhere? When it comes to specific locations of all the churches offered – S. Lorenzo in Monti, SS. Quaranta in Trastevere, S. Giorgio in Velabrum in Ripa, and finally SS. Sergio e Bacco again in Monti – all share placements in areas where there were considerable groups of immigrants, specifically those attached to Byzantine liturgical tradition. There were some Albanians in Trastevere and Monti, while the area of Santa Maria in Cosmedin and S. Giorgio was known as the Greek quarter of Rome. The fact that there were already established Slavic communities in Ripetta (S. Girolamo degli Schiavoni/Ilirici/Croati) and rione Sant'Angelo (S. Stanislao dei Polacchi) of the Latin rite seemingly played no importance to Cardinal Barberini's decisions. I suggest instead to seek the answer not only in the neighborhoods but in a larger devotional similarity that all the churches in the offers shared, namely, the dedications to specific saints and the antiquity of the place and its cult. In each example, the saints to whom the church was dedicated had a long devotional history within both Eastern Orthodoxy and Catholicism that stretched into Early Christian period of the Church, and had long been a "fixture" in Orthodox liturgical calendar: Saints Laurence, George, Sergius and Bacchus, and the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste (Holy Forty). Cardinal Barberini's choices were driven, in my view, precisely of his deep understanding of how his Orthodox partners operated, and which building would or would not constitute a successful and functional option. Barberini's mentions of the relics, in the case of S. Giorgio, is important, again, precisely because the offer of the church went along with the content (relics) upon which the dedication was based. Although much has been written about the mobility of relics, and their importance in constructing the space, we cannot discount the fact of the immobility of *cultus* as anchored in a particular location, long established and grounded in the first centuries of Christianity in the city. Barberini was conscious of that, I suspect. Each choice offered exactly that – an ancient Early Christian site⁵ with relics of Early Christian martyrs – something that no Eastern Orthodox could possibly refuse.

2. *Space*

Throughout their history in the modern period the church and the hospice of SS. Sergio e Bacco experienced several instances when objects in either of

⁵ In case of SS. Quaranta, the church was medieval, instead of Early Christian, founded in 1122.

them were cataloged. The two earliest inventories were taken on the occasions of visitations, while the others seem to have been done possibly due to some institutional changes that prompted careful listing of all the belongings. Below is the list of all known instances:

- 1656, August 19. A visitation conducted by Fr. Virgilio Spada⁶.
- 1661, May 18. A visitation⁷, conducted by Ivan Paštrić that also produced an additional document – an inventory of the material possessions left at the death (1640) of Rafajil Korsak⁸.
- 1735, May 2. Inventory⁹ by Fr. Ignazio Kulczynski, also includes 1743 inventory of the items left at the death of the Bishop of Aleppo, the Armenian Suchias Khaxavat.
- 1820 Inventory of the church by the Fr. Jordan Mickiewicz¹⁰.
- 1827, January 27. Inventory of the items in the hospice¹¹.
- 1848 Inventory of the items in the hospice¹².
- 1869 Inventory of the rector's library¹³.

The information contained in the inventories is of paramount importance to the history of the material culture of the parish, the day-to-day functioning of the church and its hospice, and the intellectual background of the resident clergy (to name just a few areas of interest). Moreover, the inventories prove that the extent of the liturgical life at SS. Sergio e Bacco was to a large measure also Roman, Latin, and Italian, rather than exclusively Ruthenian Greek Catholic. Based on the quantity of the Latin liturgical items in the church and its sacristy – objects that were also increasing in quantity over the centuries – one can conclude that the Latinization of the Ruthenian national church was a process that happened rather early on (likely in the mid-1600s, i.e. within a decade of taking over SS. Sergio e Bacco), and a phenomenon that was only growing in complexity over the years.

What immediately stands out about this church of the Byzantine Rite is that its interior space (fig. 7) appears so unlike the traditionally prescribed Orthodox space. The report, that the icon of Madonna del Pascolo already in the 1700s was placed above the high altar for the veneration of the faithful, suggests that if an iconostasis was indeed in place, it did not obscure the icon up above in the apse – hardly a Byzantine approach in icon placement. In fact, one glaring absence in the inventories is any mention of that elusive iconostasis. The inventories of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries (last one being conducted in

⁶ Archivio Storico della Sacra Congregazione della Propaganda Fide (henceforth APF), Fondo di Vienna, vol. 17, fol. 164-167v.

⁷ APF, Fondo di Vienna, vol. 18, fol. 12-20.

⁸ APF, Fondo di Vienna, vol. 18, fol. 21v.

⁹ APF, Ospizio dei Ruteni (Pascolo), Chiesa dei SS. Sergio e Bacco, vol. 1, fol. 38r-62v. Also transcribed in Šeptyckyj 1966, pp. 51-54.

¹⁰ APF, Ospizio dei Ruteni, vol. 4d.

¹¹ APF, Ospizio dei Ruteni, vol. 3.

¹² APF, Ospizio dei Ruteni, vol. 3.

¹³ APF, Ospizio dei Ruteni, vol. 3.

1869), none mention any iconostasis. In his book on SS. Sergio e Bacco, Bishop Khoma mentions and provides a picture of the “first” earlier iconostasis, as well as including the picture of the “new” (current) one¹⁴. Instead, the “first” iconostasis is the work of the Roman painter Cesare Caroselli (1847-1927) and was commissioned in 1897 soon after the remodeling of the church and a construction of the new façade by Ettore Bonoli. I would argue that this church for centuries functioned without any iconostasis. Although currently (and in line with the Byzantine liturgical prescription), a large marble altar (170 cm sq.), occupies the middle of the sanctuary (fig. 8), allowing for ambulatory movement around it, I suggest that the church originally possessed an attached high altar in the apse – very much according to the Latin liturgical practice of the post-Tridentine Catholicism. The apse, now emptied of everything except the presbyter’s chair, is noticeably transformed: an area just below the blue-painted upper register of the apse, precisely where the high altar would have been, is painted in faux marble, and the faux marble columns have a markedly different wear just below the 135cm mark – roughly the height of the suggested attached high altar.

This exterior and, arguably, the interior ubiquity of the architecture suggests something about early modern Rome that I think has not been explored in depth. The idea that Rome at the time was rapidly refashioning itself as a center of global Catholicism is not new. Moreover, the period’s developments show that Roman ecclesiastical elites attempted to remake Rome as a center of a global Christianity, not just global Catholicism. Yet, the ensuing liturgical diversity did not end up in the kind of nineteenth-century eclecticism of the architectural forms, but, rather, and paradoxically, in the stylistic uniformity of the diverse liturgical spaces. That phenomenon did not reserve itself to the confines of the city of Rome, but it spread itself across non-Latin communities in a union or only in direct contact with Rome. Marian devotion, centered on miraculous images with undeniably ancient pedigree, played a major role in this phenomenon.

3. *Images*

In 1718, during a remodeling of the building of SS. Sergio e Bacco, an image of the Virgin Mary (fig. 3) was found hidden behind the plaster of the church’s sacristy¹⁵. Upon its discovery, it was immediately recognized as a copy of the miraculous Madonna of Zyrowice, and the locals started to call the image *Madonna del Pascolo* referencing the original site of the discovery of the original image. Several sources note that the discovered was a fresco and note an inscription

¹⁴ Khoma 1972, Illustrations. The current iconostasis reuses the royal and diaconial gates from an earlier iconostasis by Cesare Caroselli of 1897.

¹⁵ Khoma 1972, p. 38.

added to it commemorating the discovery: «si scoperse a caso sotto l'incrostatura del muro, e l'anno seguente [...] fu tagliata dal muro, e transferita in chiesa» (it was discovered by chance beneath the plaster of the wall, the following year [...] it was cut out of the wall and transferred to the church)¹⁶. In 1719, it was restored by the Roman painter Lorenzo Gramiccia¹⁷, and transferred inside the church proper. On 13 September 1730, it was installed on the main altar of the church and the same year a copy of that image was sent back to the monastery in Zyrowice as a gift. The Zyrowice copy of the Roman fresco is now found in the Slonim's St Andrew Church. The icon's finding prompted a production of the whole series of images in Rome, ranging from detailed prints by Carlo Grandi (figs. 9-10) that accompanied Ignazio Kulczynski's book dedicated to all three images: in Zyrowice, in Rome, and the latter's copy in Zyrowice. In fact, I would consider the very existence of the Roman Madonna del Pascolo as a byproduct of an already well-organized campaign of Marian imagery on the part of the Basilian printing houses¹⁸. Rome, in that sense, is a source of generating a typology of images for the consumption in Eastern Europe, but also to some extent a consumer of imagery produced in Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine¹⁹.

The question remains as to why this image, discovered at SS. Sergio e Bacco, was assumed to be a copy of the one in Zyrowice? The answer lies in the close connection between the Roman church and the Basilian order. There was already a nearly eighty-year-long connection of the building of SS. Sergio e Bacco to the Basilian Order, and thus, indirectly, to the cult of Madonna of Zyrowice of the Eleousa type. However, there are also stylistic/visual similarities which link the two images. The fresco had an oval border, reminiscent of the oval shape of the original jasper image, a compositional device common to almost all the

¹⁶ The original inscription reads: «a. 1719

Qui era situata l'immagine

Della Beatissima Vergine del Pascolo

Copia di quella che si venera in Zyrowic

celebre per i miracoli nel mese d'agosto MDCCXVIII

si scoperse a caso sotto l'incrostatura del muro

e l'anno seguente nel medesimo mese comincio

il concorso del popolo, e crebbe a tal segno, che

D'Ordine di Nostro Signore PP. Clemente XI

fu tagliata dal muro, e transferita in chiesa

il di VII. Settembre MDCCXIX.

Ho riportato questa memoria che si vede nella parete di una cameretta contigua alla sagrestia, perche si chiarisce la causa del nuovo nome dato alla chiesa». *Ibidem*.

¹⁷ Lorenzo Gramiccia (1702 or 1704, Cava near Palestrina – 1795, Venice), a Settecento painter, active in Rome and Venice, was a student of the Emilian painter Bonaventura Lamberti (Bolzico 2002).

¹⁸ See Jan Drews's *Methodus peregrinationis menstruae Marianae ad imagines Deiparae Virginis per ditiones regni Poloniae et M. Ducatus Lituaniae*, for images of the Żyrowice Madonna that may have travelled to Rome and influenced directly or indirectly Madonna del Pascolo's iconography.

¹⁹ See Piskun 2003.

painted copies of the *Madonna of Zyrowice* (fig. 13). The oval border also has an inscription, the second line from *Axion Estin* – a Greek theotokion – in Church Slavonic in Cyrillic alphabet: «Честнейшую херувим и славнейшую без сравнения серафим, без истления Бога Слова рождшую, сущую Богородицу, Тя величаем»²⁰.

With the icon cover removed, one can see in the upper half the remnants of the painted trees in the background of the surviving restored Madonna del Pascolo (fig. 3), while the bottom half did not survive and was painted an uniform red. The top portion of the original background suggests that the fresco initially showed the oval image held by angels as appearing among the tree branches to the children – a reference to the original discovery of the jasper image. It is thus clear that the iconography of Madonna del Pascolo in Rome was rooted in the Madonna of Zyrowice in both its form and narrative content. The same composition, showing the act of finding of the image in the tree by the children, is used without any changes in the Grandi engraving from Kulczynski's book (fig. 10).

Seventy-eight years passed between the time that Basilians came to the possession of SS. Sergio e Bacco, and the finding of the fresco (1718). Considering Basilian *modus operandi*, and its connection to the Marian cult, it would only be natural to expect that sometime soon after 1640's establishment in Rome, the Ruthenian monks would have a Marian image at their new church, preferably of an ancient pedigree. We find the support to that in the contemporary documents: two visitations conducted in seventeenth-century left reports on the condition and the contents of SS. Sergio e Bacco, which was under the jurisdiction of Basilian monks. The first visitation was conducted on 19 August 1656 by Fr. Virgilio Spada²¹. The report mentioned the existence of three altars dedicated to St Nicolas (the largest), the Virgin Mary, and to the Blessed Josaphat (Kuncewicz) respectively²². It also mentioned an image of the Virgin Mary, painted on canvas, and hanging not far from the doors, although it is not clear which ones²³. This is as much as was said about an image of Mary present in the church at the time.

²⁰ «Достойно есть яко воистину блажити Тя, Богородицу, Присноблаженную и Пренепорочную и Матерь Бога нашего. Честнейшую херувим и славнейшую без сравнения серафим, без истления Бога Слова рождшую, сущую Богородицу, Тя величаем» [It is truly right to bless thee, O Theotokos, thou the ever blessed, and most pure, and the Mother of our God. Thou the more honorable than the cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim, who without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, thou the true Theotokos, we magnify thee].

²¹ Virgilio Spada (1596-1662) was an Oratorian, a papal almoner and the close advisor to Pope Innocent X Pamphili, who retained his influence in the next pontificate, that of Alexander VII Chigi. Spada oversaw virtually all of the papal construction projects. He edited Francesco Borromini's (his friend) book *Opus architectonicum*. For further discussion of Spada's importance in the urban redevelopment of Rome, see Connors 1989, pp. 76-90, and Habel 2013.

²² Khoma 1972, p. 27.

²³ *Ibidem*.

However, during the second visitation, on 18 May 1661, more details are given. It mentions the same three altars, but the main altar is mentioned as that of the «Most Blessed Sacrament». The most interesting detail of the report is that it describes an image of the Virgin Mary placed on the second altar. It says that it is «*immagine antica e miracolosa*», painted «*alla Rutena*» (in the Russian style) and was brought to Rome by Bishop Rafajil Korsak (c. 1599-1640). Moreover, the report goes on to say that this very image of Our Lady previously belonged to Patriarch Ignatius of Moscow (1540-1620)²⁴. Is it possible that the «*immagine antica e miracolosa*» belonging first to Patriarch Ignatius²⁵ and then to Rafajil Korsak, was also a copy of the Madonna of Zyrowice or of another already venerated icon from Ruthenian lands? The image was painted «*alla Rutena*» – not so much in the “Russian” style as in “Ruthenian,” a style very much peripheral and vernacular, that we now recognize in many of the surviving examples of religious art from the area of Belarus and Ukraine. This first recorded²⁶ miraculous image of the Madonna in SS. Sergio e Bacco was thus brought to Rome by Bishop Korsak in 1633. This image is no longer mentioned in the early 1700s when the emphasis shifts to the newly uncovered fresco²⁷. What happened to the Ignatius-Korsak icon? Arguably, the very discovery of the fresco of Madonna del Pascolo in that church suggests that the earlier image belonging to Patriarch Ignatius and Bishop Korsak was, for yet unknown reason, no longer present in SS. Sergio e Bacco – the space was in

²⁴ «Havendo poi il metropolita de' monaci Ruteni, Korsak per nome, portata in Roma un'immagine antica e miracolosa della Madonna dipinta all Rutena co'l Bambino in mano, sopra meteria non ho potuto saper di certo, con i circoli de' capi della Madonna e del Bambino larghetti d'argento adornati con pietre preziose apparenti con la cornice quadra di rame annerita hormai, adorna anco esse di pietre simili. L'altare ha preso nome anco della Madonna. Dicesi che questa istessa imagine l'havesse un pezzo primo da Moscovia a Vilna, Ignatio patriarca di Mosca. Et è posta in qui in alto del quadro dell'altare, talmente che pare che da i due Santi Sergio e Bacco sia sostenuta. Intorno ad essa vi sono vari lavori e ornamenti, come angetti che sostengono una corona, et altre vaghezze di indotatura». Šeptyckyj 1966, vol. III, p. 114.

²⁵ Having been a Patriarch of Moscow for less than a year, Ignatius was deposed, for political reasons in May of 1606. Liberated from his imprisonment by an invading Polish army, and despite being reinstated, he chose to retire to Vilnius, to the Monastery of Holy Trinity in 1611. In 1595, as archbishop, Ignatius had an opportunity to visit the monastery as a member of the mission sent by Jeremias II Tranos, Patriarch of Constantinople, to Russia. Vilnius was a usual stop on the route to Moscow undertaken by the Greek Orthodox clerics, and it is possible that Ignatius had already once stayed at the monastery. However, by 1611 – the year of Ignatius's leaving Moscow – the monastery of the Holy Trinity was a Greek Catholic institution for several years and a religious and political center of the initiators of the Union of Brest of 1596. Although for most of his life an opponent of the Union of the Churches, Ignatius had now accepted the primacy of the Pope under the influences of Holy Trinity's hegumen and archimandrite, Josyf Veliamyn Rutsky (1574-1637) and of Josaphat Kuncewicz (1580-1623). Kuncewicz was one of the major leaders of the Union, a Basilian monk at the Holy Trinity and since 1613 – the first hegumen of the Monastery of the Dormition in Zyrowice that held the miraculous image of the Virgin Mary.

²⁶ Recorded during the visitation of 1661.

²⁷ It appears that contemporary sources as well as the twentieth century Basilian scholars such as Bishops Šeptyckyj and Khoma are silent on the whereabouts of the Ignatius-Korsak icon.

dire need of another «image from a different age», another «*immagine antica e miracolosa*». The 1718 discovery did just that: it allowed SS. Sergio e Bacco to function as a mirror sanctuary to that in Zyrowice.

Based on the archival evidence, we see two concurrent developments within the liturgical environment of the church: bi-rituality, presented in weekly celebrations of the liturgy in a Latin Rite (Roman), as well as the Byzantine liturgy (theoretically in Church Slavonic) at weekends. The latter shows early signs of Latinization despite the fact of numerous papal warnings against mixing of the rites or corrupting either of the two with other's characteristics. It appears that on the ground, in practice, Latinization has been advanced by the very clergy and the environment in which the said clergy found itself. However, that would not be the whole picture of the rather complex liturgical situation at SS. Sergio e Bacco.

All of the Eastern European actors, involved in the establishment of the national church of the Ruthenians, had been alumni of one of the pontifical colleges in Rome, either Collegio Greco or Collegio Romano, and educated by Jesuits. Furthermore, as such, during the course of their studies, they were classmates with other Slavs, Armenians, Greeks, and Albanians who would eventually collaborate with them later in their ecclesiastical careers. Ivan Paštrić was a classmate of several Ruthenians – the very people to whom he was later sent to conduct a visitation in 1661 at SS. Sergio e Bacco²⁸. All three early leaders of the Greek Orthodox union with Rome, who succeeded each other as Metropolitans of Kyiv and Halycz – bishops Ipatii Potii²⁹, Rutsky and Korsak – grew up as Calvinists but converted to Orthodoxy as adults. Later, upon encountering Jesuit theology, they sought ways of uniting with the Holy See. All three had intimate connections to Rome. For example, the books of the Pontifical Greek College of St Athanasius in Rome³⁰ show that the earliest Byzantine-Rite students from Eastern Europe were the older son of Kosma Mamonicz (Leon), a student in 1578³¹, Petro Potii, a son of Metropolitan Ipatii Potii, and a student in 1595 – the same year his father traveled to Rome to obtain the guarantees from the Pope of the Byzantine rite privileges ahead of the union. From 1599 until 1603, Josyf Rutsky was a student at that College, and the man who would succeed him in the leadership of the Greek Catholic Church, Metropolitan Korsak, was a student at the Pontifical Greek College in 1621-1624³². A decade later, starting in 1633, Rafajil Korsak stayed in Rome

²⁸ On Paštrić, member of the chapter and the confraternity of S. Girolamo degli Schiavoni/Illirici and an Arcadian, see Golub 1977.

²⁹ Ipatii Potii (1541-16130).

³⁰ Pontifical Greek College in Rome, founded on 3 November 1576.

³¹ Blažejovskyj 1984, pp. 35, 82. Leon Mamonicz would eventually (in 1607) inherit his father's and uncle's printing house in Vilnius that under his management would become one of the largest and the most effective "mouthpieces" of the Greek Catholic Church.

³² Blažejovskyj 1984, p. 82. Upon his return from Rome, Korsak became the archimandrite

for two years in his capacity as the procurator of the Greek Catholic Church at the Holy See. While in the capital, Korsak also served as a postulator for the cause of beatification of the newly-martyred Josaphat Kuncewicz, the former hegumen in Zyrowice³³. In 1635 Korsak left Rome and assumed the See of Kyiv upon Rutsky's death in 1637. Yet in two years he again returned to Rome, in 1639 and stayed at in SS. Sergio e Baccho until his death the following year³⁴.

While the extent of the involvement of the Croats of Propaganda Fide in missions to the East has been well known, we can now see that their Ruthenian companions were very much part of that effort. It brings to mind the famous words of Pope Urban VIII to the Ruthenian Uniate bishop Methodij Terleckyj: «*Omei Rutheni, per vos ego Orientem spero convertendum*». Thus, the Barberini pope saw Ruthenians as integral to the very project of global Christianity centered in Rome, and specifically instrumental in the "conversion" of the East – East in this context being every location east of Rome: Slavonia, Valachia, Russia, Middle East, or China.

An inventory of 1743, mentioned above, contains an additional inventory of the items that belonged to an Armenian lecturer of the Propaganda Fide's College, Suchias Khaxavat, titular bishop of Aleppo that died at the Ospizio³⁵. Armenian connection with Ruthenians was just as strong as that of the Schiavoni/Illyrians and merits a thorough investigation. Already in 1630, while Ruthenians were negotiating for their own church in Rome, Armenians of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, represented by Bishop Mikołaj Torosowicz of Lviv signed a union with Rome, establishing the *Archieparchia Leopolitana Armenorum*, and inviting Theatine order to Ukraine to oversee the education of both Armenian and Ruthenian Uniate seminarians in *Pontificio Collegio Armeno et Rutheno in Leopolis*.

Aside from Armenians, Maronites play a substantial role in the period. Documents in the archives of the Propaganda Fide suggest their bigger presence at SS. Sergio e Baccho, alongside the Ruthenians. At one point, in April 1828, a Maronite priest stayed at the Ospizio and celebrated masses according to what I would assume to be the Western Syriac Rite – the normative rite for the Maronite Church. His masses were recorded in Syriac handwriting along with the other daily masses celebrated by the resident clergy³⁶. Although this nineteenth-century reference is rather beyond the chronological confines of

of the Holy Trinity in Vilnius in 1625, and the next year, the Proto-Archimandrite of the whole Basilian Order and the Bishop of Halycz, as the coadjutor to Metropolitan Rutsky of Kyiv.

³³ Kuncewicz was killed by an Orthodox mob while serving as the Greek-Catholic Archbishop of Polotsk.

³⁴ Korsak is buried in SS. Sergio e Baccho as well.

³⁵ Khaxavat, Suchias, born in Costantinopole, son of Minas. Titular bishop of Aleppo. Lector at the Collegio di Propaganda Fide, in the Armenian language (1735-1743). See recently published work of Tatarenko 2017.

³⁶ APF, Ospizio dei Ruteni (Pascolo), Chiesa dei SS. Sergio e Baccho, vol. 3.

this article, the recurring presence of the Maronites at the Ruthenian church in Rome should not be assumed to be only a modern phenomenon, but rather a continuation of the relationship that was established in the previous centuries.

In fact, the Maronites were neighbors of Ruthenians in Monti neighborhood for quite some time. In 1707 Pope Clement XI³⁷ established the location of a monastery of the Lebanese Maronites of St Anthony the Abbot by the church of SS. Marcellino e Pietro, not far from S. Giovanni in Laterano³⁸. A few decades later, a description of the area south of the Piazza della Madonna dei Monti places «il monastero degli Antoniani Maroniti della congregazione del Monte Libano»³⁹ to close to the monastery and the church of S. Francesco di Paola of the Minims, and the church of S. Pietro in Vincoli⁴⁰. In this second location, Maronites would have been a short walk from SS. Sergio e Bacco, and the close contacts evident from the archival sources make even more sense.

While the circulation of images, so similar and connected to the circulation of men, between the periphery and Rome was of great importance as it was one of the primary areas in which Ruthenians found themselves with more agency, the reconstruction of the actual church in Rome presents a very different picture of the Ruthenian role in it. In comparison, the architectural redevelopment of the actual SS. Sergio e Bacco in Sei and Settecento had been thoroughly directed by the Propaganda Fide and overwhelmingly the work of the Roman architects, either those of the neighborhood: Moraldi and Barigioni, or those previously involved in the commissions for the Polish nation in Rome, like Barigioni and Ferrari, or those connected to the Congregation of Propaganda Fide, like Fr. Valerio Poggi, the Theatine priest. This brings us to the last consideration: that of the involvement of local Roman architects in the construction of the Ruthenian national church.

4. Place

Historical archives in Rome, especially Archivio di Stato, give a detailed picture of the extent to which local neighborhoods' architects (*architetti*

³⁷ Initially, Maronites took over the church of S. Giovanni della Ficocchia, near Fontana di Trevi, in 1581 (February 27), and over the years the street became known as Via dei Maroniti. Pope Gregory XIII with his breve *Exigit incumbentis* on 31 January 1582 officially made the house into Ospizio of the Maronite Nation, and in two years later, established the Collegio Maronita (bull *Humana sic ferunt*, 27 June 1584).

³⁸ Bernardini 1744, p. 31.

³⁹ Magnan, *et al.* 1779, p. 28.

⁴⁰ Based on the location, it seems that the current institution, Collegio Maronita Mariamita Beata Maria Vergine (Collegio di Religiosi Ordine Maronita Mariamita [O.M.M.]), Piazza di San Pietro in Vincoli 8, retained the building of the original congregation of the «Ordine aleppino libanese antoniano maronita».

sottomaestri delle strade and *architetti del rione*) were responsible to most work that seems to have been on the façade and the interior of the church of SS. Sergio e Bacco in the periods of Seicento and Settecento. Recent scholarship, especially the work of Bruno Contardi and Giovanna Curcio, was able to carefully list all the *architetti sottomaestri delle strade* and the chronology of their activity in the *rioni* as well their private commissions (individuals, families, and the religious institutions and organizations) in the period of 1680-1750⁴¹. Questions still remain as to the precise involvement of the same type of architects in the first half of Seicento and earlier century. In case of SS. Sergio e Bacco, we know several periods that would have occasioned such architects' involvement:

- 1563: SS. Sergio e Bacco is demolished and rebuilt «ad fundamentis»
- 1620s-1646: when the church was remodeled and a façade renovated under Cardinal of S. Onofrio (Antonio Marcello Barberini) based on the design of Padre Valerio Poggi (Theatine).
- 1697: Petition to build a house next to the church (on the lot taken over by the walled courtyard/garden).
- 1729: finishing of the rebuilding of the walls; new high altar by Filippo Barigioni.
- 1741: new façade by Francesco Ferrari.
- 1788: a new *bussola* (first one?).
- 1880-1896: a new (three order) façade by Bonoli.

To these seven occasions, we must add a note that Barigioni was mentioned to have been hired in 1719⁴² – the year postdating the 1718 finding of the frescoed image of the Madonna of Żyrowice on the wall of the sacristy. The finding itself was prompted by the works being done on the walls. It may mean that the work that the Basilians petitioned Propaganda Fide to approve was being done (or continued to be done) in the year 1718.

It is not clear who was responsible for the work that would have been done during the period 1697-1718. It was clearly not Barigioni. One possible candidate would be Giacomo Moraldi who in the years 1680-1711 was the *architetto sottomaestro* of Monti. In 1711, he was succeeded by Minelli who continued until 1714, when L. Gregorini took over. However, for some time in 1717 Monti was overseen by Bizzaccheri, who, the same year, was replaced by Barigioni. The latter continued as Monti's architect until 1732, with two short consecutive periods when A. Specchi was responsible for the area (1721-22) and L. Gregorini along with De Marchis (1723-1725)⁴³. For the next two years Raguzzini was Monti's *architetto sottomaestro*, and in 1735 Barigioni yet again returned for his last year in Monti. In the next years, a number of architects were responsible for the rione: De Marchis, Raguzzini, Ferruzzi, Fiori, Fuga, and Brioni.

⁴¹ See Contardi and Curcio 1991.

⁴² Ivi, p. 469.

⁴³ Ivi, p. 288.

When Basilians asked for the building of the additional structure on the adjacent lot, it would have been in the immediate responsibilities of Giacomo Moraldi to get involved in the construction. Although there is a possibility that an outside architect would have also been commissioned, the whole history of SS. Sergio e Bacco makes that less likely. Instead, rione's architects seem to be directly responsible for changes to the structure and appearance of the church in question. The year of Barigioni's work for the Basilians at the church (1719)⁴⁴ falls right in the middle of the architect's first period overseeing the area (1717-1720) after the departures of Moraldi and Minelli. The year 1729, when the reconstruction of the church's walls was finished and, designed by Barigioni, a new high altar, featuring Madonna del Pascolo, also falls within the second period that the *rione* Monti was again overseen by Barigioni (1726-1732). Thus, the works done on the church in the first decades of the eighteenth century were treated as being within the responsibilities of the *rione*'s architect whoever he might have been at the moment.

However, a decade later, in 1741, the commission for a new façade of SS. Sergio e Bacco has not gone to the *rione*'s architect but instead to Francesco Ferrari who seems not to have previously been involved with the Presidenza delle Strade. The choice of Ferrari may have been influenced by his earlier work with the Polish circles of the city. In 1721, he was commissioned to resume the progress on the work that was planned on the national church of the Polish nation, San Stanislao on Via delle Botteghe Oscure, initially according to the design of actually a Polish architect, albeit trained in Rome, Benedykt Renard in 1712⁴⁵. The new façade of S. Stanislao, now redesigned by Ferrari, has been completed by 1735. During the same period, in 1726-1738 Ferrari also worked for the Monks of the Monte Vergine on a new façade for Sant'Agata dei Goti – another smaller medieval church in the *rione* Monti, just a block north of SS. Sergio e Bacco. In fact, architectural history of the building of Sant'Agata chronologically closely mirrors that of SS. Sergio e Bacco: an early medieval foundation, it underwent a complete rebuilding in the Cinquecento, with additional changes in the Seicento and Settecento that radically altered the church's original appearance, and final modifications to the interior in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

By comparison with San Stanislao and even with Sant'Agata, Ferrari's project for SS. Sergio e Bacco was much humbler and definitely less visually impressive. There is no attempt to create a unified succession of façades of the church and buildings of the Ospizio, like at S. Stanislao on via delle Botteghe Oscure. The buildings that flanked SS. Sergio e Bacco, in their Seicento and Settecento appearance are stylistically and visually unrelated to the church they sandwich. Ospizio dei Ruteni is not a part of the ensemble with its church, like

⁴⁴ Ivi, p. 469.

⁴⁵ Ivi, p. 472.

the Ospizio dei Polacchi with the church of S. Stanislao. In the same manner, Ruthenian church possesses none of the theatricality of successive entrances and spaces that precede its original medieval structure – the medieval structure itself is gone, replaced by the Cinquecento rebuilding *ad fundamentis*.

Prior to changes in the eighteenth century, SS. Sergio e Bacco's appearance was that of a small, two-story church attached to the building of the Ospizio to the left of it, of the same height, and under the same roof. A small belfry on the Ospizio side of the complex was the only structure that interrupted the continuity of the roof over the two buildings. The façade was a simple rectangle whose projection was augmented only with few elements: a flat border that ran on three sides, except the bottom, the door frame topped with a pointed pediment, and a window frame, above the entrance. There appears to have been also a cartouche on the cornice under the roof. In Falda's etching of 1678 (fig. 4), the treatment of the façade's wall and its border suggests that the two were of a different finish – while the wall could have been exposed brick, the flat border could have been a painted plaster over masonry, or some sort of stone (maybe travertine like the entrance and window frame). The wall of the adjacent garden (to the right of the church) is left "white" in the etching, just like the border, and was likely stuccoed masonry, ubiquitous in Rome.

The existence of a garden to the right (southeast) of the church suggests that the whole right side of SS. Sergio e Bacco has not been build up until the erection of a new building in garden's lot in an early eighteenth century (fig. 5). Up to that point, the southeast wall could have possibly had openings to add to the only two light sources located on the opposite walls of the façade and the apse. The location of the openings in the apse is also uncertain, and in fact, the current ones might be later additions in Settecento to remedy the closing up of the right side's ones if they ever existed. Currently, it remains impossible to confirm the existence of any openings on that side as it is completely hidden by the adjoining building of Casa S. Sofia.

Exteriorly, the Ferrari intervention literally added an additional story to the already existing Seicento façade: the new story was approximately a third of the existing façade's height, and was crowned with a pointed pediment, itself topped with a crucifix. According to the etching of Vasi from the 1750s, the new, technically third, story contained a large oval cartouche of the Basilian Order, flanked by two vertical rectangular windows. It appears that a century later, by 1870s, those windows were closed at the bottom halves by the metalwork rails as could be seen in the rather detailed watercolor by Achille Pinelli. Although Pinelli's record of the third story gives it a larger height and prominence, I hesitate to assign it to yet another architectural intervention post-dating the one by Ferrari in Settecento – it might only be due to artistic exaggeration or lack of precision in recording the actual proportions of the church. In fact, there is no record that the church underwent another façade remodeling between Ferrari's time and that of Bonoli in 1880-1896.

If we consider all the other projects of the architects and artists involved in SS. Sergio e Bacco's renovations throughout Settecento – those of Poggi, Barigioni, Ceccarelli, Ferrari, Gramiccia, Stern – we would be able to see that the Ruthenian church falls into the lower end of all their known production, both in scope and the artistic quality. This assessment is not meant to devalue the work or the church itself, but rather give us a better understanding of the site and renovation project(s) associated with it within the larger context of architectural and artistic activity in the late Baroque Rome. For example, Barigioni's project from the same period included working on a new façade (1729) for the small S. Gregorio a Ponte Quattro Capi (also known as Della Divina Pietà) on the edge of the Roman Ghetto, as well as the remodeling of the exterior of the large S. Marco in Piazza Venezia (1744) – the altar project for the Ruthenian church appears as a small and uncomplicated side project in comparison to just those two. Ultimately, as mentioned earlier, the Ruthenian community's agency in the reconstructions and remodellings of SS. Sergio e Bacco and its *ospizio* seem to have been rather reduced, and relying exclusively on the Propaganda Fide connections and those with specific cardinals, drawing creative actors from the ranks already employed by these institutions, and/or already assigned to oversee that specific area of the Monti neighborhood.

In conclusion, I would like to argue for a substantial rethinking of the visual culture, art, and architecture of the Early Modern Catholicism vis-à-vis the Early Modern Orthodoxy. The example of SS. Sergio e Bacco allows us to reassess assumed relationships between the two, and in turn, re-evaluate the actual importance of the Orthodox and Eastern-Rite Catholics in constructing the new global Catholicism. In this case, directed toward Rome, Ruthenian self-representation was based on two constants that differentiated them from every other Slav in the city: unlike Schiavoni and the Polish, they belonged to the “rito greco”, yet, unlike the Greeks, they used “lingua dalmatica”. Unlike the other, more numerous Slavs in the city, Ruthenians' very identity was tied to the ecclesiastical union with Rome. It is not surprising then that *ruteni uniti* were so involved in the missionary work, publishing, and education that literally changed the confessional landscape in Eastern Europe, but even more so, its visual culture. Through the study of Slavic presence in Rome, we might be able to better grasp the success of the so-called “baroque” visual culture in Eastern Europe. Arguably, that very success depended on a complex combination of the vernacular visual culture as fully integrated into the aesthetic and architectural vocabulary that ultimately originated from Rome.

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Appendix

Fig. 1. SS. Sergio e Bacco in Rome, Photo: author, 2016

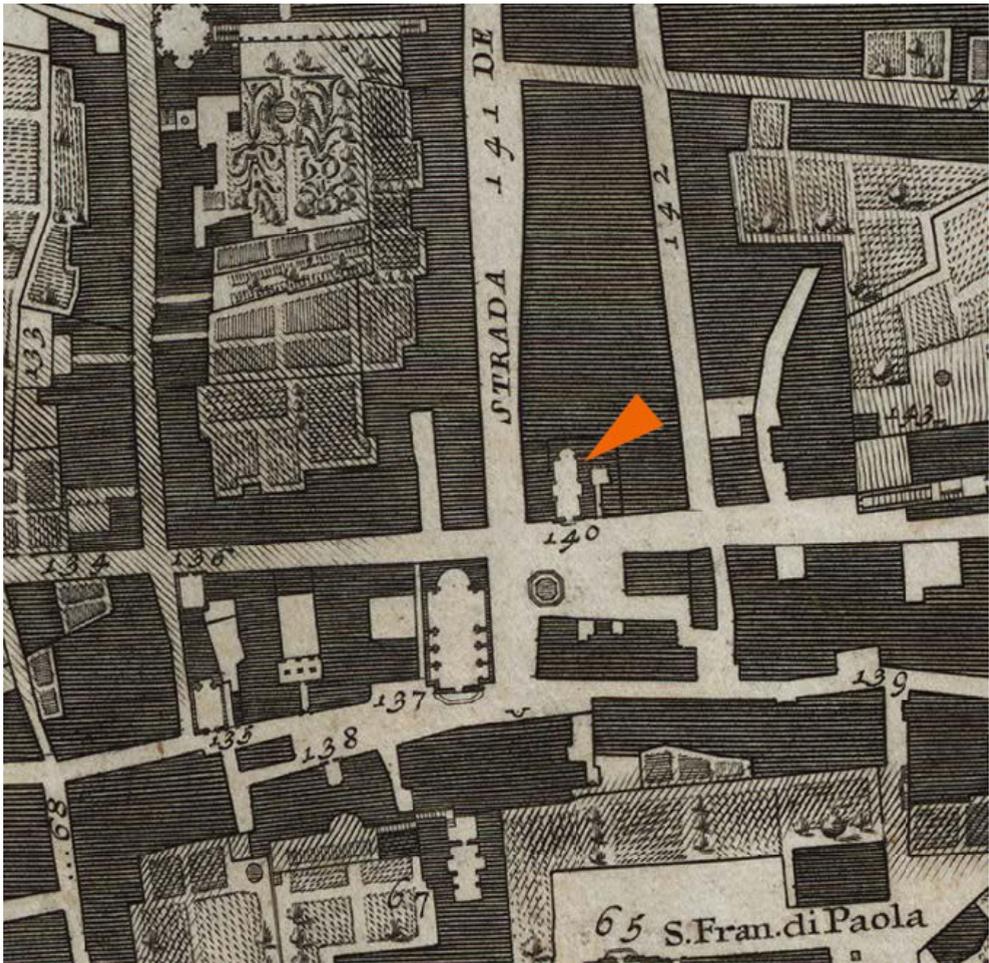


Fig. 2. Detail of the 1748 map of Rome by Giambattista Nolli, showing the location of SS. Sergio e Bacco (140), Santa Maria ai Monti and the Palazzo dei Neofiti (137)



Fig. 3. The icon of *Madonna del Pascolo* without the revetment

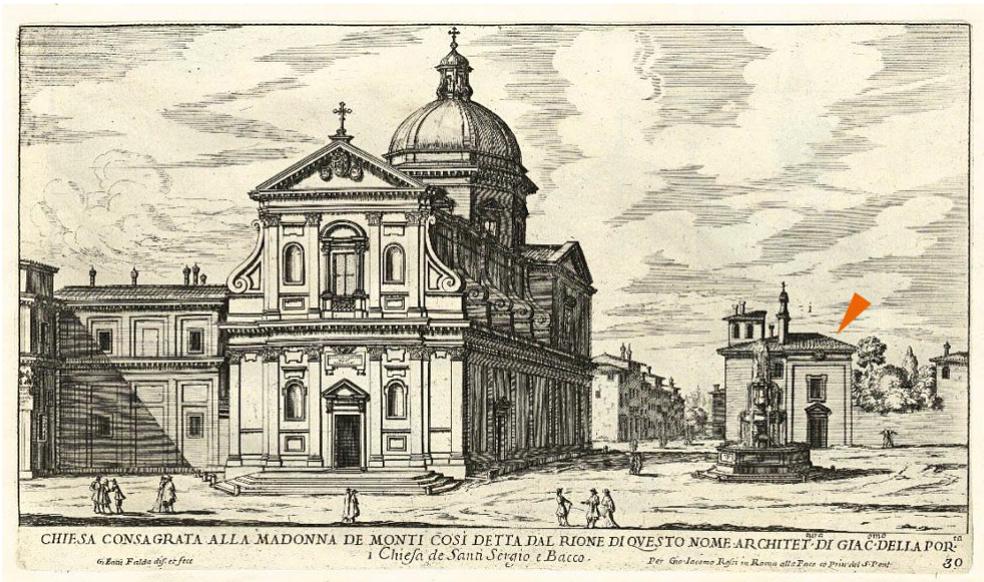


Fig. 4. Giovanni Battista Falda, *Chiesa consagrada alla Madonna de Monti*, etching, 1669, showing the church SS. Sergio e Bacco behind the fountain by Giacomo della Porta



Fig. 5. Giuseppe Vasi, *Piazza dei Monti*, showing the building of SS. Sergio e Bacco, opposite the fountain. Engraving from *Vedute di Roma*, c. 1750



Fig. 6. Map of churches, offered by Cardinal Barberini to the Ruthenians in Rome, Photo: Google Maps



Fig. 7. Interior of the church of SS. Sergio e Bacco, Photo: author, 2017



Fig. 8. Altar area of the church of SS. Sergio e Bacco, Photo: author, 2017



Fig. 9. Carlo Grandi, *Our Lady of Żyrowice*, engraving, from Kulczyński 1732, Copyright, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

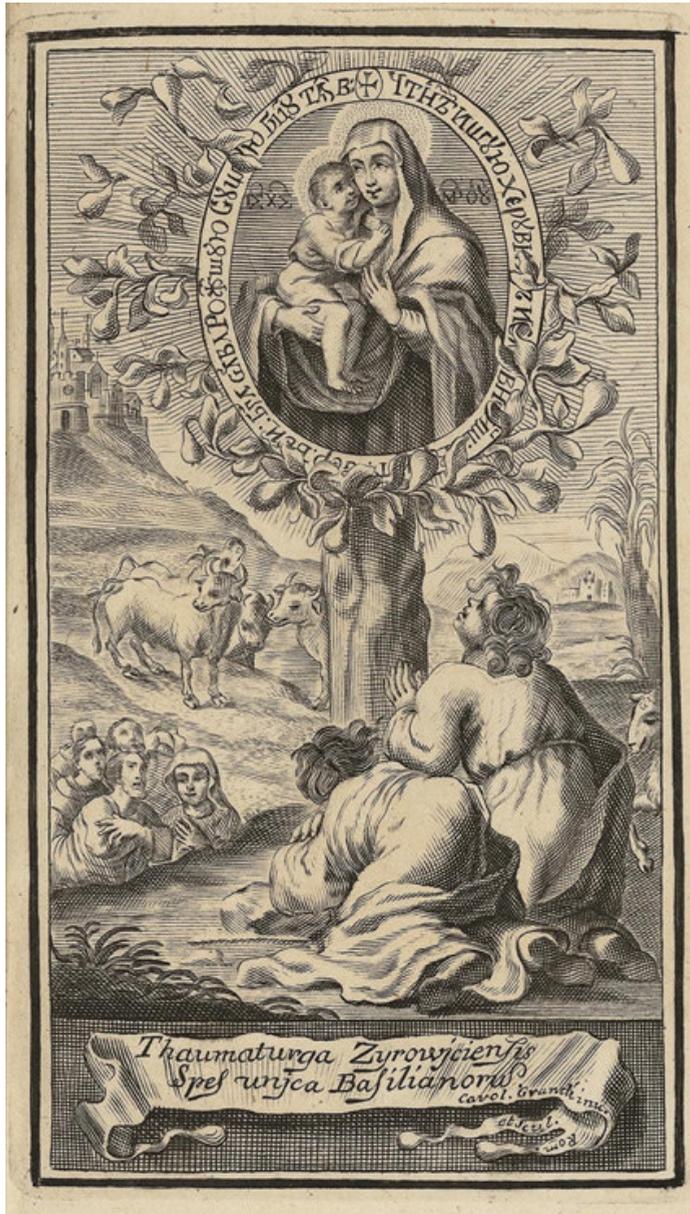


Fig. 10. Carlo Grandi, *Finding of Our Lady of Żyrowice*, engraving from Kulczynski 1732, Copyright, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

Section III

Schiavoni/Illyrians on the “other” coast of
Adriatic: Marche

Confraternities, immigrants and artistic production of the “Illyrians” in the Marche (XV-XVI cent.). Master Piero di Giorgio da Sebenico in Fermo (1462)*

Francesca Coltrinari**

Abstract

The paper initially reassumes two years of research on the artistic production related to the Schiavoni confraternities in the Marche region. Unlike Albanian communities, identifiable for their choice of Saint Venus as their patron saint, the Schiavoni confraternities are more difficult to identify due to a greater variety of patron saints, non exclusively “national”. Their group “national” identity, recognizable through the images, seems to have resisted

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in the 15th century, but not much later. In addition, the research interconnects the notion of the “art of confraternities” with the “Schiavoni artists”, a much more substantial and documented category in the Marche of the 15th and 16th century, re-discovering another forgotten Dalmatian sculptor active in Marche in the second half of the 15th century: Piero di Giorgio da Sebenico. In 1462, he was commissioned to design the new portal for the Church of Santa Maria della Carità in Fermo, and the previously unpublished contract for the portal allows us to advance a hypothesis for the identification of some of its elements, now reused in the portal of the Mount of Piety in Fermo.

L'articolo parte fornendo una panoramica su due anni di ricerche sul tema della produzione artistica collegabile alle confraternite di Schiavoni nelle Marche. A differenza delle comunità albanesi, identificabili per la loro scelta di Santa Venere come loro santa patrona, le confraternite di Schiavoni sono più difficili da identificare, a causa di una maggiore varietà di santi patroni, non esclusivamente “nazionali”. Una loro identità di gruppo, riconoscibile dalle immagini, sembra aver resistito fino al XV secolo, ma non molto oltre. In questa ricerca la serie storica “arte delle confraternite” è stata incrociata con “gli artisti Schiavoni”, una categoria molto più consistente e documentata nelle Marche fra XV e XVI secolo. Il contributo presenta un altro sconosciuto scultore dalmata attivo nelle Marche nella seconda metà del XV secolo: Piero di Giorgio da Sebenico, che nel 1462 fu incaricato di realizzare il nuovo portale per la chiesa di Santa Maria della Carità a Fermo. Il contratto inedito per il portale ci consente di avanzare un'ipotesi per l'identificazione di alcuni elementi, ora riutilizzati nel portale del Monte di Pietà a Fermo.

1. *Schiavoni and Albanian Confraternities in Marche Region: devotion and art*

After two years of research of the artistic production that can be linked to the Schiavoni confraternities in Marche Region, it is clear that the most common Early Modern immigrants in the area, the Schiavoni/Illyrians and the Albanians, have completely different stories. Frequently, they both exist in the same town and sometimes, like in Fermo and in Ascoli Piceno, confraternities even have altars in the same church: in both cases, the church is devoted to Santa Maria della Carità. Nevertheless, the Schiavoni brotherhoods seem to be more widespread in the coastal towns, while the Albanians are also frequent in the hinterland, like in San Severino Marche and Fabriano. Ascoli, where both national confraternities existed, was an important manufacturing centre, and its nearby port (Porto d'Ascoli) favoured immigration¹.

The concentration of confraternities was very high in the area of Ancona: between Ancona and the nearby Camerano there were three confraternities of

¹ For Fermo see Sensi 1978, p. 79. For Ascoli Fabiani 1958, vol. I, p. 372 and now also Capriotti 2016, pp. 32-39.

Schiavoni and one of Albanians²; in Recanati there were also two Schiavoni (St Peter Martyr in San Domenico and St George in Santa Maria di Castelnuovo) and two Albanian confraternities, while in Loreto there was a Schiavoni brotherhood devoted to the Virgin of Loreto and St Jerome³.

The biggest difference concerns the cult these two communities choose to promote. The Albanians used an identity national cult, the one of St Venus, to whom all their confraternities in Marche region are dedicated, with no exceptions⁴.

The Schiavoni confraternities are more difficult to recognize due to a larger variety of patron saints, not exclusively "national" ones. The most frequent is St Jerome, the patron saint of the Schiavoni, to whom the confraternities of Pesaro (located in the cathedral), Loreto (St Jerome and Holy Mary) and Jesi (in the church of Saint Domenico), were dedicated. The Church father was followed in popularity by St George, the patron saint of Bar (Bocche di Cattaro), to whom one of the two confraternities of Recanati was devoted, located in the church of Santa Maria of Castelnuovo, and St Blaise, patron saint of Dubrovnik (Ragusa), to whom the brotherhood of Ascoli, in the church of Santa Maria della Carità, was entitled, and Ancona, where the brotherhood had a church exclusively dedicated to this saint. There are also other patron saints that are not linked to traditional saints of the Schiavoni population, like St Peter Martyr, to whom the most numerous brotherhood of Recanati was entitled, located in the church of San Domenico; St Germano, to whom the confraternity of Camerano was devoted, St Mary of the Mercy and St Sebastian, to whom the brotherhood of Macerata was devoted. Some confraternities are generically called in the documents as "of the Schiavoni" so the patron saint hasn't been found yet: this is the case of Fano and Fermo⁵.

I can also point out that the confraternities of the Albanians tend to keep their distinctive national features for a very long period, while the historical data indicates a change in the character of the Schiavoni confraternities in the mid-sixteenth century. There seems to be a tendency to replace the ethnic element present in the title of the Schiavoni confraternities, which becomes overlapped or completely replaced by a new devotion, typical of the post-Tridentine period.

Two cases corroborate this hypothesis: one is Loreto. The Confraternity of Saint Jerome and the Virgin of Loreto, founded in 1469, was connected to the

² See in general Sensi 1978, p. 79 and Sensi 2003; for the Schiavoni confraternity in Ancona see Natalucci 1978, pp. 101-103 and Sebastiani 1996; for Camerano see Toccaceli 1991 e 1999. The existence of an altar devoted to St. Venus in the church of San Francesco ad Alto in Ancona is proved by an unpublished document in Archivio di Stato di Ancona, Archivio notarile di Ancona (ANA), notaio Angelo Cicconi, vol. 279 (1534), c. 358r.

³ For the Schiavoni brotherhoods in Recanati and Loreto see Calcagni 1711, pp. 306-307; Grimaldi 1993, pp. 88-104; Coltrinari 2016a and 2017 with previous bibliography. For the Albanians cfr. Sensi 2003, pp. 488-489.

⁴ Cfr. Sensi 2003, pp. 488-493.

⁵ For the references see the previous notes.

Confraternity of the Holy Sacrament already in the 1530s, and soon the latter remained the only name of the group. In this case, the change is brought about by the Protector of the Sanctuary of Loreto, Cardinal Gaspare Contarini (1538-1542)⁶.

In Jesi, the Confraternity of St Jerome of the Schiavoni has been documented since 1487, but the sixteenth-century visitations fail to mention it. Gianni Barchi, who has recently carried out a research about the brotherhoods of the Albanians and Schiavoni in Jesi, draws a hypothesis that the Confraternity of St Jerome could have been dissolved or, more probably, merged into some other post-Tridentine confraternity⁷.

A strong identity of the Schiavoni confraternities, also acknowledged by the images of the national saints, seems to have endured until the early sixteenth century; their subsequent disappearance could be interpreted as a sign of a stronger integration of the Schiavoni immigrants into the receiving communities. For this reason, there are also very few testimonies of the art produced for these confraternities in Marche region.

One of such works is the well-known polyptych painted by Pietro Alemanno, signed and dated 1489, for the Schiavoni brotherhood of Ascoli (fig. 1)⁸. There is also a chapel with quite ruined frescoes in the church of Santa Maria di Castelnuovo in Recanati (1510-20 ca.), probably made for the Schiavoni confraternity of St George (figs. 2-3). The frescoes depict *St George killing the dragon* in the middle, on the left an illegible figure and on the right *St Jerome*, all inside a classical frame decorated with grotesque designs. In the upper part, there is a very fragmentary preserved enthroned *Madonna between two angels*, with members of the brotherhood at her feet. This fresco was so-far unpublished and no related archival documents have been traced. The figurative culture of its author reveals an Umbro-Marchigian environment, with clear influences from Perugino and Pinturicchio⁹. There is also the altarpiece by a Greek painter dated to the early sixteenth century in the Museum – Ancient treasure of the Holy House of Loreto, probably from the Schiavoni chapel in the basilica¹⁰. Finally, when discussing Schiavoni patronage, it is important to notice that the Gozze altarpiece by Titian in Ancona¹¹ is a result of the initiative by a single wealthy member of a community of the merchants from Ragusa, and that cannot be assimilated to a collective context or to a confraternity¹².

⁶ Coltrinari 2016a.

⁷ Barchi 2010.

⁸ For the painting and its patronage cfr. Di Provvido 2005, pp. 148-151; Capriotti 2016, pp. 35-38.

⁹ The frescoes could perhaps be attributed to the local painter Simone di Giovanni Corvi, documented in the early 16th century, but still devoid of works of comparison (on this painter see Coltrinari 2009, p. 55; Castellana 2014, p. 49; Coltrinari 2016b, p. 21, note 41).

¹⁰ Coltrinari 2016a, pp. 48-51.

¹¹ See Tiziano 1988; Gentili 1992; Gudelj 2010.

¹² See contributions by Giuseppe Capriotti and Anita Ruso in this volume.

Given the small number of the found artworks related to Schiavoni collective patronage in the Marche, the results of the research seem rather modest. Nevertheless, the art world in the region between the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries was strongly characterized by the presence of the Schiavoni masters who had moved from the Eastern to the Western side of the Adriatic sea, many of them permanently, significantly contributing to the image of many local towns.

2. *Piero di Giorgio da Sebenico in Fermo, 1462*

An interesting case of inquiry is based on a document of great importance both for the history of art in Marche region and for the exchanges between the two coasts. This is a parchment in the State Archive of Fermo, recording the commission for the portal and the rose window of the church of Santa Maria della Carità in Fermo. It was signed in Palazzo dei Priori by master Antonio di Eustachio da Fermo, the responsible one for the church at the time, and Piero di Giorgio da Sebenico, on July the 16th, 1462¹³.

This kind of documents is rare given its date and the richness of details about the commission. The first part of the document concerns the supply of materials for the commissioned work. Master Piero committed to bring and unload in the port of Fermo all the «fine and polished» white stones (*albe, fines et gentiles*) of the same quality (not marble) like those of the exterior of the cathedral of Fermo, necessary for the realization of the portal and the rosette window of the church. Master Antonio would be responsible for the task of bringing the stones from the seaside to the church. Moreover, master Piero committed himself to execute the rose window with twelve small columns, with carving and features shown on a paper drawing, which was left in the hands of the church officials. Above the portal, Giorgio would have carved a Madonna with the mantle and two angels on her sides as set by Battista di Giacomo di Ser Antonio and Master Cristoforo di Ser Mainardo from Venice, who both lived in Fermo.

The sculptures and the assembly of the statues would have been entirely carried out by Giorgio, except for the necessary scaffolding, which was the responsibility of both the church and the hospital. The fee of the Dalmatian master is 130 Venetian golden ducats, to be paid in three installments: the first due as soon as Giorgio brings the stones to the port of Fermo, the second in the middle of the work and the rest at its completion. The common clause in this kind of contracts is also interesting, with the cities where master Piero was declared available to be summoned for possible legal disputes: there are six cities of the territory of Marche (Fermo, Monterubbiano, Ascoli, Recanati, Macerata, and Ancona) and then Venice, Naples and the Duchy of Tusciana.

¹³ Archivio di Stato di Fermo (ASF), Fondo opere pie di Fermo, Pergamene, n. 3, 144. See the documentary appendix below.

The geography of the centers stated by Giorgio in the legal guarantee clause is very interesting: Monterubbiano, a town near Fermo, still preserves a polyptych by a Venetian master, Giacomo di Lorenzo, who was active in about 1430¹⁴. Ascoli, as mentioned before, was economically wealthy, which welcomed both works of art and artists coming by sea. Ascoli also had a Schiavoni community with their own confraternity dedicated to St Blaise. Recanati was the seat of the biggest trade fair in the Adriatic, while Macerata had the general Curia of the Marca of Ancona. Ancona was finally the maritime city *par excellence*, where Giorgio da Sebenico (Juraj Matejev from Šibenik) and dozens of Dalmatian sculptors and stone cutters were working at the time¹⁵.

As stated in the document, the listing of the towns of Venice, Naples, and Tuscia seems to draw a path of an Italian circumnavigation, probably linked to the trade of Istrian stone. We know that Giorgio di Matteo da Sebenico, in addition to the transport and trade of the Istrian stone, also marketed other goods and sold a load of cheese in Palermo¹⁶.

We can make many observations here: Piero di Giorgio is an artist-entrepreneur who cared about the transport of stones; a characteristic that associates him to his great contemporary and compatriot, Giorgio di Matteo da Sebenico, who in those years worked in Ancona in prestigious artistic sites. The commission is agreed upon by making use of a drawing and it is under the supervision of two Venetians: since they are called “masters”, they might have been artists, even if we are not sure about it. However, it is important that the supervision was entrusted to two Venetians: the prevailing taste in Fermo was the one for the “Adriatic” culture, irradiated by the Serenissima and developed on both the Adriatic coasts¹⁷.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, artistic relations between Fermo and the Dalmatian coast were particularly intense, thanks to the presence of Luca Turriani da Fermo, Augustinian friar and archbishop of Zadar (Zara) from 1400 to 1420, a great art patron. Turriani probably calls the architect Nuzio Ucinelli from Fermo to work in Zadar; the latter from 1401 to 1413 is the head of a workshop made up of Italian and Dalmatian artists and even attended by Cristoforo from Wien. Ucinelli in 1401 undertakes the task of completing the chapel of San Simeone Giusto in the church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Zadar and he is at the same time the leading hand, the main master of the cathedral of Fermo where, according to Fabio Mariano, he is the author of the leaf decoration frames of the two side portals of the church¹⁸.

¹⁴ For the painting see F. Marcelli, Cat. 9 in Liberati 1999, p. 92.

¹⁵ For Ancona see De Marchi, Mazzalupi 2008.

¹⁶ See Ercolino 2001.

¹⁷ For the artistic culture in the fifteenth century Fermo see De Marchi, Franco 2000; Papetti 2006, Coltrinari 2012, pp. 24-26; Coltrinari 2014. For the “Adriatic culture” see Zampetti 1988, pp. 316-319 and 2000; De Marchi 2008, in particular pp. 67-86.

¹⁸ See Mariano 2003, p. 15; Coltrinari 2012, pp. 24-26.

In 1420 the sculptor Andrea di Giorgio da Ragusa was commissioned an altar by friar Antonio di Biagio, prior of the convent of Sant'Agostino in Fermo, and the recipient of a box full of books sent to his hometown by the deceased archbishop Turriani¹⁹.

3. *A hypothesis for Piero di Giorgio: the portal of the Mount of Piety in Fermo*

Going back to our 1462 document, the church of Santa Maria della Carità, annexed to one of the largest hospital in the town of Fermo, stands at the foot of Girfalco, the acropolis of the city (figs. 4-5): today it is an 18th-century building, the result of the reconstruction by the architect Pietro Augustoni²⁰.

However, adjoining to the church still stands one of the greatest examples of the 15th-century sculpture, the portal of the Mount of Piety, portraying Our Lady of Mercy (fig. 6). It is clearly the result of the re-assembling of pre-existing pieces: Alessandro Marchi, studying the portal in 2006, noticed the inconsistency of the supporting pillars where Istrian stone blocks are irregularly alternated with local sandstone elements. The scholar has rightly thought of a rather late restoration, which took place between the nineteenth and the twentieth-century, reassembling pieces of different origins. In my opinion, even the solution of the Gothic two-lights windows may not be congruent with the rest of the work²¹.

On the door frame, there is a time-worn writing that says: MONS PIETATIS (mount of piety). A lancet arch with leaf decoration typical of the international Gothic, topped by the figure of God Father blessing, surrounds the opening (fig. 7).

On the top of the portal, there is a lunette with the image of *Our Lady of Mercy* (fig. 8): the Virgin holds her cloak opened with her hands, accepting six figures on each side under it. On the left, there are men and on the right women: among the men, the closest one to the Virgin brings a smaller figure to Mary, perhaps a child. The bottom of the relief with the Virgin of Mercy is decorated with a curtain.

In 1906 Carlo Grigioni found in the State Archive of Fermo the commission contract for the altar of the chapel of St Venus in the church of Santa Maria della Carità with the sculptor Giacomo di Giorgio referred as «Schiavone stonemason», living in Fermo: the sculptor had to make the altar similar to

¹⁹ Walcher 2005, docc. 213-214, pp. 148-149; Coltrinari 2012, p. 25.

²⁰ For the church see Trebbi, Filoni Guerrieri 1890, pp. 150-151; Maranesi 1944, pp. 159-161.

²¹ Marchi 2006, pp. 61-65.

another one already built in the church of San Domenico in Fermo²². Grigioni, therefore, attributed the church portal to this Schiavone master, followed by most of the later scholars, who then dated the portal in about 1480. Adolfo Venturi and Luigi Serra thought about some followers of Giorgio da Sebenico²³. In 2006, Alessandro Marchi challenged this thesis, observing how the stylistic features of sculpture, such as the almost three hundred-years-old figure of Our Lady, the dresses of the kneeling figures and the stylistic features of the foliage indicate a date before 1450²⁴.

In my opinion, the Virgin of Mercy may be the sculpture which was originally on the main door of the church, later reused in the portal of the Mount of Piety. In the 1462 contract, the iconography described (the Madonna with the mantle) is, in fact, that of the Virgin of Mercy. It is true that in the document there were two angels holding the cloak, while in the sculpture they are not present, however, it is possible to attribute this difference to a change during the execution.

Master Piero di Giorgio, who is the proved author of the portal of the church of Santa Maria della Carità, is the plausible candidate for a work that reminds us so much of the models by Giorgio di Matteo da Sebenico (fig. 9), but less finished and less naturalistic, indicating a follower of the great master.

As we have already said, we know that two “national” confraternities were established in the church of Santa Maria della Carità: one of the Albanians which had a chapel dedicated to St Venus, and, as mentioned before, has commissioned an altar to a Schiavone sculptor in 1487, and the Schiavoni confraternity. Unfortunately, we do not know the patron saint of the latter nor the date of its foundation.

A document dated on May the 14th 1464 tells us that one of the most important people in the Confraternity of Santa Maria della Carità asked the Municipality of Fermo some wheat as a gift to pay for the stones purchased in Schiavonia for the door of the church²⁵. This document states that the portal was in fact realized and it also mentions the Confraternity of Santa Maria della Carità as involved in the project. It is unlikely that this was the Schiavoni brotherhood, but the coincidence of the Schiavoni artists working in the churches which were the reference for the immigrant community coming from the east side of the Adriatic sea is important and it probably not completely casual.

²² Grigioni 1906.

²³ Venturi 1908, p. 1010; Serra 1934, p. 220; see also Maranesi 1944, p. 159.

²⁴ Marchi 2006, pp. 63-64.

²⁵ ASF, Archivio del comune di Fermo, Consigli e Cernite, vol. 16 (1464-1465), c. 10v: «Quarto super petitione oratenus facta per dominum Johannem Augustini unum ex capitibus fraternitatis Sancte Marie petentem sibi concedere tractam tanti grani ut sufficiat ad solutionem lapidum emptorum in Slavina pro porta et oculo dicte ecclesie Sancte Marie».

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Appendix

Fig. 1. Pietro Alamanno, *Polyptych of the Schiavoni*, 1489, Ascoli Piceno, Pinacoteca Civica



Fig. 2. (Simone Corvi da Recanati?), *Frescoes with The Virgin, Angels, Saint George killing the dragon, Saint Jerome*, 1510 ca, Recanati, church of Santa Maria di Castelnuovo

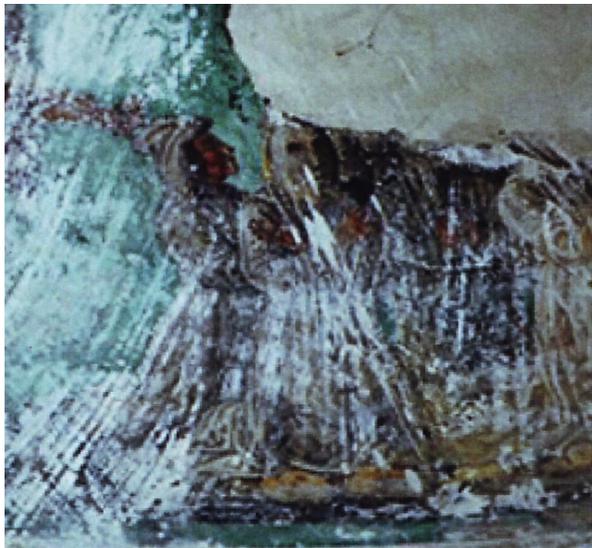


Fig. 3. (Simone Corvi da Recanati?), *The members of the Schiavoni Confraternity of Saint George*, detail of fig. 2

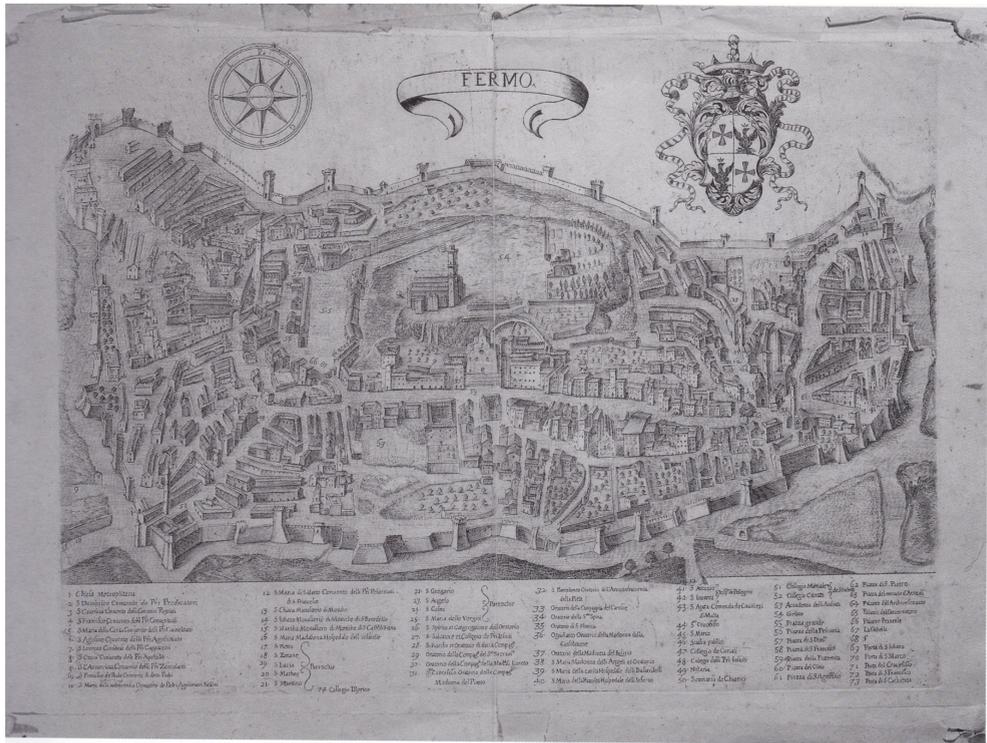


Fig. 4. Map of the city of Fermo, 18th century, Fermo, Biblioteca civica “Romolo Spezioli”, Fondo disegni e stampe



Fig. 5. *Map of the city of Fermo*, 18th century, Fermo, Biblioteca civica "Romolo Spezioli", Fondo disegni e stampe, detail with the church of Santa Maria della Carità (number 5)



Fig. 6. *Mount of Piety*, Fermo



Fig. 7. *Portal of the Mount of Piety, Fermo*



Fig. 8. Piero di Giorgio da Sebenico, *Our Lady of Mercy*, 1462, relief now in the portal of Mount of Piety, Fermo

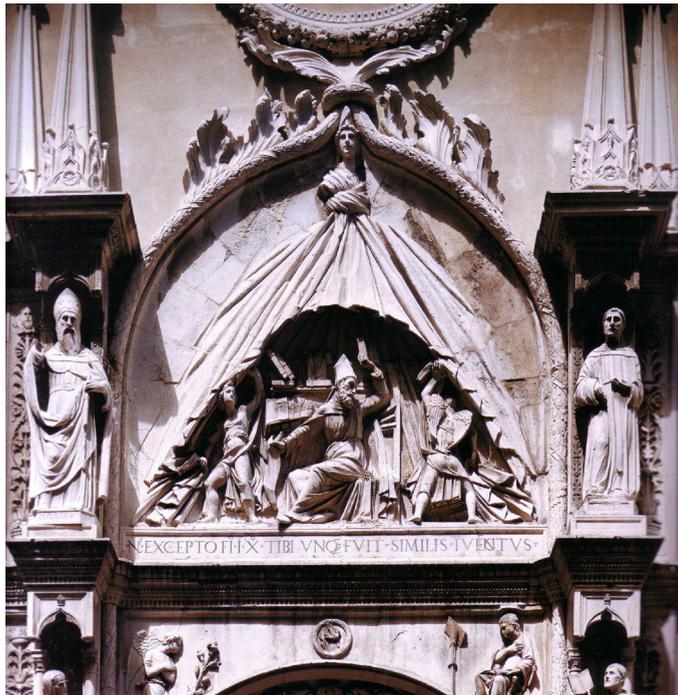


Fig. 9. Giogio di Matteo da Sebenico, Portal of the church of Sant'Agostino, detail, Ancona, church of Sant'Agostino

Documentary Appendix

Document 1

Archivio di Stato di Fermo, Fondo opere pie di Fermo, pergamene, n. 3, 144

In dei nomine amen, anno milleximo quadragesimo sexagesimo secundo, indictione decima, tempore [...] Pii secundi et die decimasexta mensis julii dicti anni, presentibus Johanne Nicole de Firmo, ser Peructio Dominici cancellario comunis Firmi et ser Angelo Nicole de Castro Petrituli comitatus Firmi et nunc habitatori Firmi, testibus ad hec habitis et vocatis.

Hoc presens publicum instrumentum [...] pateat evidenter qualiter coram me notario infrascripto et testibus supradictis personaliter constituti magister Antonius Eustachii de Firmo, ut syndicus [...] hospitalis ecclesie Sancte Marie de La Carità de Firmo, de cuius sindicato plene patet et constat manu quondam ser Antonutii Benedicti de Firmo nunc premortui, notarii publici [...] cum presentia, consensu et voluntate nobilium virorum Bonjohannis Augustini Cichi Messure de Firmo et ser Ludovico Mactei Cicchi de dicta civitate Firmi, capitum dicti hospitalis ecclesie Sancte Marie de la Carità, ibidem presentium [...] ex una parte et magister Pierus Georgii de Sibinico de partibus Sclavonie ex alia parte [...] devenerunt ad infrascriptum pactum, conventionem et concordiam, videlicet quod dictus magister Pierus [...] promisit et convenit supradicto magistro Antonio sindico predicto [...] hinc ad unum annum proxime futurum et abinde in posterum ad omnem dicti hospitalis et dicti magistri Antonii dicto nomine et suorum in dicto hospitali successorum vel cui ipse commissionem, petitionem, requisitionem et compellum adportare et conducere seu apportari, conduci et scharcari facere ad portum dicte civitatis Firmi omnes et singulas lapides albe, fines et gentiles et de ea bonitate quemadmodum sunt lapides posite a parte exteriori in ecclesia Sancte Marie episcopatus Firmi, qui lapides non intelligatur nec sint de marmore itaque sint suffitientes ac boni et albi et de ea bonitate ut sunt lapides dicte ecclesie Sancte Marie episcopatus Firmi. Et hoc pro fatiando porta magna cum una rosa dicte ecclesie et hospitalis Sancte Marie de la Carità, omnibus et singulis sumptibus et expensis dicti magistri Pieri cum pacto et conditione inter eos habito et reservato, videlicet quod primum dictus magister Perus conduxerit et scharcari fecerit dictos lapides ad dictum portum dictus magister Antonius dicto nomine teneatur et obligatus sit conducere et apportare et conduci et apportari facere ad dictam ecclesiam et hospitale Sancte Marie de La Carità omnibus et singulis dicte ecclesie et hospitalis Sancte Marie de La Carità sumptibus et expensis, quos lapides sic conductos ad dictam ecclesiam et hospitale dictus magister Pierus promisit et convenit dicto magistro Antonio ibidem presenti et ut supra stipulanti laborare et intagliare pro dicta porta magna cum dicta rosa fatienda super dictam portam cum duodecim posas columpnarum cum hiis designis, intaglis et

lavoris prout et sicut et quemadmodum dicta porta et rosa fatienda designata in quodam foleo carte bambacine, quod foleum est penes dictum syndicum et capita, de quibus designis et intaglis plene est informatus magister Baptista Jacobi de Firmo, prout dicte partes asseruerunt, cum hoc autem pacto inter eos habito videlicet quod dictus magister Pierus teneatur et obligatus sit intagliare et facere de dictis lapidibus unam imaginem gloriose Virginis Marie cum manto et cum duobus angelis a lateribus dicte imaginis Virginis Marie de ea amplitudinem prout declaraverunt et sentiaverunt dictus magister Baptista Jacobi ser Antonii et magister Cristoforus ser Maginardi de Venetiis et nunc habitatores dicte civitatis Firmi, quam imaginem Virginis Marie cum dictis duobus angelis dictus magister Pierus tenebatur et obligatus sit ponere supra dictam portam, quam portam cum dicta rosa sic intagliata et laborata dictus magister Pierus teneatur et obligatus sit et sic per sollepnem stipulationem promisit rîçare, laborare, murare et componere omnibus et singulis ipsius magistri Pieri sumptibus et expensis, cum pacto et conditione quod dictus magister Antonius dicto nomine teneatur et obligatus sit et sic per sollepnem stipulatione promisit dare et consignare dicto magistro Piero quatricos sive stangas et tabulas pro armando et pro armandis fatiando, tempore quo dictus magister Pierus voluerit dictam portam cum dicta rosa rîçare, murare et componere sumptibus et expensis dicti hospitalis et ecclesie Sancte Marie de La Carità. Et hoc pro eo quia dictus magister Antonius Eustachii dicto nomine [...] promisit et convenit supradicto magistro Piero ibidem presenti, stipulanti et recipienti pro se suisque heredibus et successoribus dare, solvere et cum effectu numerare omni occaxione et exceptione remota, ducatos centum triginta auri venetos boni auri et puri auri, iusti et legalis ponderis pro mercede et salario ipsius magistri Pieri infra hoc terminos, videlicet unam tertiam partem dicti denari quam primum dictus magister Pierus conduxerit dictos lapides ad dictum portum Firmi, item unam tertiam partem dicti denarii ad medietatem dicti laborerii facti et conducti per dictum magistrum Pierum et aliam tertiam partem dicti denarii videlicet residuum dicti pretii finito et completo toto dicto laborerio dicte porte et rose et ab inde in posterum, ad omnem dicti magistri Pieri et suorum heredum et successorum et cui ipse commiserat petitionem [...] quibus supra promiserunt et convenerunt dicte partes se realiter et personaliter conveniri, cogi, constringi et compelli quolibet tempore iuridico et feriato [...] in curia domini potestatis et domini capitanei civitatis Firmi, Montis Rubiani, Esculi, Rechaneti, Macerate, Ancone, Venetiarum, in curia generali provintie Marchie Ancone, Neapoli, Ducatus Tusie et ubique locorum [...] de quibus omnibus et singulis firmiter attendentis observandis et adimplendis predicte partes et qualibet ipsarum promiserunt et obligaverunt dicte partes hinc inde, videlicet dictus magister Antonius dicto nomine, cum presentia, consensu et voluntate dictorum capitum dicto magistro Piero ibidem presenti ut supra [...] omnia et singula bona dicti hospitalis mobilia et stabilia presentia et futura et dictus magister Pierus dicto hospitali [...]

Actum Firmi videlicet in palatio comunis Firmi solite residentie magnificorum dominorum priorum dicte civitatis, videlicet in quadam caminata aperte superiori dicti palatii posita in contrata sancti Martini iuxta plateam comunis ante ab uno latere viam comunis et alios fines, et ego Ludovicus Matheutii de Firmo publicus imperiali auctoritate notarius [...] scripsi et publicavi [...] [other handwriting] Priores populi et communis civitatis firmane [...] fidem facimus testamur et impartimus qualiter vir egregius ser Ludovicus notarius supra rogatus fuit et est publicus imperiali auctoritate notarius [...] [on verso] 1462, n° 1. Instrumento d'obbligo a favore dell'hospedale di portare le pietre di marmo da Sibinico fatta da maestro Pietro di Giorgio.

The painting owned by the Schiavoni Confraternity of Ancona and the wooden compartments with *Stories of St Blaise* by Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro*

Giuseppe Capriotti**

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to analyze the phenomenon related to the migration of the cult as well as the iconography of St Blaise towards the Italian Adriatic coast, due to

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This essay is a synthesis of some papers presented at two international conferences: the first (*From Dubrovnik to the Italian Adriatic coast: the migration of the iconography of St Blaise and the story of a painting owned by the Confraternity of Schiavoni of Ancona*) was presented at the Sixteenth Century Society Conference, held in Bruges, Belgium, in 2016 (18-20 August); the second (*The wooden compartments with stories of St Blaise by Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro: a work commissioned by the Schiavoni confraternity of Ancona?*) was presented at the international conference *Visualizing Past in a Foreign Country: Schiavoni/Illyrian Confraternities and Colleges in Early Modern Italy in comparative perspective*, held in Zagreb, Croatia, in 2017 (30-31 May). The author thanks Chiara Musio, Francesca Serpentine, Roberto Dell'Orso, Jasenka Gudelj, Tanja Trška, Ivana Čapeta Rakić, Ivana Prijatelj Pavičić, Valentina Živković, Ivana Čota, Matteo Mazzalupi.

individuals or groups of people who moved from the Dubrovnik Republic, where the saint was venerated as patron. In the paintings produced in the town between the 15th and the 18th century, St Blaise is always represented as a bishop carrying a model of the town in his hand, to show the protection offered by the saint to the Republic. Because of different reasons and patronages, the cult of St Blaise is quite spread in Italy and Europe, however, as for the Italian Adriatic coast, it was promoted by the citizens who came from Dubrovnik for business reasons, as shown by the paintings commissioned to Titian by Alvise Gozzi (Ancona, in the Marche) and to Padovanino by Nikola Radolović (Polignano a Mare, in Puglia), both Ragusans. The essay eventually aims at proposing an analysis of some wooden compartments by Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro (15th century), representing the stories of St Blaise, as a probable commission by the documented confraternity of St Blaise of Ancona, established by some Schiavoni people in the 15th century. The compartments, preserved in various museums and collections, could be the remnant panels of the documented altarpiece belonging to the chapel of the Schiavoni confraternity in the church of St Dominic.

Lo scopo di questo saggio è analizzare il fenomeno della migrazione del culto e dell'iconografia di San Biagio verso la costa adriatica italiana, grazie al movimento di singoli o gruppi di persone provenienti dalla Repubblica di Dubrovnik, dove il santo era venerato come patrono. Nella pittura prodotta in questa città tra il XV e il XVIII secolo, San Biagio è infatti sempre rappresentato come vescovo con il modellino della città sulle sue mani, per dimostrare la protezione offerta dal santo alla Repubblica. Per diverse ragioni e patronati, il culto di San Biagio è abbastanza diffuso in Italia e in Europa, ma sulla costa adriatica italiana è stato promosso, in particolare, da cittadini trasferitisi da Dubrovnik per motivi economici, come testimoniano ad esempio i dipinti commissionati a Tiziano di Alvise Gozzi (Ancona, nelle Marche) e al Padovanino di Nikola Radolović (Polignano a Mare, in Puglia), entrambi ragusei. Il saggio si propone da ultimo di analizzare alcune tavole di Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro (XV secolo), rappresentanti storie di San Biagio, come probabile commissione della confraternita di San Biagio di Ancona, costituita nel XV secolo da Schiavoni. Gli scomparti, ora conservati in diversi musei e collezioni, potrebbero essere ciò che resta della documentata pala d'altare della cappella della confraternita degli Schiavoni nella chiesa di San Domenico.

1. *Introduction*

The aim of this paper is to analyze three wooden compartments of an altarpiece, attributable to Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro and representing the stories of St Blaise, as a possible work commissioned by the Schiavoni confraternity of Ancona, in the Marche Region, in the 15th century. This “micro” case could be a new chapter in the rich phenomenon of the migration of the cult as well as the iconography of St Blaise towards the Italian Adriatic coast, due to the movement of individuals or groups of people from Dubrovnik, the ancient Ragusa, where the saint was worshipped as patron¹.

¹ On this problem see in general: Bianco 2009; Lupis 2014.

Who exactly was St Blaise? According to the *Legenda aurea* by Jacopo da Varazze², who in the 13th century makes a synthesis of the previous Greek and Latin versions of the legend of the martyr³, St Blaise was a bishop who lived in Sebaste, in Asia Minor, under the rule of Diocletian. As soon as he was appointed a bishop, he was forced to hide in a retreat, in order to escape persecutions against Christians. In the cave where he was hiding, he repeatedly received the visit of wild animals, wounded or ill, and he healed them with his blessing. One day, the governor's soldiers on a hunting session found him and caught him. Along the way, Blaise met a woman who was desperate since her son was in danger of dying because of a fish bone stuck in his throat. Blaise healed him with a blessing. Because he refused to worship pagan gods, Blaise was first tortured with the carder's combs and then thrown into a pond. Making the sign of the cross, Blaise made the water as solid as the ground and avoided drowning. The governor then made his soldiers march into the pond, but they all drowned. At this point the governor had Blaise beheaded and his soul rose up to heaven. According to this legend, then, St Blaise does not have any direct relation with the city of Dubrovnik.

The relation between the saint and the South-Adriatic city is narrated by Serafino Razzi, prior of the Dominican convent of Ragusa at the end of the 16th century⁴. In his chronicle, the friar mentions a miracle that happened in 971⁵: the parish priest don Stojko told the Senate that he had seen in night vision (maybe a dream) his church of St Stephan full of armed men and a bearded man with a crosier in his hand. The man first revealed that he was St Blaise and then said that he had chased away Venetian ships that had come to conquer the town. Following this legend, the saint becomes the guardian of the freedom of the Republic, first against Venice and then against the Ottomans. In the art of this city, in effect, between the 15th and the 18th century, St Blaise is traditionally represented as a bishop carrying a model of the city in his hand, to show the protection offered by the saint to the Republic, as a guardian of the city walls and of the Ragusan fleet⁶. This happens for instance in the polyptych by Nikola Božidarević, which is now in the Dominican Museum of Dubrovnik (fig. 1)⁷.

For different reasons, the cult of St Blaise is quite spread around Italy and Europe: he becomes the guardian of harvests and animals and the "physician" for throat diseases of the throat⁸; on the Italian Adriatic coast, however, his cult was particularly promoted by citizens who came from Dubrovnik for business

² Da Varazze 2007, pp. 204-207. On the importance of this text for the European culture cf. Boureau 1984; Le Goff 2014.

³ Garitte 1955, 1955b.

⁴ On the presence of St Blaise in the Ragusan literature see: Stojan 2014.

⁵ Razzi 2011, p. 37; Razzi 1595, pp. 20-21.

⁶ Cf. Gjukić-Bender 2014, pp. 292-325; Fisković 2014, pp. 154-201.

⁷ Cvetnić 2007 and the entry in Vilač 2017, pp. 76-77.

⁸ Tchouhadjian 2004; Colafranceschi *et al.* 2014.

reasons⁹. The case of the patronage of Lujo Gučetić (Alvise Gozze) in Ancona and Marin Radolović in Polignano a Mare, both Ragusans, is quite meaningful¹⁰.

2. *St Blaise for two Ragusans on the Italian Adriatic Coast*

In his patronage Lujo Gučetić (Gozze or Gozzi in Italian), a Ragusan merchant resident in Ancona had used the hometown saint with a clear identity-defining function. In 1520 Gučetić commissioned Tiziano Vecellio to paint the altarpiece for the high altar of the Franciscan observant church of San Francesco ad Alto (fig. 2)¹¹. The relationship of the painting by Titian with the *Madonna di Foligno* of Aracoeli by Raffaello (fig. 3), repeatedly highlighted by critics¹², is very significant in this case for the role played by St Blaise in the Ancona painting. As well known, in his *Madonna di Foligno*, Raffaello was inspired by a lost fresco by Pietro Cavallini in the apse of the church of Aracoeli¹³, whose iconography scheme is documented by a seal, still preserved in the same Franciscan convent (fig. 4)¹⁴. The seal, that mirrors the lost fresco by Cavallini, portrays on the left the Tiburtine Sibyl, who points out the appearance of the Virgin with Child to Augustus, according to the well-known legend on the foundation of the church of Aracoeli, also told by Jacopo da Varazze¹⁵. In the painting by Raffaello the kneeling client Sigismondo de' Conti¹⁶, accompanied by St Jerome, takes up the place of Augustus in all respect, while the pointing action of the Tiburtine is carried out by St John the Baptist. From an iconographic point of view, St John shares the same gesture (the indicating finger) with the Tiburtine. Titian further elaborates this iconography: to the right, we see St Francis, patron of the church, while on the left the Dubrovnik client is being protected by St Blaise, who at

⁹ On the case of Puglia see Bianco 2009 and Lupis 2014; Cf. also Basile Bonsante 2006.

¹⁰ Cf. Tomić 2010.

¹¹ For the circumstances of the commission cf. Gudelj 2010.

¹² Ivi, pp. 86-88. More in general see Polverari 1988; Brock 2017.

¹³ Cf. De Vecchi 2002, pp. 244-246.

¹⁴ Cf. Tomei 1982; 2000, pp. 106-107.

¹⁵ In a sibylline key, the famous *Ara Coeli* legend develops a theme already dealt with in the Greek version of the *Chronographia* by Giovanni Malalas (6th century), in which Augustus asked the Pythia of Delphi who would reign after him. In divulging the Tiburtine Sybil as its protagonist instead of the Pythia, the *Golden Legend* by Jacopo da Varazze does nothing but resume a replacement already present in the *Mirabilia Urbis Romae* of the 12th century. To the manifested wish of the Senate to venerate the emperor like a god, Augustus himself replies that he would ask the Sibyl beforehand if a man greater than himself would ever have been born. While the prophetess interrogates the oracle in the imperial chamber, a Virgin appears in a circle around the sun with a child in her lap, which the Sibyl indicates to him as an object of adoration. After this event, the emperor not only did not allow the Senate to worship him as a god, but founded the still existing Church of the *Ara Coeli* on the Campidoglio, in honor of the Virgin. Cf. Verdier 1982.

¹⁶ Cf. Sensi 2014.

the same time shows him the appearance of the Virgin. St Blaise, who makes the gesture that was Tiburtina's in Cavallini and the Baptist's in Raffaello, here plays for Gozze the dual function of protecting and announcing the vision. In summing up Raffaello's model, therefore, Titian reinforces the role of the patron of Dubrovnik.

In the following century, another Ragusan immigrant, that is, Marin Radolović uses the patron of Dubrovnik to remind his origin. Marin's brother, Nikola Radolović, a descendant of a merchant family from Ragusa, had become a feudal lord of the Viceroyalty of Naples in 1604, acquiring the feud of Polignano a Mare, ruled by his family until 1713¹⁷. Nikola promoted the restoration of the Franciscan observant complex of Santa Maria di Costantinopoli (today, Sant'Antonio), which was meant to become a sort of family sanctuary. For this church, his brother Marin commissioned an altarpiece to Alessandro Varotari, known as Padovanino, around 1626 selecting some very significant saints to celebrate his double homeland (fig. 5): on the right there is St Vito, patron of Polignano, portrayed while he is holding a dog by the leash; on the left, there is the patron of his family's hometown, portrayed as a bishop, while an angel carries his international attribute, the carder's comb¹⁸. This latter is quite significant: while in Dubrovnik the specific attribute of St Blaise is the model of the town, in the rest of Europe it is the instrument of one of his tortures, the carder's comb¹⁹.

3. *The Schiavoni Confraternity of Ancona and its painting in the documentation*

Already in the 15th century, St Blaise had a close relationship with the Schiavoni of Ancona, one of the most important communities of immigrants, settled in the multicultural port of Ancona in the modern period²⁰. According to the documentation produced between the 18th and early 19th century by the confraternity of St Blaise of Ancona, groups of Schiavoni, fleeing from the plague, had disembarked in the 15th century on the coast of Ancona, where they founded a confraternity dedicated to St Blaise²¹. The existence of this confraternity, that in the 15th century had an altar in the Dominican church, is confirmed by some notarial documents, found by Matteo Mazzalupi²²: in 1476 Guccino di Bonanno from Ragusa (this provenance is quite important) leaves a florin *cappelle Sancti*

¹⁷ Basile Bonsante 2002, pp. 75-100.

¹⁸ Ivi, pp. 90-91.

¹⁹ See for example the case of Ascoli Piceno: Capriotti 2016.

²⁰ Cf. Hansen 2004.

²¹ See Capriotti in print.

²² Some documents are quoted in Mazzalupi 2008, pp. 180-181, note 28; other documents are quoted in an unpublished entry written by Matteo Mazzalupi for the company Altomani&Sons. I would like to thank Mazzalupi for this reference.

*Blaxii site in ecclesia Sancti Dominici de Ancona*²³; in 1498 Gregorio di Giovanni called Zingaro (the gypsy) requests to be buried in the Dominican church *in sepulture confraternitatis Sancti Blasii ante altare Sancti Blasii*, delivering 5 ducats to use *in uno Sancto Ieronimo fiendo in dicto altare*, probably a sculpture, now lost²⁴. In this context, the documented reference to St Jerome is quite interesting because in the 15th century the author of the Vulgate had become the saint representative of the Illyrian nation²⁵, as testified by the dedication to him of the national church of the Croats in Rome²⁶.

According to an inventory compiled in 1791, the Schiavoni origin of the confraternity would be documented by a painting found in the church of St Blaise in Poggio, near Ancona, site of the first organized community of Schiavoni²⁷. However, the painting is not described in the document. A painting, brought by the Schiavoni that settled in Poggio, is mentioned in the 1817 inventory, in which it is stated that they had brought from Schiavonia «a Painting portraying the Madonna with Child in her arms, St Blaise, highly worshipped by them, and underneath the image of the Purgatory with various souls, and a young boy that, with a vase, poured water over the purifying fire»²⁸. According to this source, the “painting” had the same identical subject of the one now preserved in the church of St Blaise in Ancona, made out by Domenico Simonetti known as Magatta in the 18th century²⁹ (fig. 6). In the 1808 inventory compiled by the Schiavoni confraternity of St Germano of Camerano, near Ancona, another painting is mentioned, owned by the confraternity of Ancona, which should portray the landing of the Schiavoni at Numana, on the Conero coast³⁰. So far we have no trace of this painting and the accounts about it are clearly discordant: according to the 1791 inventory, the painting found under the altar of St Blaise in Poggio would reveal the Schiavoni origin of the brotherhood, but it is not specified how; according to the 1817 inventory, the Schiavoni had brought with them a painting, which should be identical in its iconography to the one that is today on the altar of the church of St Blaise in Ancona; according to the inventory of St Germano, the painting should represent the landing of the Schiavoni on the shore of Numana.

²³ Archivio di Stato di Ancona, Archivio Notarile di Ancona, 65, notaio Melchiorre Bernabei, II fasc., c. 27r-v.

²⁴ Archivio di Stato di Ancona, Archivio Notarile di Ancona, 137, notaio Girolamo Sevini, cc. 483r-484r.

²⁵ Ivić 2016. See also: Rice 1987.

²⁶ Cf. Gudelj 2015.

²⁷ Archivio Diocesano di Ancona (hereinafter ADAN), S. Biagio. Regole Storia (1768-1943), *Inventario* (1791), p. 3.

²⁸ «un Quadro in cui vi era dipinta la Madonna Santissima col Bambino in braccio, Santo Blasio da essi tenuto in somma venerazione, e sotto poi a detta figura vi era il Purgatorio con varie anime, ed un Donzello con vaso di acqua, che versava su quel purgante fuoco»: ADAN, S. Biagio. Regole Storia (1768-1943), *Platea* (1817), p. 3.

²⁹ Cf. Capriotti in print.

³⁰ Cf. Toccaceli 1991, p. 49.

Regardless of the problems posed by this discordant documentation, starting from 1444, the Schiavoni of the confraternity of St Blaise of Ancona definitely possessed a painting that adorned their altar in the St Dominic church in the town³¹. In 1717, when the Dominicans decided to renew their church, the brothers were forced to transfer their painting to a new chapel in Calamo, which was built in 1718. In 1728 an inventory of the main altar of this chapel describes an altarpiece representing the Madonna with Child in the center, on the right St Blaise and St Mary Magdalen and on the left St Jerome and St Lucy. St Blaise and St Jerome, the saints that identify the Schiavoni, are also replicated in two statues in the gilded frame of the altarpiece. When St Blaise church was rebuilt in 1748, this altarpiece, now lost, was surely replaced with the abovementioned work by Magatta. This painting actually defines the new role of the confraternity, which is no longer to keep Illyrian customs alive but to soothe the pains of the souls in purgatory with their prayers. In fact, in the painting, the Virgin and St Blaise are interceding with Christ to save the souls in Purgatory, whose sorrows find some relief in the water poured from the *donzello*, a young man wearing the dress of the confraternity of St Blaise³².

4. *The compartments of the altarpiece by Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro*

Today, there is no trace of the painting mentioned in the reports representing the origin of the Schiavoni confraternity, once in the Dominican church in Ancona. Nevertheless, it is possible to develop a hypothesis formulated in 2008 by Matteo Mazzalupi, who dubiously proposed to identify the three works by Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro as the surviving compartments of the old altarpiece of the Schiavoni altar in the Dominican church³³. Federico Zeri included these works in the catalog of Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro in 1948³⁴, a painter that had been active in the Marca of Ancona for a long time, from 1441 to 1475, year of his death (even if he is documented in Pesaro in 1459)³⁵. The three stories of St Blaise, due to their size, cannot be considered compartments of a *predella*. More likely, they were compartments of a hagiographic altarpiece following the Venetian model, with the saint in the middle and stories on the sides, similar to the *Stories of St Lucy* by Jacobello del Fiore or the *Stories of St Elpidio* by Giacomo di Nicola da Recanati³⁶.

³¹ Cf. Capriotti in print.

³² For a more detailed story see Capriotti in print.

³³ Mazzalupi 2008, p. 180.

³⁴ Zeri 1948.

³⁵ Cf. Berardi 1988; Mazzalupi 2008, pp. 178-180 and pp. 210-223 (chapter written by Alessandro Marchi).

³⁶ Cf. the unpublished entry written by Matteo Mazzalupi for the company Altomani&Sons.

The compartment now in the museum of Palazzo Venezia in Rome depicts the torture with the carder's comb (fig. 7). Before being hanged on two poles in the form of a crucifix, St Blaise was undressed: in the foreground, there is, in fact, his garment, his cane, and a book. Two persecutors in tattered clothes are torturing him with two carder's combs, while two groups of people are observing on the right and on the left.

The compartment now in an unknown collection (fig. 8) represents the moment when Blaise, thrown into the lake, does not drown, unlike the soldiers persecuting him. At the center of the image, St Blaise is still naked while praying with palms united, with a big stone wheel hanging on his neck, despite which the martyr does not sink. This wheel tied to his neck is not present in the *Golden legend* by Jacopo da Varazze. Among four legends of the martyr published in the *Acta Sanctorum*, only one tells us that St Blaise was punished «marmoreo pondere ad collum eius ligato»³⁷. However, the generic weight quoted in the legend becomes a millstone in the painting³⁸. This detail creates a figurative connection with the martyrdom of another saint highly venerated in the Dalmatian coast, St Anastasius from Solin (the laundryman), who is, together with St Domnius, one of the patron saints of the city of Split. According to his legend, St Anastasius was thrown into the sea with a stone hung on his neck³⁹; in his iconography this stone becomes a wheel of a millstone, his most common attribute⁴⁰, as it is evident in the relief by the Master Otto in the Cathedral of Split⁴¹, in the tomb of the martyr conceived by Juraj Dalmatinac for the same Cathedral⁴² and in the polyptych by Dujam Vušković, coming from the Franciscan church in Split and today preserved at the Hermitage (fig. 9)⁴³. Therefore, in the painting by Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro, St Blaise seems to appropriate the attribute of another Dalmatian saint, St Anastasius, probably to create a visual link between the two much-venerated saints on the Dalmatian coast.

The last compartment, which was owned by the antiquarian Altomani and which is now in another private collection (fig. 10), portrays the beheading of the saint. St Blaise prays again with his palms united, while a rogue is about to decapitate him together with two banded boys, who are also present in the legend of the saint. On the right, some characters dressed in Oriental clothes

³⁷ *Acta Sanctorum Februarii* 1658, p. 352. Although this detail is rather rare, it is mentioned in a passion of St Blaise rewritten in 1752. Cf. Niccolai 1752, p. 51.

³⁸ The representation of the weight tied to the neck of St Blaise is quite rare in his iconography. It misses for instance in a compartment of the *predella* in the polyptych by Sano di Pietro (Siena, Pinacoteca Nazionale) and in the cycle of frescos by Giacomo Jaquerio in Sant'Antonio di Ranverso (Buttigliera Alta, TO). Cf. Colafranceschi *et alii* 2014, p. 26 and p. 36.

³⁹ *Acta Sanctorum Septembris* 1750, p. 23: «ut suspenso in collo eius lapide in mare mitteretur». On this legend see Delehay 1897; Jarak 1997.

⁴⁰ Cf. Prijatelj 1978.

⁴¹ Goss 2010, p. 126.

⁴² Ivanišević 1982; Prijatelj 1989; Ivanišević 1989.

⁴³ De Marchi 1996.

observe the scene: one wears a pointed hat, another a turban, and another a shawl similar to a Jewish *tallit*⁴⁴. Their appearance, therefore, is similar to that of the Jews in a scene of Crucifixion, although in this context they seem to have a more positive function as if they were merely the Eastern companions of the martyr.

Since the iconography of St Blaise along the west coast of the Adriatic is generally linked to the cult of the saint, promoted by individuals or communities of Schiavoni in their new homeland (the quoted cases of the patronage of Lujó Gučetić in Ancona and Marin Radolović in Polignano a Mare may be the most famous examples), I think that the three stories of Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro could really be fragments of the “mysterious” painting mentioned in the conflicting documentation at the origins of the Schiavoni confraternity of Ancona. The altarpiece by Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro could have been dismembered and dispersed after 1718, with the transfer of the confraternity from the Dominican church to the new chapel, and replaced with a new altarpiece already documented in the inventory of 1728.

5. *A final Adriatic comparison*

I would like to finally propose a comparison with the case of a painting dating to the end of the 16th century and now kept in the church of St Andrea in Barletta, in Puglia (fig. 11). The existence of a confraternity entitled to St Blaise had been documented in this town already in the 16th century, but we do not know whether it was founded by Ragusans and whether this confraternity commissioned the painting⁴⁵. However, in this hagiographic altarpiece, St Blaise is portrayed as a bishop in the act of blessing, holding a crosier and the model of Ragusa. The presence of this detail, which is the special attribute of St Blaise in Dubrovnik, makes us assume that the painting was commissioned by Ragusans that had moved to a new country. Indeed, it would make no sense to portray the saint in Barletta with the model of Ragusa. This artwork is also very important because it is one of the rarest examples of a hagiographic altarpiece dedicated to St Blaise, as should have been the one by Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro before its dismembering. Behind the still figure of the saint we can see some episodes of his life: on the top left, St Blaise is portrayed as hermit healing some wild animals, whereas at the bottom left he is healing the boy with the fishbone in his throat with his blessing; on the top right, Blaise is being tortured with the combs, while in the scene at the bottom he is beheaded.

In conclusion, it is possible to observe how, along the west coast of the Adriatic, from Marche to Puglia, the Schiavoni patronage has very similar

⁴⁴ On the attributes of the Jews in the iconography see Capriotti 2014, pp. 13-17.

⁴⁵ Lupis 2014, pp. 143-146.

features, using St Blaise to recall their motherland and distinguish themselves from the Other. Furthermore, both in Barletta and in Ancona, the confraternity of Schiavoni promoted the saint from Ragusa with a hagiographic altarpiece in Venetian style.

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Appendix

Fig. 1. Nikola Božidarević, *Bundić Polyptich*, Dubrovnik, Dominican Museum



Fig. 2. Tiziano Vecellio, *Pala Gozzi*, Ancona, Pinacoteca Podesti

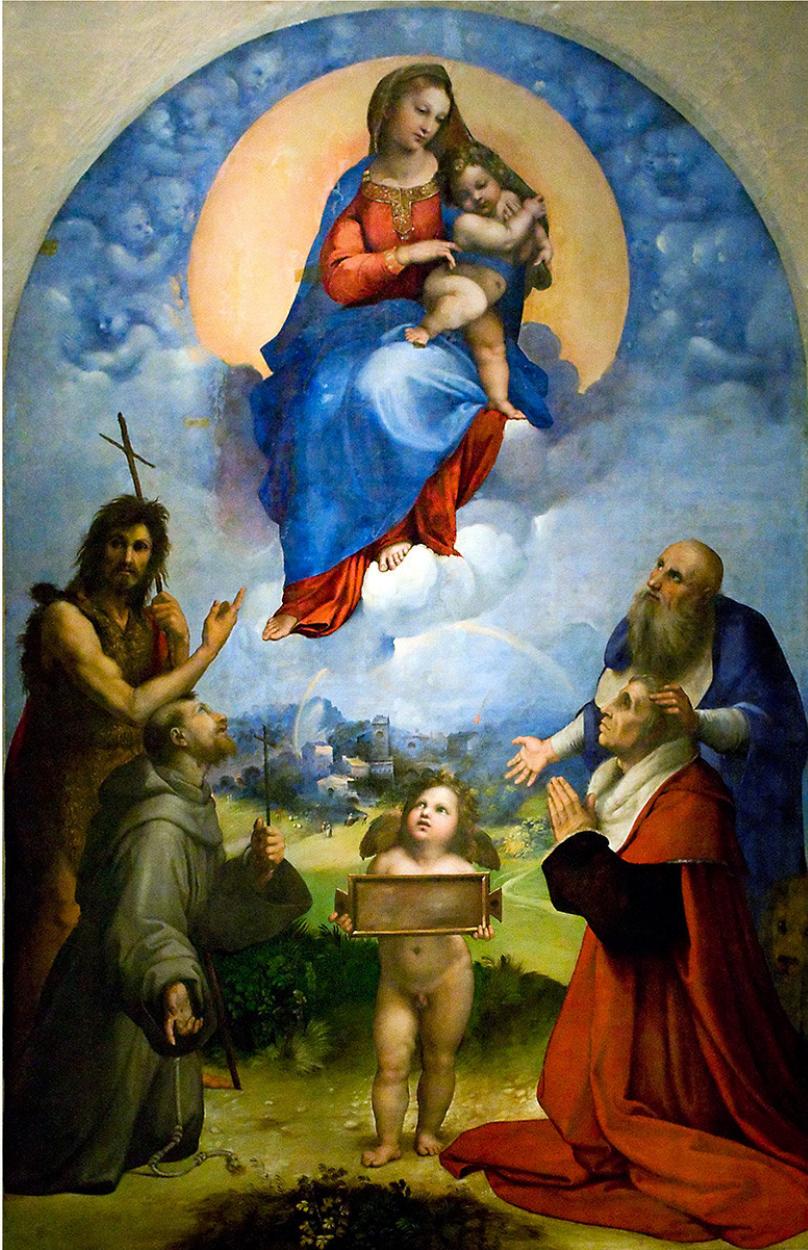


Fig. 3. Raffaello, *Madonna di Foligno*, Città del Vaticano, Musei Vaticani



Fig. 4. Sigillo dell'Ara Coeli, Rome, Ara Coeli convent



Fig. 5. Padovanino, *Pala Radolović*, Polignano a Mare, Church of Santa Maria di Costantinopoli



Fig. 6. Domenico Simonetti, called il Magatta, *Christ, the Virgin, St Blaise and the souls of the Purgatory*, Ancona, Church of St Blaise

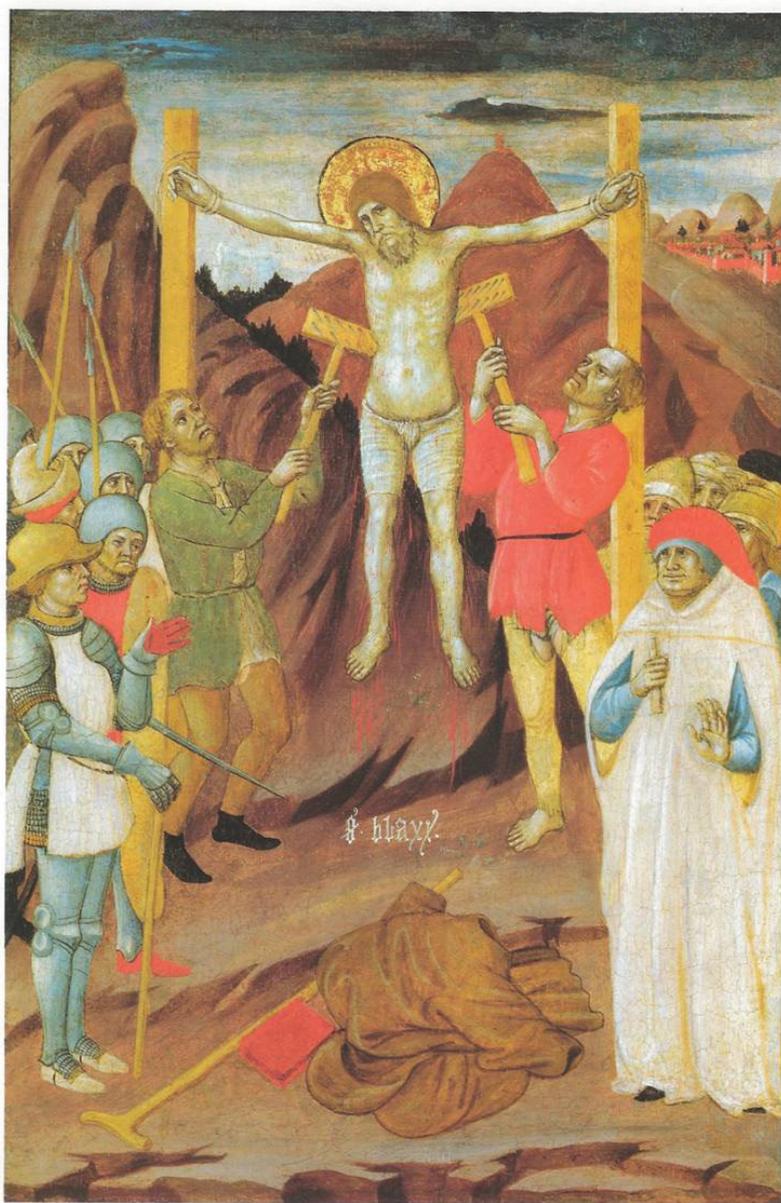


Fig. 7. Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro, *Story of St. Blaise*, Rome, Museum of Palazzo Venezia

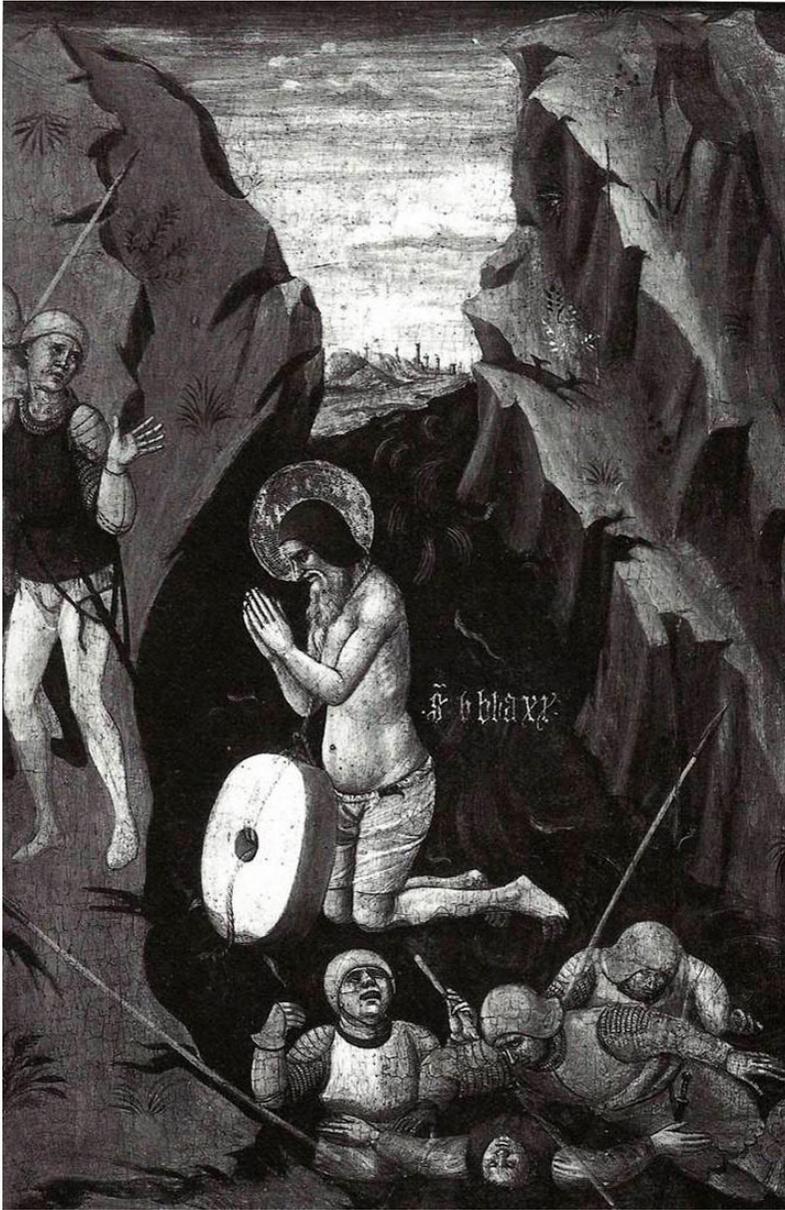


Fig. 8. Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro, *Story of St. Blaise*, Unknown Collection



Fig. 9. Dujam Vušković, *Polyptych from the Franciscan church of Split*, Saint Petersburg, Hermitage



Fig. 10. Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro, *Story of St Blaise*, Private Collection

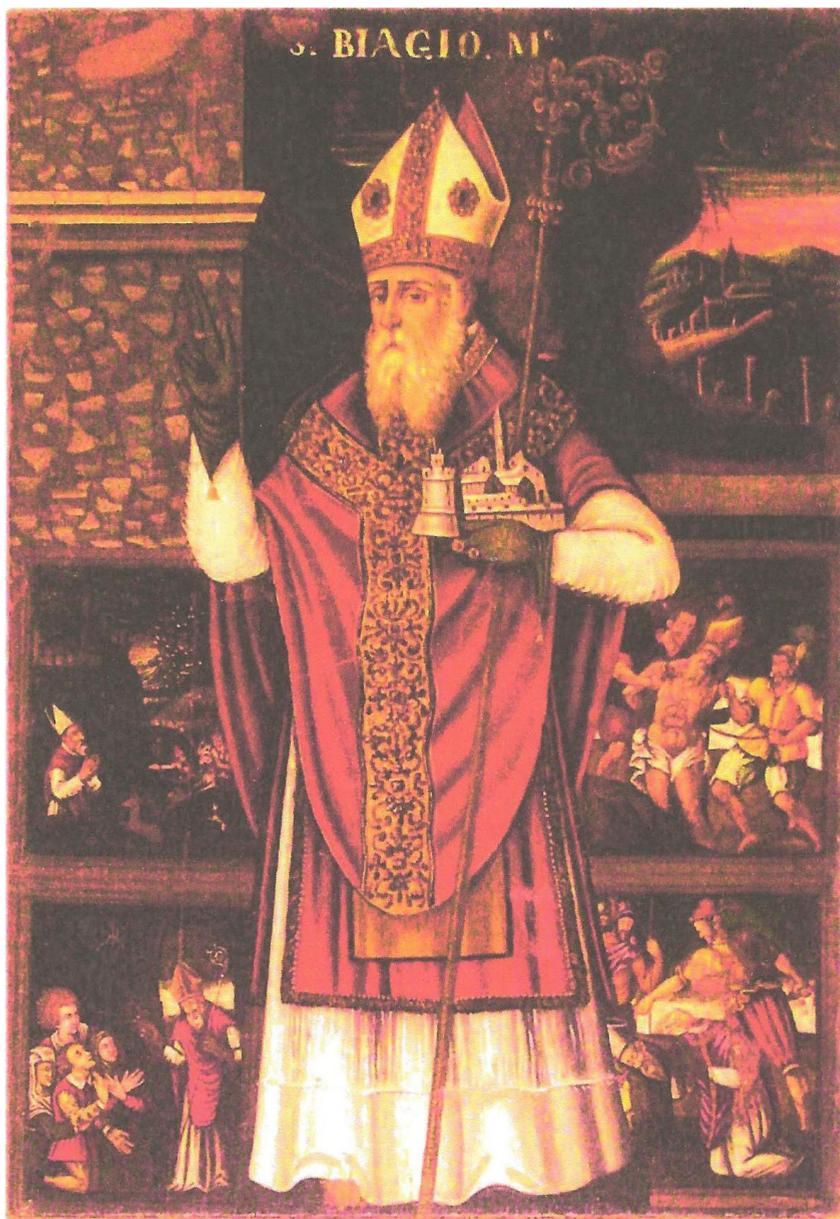


Fig. 11. *Altarpiece of St Blaise*, Barletta, Church of St Andrea

Section IV

Schiavoni/Illyrians in the university city:
Bologna

The *Great Bravery of Croatian Soldier* by Giuseppe Maria Mitelli*

Daniel Premierl**

Abstract

The article investigates the iconography of two etchings with Croatian subject matter made by the Bolognese etcher Giuseppe Maria Mitelli in 1684. In the focus is the etching *Great Bravery of Croatian soldier* (*Gran prodezza di soldato croatto*). The author concludes, interpreting the explanatory text below the etching, that it depicts an event of the so-called Great Turkish War (1683-1699). The depicted hero belonged to the Croatian Regiment commanded by general James Leslie, and the depicted heroic act occurred, in all probability, during the battle of Virovitica in 1684. Also, the author points out to a model for Mitelli's etching as well as to the literary image of the simultaneous decapitation of both a horseman and a horse in the Croatian literature. In the same year, Mitelli also made the portrait of the Zagreb bishop and the politician Martin Borković. The existence of both etchings is associated with the Illyrian-Hungarian College in Bologna, governed by the Zagreb cathedral Chapter.

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L'articolo indaga l'iconografia di due incisioni con soggetto croato realizzate dall'incisore bolognese Giuseppe Maria Mitelli nel 1684. Il focus del saggio è l'incisione *Gran prodezza di soldato croatto*. Interpretando il testo esplicativo sotto l'acquaforte, l'autore ritiene che essa raffiguri un evento della cosiddetta Grande Guerra Turca (1683-1699). L'eroe raffigurato apparteneva al reggimento croato comandato dal generale James Leslie e l'atto eroico raffigurato avvenne, con ogni probabilità, durante la battaglia di Virovitica nel 1684. L'autore individua inoltre un modello per l'incisione di Mitelli e un riferimento a una fonte nella letteratura croata ove compare la decapitazione simultanea di un cavaliere e di un cavallo. Nello stesso anno Mitelli fece anche il ritratto del vescovo di Zagabria e del politico Martin Borković. L'esistenza di entrambe le acqueforti è associata al Collegio illirico-ungarico di Bologna, governato dal Capitolo della cattedrale di Zagabria.

The etching entitled *Great Bravery of Croatian soldier* (*Gran prodezza di soldato croatto*; fig. 1) was signed in 1684 by Giuseppe Maria Mitelli (1634-1718), a prolific and well-known Bolognese etcher. It depicts a Croatian cavalry soldier who has just beheaded both an Ottoman horseman and his horse in one stroke. The explanatory text at the bottom of the sheet reads: *La vera, et propria rappresentatione, d'un ben che ordinario, però magnanimo, et risoluto guerriere, sotto / il governo del Regimento Croato, del Generale Lessle, con nome Pietro Barij, nazionale Crovato: Come / questo, nell'ultima battaglia, ad un principale Turco, chiamato Mitritz, in un sol colpo, et al suo cavallo, con animo coraggioso, Separò con Sciabla dal collo ambe le teste. Del 1684. / Disegno venuto di Vienna. / Mitelli Intagliò.*

The *Great Bravery of Croatian soldier* has been catalogued since the nineteenth century among more than six hundred engravings by Giuseppe Maria Mitelli that ended up in the collection of the *Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio in Bologna*¹. The etching has been grouped among Mitelli's popular prints that celebrated Christian victories against the Ottomans and were aimed at the retail market². Mitelli's anti-Ottoman prints are thematically linked to the so-called Great Turkish War that began with the famous Christian victory in 1683 in Vienna and ended in 1699 with the Peace Treaty of Karlowitz, resulting in the liberation of greater parts of Hungary and eastern Croatia from the Ottoman rule. The whole Europe was interested in the outcome of this war, the Papal State city of Bologna being no exception (at that time Bologna's prominent scholar Count Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli was employed by the Habsburgs for twenty years; he was to lead the Habsburg border demarcation commission after the war).

Giuseppe Maria Mitelli's anti-Ottoman etchings have not stirred many comments in the historiography thus far – the Bolognese etcher owes his reputation to the more aesthetically accomplished maps such as *Le arti per*

¹ Varignana 1978, pp. 312-313.

² Cf. Ivi, pp. 309-322; Boschloo 1992.

via, the fantastic *Alfabeto in sogno*, or the curious *Giochi*. However, the *Great Bravery of Croatian soldier* was reproduced in the 1988 book *Annali del Collegio Ungaro-illirico di Bologna*, together with another etching by Mitelli, *Triumph of Bologna* (where the allegory figure of Bologna celebrates the liberation of Vienna)³. In the caption below the reproduction, the editors of the book brought forward the idea that the creation of images such as these should be understood as an effect of the mediation of the Illyrian-Hungarian College in Bologna. In the present article, the *Great Bravery of Croatian soldier's* iconography will be analyzed, affirming the assumption that its patron was associated with the Illyrian-Hungarian College in Bologna.

The Illyrian-Hungarian College in Bologna was governed by the Zagreb cathedral Chapter between 1553 and 1781 with the purpose of providing a possibility of doctoral education at the University of Bologna to the students from the Zagreb diocese and Slavonia⁴. Reasons for the foundation of the national College in Bologna laid in the complex political situation in the Hungarian-Croatian Kingdom: after the 1526 Ottoman victory at Mohács the Hungarian-Croatian Kingdom lost most of its territories and experienced the turmoil of the civil war as well as the successful spread of Protestantism. The College was founded in Bologna in order to provide a safe haven for the training of the future elite. An equal number of students from the Kingdom's two nations, Hungarians and Croats, were enrolled each year; however, since the late 17th and throughout the 18th century, the majority of students were Croats. Rectors of the College, who were also canons of the Zagreb cathedral Chapter, informed regularly not only their political and ecclesiastical protectors in Bologna and Rome on developments of events on the battlefields in the Hungarian-Croatian Kingdom but also the Bolognese public. For instance, in 1689 the College organized a public feast to commemorate the victory against the Ottomans in Zrin (Croatia) – it is recorded that on that occasion people of Bologna chanted «Vivano li Croati, vivano li Croati!; Viva il bano di Croatia, vivano li coraggiosissimi Croati!»⁵.

The explanatory text at the bottom of Mitelli's etching, cited at the beginning of this article, mentions the names of the depicted Croatian and Ottoman horsemen: *Pietro Barij* and *Mitritz*, respectively. These names have not been traced in narrative sources thus far. Moreover, the surname *Barij* does not sound Croatian at all and might well have been misspelled. Both protagonists might have been mentioned in an unknown narrative source, possibly written by an eyewitness.

On the other hand, the explanatory text mentions that Croatian soldier *Pietro Barij* fought in the *Regimento Croato* commanded by *Generale Lessle*. *Generale*

³ Accorsi, Brizzi 1988, pp. 192-193.

⁴ For the history of the Illyrian-Hungarian College in Bologna see studies by G.P. Brizzi, P. Sárközy and D. Barbarić in Accorsi, Brizzi 1988, pp. IX-LXIII.

⁵ Ivi, p. 186.

Lesle is general Count James Leslie (?-1692?), Imperial field marshall⁶. He was the Scottish nobleman who, following his uncle Count Walter Leslie, had a successful court and military career serving the Habsburgs. After receiving praise for his role in the defence of Vienna in 1683, in July 1684 James Leslie's Croatian troops captured strategic town of Virovitica (northeastern Croatia). This important victory opened the way to Osijek (eastern Croatia) where next year Leslie's troops would burn down Suleyman's bridge, thus weakening the strength of the Ottoman army in Hungary and contributing to the 1686 liberation of Buda (the capital of the Kingdom of Hungary)⁷. In the annual reports written by rectors of the Illyrian-Hungarian College in Bologna general Leslie's campaigns in Slavonia are duly mentioned, and the report for the year 1684 briefly describes the capture of Virovitica by *cumpaniae leslianae*⁸. James Leslie would spend his retirement in the family castle in Ptuj (ger. *Pettau*; lat. *Poetovium*) in Styria (present-day northeastern Slovenia), close to the border with Croatia. The castle, now a regional museum, still boasts the Leslies' legacy, including Brussels tapestries cycle with stories of Odysseus.

The explanatory text then describes the image – the violent yet heroic act in which Croatian horseman is beheading the Ottoman horseman and his horse (...*in un sol colpo, et al suo cavallo, con animo coraggioso, Separò con Sciabla dal collo ambe le teste*). The text ends with following information: *Del 1684. / Disegno venuto di Vienna. / Mitelli Intagliò.*

I am not aware of the image of the simultaneous decapitation of both the horseman and his horse, but one: it depicts the heroism of Ferenc Wesselényi (1605-1667), the Palatine of Hungary and the anti-Ottoman hero (fig. 2). This image is the central theme of the theses broadsheet (*Thesenblatt*) of young Hungarian nobleman Gáspár Széchy, made for his degree examination in 1663 at the University of Tyrnau (lat. *Tyrnavia*; hung. *Nagyszombat*; slovak. *Trnava* in present-day Slovakia). Ferenc Wesselényi was depicted on Gáspár Széchy's theses broadsheet because he was Széchy's patron. The engraving was made by German etcher active in Vienna, Matthäus Küsel (1629-1681), after a drawing made by an unidentified painter⁹, but its narrative or visual source remain unknown¹⁰.

It is obvious that both heroic images, that of Hungarian Palatine Wesselényi and that of Croatian soldier *Pietro Barij*, significantly resemble each other. It can safely be concluded that they were made after the same model or its version (*disegno*). However, it is also possible that Küsel's etching itself served as the model – its very owner, young Gáspár Széchy, happened to be the *convictor* of

⁶ Worthington 2002, pp. 84-85; Weigl 2002, pp. 91-93, 50-52; Štefanič 2009, pp. 12-15.

⁷ Mažuran 1998, pp. 249-253, 255.

⁸ Accorsi, Brizzi 1988, pp. 172, 131, 181-182.

⁹ Rózsa 1987-1988, p. 261; Galavics 2003, pp. 117-118, 127.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

the Illyrian-Hungarian College in Bologna in 1669¹¹. Did he bring to Bologna his Tyrnau theses broadsheet and left it there, so it would be handed down to Mitelli fifteen years later as the model for the *Great bravery of Croatian soldier*? Or a patron of the *Great bravery of Croatian soldier* simply acquired the same model (or its version) as the one that had been used for Küsel's etching?

However, the literary image of the simultaneous decapitation of a horseman and his horse appeared in two texts written by Croatian authors, both of them predating Küsel's etching. It appeared in *Osmanščica* (Rome, 1631) by Ivan Tomko Mrnavić (1580-1637), a Croatian prelate and author who spent much of his time in Rome working for the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith as well as for the confraternity of St Jerome of the Schiavoni/Illyrians¹². *Osmanščica* is a historical drama which narrates the Ottoman defeat by the Polish army at the 1621 battle of Hochim and its aftermath that led to a conspiracy in Constantinople in which sultan Osman II was to be murdered by his Janissaries¹³. The literary image of double-decapitation appears in the preface of the book, directed to Vuk Mrnjavčić of Brezovica near Zagreb (around 1586-1648), Croatian cavalry officer and the son of the deputy viceroy (*viceban*) of Croatia Krsto Mrnjavčić¹⁴. In the preface the author praises dedicatee's heroism shown thus far in battles against the Ottomans, wishing him to come back to the battlefield soon, so that he can behead Turkish horsemen and their horses in one stroke, for the revenge of his people and his parents («Neka [...] uzbudiš tvoje gospodsko srce, i ukripiš desnicu zavičnu do sada, jednime zamahom, odsikovati glave Turske konjičke i konjske skupa, na osvetu svega naroda našega, a navlastito roditeljne gospode [...]») ¹⁵.

The same literary image would recur in the book which was more influential on the readership of the Zagreb ecclesiastical and political elite – *Memoria regum et banorum Regnorum Dalmatiae, Croatiae et Slavoniae* (Vienna, 1652) by Georgius Rattkay (1612-1666), a canon of the Zagreb cathedral Chapter and a historian. The same book happened to be the narrative source for the vault paintings painted by Gioacchino Pizzoli in 1700 in the refectory of the Illyrian-Hungarian College¹⁶. In his book, Rattkay created a heroic story based on the aforementioned Mrnavić's sentence from the preface to *Osmanščica*. In Rattkay's story, Vuk Mrnjavčić goes to the fight to revenge his father's death. During the fight, he confronts the Ottoman hero Badanjković, who first gets wounded and then receives the final blow: Mrnjavčić hit him with such force that he beheaded the Turk and his horse in one stroke. «Mernavicius abiecto

¹¹ Accorsi, Brizzi 1988, p. 124; Sárközy 1988, LXI.

¹² For Mrnavić's links with visual arts see Premerl 2018a; Premerl 2018b.

¹³ For *Osmanščica* see Fališevac 2011, p. 273 (with previous bibliography).

¹⁴ For Vuk Mrnjavčić see Maček 2015, pp. 55-58. See also Premerl 2018b (with previous bibliography).

¹⁵ Tomko Mrnavić 1631, p. 4.

¹⁶ For the iconography of these vault paintings see Premerl 2014, pp. 25-60.

sclopo, evaginatoque acinace, quem ad latus equi militibus gestare est moris, eum a sinistra parte assecutus, adeo immani ferit impetu, ut uno eodemque ictu, & totum Turcae caput, & equi per collum iugulumque venas praecideret, amboque uno casu in terram ruentes exanimati interirent»¹⁷. Rattkay continues with a description of how this heroic act had an awe-inspiring effect on the Turks. Thus, Rattkay modified Mrnavić: while Mrnavić wished Mrnjavčić to pursue to behead Ottoman horsemen and their horses for revenge of his people and his parents, Rattkay fashioned a story of actual revenge for the death of the father, which has its climax in the duel whose final blow was the double-decapitation.

The image of the double-decapitation, either literary or visual, is both rare and strange. It is obviously a figure of speech – a hyperbole – for the physical strength of the hero as well as for the humiliation of the enemy. In the *Great bravery of Croatian soldier*, a beholder is even tempted to see the humor, a characteristic of many *stampe popolari* by Mitelli.

The iconography of the *Great bravery of Croatian soldier*, which celebrates the heroism of the Croatian Regiment's soldier performed, in all probability, during the battle of Virovitica, points to a Croatian patron. Other anti-Ottoman etchings by Mitelli celebrated the Habsburgs, the Allied Forces of the Great Turkish War in general, or the Catholic Church, not soldiers or national heroes.

In the same year when Mitelli engraved the *Great bravery of Croatian soldier*, he happened to make another etching with Croatian subject matter – the portrait of Martin Borković, bishop of Zagreb (fig. 3)¹⁸. Martin Borković (1597-1687) was bishop of Zagreb between 1667 and 1687¹⁹. Before that he had been one of the leading monks of the Order of St Paul the First Hermit (Paulines), a notable Central European monastic order (he was the three-times General Superior of the Order). In the year of his death, Borković would become the archbishop of the metropolitan see of Kalocsa and Bács (then still under the Ottoman rule). However, Martin Borković was also the leading Croatian politician of the day. After 1670 he obtained the post of Croatian viceroy's *locum tenens* (*locum tenens bani*), as Croatian viceroy Petar Zrinski was convicted of treason and decapitated. In the aftermath of the Magnate Conspiracy, Borković would play a pacifying role, advocating for Croatian interests while staying loyal to the king.

The face of Martin Borković on his portrait by Giuseppe Maria Mitelli shows similitude to his face on the portrait by Ioannes Eisenhardt in the Archbishopric palace in Zagreb²⁰. In both portraits the bishop has two papillomas depicted

¹⁷ Rattkay 1652, p. 203. There is also a modern reprint of Rattkay's book, published in 2000. Cf. also its Croatian translation: Rattkay 2001, p. 257.

¹⁸ Varignana 1978, p. 346.

¹⁹ Sekulić 1995.

²⁰ For the portrait of Borković by I. Eisenhardt see Repanić-Braun 1994, pp. 346-347, 362, 78; Cvetnić 2000, pp. 102, 104-107. For the portrait of Borković in the Strossmayer gallery in

on the same place (on the forehead and on the temple). Does that mean that the eighty-seven years old bishop came to Bologna and sat in front of Mitelli? Or a rector of the Illyrian-Hungarian College in Bologna (also a canon of the Zagreb cathedral Chapter) gave to Mitelli an unidentified drawing or etching of the bishop, on the bishop's behalf?

Mitelli's portrait of the Croatian prelate features his coat of arms, which was the coat of arms of the Pauline order. It also features the explanatory text at the bottom of the sheet which reads: *Illustrissimus et Reverendissimus Dominus Dominus Martinus Borkovics, / Primas Croatiae, Dei et Apostolicae Sedis Gratia Episcopus / Zagrabiensis, Beatae Virginis Mariae de Topuzka Abbas, Sacrae / Caesariae Regiaeque Maiestatis Consiliarius / G. M. Mitelli fecit 1684.* What is curious in this text, however, is the phrase *Primas Croatiae*. Bishop of Zagreb has never held that title. The mere use of the phrase *Primas Croatiae* is a sign of Borković's power and his wish for a self-fashioned representation²¹. This confabulated title was coined in contrast to the actual and only title of that kind in the Hungarian-Croatian Kingdom, *Primas Hungariae*, which has been held by archbishops of Esztergom (lat. *Strigonium*).

It is reasonable to assume that the bishop of Zagreb and the politician Martin Borković, who considered himself *Primas Croatiae*, commissioned, personally or through the rector of the Zagreb College in Bologna, the etching that glorifies the Croatian soldier as the anti-Ottoman hero. As a matter of fact, both etchings with Croatian subject matter made by Giuseppe Maria Mitelli in 1684 can be associated with a rising national pride of Zagreb bishops and their canons at the outset of the Great Turkish War. After the end of the War in 1699, and the completion of the new building of their Bolognese College in 1700, Zagreb bishops and their canons in Bologna would pursue to commission artworks of self-representational and national iconography; a mirror of their wish for more equality between the two Kingdoms of the Kingdom²².

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²¹ It has been mentioned, without citation, that Borković used to sign as *Primas Croatiae*. See *Autonomija katoličke crkve u Hrvatskoj* 1870, p. 336; see also Bahlcke 2005, p. 177.

²² For the iconography of the 1700 wall paintings by Gioacchino Pizzoli in the College refectory see Premerl 2014; For the early 18th century coats of arms wall paintings in the College courtyard see Šourek 2016; For the 1765 catafalque for Emperor Francis I by Mauro Tesi see Premerl 2011.

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Appendix



Fig. 1. Giuseppe Maria Mitelli, *Great Bravery of Croatian soldier (Gran prodezza di soldato croatto)*, 1684, etching (acquaforte), 399 x 270 mm, Bologna, Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Bologna, Accorsi, Brizzi 1988, pp. 192-193



Fig. 2. Matthäus Küsel, *Heroic deed of Ferenc Wesselényi and its allegory*. Theses broadsheet of Gáspár Széchy, 1663, copperplate engraving, 700 x 483 mm, Vienna, Heeresgeschichtliches Museum, Galavics 2003, p. 117



Fig. 3. Giuseppe Maria Mitelli, *Portrait of Martin Borković, bishop of Zagreb*, 1684, etching (*acquaforte*), 168 x 112 mm, Bologna, Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Bologna, <<https://collezioni.genusbononiae.it/products/dettaglio/7247>>

Bolognese fame of Arpadian King: Krčelić, Zaniboni, Manelli and the *Compendio in rime della vita, e di alcuni miracoli di S. Ladislao re d'Ungheria**

Danko Šourek**

Abstract

In 1738 the Illyrian-Hungarian College of Bologna published a booklet with Italian verses containing episodes of the life of the holy Hungarian king Ladislao. It was, in a way, a product of cultural collaboration presented by the College alumnus Baltazar Adam Krčelić – the future Zagreb canon and famous historian – and Bolognese poet Antonio Zaniboni, founder of the *Accademia de' Nascosti*. The edition was adorned with an engraving by Bolognese artist Sante Manelli, representing the holy ruler on horseback, lacerating a rock with his lance and miraculously unsealing a hidden spring. The iconographical solution, as well as the composition of Manelli's engraving, shows interesting connections with several Central European examples, confirming College's role in bidirectional cultural mediation.

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Nel 1738 il Collegio illirico-ungarico di Bologna pubblicò un opuscolo in versi in lingua italiana contenente episodi di vita di San Ladislao, re d'Ungheria. In un certo senso si trattava di un prodotto di collaborazione culturale presentato da Baltazar Adam Krčelić, allievo del collegio, futuro canonico di Zagabria e famoso storico, e dal poeta bolognese Antonio Zaniboni, fondatore dell'Accademia de' Nascosti. L'edizione era adornata con un'incisione dell'artista bolognese Sante Manelli, che rappresentava il santo sovrano a cavallo, in atto di percuotere una roccia con la sua lancia, facendo miracolosamente sgorgare una sorgente nascosta. La soluzione iconografica, così come la composizione dell'incisione di Manelli, mostrano interessanti collegamenti con numerosi esempi dell'Europa centrale, confermando il ruolo di mediatore culturale rivestito dal Collegio bolognese.

The Illyrian-Hungarian College in Bologna existed from 1553 until 1781, governed by the Zagreb Cathedral Chapter. Its building, built between 1690 and 1701, still exists, and since the 1820s has been known as *Collegio Venturoli* (after its subsequent owner) (fig. 1). The central mission of this institution stipulated by its founder, Zagreb and Esztergom canon and titular bishop of Risan, Paulus Zondinus, was to provide a seven-year doctoral programme at the University of Bologna for Croatian and Hungarian students from the Zagreb Bishopric and Slavonia (i. e. present-day Northern and Eastern Croatia). However, as a quote from the opening passage of the book written by one of the College alumni, Juraj Patačić de Zajezda, entitled *Glory of the Hungarian-Illyrian College founded in Bologna under the care of Venerable Chapter of Nourishing Cathedral Church of Zagreb*, edited in Bologna in 1699¹, explains, the Illyrian part eventually comprised much broader context. According to Patačić, *Illyricum* is to be identified with six historical Slavic kingdoms – Croatia, Dalmatia, Slavonia, Bosnia, Serbia and Bulgaria – which were later (some of them at least nominally) united under the Hungarian Crown: «Illyricum verò generali nomine sena in se comprehendit Regna, Ungariæ omniæ Corona unita, Croaciam [*sic*] nempe, Dalmatiam, Sclavoniam, Bosniam, Serviam sive Mœsiam et Bulgariam»².

The current state of knowledge on the general history of the College is to be found in introductory essays of the book *Annali del Collegio Ungaro-Ilirico di Bologna*, edited by Gian Paolo Brizzi and Maria Luisa Accorsi, Bologna, 1988³. In 2014 Daniel Premerl published a book on the iconography and patronage of ceiling and wall paintings painted in 1700 and still preserved in the College refectory, executed by Bolognese painter Gioacchino Pizzoli⁴.

St Ladislao – Hungarian king who reigned in the second half of the 10th century, and was canonized already in 1192 – played a central role in the complex iconographical programme of wall and ceiling decorations of the college refectory. This was certainly due to him being the founder of the Zagreb Diocese

¹ Patačić 1699a.

² Ivi, pp. 12-13.

³ Brizzi, Accorsi 1988.

⁴ Premerl 2014.

(in 1094), as well as to his role in – as 17th and 18th century Croatian historians (Juraj Ratkaj, Pavao Ritter Vitezović) were pointing out – a peaceful transition of power between Croatian king Dmitar Zvonimir and the Hungarian Arpadian dynasty. The essential moment for this narrative – Ladislav accepting the heritage of *Illyrian kingdoms* from his sister Jelena, the widow of king Zvonimir – is thus being presented as the central scene on the refectory vault (fig. 2)⁵. His pivotal role in this Bolognese painting furthermore corresponded with a particular resurgence of the cult of Arpadian royal saints in the 17th century Croatia. This is particularly true in the case of St Ladislav, who, «by the end of the century [...] had already been intricately linked with Croatian history, almost to the point of breaking with his Hungarian origins»⁶.

In addition to the, fortunately still preserved and certainly most distinguished, St Ladislav's depiction on the refectory vault, the holy ruler's presence in Bologna – as a specific sign of identity of one of its *national colleges* – is to be recorded in several other, albeit ephemeral, situations. Thus, from the archival records, we find out that already in 1610 the street front of the college building was decorated with an image of Blessed Virgin as *Patrona Hungariae*, flanked with holy Hungarian kings Stephen and Ladislav⁷, and that a certain (unnamed) painter received payment of 12 lire for its execution⁸. This iconographical scheme – that sometimes included St Stephen's son, duke Emeric – was well known in Hungarian-Croatian imaginary (e.g. the woodcut introductory page of *Missale secundum chorum et rubricam almi episcopatus Zagrabienensis Ecclesiae*, printed in Venice in 1511)⁹. In 1683 the analogous scene (*Patrona Hungariae*, St Stephen, and St Ladislav) was depicted on the wall in the college garden¹⁰.

The college inventories also provide us with information on iconography of easel paintings adorning its rooms, where we are to repeatedly meet St Ladislav (accompanied by other Hungarian and Croatian national saints – like the Hungarian king St Stephen; prince St Emeric; St Quirinus, bishop of ancient Siscia; St Jerome; Croatian king St Budimir and others)¹¹. Finally, the *Saintly*

⁵ Ivi, pp. 25-29.

⁶ Miladinov 2007, p. 215.

⁷ «Collegium quoque a platea publica renovatum est cum picturis Patronæ Ungariæ et hoc disticho, *Patrona Ungariæ patriæ succurre labenti, / Atque Jagustitii dirige vota tui*. Ed ad latera patronæ Beatæ Virginis, Sanctorum Stephani ed Ladislai Regum imagines sunt apositæ». Brizzi, Accorsi 1988, p. 76.

⁸ «Pictori pro imagi[ni]bus P[at]ronæ Vngariæ, SS. Steph[an]i & Ladislai Regu[m] Vngariæ [L] 12; Eidem pro porta Collegii & armis Vngariæ in eadem expressis [L] 1 [B] 20», Zagreb, Archives of the Archdiocese of Zagreb (NAZ), *Acta Collegii Bononiensis*, Rationes Bononienses Pauli Jagustich (Martius, 1610.), f. 516.

⁹ Premerl 2014, pp. 57-59. For *Missale Zagrabienense*, see: Dobronić 1994, pp. 64-65; Pelc 1994, pp. 474, 478; Germ 2002; Pelc 2005, pp. 24-28; Pelc 2007, p. 552.

¹⁰ «Item hoc anno curavi fieri unam imaginem depictam Beatæ Virginis Mariæ in horto cum sanctissimis patronis Regni Hungariæ». Brizzi, Accorsi 1988, p. 164.

¹¹ E.g. NAZ, *Acta Collegii Bononiensis*, Inventarium literalium instrumentorum, et supellectilis Collegii Illyrico-Ungarici [...], 1711, f. 373v. (*In foresteria maiori*); Inventarium Literarium

King was included in the *corpus* of lives of Hungarian and Illyrian (Croatian) historical heroes, compiled by aforementioned Juraj Patačić of Zaječda and issued in Bologna in 1699¹².

To our misfortune, after the dissolution of the College in 1781, all its inventory was sold in the auction and – although at least some of the paintings should be iconographically unusual in the Italian context – none of them had yet been recognized. So, in addition to the monumental vault painting in the college refectory, the only surviving and to us known Ladislav's depiction connected to Bologna is the one occurring in the booklet entitled *Compendio in rime della vita, e di alcuni miracoli di S. Ladislao re d'Ungheria*, issued in Bologna in 1738¹³. It commemorated a public presentation of doctoral theses by Baltazar Adam Krčelić – a future famous historian of the Zagreb Diocese, and at the time, an alumnus of the *Collegio Illirico-Ungarico*¹⁴. As Krčelić himself notes in the dedication to the cardinal Giovanni Battista Spinola (contemporary papal legate in Bologna), the Italian verses praising the life and some miracles of St Ladislav were composed by his personal friend, *conte* Antonio Zaniboni¹⁵.

Before concentrating on the engraving itself, a few words can be said on the author of Ladislav's Bolognese versified glory. Antonio Zaniboni (†1767) was Bolognese poet and orator who founded the *Accademia de Nascosti* in 1717¹⁶. Zaniboni was also a member of, certainly more famous Roman *Accademia degli Arcadi* (his pseudonym being *Estrio*). The *Accademia de Nascosti* was apparently short-lived and while it existed, its members congregated in the Dominican church and cherished a special devotion towards Dominican saint Thomas Aquinas. However, their formal patron was an Oratorian saint, St Philip Neri which was lauded in the month of May in Bolognese church of Santa Maria in Via Mascarella. In addition to numerous Zaniboni's sermons, *penegyrics*, and arguments, his major works include ten oratories, dramas and comedies as well as a number of published translations from French. An interesting, although puzzling fact regarding 1790 list of Zaniboni's writings is that our 1738 edition (*Compendio in rime*) is being quoted not as an original work, but as a translation from French¹⁷.

As the initiator of the whole editorial enterprise, Baltazar Adam Krčelić most probably chose the main subject of the poem (starting with dramatic evocation: «O

Instrumentorum, et supellectilis Collegii Illyrico-Vngarici [...], 1718, f. 393v. (*In cubiculo d[omi]ni rectoris*). Some of them (St Quirinus, St Budimir, St Stephen and St Emeric) were also depicted on the Pizzoli's frescoes in the refectory. Premerl 2014, pp. 31-38, 51-61.

¹² Patačić 1699b, pp. 29-36. For Patačić's book, see: Premerl 2014, p. 105; Blažević, Premerl 2016, p. 406.

¹³ Zaniboni 1738.

¹⁴ For Adam Baltazar Krčelić, cf.: Shek Brnardić 2013.

¹⁵ Brizzi, Accorsi 1988, ill. 16; Shek Brnardić 2009, pp. 127-128, ill. 35.

¹⁶ Fantuzzi 1790.

¹⁷ «Oltre a ciò tradusse dal Francese, e pubblicò [...] Compendio in Rime della Vita, e di alcuni miracoli di S. Ladislao Re d'Ungheria etc. Bologna a S. Tommaso d'Acquino 1738». Fantuzzi 1790, p. 253.

sette! O fonte! O Condottier sovrano, / Cui natura ubbidisce in ogni evento!»)¹⁸, as well as that of an accompanying engraving, signed by Bolognese engraver Sante Manelli («Sante Manelli Incisit») (fig. 3)¹⁹. It was based on the events recorded in Ladislás's medieval *Vitae*, where king miraculously strikes water from a rock – proving his supernatural power over the elements and saving his army and horses from thirst²⁰. In the 18th century, those miracles were also recorded by the Pauline monk Hilarion Gašparoti, who in 1756 issued the second volume of his lives of saints (*Czvet szveteh*) in Croatian, containing St Ladislás's *Vita*²¹.

As for Sante Manelli, almost unrepresented in accessible surveys²², the span of his *oeuvre* can be partly grasped by an insight into book editions of the first half of the 18th century in Bologna, Rome and some other cities²³. In addition to a dozen of books with his signed individual engravings, the importance of his work is suggested by his inclusion in the group of artisans working on an important two-volume edition on the history of the famous Bolognese art academy (*Storia dell'Accademia Clementina*), printed only a year after our booklet, in 1739. Manelli's name (in a capacity of an engraver; «Sante Manelli Inc.») appears on the first vignette of the second volume, with a humorous band of *putti*-painters, as well as on three portraits of the Academy members – that of the sculptor Giuseppe Maria Mazza, and two Bolognese painters – Donato Creti and Ercole Graziani (fig. 4)²⁴.

It is however obvious that – although highly skillful, Manelli can hardly be described as a great figurative inventor. As a matter of fact, even St Ladislás's image was his incision after another engraving, in this case, one deriving from

¹⁸ Zaniboni 1738, p. 9.

¹⁹ «Divus Ladislaus Rex Hungariae». Zaniboni 1738, p. 6.

²⁰ For St Ladislás's *Vitae*, see: Klaniczay 2002, pp. 173-194, 417-419. For his iconography: Marosi 1987-1988.

²¹ Gašparoti mentions that St Ladislás performed those miracles striking a rock with a hoof of his horse, with his spear, or helmet. Further he states that still, there are some wells called *Ladislas's springs*: «Szpodobnem nachinom dabi vechkrat junakom, y konyom voda menykala, Sz. Ladislav ali z-kopitom konya szvojega, ali z kopjem, ali z-viteskem shisakom vu pechinu vudrenem, kakti drugi Mojsez najchisztesse vode, zvirajuče zdenchecze van jeszt zvabil; odkuda tak lyudi kak marsicza obilno sedgyu vgasziti mogli jeszu. Ovi y dan danassnyi Sz. Ladislava zdencki ozivajusze». Gašparoti 1756, p. 842.

²² He was being briefly mentioned, e.g., in Filippo De Boni's *Biografia degli artisti*: «MANELLI (Sante), bolognese, che operava circa il principio del secolo decimottavo, intagliò a bulino alcune vignette e qualche ritratto per la storia dell'accademia Clementina, che lo dimostrano non più che mediocre», as well as in Tieme – Becker's *Lexicon*: «Manelli, Sante (Santi), Bilnis- u. Vignettenstecher aus Bologna, 1. Hälfte 18. Jahrh». De Boni's 1840, p. 602; Vallmer 1930, p. 2.

²³ In addition to Italian cities such as Bologna, Rome, Genova, Naples and Lucca, one of the books containing Manelli's engravings (Antonio Maria Mazzoni, *La clemenza di Tito*, 1755) was even printed in Lisbon <http://www.internetculturale.it/opencms/ricercaExpansion.jsp?q=&searchType=avanzato&channel__creator=Manelli%2C+Sante+%3Csec.+18.%3E&channel__contributor=Manelli%2C+Sante+%3Csec.+18.%3E&opCha__contributor=OR&opCha__creator=OR>, 12.07.2017.

²⁴ Zanotti 1739, pp. [V], 2, 98, 274.

Vienna. This was commissioned in 1731 by a philosopher and physician of Bohemian (or better to say Moravian) origin, Franciscus Iosephus Ignatius Frid, and signed by two Viennese engravers – brothers Andreas and Joseph Schmuzer (Schmutzer) (fig. 5)²⁵. Although the actual inventor of the composition – for now – remains unknown, Frid's motivation for the particular commission is being explained by a short Latin inscription, in which he is being indicated as *procurator* of the *Natio Hungarica* at the Viennese University.

The inscription features Ladislav as Hungarian Moses, and praising his power over the inanimate nature, as the one whose commands are obeyed even by a deaf rock: «Divo Regi Ladislao / Hungariae Moysi, / Cujus / Imperium Surda Petra Audiens / Misipata Sitientem Militem / Lacrimas Fudit / Nacionem omnem Hungaricam / Seq. / D D D / Franc. Ios. Ignat. Frid Phil. Ac Med. Doct. / P. T. ejusdem Nationis / Procurator / M.D.C.C.XXX.I.»²⁶. No wonder, it was precisely in 1731 that Frid issued his panegyric to St Ladislav, held in Viennese St Stephen's cathedral and dedicated to count Emeric Eszterházy, *primas* of Hungary²⁷. In any case, Krčelić – who before coming to Bologna in 1734 was, from 1731, an alumnus of yet another Croatian College, the one in Vienna²⁸ – might have well heard or read Frid's panegyric and, more importantly, obtained Schmuzer's engraving taking it with him to Bologna. If this was the case, we may say that the Viennese engraving served as a model not only for Manelli's work but also had an immediate influence on Zaniboni's verses, reversing the usual concept of the picture following the text. It is important to notice that Frid only briefly mentions the episode with a spring, within a broader context of *Holy King* miraculously feeding his troops with herd of deer and cows²⁹.

Although he consistently followed this Viennese model, Manelli, however, introduced some slight changes. He excluded a genre-motif of a spotted dog drinking the water in the left foreground, and embellished the bare rocks with delicate motifs of leaves and branches that can – arguably – be interpreted as an echo of richer solutions in drawings by his contemporary (and, in several occasions a provider of models for his engravings) Domenico Maria Fratta³⁰.

The Viennese engraving served as an initial model for at least two easel paintings: a small watercolour on parchment from 1737, now in Bratislava

²⁵ Kronbichler 1995, p. 138. For Andreas and Joseph Schmuzer (Schmutzer), see: von Wurzbach 1875, pp. 343-344.

²⁶ Hilarion Gašparoti makes a similar connection between the medieval king and the Old Testament hero, referring to St Ladislav as to the *Second Moyses*. Gašparoti 1756, p. 842.

²⁷ Frid 1731.

²⁸ Šek Brnardić 2009, pp. 83, 107. For Croatian College in Vienna, see: Dočkal 1996.

²⁹ «Vidit ad confinia Ungariæ totus LADISLAI exercitus prodigium illud humanas excedens vires, dum sititenti è Petra fons, tamen è converso laboranti ingens sese cervavorum [*sic*], bubalorúmque grex ultró praebeuit manducandum», Frid 1631, s. p. [9].

³⁰ E.g. *Episode from life of the pope Honorius III; St Michel leading the nuns; St Philipp Neri*. Cfr. <<http://www.lombardiabeniculturali.it/stampe/autori/23965/>>, 12.07.2017.

communal gallery (*Galéria mesta Bratislavy*) in Slovakia (fig. 6)³¹, as well as a much larger altarpiece attributed to Michael Angelo Unterberger in the former Jesuit church in Târgu Mureş (*Marosvásárhely* in Hungarian, *Neumarkt am Mieresch* in German) in Transylvania (*Erdély* in Hungarian, *Siebenbürgen* in German; present-day central Romania) (fig. 7). To some extent, regarding the figure of the *Holy King* himself, it also served as an inspiration for a much larger and more elaborate composition, frescoed by Austrian painter Franz Anton Maulbertsch on the dome of the Bratislava bishop's palace chapel (1781) (fig. 8)³².

The Târgu Mureş painting – dated in the mid of the 18th century, when the local Jesuits were finishing up their new church – has been connected with a preparatory drawing preserved in Innsbruck Ferdinandeum (fig. 9), and subsequently with the Viennese engraving of 1731³³. Yet, apart from featuring some minor (although obvious) alteration in different position of the saint's head, and a new format adapted to its placement on the altar, Unterberger's works may also show some similarities with the Bolognese example: notably in excluding a dog to the left, and – at least in the case of the preparatory drawing – including delicate leaves and branches on otherwise bare rock.

At this point, we can again turn to Zaniboni's verses, some aspects of which could hold a special significance for the Transylvanian commissioners. The verses in the sixth and the seventh strophe of the poem – starting with lines «Nel tempio Varadino avea prescritto, / Che la salma regal si riserbasse» – are describing miraculous events connected to Ladsilas's death and burial³⁴. Actually, according to the legend that inspired Zaniboni, the chariot with Ladislav's corpse was miraculously, without harnessed horses, brought to *Varadin* (Hungarian *Nagyvárad*, present-day *Oradea* in Romania)³⁵, an important religious and cultural centre of Transylvania, not so far from Târgu Mureş. Given the fact that Sante Manelli's engraving was a part of an edition of some interest to the cultural public of Habsburg Monarchy, it is possible to presume that it might have had some influence on the visual arts, offering (for a change) an Italian *translation* of the original Central European composition. Finally, the image of St Ladislav striking water from a rock found its inseparable counterpart in Zaniboni's Italian verses, confirming once more Horace's phrase: *Ut pictura poesis*.

³¹ <http://www.webumenia.sk/dielo/SVK:GMB.A_413>, 12.07.2017.

³² For the fresco see: Da Costa Kufmann 2005, pp. 68-69, plate 13.

³³ Kronbichler 1995, p. 138; Sabău 2005, pp. 145-146.

³⁴ «Nel tempio Varadino avea prescritto, / Che la salma regal si riserbasse. / Or mentre a prender sonno, a prender vitto; / Dal gir col cocchio chi 'l traeva, ritrasse; // Del cocchio, in qui giacea, da se le ruote / Proseguiro il cammin non tarde, o lente; / Nè le traean cavalli Ove le ignote / Destre angeliche all' opra erano intente». Zanoboni 1738, pp. 9-10.

³⁵ Klaniczay 2002, pp. 418-419.

*Compendio in rime della vita, e di alcuni miracoli di S. Ladislao re d'Ungheria
dedicato all'eminantissimo e reverendissimo principe il signor cardinale
Giovambattista Spinola legato a lathere di Bologna*

O sette! O fonte! O Condottier sovrano,
Cui natura ubbidisce in ogni evento!
Dalla selce percossa e l'erba, e l'piano,
Scorre a bagnar dell onda il chiaro argento.

Ne beon Cavalli, e Fanti, e siegne ancora
Il portentoso innassio, a par di quello,
Che uscito dall' Orebbo, omdonne allora
Dietro per lo Deserto ad Israello.

Ciò, che volea dal Ciel, supplice ottenne,
A pro di suoi Vassalli in cento guise:
E di gir contro il Trace ei fe solenne
Voto, e forti milizie in pronto mise.

Quando gl' investigabili decreti
Dell' alta Providenza al Campidoglio
Superno il trasser fra' beati, e lieti
Spiriti trionfatori in miglior soglio.

Così morte qualora il tolse a fido
Regno piagnenete, di gramaglia, e lutto
Vestissi, e risonar di flebil grido
Fe lo Stato, la Reggia, e il Popol tutto.

Nel Tempio Varadino abea prescritto,
Che la Salma Regal si riserbasse.
Or mentre a prender sonno, a prender vitto;
Dal gir, col cocchio chi 'l traeva, ristasse;

Del cocchio, in qui giacea, da se le ruote
Proseguiro il cammin non tarde, o lente;
Nè le traean Cavalli Ove le ignote
Destre Angeliche all' opra erano intente.

Fuvvi lingua sacrilega, che disse,
Che dale sacre membra uscia fetore;
Ma tosto volle il Ciel, che la rea gisse
Bocca pemità con mortale orrore.

Se non che, ravveduto il cuor dell' empio,
E implorata mercè, salvezza ottenne.
Ma qual, senza egual sorte, a Lui nel Tempio
Cieco, Mutolo, Storpio, Egro sen venne?

A tal, che Celestin dal Vaticano
Fra quei de' Santio il di Lui nome inciso

Volle, all' Ibero, al Gallo, ed al Germano
Partecipando un così lieto avviso.

Fino a' confine della Terra uscio
Il nome allor di *LADISLAO*, possente
Ogni spirito a fugar malignoso e rio,
A sedar la procella altra, e fremente;

Tutti a spegner gl' incendj, e l' ire atroci,
A serbar le raccolte, e da' perigli
Trar quanti ergono a Lui sospiri, e voci
Come a padre comun clienti, e figli.

Tali a te ricoriamo, e come tali
Ci accogli, o *LADISLAO*, dall' alto seggio:
Speriam (la tua mercè) favori eguali,
E quel di più, che umilente i' chieggio:

Di tua fe, di tua speme, e di tuo amore
Una scintilla, a viver giusto e pio:
Così, che al Ciel pervenga, e tuo splendore,
Tua Gloria miri, e la contempi in Dio.

Ecco il mio voto: or tu l' avvrei, e sia
Pregio de' merti Tuoi la mia salvezza.
Io calcherò da lungi pur la via
Che m' additò la Tua Regal fortezza.

Che s' io mai vengo men, tu mi sostieni,
Tu mi rincora, incoraggisci, e guida
Per drita via su Colli almi e sereni,
Ov' ha pace per sempre ogn' alma fida.

IL FINE

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Appendix

Fig. 1. Bologna, ex Illirian-Hungarian College



Fig. 2. Gioacchino Pizzoli, *St Ladislav and queen Jelena*, 1700, vault painting, Bologna, ex Illirian-Hungarian College (refectory)



Fig. 3. Sante Manelli («Sante Manelli Inc.»), *St Ladislaus striking water from a rock*, 1738, engraving in Zaniboni 1738



Fig. 6. Unknown painter, *St Ladislaus striking water from a rock*, 1737, watercolour on parchment, Bratislava, Galéria mesta Bratislavy



Fig. 7. Michael Angelo Unterberger (attributed to), *St Ladislas striking water from a rock*, ca. 1750, oil on canvas, Târgu Mureș, former Jesuit church of St John the Baptist, side altar



Fig. 8. Franz Anton Maulbertsch, *St Ladislav striking water from a rock* – detail, 1781, Bratislava, dome of the Bratislava bishop's palace chapel



Fig. 9. Michael Angelo Unterberger (attributed to), *St Ladislas striking water from a rock*, ca. 1750, ink on paper, Innsbruck, Ferdinandeum

Section V

Schiavoni/Illyrians and the Catholic Republics
of Letters

The “Making” of a National Saint: Reflections on the Formation of the Cult of Saint Jerome in the Eastern Adriatic*

Ines Ivić**

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to provide the general overview of the development of the cult of Saint Jerome in the Eastern Adriatic Coast in the Late Middle Ages. While discussing the cult as the reflection of the growing cult in the Apennine peninsula, I will focus on the local characteristics of the cult – local origin, alleged attribution of Glagolitic letters, humanists’ identification with the saint’s virtues, personal and official veneration – which contributed to Jerome’s denomination as the national saint. Furthermore, the paper reflects upon the political context in which the denomination happened, as well as it introduces new ideas in the interpretation of certain visual representations of the saint. Particularly, the

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paper discusses the perception of Jerome being the inventor of Glagolitic letters in the 15th century, proposing the idea that the Glagolitic production was perceived as a saintly relic.

Lo scopo del presente articolo è quello di fornire un quadro generale sullo sviluppo del culto di San Girolamo, sviluppatosi durante il tardo Medioevo lungo la costa orientale dell'Adriatico. Oltre a trattare l'ipotesi che questo culto non sia altro che un riflesso di quello crescente sulla penisola apenninica, mi concentrerò sulle caratteristiche locali, ossia: l'origine locale, la presunta attribuzione di lettere glagolitiche, l'identificazione degli umanisti con le virtù del santo in questione e infine la sua venerazione sia personale che ufficiale, la quale ha reso San Girolamo santo nazionale. L'articolo descrive, inoltre, il contesto politico in cui avviene tale proclamazione, introducendo allo stesso tempo nuove idee sull'interpretazione di alcune rappresentazioni visuali del santo. Si discute in particolare l'ipotesi che Girolamo sia l'inventore dell'alfabeto glagolitico nel XV secolo, proponendo l'idea che la scrittura glagolitica era percepita come una reliquia sacra.

The formation of common identity among medieval migrant groups far from their homeland was based on the common geographical, ethnic, linguistic or cultural background, intertwined with personal and business networks, and rooted within religious institutions. An illustrative example for shared expatriate identity can be found in the city of Venice and its numerous lay confraternities where people coming from the same geographic area or the same ethnic group gathered, united under the protection of the patron saint whose cult was usually brought from their homeland and connected with the city whence majority of members originated. Venice was home to several "national" confraternities, for example, the *Scuola de Santa Maria Elisabetta* gathering citizens of the city of Bormio was consecrated to Virgin Mary, Saint Elisabeth as well as Protasio and Gervasio, saintly martyrs and patrons of this small Alpine town on the route between Venice and the German lands¹. There are similar examples for "imported" saints in other *scuole* as well. For instance, citizens of Lucca were united in the confraternity under the protection of Volto Santo di Lucca (the Holy Face of Lucca), a miraculous crucifix still kept in the cathedral of Lucca².

This pattern of using "imported" local saints is also discernible in the case of Schiavoni confraternity, founded in Venice in 1451 and placed under the protection of St Tryphon and George³. Even though St Jerome was never officially added to the confraternity's name, his cult had a special place in the devotional practices of the members⁴. While the presence of St Tryphon is not surprising due to the role of Kotor merchants and migrants in the formation

¹ Vio 2004, p. 433.

² Ivi, pp. 535-538.

³ Čoralčić 2000.

⁴ Among the seven panels representing the patron saints in Scuola, made by Vittore Carpaccio in 1502, three are displaying the stories from Jerome's hagiography: *Saint Jerome and the Lion in the Convent*, *Saint Augustine Having a Vision of Saint Jerome in his Study*, and *The Funeral of Saint Jerome*.

of the confraternity⁵, that of Jerome certainly is. He was not a patron of any commune in the Eastern Adriatic from where the cult could have been transferred directly, nor was there a central place for his worship. However, the Venetian example of appropriating Saint Jerome as one of the patrons is not exceptional, it actually seems to be rather common among Schiavoni in the Apennine peninsula. The confraternity under the protection of St Jerome was founded in 1452 in Udine⁶, followed by one in Rome in 1453⁷.

While tracing the presence and the manifestations of the cult among the migrants is beyond the scope of the present article, it will sketch the factors which have contributed to the perception and acceptance of Jerome as the universal patron of all Schiavoni coming from the different parts of the Eastern Adriatic Coast, and demonstrate how the idea of Jerome as the unifier through geographical origin, language, and religion was a reflection of ideas brought from the homeland. Even though some aspects of Jerome's cult have been already discussed by various scholars including myself, the aim of this article is to highlight hitherto unexplored elements which contributed to the formation of Jerome as a national saint and the logic behind selecting him as a patron among the migrant communities in Italy⁸. This work will trace the beginnings of this idea in the fifteenth and the early sixteenth century, that is, before the development of the national saint discourse in the writings of Croatian Renaissance historiographers.

1. *Jerome: The superstar of the fifteenth century*

To understand the rising popularity of the saint in the Eastern Adriatic Coast from the middle of the fifteenth century, a brief overview is necessary of the development of his cult. Unlike other church fathers, Jerome's recognition was a long process which started at the end of the thirteenth century when his relics were translated to the church of Santa Maria Maggiore⁹. Slowly, Jerome acquired more roles than the saint of great knowledge who translated and edited a Bible. With the rising humanist culture, he became an ideal model of pious and educated man; the most prominent humanists such as Giovanni d'Andrea or Pier Paolo Vergerio owned copies of his works and even composed new devotional literature about the saint¹⁰.

⁵ Čoralić 2008; Trška 2016.

⁶ Mann, Čoralić 1995.

⁷ Jelić 1902; Perić 2002; Mandušić 2006; Gudelj 2015 and 2016; Neralić 2017.

⁸ Since the list of all the relevant works would be long to be presented here, the most important works were used and cited in this article throughout the text. This article continues on the previous research by author: Ivić 2016.

⁹ Rice 1985, p. 63.

¹⁰ Vergerio, McManamon 1999.

In the wake of the growing reform movements, especially among monastic communities, Jerome represented the ideal for monks to achieve piety, obedience, and humility¹¹. Spreading from Italy, Jerome's cult appeared across the whole Western Christianity in different forms. The iconographic types established in Italy – Jerome as Cardinal, Jerome in the Study, and Penitent Jerome – became standard in the visual representation of the saint¹². Examples include Jan van Eyck's famous portrait of Jerome in his study and Giovanni Bellini's series of paintings of the penitent Saint Jerome in the wilderness¹³.

The proximity and constant exchange of goods and ideas between the two shores of Adriatic Sea helped the cult and its ideas to gain a foothold on the Eastern Adriatic Coast in both written and visual form. Among others, Jerome's work was transcribed by Dalmatian humanists, Italian artists were commissioned to produce visual representations of the saint, and the devotional literature about the saint was used and produced in the Eastern Adriatic Coast¹⁴. The implemented ideas of veneration are reflected in the text of the proclamation of the official veneration of Jerome's feast day (September 30) in Trogir in 1455 where he is named *gloriosissimus doctor*¹⁵, Jerome's most common title between the end of the fourteenth century and the end of the sixteenth century¹⁶.

The rising popularity of the saint in the Eastern Adriatic is also shown by the popularity of the name Jerome (Jeronim or Jerolim in Croatian) during the fifteenth century. Nella Lonza already noted this phenomenon in the case of Republic of Ragusa based on the occurrence of the name in the testaments of the period¹⁷. There was a similar situation in Trogir. The detailed lists of the names used by the aristocracy through the centuries reveal that before fifteenth century not a single individual was named after Jerome, while in the fifteenth century fifteen people were given the name of the saint¹⁸.

From the middle of the fifteenth century, Jerome's cult emerged in all major settlements in the Eastern Adriatic Coast, from Istria to Boka Kotorska, regardless of what political entity they belonged to. The cult of St Jerome was present in the Republic of Ragusa, Venetian Dalmatia and Istria, and the parts of Lika and Krbava which were a part of the Hungarian kingdom. Even though the cult in the Eastern Adriatic was densely interconnected with and reminiscent

¹¹ See more about the development of the cult in the Renaissance: Rice 1985.

¹² Russo 1987.

¹³ Belting 2014.

¹⁴ One of the examples of the devotional literature to the saint is *Transito di San Girolamo*, a compilation of the works about Jerome with focus on his death. During the fifteenth century it was extremely popular work of literature. The Venetian redaction of the work served as the base for the Croatian edition, published in 1509 in the Croatian vernacular and Glagolitic letters.

¹⁵ Strohal 1915, p. 259.

¹⁶ Rice 1958, p. 50.

¹⁷ Lonza 2009, p. 257. See note 941.

¹⁸ Andreis 2006, p. 295.

of the established cult practices of Italy, it contained other components which gave the cult political connotations and transformed Jerome into a national patron. These distinctive components are the main subject of this paper.

2. *Local origin: Jerome the Dalmatian*

The first and strongest reason for the appropriation of Jerome by Dalmatians is based on his own words about his birthplace. In his work *De viris illustribus*, Jerome relates that he was born in Stridon, a small *oppidum* that once stood at the borders of the Roman provinces of Pannonia and Dalmatia¹⁹. Its exact location was unsure in the Middle Ages and is still debated, which resulted in several theories throughout the centuries²⁰. This uncertainty explains why there was no central place of worship in the Eastern Adriatic. The coexisting Dalmatian and Istrian theories of the location of Stridon lay at the heart of the humanist debate about Jerome's origin.

The fact that his birthplace should be somewhere in the territory of the Eastern Adriatic was known before the fifteenth century but it seems that it did not have much influence on the development of personal and official devotion until the middle of the fifteenth century²¹. Notably, however, the establishment of the independent Franciscan province of Dalmatia, bearing the name of Saint Jerome since 1398, greatly contributed to the dispersion of the worship of the saint. Despite Jerome's importance and the promotion of the ascetic lifestyle in Franciscan theology, the reason for this name choice lies primarily in the saint's regional origin²².

Historical data suggests that the crucial phase in the development of the cult was the years between 1445 and 1455 when the confraternities in Italy were founded and Jerome's feast day was included in the official communal calendar and celebrations. Certainly, this was done to emphasize the importance of the saint for the people living in the territory of Dalmatia, inspired by his growing popularity in Europe. Additionally, it shows how commonly accepted was the idea of Jerome's Dalmatian origin. In 1445, the text of a Dubrovnik decision

¹⁹ Jerome 2010, p. 167.

²⁰ Bulić 1986.

²¹ Archdeacon Thomas *et al.* 2006, p. 3. In the thirteenth century, Toma Arhidakon writes about the location of Stridon in the Gulf of Kvarner, which he counts in the borders of Dalmatia, based on the borders of the Roman Province of Dalmatia: «Today, however, Dalmatia is a maritime region. It begins from Epirus, where Durrës is, and extends up to the Gulf of Kvarner, in the hinterland of which is the town of Stridon, which was the boundary between Dalmatia and Pannonia. This was the native town of the blessed Jerome, the illustrious doctor».

²² The exact reasons why Jerome was chosen to be a patron of the province are not known since the documents from the chapter in Koln are not preserved, but certainly it was done due to the believe that he was Dalmatian.

stipulates that «Jerome should be worshipped by us and all the Dalmatians of whose nation he was»²³. Similar words were repeated ten years later in Trogir, where it is stated that among other accomplishments, Jerome should be praised and celebrated because of his regional origin²⁴.

The widespread acceptance of Jerome's Dalmatian origin is best shown in the dispute between Dalmatian and Italian humanists²⁵. It was triggered by the Italian appropriation of the saint by Flavio Biondo. The Italian Renaissance humanist Biondo propagated the Istrian theory of the saint's origin, adopted from Pier Paolo Vergerio, a devoted worshiper of St Jerome and composer of sermons in Jerome's honor²⁶. According to Biondo, Jerome's birthplace, Stridon, was the Istrian village Sdrigna (Zrenj) near the present-day town of Buzet. This appears in the chapter on Istria's affiliation to Italy in *Italia Illustrata*, Biondo's historiographical and encyclopaedic work on Italian regions published in 1474, in which he discusses the history of the regions from the antiquity in order to prove the continuous existence of the same peoples in the same territory united by their shared culture and language²⁷. For him Istria was part of Italy, so Jerome, born in the territory of Italy, could not be anything but Italian²⁸. Biondo was aware of the Dalmatian theory of the origin, which he rejected as false²⁹.

Nevertheless, despite Biondo's promotion, the idea of Jerome's Istrian origin never took root on the Eastern Adriatic Coast, mainly thanks to the Dalmatian humanists' strong reaction to Biondo's appropriation. Still, in Istria Jerome's cult remained present in the popular devotion and liturgical services, as evident from the inscription of his feast day in the liturgical calendars and books³⁰.

The Dalmatian humanists' passionate response to Biondo's words illustrates the extent to which Jerome was considered Dalmatian, one of their own, and that by no means they would allow someone, especially an Italian, to take the saint from them. The first one to eagerly defend Jerome was Juraj Šižgorić in his *De situ Illyriae* written in 1487, mentioning Jerome as the most prominent among Illyrians and adding that the Italians were eagerly trying to steal him because they thought «that the Dalmatian thorn could never bear such a fertile rose»³¹. Although Šižgorić does not name the Italians who appropriated the cult, it is likely that he refers to Biondo and Pier Paolo Vergerio.

²³ Nedeljković 1984, p. 320: «[...] a nobis ac ceteris Dalmaticis de quorum natione fuit».

²⁴ Strohal 1915, pp. 259-60: «[...] ipsum beatissimum sanctum a quorum provincia originem habuit».

²⁵ The idea of Italian appropriation mentioned in works by Dalmatian humanists demonstrates the importance of Jerome's local affiliation. While it is not possible to discuss each in detail here, besides those mentioned in the text, others include Benedikt Kotruljević in his *De Navigatione* written in 1461 and Ivan Polikarp Severitan in his *Dionisii: Apolloni: Donati* written in 1517.

²⁶ McManamon 1985.

²⁷ Biondo 1542.

²⁸ Ivi, p. 196.

²⁹ *Ibidem*: «Molti ci sono ingannati credendo che San Girolamo fusse di Dalmazia [...]».

³⁰ Pantelić 1971; Badurina Stipčević 2013.

³¹ Šižgorić 1981, p. 25.

The most notable response to Biondo was by Marko Marulić, the author of a work about the life of Saint Jerome. His argumentative essay *In eos qui beatum Hieronymum italum fuisse contendunt* (Against all of those who think that Jerome was Italian) is the direct answer to Biondo and his student Jacopo Foresti di Bergamo (1434-1520) who also propagated the idea of Jerome's Italian origin. In the text, Marulić reproaches Foresti's ignorance, blaming his teacher, Flavio Biondo, and mocking Biondo's naivety³². He uses ancient sources to prove that Biondo was wrong. Marulić also goes as far as to identify himself with Jerome saying «*ille est meus et ego suus*» (he is mine and I am his) on the ethnic, national and cultural level. He does not identify with Jerome merely as an erudite and pious man, but also as his compatriot. Still, it is necessary to highlight that if it was not for Biondo's appropriation, there would be fewer valuable sources at our disposal to demonstrate the Dalmatian devotion to this saint.

It is notable that in the sources of the fifteenth and the early sixteenth century, Jerome is called a Dalmatian³³, a Slav³⁴, an Illyrian³⁵ or Croat³⁶. Due to the limited scope of the present work, I cannot go into more detail about the meaning and the differences of these designations, especially that at this stage of research it is not easy to distinguish the minor differences between these categories. However, it is necessary to underline that regardless of the nominal affiliation attributed to the saint in the sources, the virtues for which he was praised are the same: his erudition and intellectual work, his saintly miracles, and above all that he was the greatest and most important individual, *a vir illustris*, of their kind. When it comes to Jerome, these designations seem equivalent: while in the fifteenth century Juraj Šižgorić praises Jerome as the greatest Illyrian, Vinko Pribojević in the sixteenth century praises him as the greatest Slav.

Whether Jerome was called Illyrian, Slav or Dalmatian (for example Marko Marulić), the intention is obvious. Besides appropriating Jerome as the member of their own group in order to elevate themselves (in this case, Šižgorić or Pribojević) as someone equally rich in knowledge and virtues, it also served the purpose to prove the long-standing existence and continuity of this ethnic group since

³² Suić 1986; Zlatar 1989; Novaković 1994; Suić 1997.

³³ Throughout the text Marulić refers to Jerome as Dalmatian trying to prove his Dalmatian origin by using ancient sources.

³⁴ Pribojević 1997, pp. 143, 160. In 1525 Pribojević held a speech on the history of the Slavs, where he drew the history of Slavs from the ancient Illyricum. Besides the history and the geographical position of the Dalmatia, he enumerated the most important Slavs, including Macedonian and Illyrian rulers and some Roman emperors, as well as Saint Jerome. He referred to Marulić's work addressed to Biondo, and accepted the theory of Jerome inventing different letters for his compatriots without naming the alphabet.

³⁵ Šižgorić 1981, p. 22. In his work, modelled upon the ancient authors, Šižgorić discusses the geography and the history of the province of Illyricum. In Chapter 5, he discusses the most prominent Illyrians including Jerome.

³⁶ Badurina Stipčević 2016. In the fifteenth-century miscellanea composed of different hagiographical texts, Jerome is referred to as *Hrvatina* (Croatian).

Jerome's time. In this case, highlighting Jerome as Illyrian was to demonstrate the existence of the group to which Šižgorić belonged in the same territory since ancient times.

This myth – it is a myth since Jerome was a Roman citizen and could not have been in any sense connected with the historical Illyrians, Late Medieval “Illyrians” or Slavs – reflects the process of the formation of a common identity. According to Adam Smith, the “modernity” of any nation depends on its historical roots and long continuity, but in the case where such historical base is missing, it was necessary to re-invent it³⁷. Naturally, this process is not a result of a series of planned actions but that of a long social process combined with other political factors such as the establishment of the Venetian government in the Eastern Adriatic Coast and Ottoman conquest of the Balkans. The re-invention of Illyrian history is associated with the figure of Saint Jerome in another aspect too, the linguistic one, which I will discuss in the following together with Jerome's role as a national hero.

3. *Language: Jerome as the inventor of Glagolitic letters*

The other myth which defines the Jerome cult in the Eastern Adriatic is his alleged invention of the Glagolitic letters³⁸. It is not certain when this concept emerged first, but the earliest documented mention is from the thirteenth century in Pope Innocent IV's reply to the bishop of Senj. It contains a permission for the clerics of the bishopric to use the Slavonic language and liturgy since they were using letters invented by the saint himself³⁹. Again, this is entirely unfounded historically: Jerome lived a long time before the letters were invented, and could not have any connections with the early development of Slavic literacy.

The connection between Jerome and Glagolitic communities is evident in the presence of Jerome's *officium* in the Glagolitic breviaries and masses in his honour in the missals⁴⁰. Due to this, it is generally accepted in Croatian historiography that this invention took place inside monastic communities, while Julia Verkholtantsev suggests that it might have been the initiative of the Roman clergy which wanted to incorporate the Glagolitic communities into the Western church. Even though they used the Slavonic language and served Slavic liturgy, they were loyal to Rome⁴¹. Regardless of the initiator, the intention is evident. Who could disregard the letters and the mass invented by one of the greatest saints, translator of the Bible and author of so many theological

³⁷ Smith 1986, p. 212.

³⁸ For detailed discussion on topic see: Verkholtantsev 2014.

³⁹ Glavičić 2014; Kraft Soić 2016.

⁴⁰ Stipčević 2013; Pantelić 1971 and 1976.

⁴¹ Verkholtantsev 2014, p. 59.

works? The sacred legitimation not only made the letters sacred, but it gave sacred legitimation to everything written in the alphabet as well. The Slavic language became the language of the Church, an equal to Latin and Greek.

Another important element which leads to the construction of this myth was in the condemnation as heretics of Saint Cyril, the actual inventor of Glagolitic letters, and Methodius⁴². Even though the reaction to this act should have been the rejection of the Slavic mass and the Glagolitic script by those who use them, the opposite happened. By replacing Cyril with Jerome, the Glagolitic communities could easily receive Rome's blessing to their activities. As noted previously, while the originator and architect of this process is irrelevant here, its impact is more than evident, primarily in material culture such as Glagolitic liturgical books which contain Jerome's *officium* or mass in his honor.

How much did the idea of Jerome being the inventor of Glagolitic letters spread and become commonly accepted? It seems that Jerome's cult gradually ceased to be limited to the monastic setting. Evidence for this can be found in several written accounts. The first one is the marginal note written by Juraj Slovinac, also known as Georgius de Sclavonia (1355/1360-1416), a theologian at Sorbonne and the promoter of the Glagolitic script⁴³. In his own copy of Jerome's commentaries on the Psalms, he added a marginal note next to the passage where Jerome explains how he translated the Psalms into vernacular, he writes «[...] in linguam sclavonicam [...]» suggesting that Jerome used the Slavic language as vernacular instead of Latin⁴⁴.

Valuable information about the Dalmatian perceptions of Jerome can be obtained from the foreign travelers who made stops along the Eastern Adriatic Coast on their way to the Holy Land. Besides the descriptions of churches and mentions of the important relics held in them, they also reflect upon local customs. Surprisingly, a few of them mentions Saint Jerome as the protector of Dalmatia. The earliest such note is in the itinerary of Pero Tafur (1410-1484), a Spanish pilgrim. During his short stay in Split in the 1430s, he talked with the local people, probably canons of cathedral or local aristocrats who informed him that two saints – Saint Christopher and Saint Jerome – were born in the city and that the memory where their houses stood was still alive at the time⁴⁵. Even though the story is not certifiable, it demonstrates how the idea of Jerome's local, or better to say regional, origin was present, and that people of Dalmatia were aware of the fact that he was born somewhere on the territory.

Similar observations are found in the itineraries of the other pilgrims. For example, Felix Fabri (1438/1439-1502) stopped at several places on Eastern

⁴² Verkholtantsev 2014, p. 51.

⁴³ Šanjek, Tandarić 1984; Novak 2010.

⁴⁴ Novak 2010, p. 26.

⁴⁵ Tafur 1926, p. 53: «[...] we came to a town called Spalato, which is also in Dalmatia. St Jerome and St Christopher were born in this town, and there is an arm of the sea which passes by a hamlet, where they say St Christopher carried the poor people across who could not pay for a boat, and even to-day there is some remembrance of the houses of both those saints».

Adriatic coast in the 1480s, where he met some locals who informed him that Jerome had invented letters different from Greek and Latin for his compatriots and that he used those letters to translate the Bible into Slavic. He also adds that the mass was held in the Slavic language⁴⁶. Georges Lengherand, the mayor of the city of Mons, also passed through some along the Eastern Adriatic coastline. While he was in Poreč, he attended a Slavic mass which was said to have been composed by St Jerome⁴⁷.

These accounts suggest that the people living in the fifteenth century Eastern Adriatic were aware that Jerome was born among them, and that they felt it important to emphasize to the foreigners coming to their land. Emphasized in the writings of the Dalmatian humanists and reflected in the popular devotion, it is evident that Jerome was praiseworthy as one of the most important individuals whom they considered to be their compatriot.

3.1 *Jerome's relics?*

It is not known whether certain communes in the Eastern Adriatic possessed Jerome's relics and if they played a crucial role in the celebration of the saint, or if they were a destination for local pilgrimages⁴⁸. But one example sheds light on Jerome's perception as the inventor of Glagolitic letters. The lack of Jerome relics resulted in the worship of secondary relics: books. This is not surprising considering Jerome's translation and edition of the Bible and in the Eastern Adriatic, it is also connected with the Glagolitic tradition. At the end of the fifteenth century, *Glagolita Clozianus*, a Glagolitic codex dating back to the eleventh century, passed to the ownership of Marquardo Breisacher, the

⁴⁶ Fabri 1848, p. 369: «Quod autem beatus Hieronymus in vernaculam linguam divinum officium et sacram scripturam transtulerit, patet in epistola de locis et nominibus hebraicarum quaestionum, ubi dicit: studii nostri est, de libris Ebraeorum errores refellere, etymologias quoque nominum atque regionum vernacula lingua explanare. Et iterum in epistola ad Sophronium: antiquorum, inquit, translationem diligentissime emendatam olim meae linguae hominibus tradidi. Pannonia enim adhaeret Dalmatiae, in qua oppidum sancti Hieronymi fuit, dictum Sidrona vel Stridon, dudum penitus destructum a Gothis. A nullo autem in divinis differunt a Latinis, nisi in lingua: legunt sicut nos; cantant et mores habent per omnia, sicut nos».

⁴⁷ Lengherand 1861, p. 88: «Et ce propre jour entre autres messes oymes ung prêtre qui dit messe en langue esclavon; et nous fut dit que saint Géromme composa les messes qui pour le présent se dient en ce langage».

⁴⁸ Current research managed to identify these relics of Jerome. The earliest mention is in Zagreb, where Jerome's relics were used in 1275 during the consecration of the altar of Saint Peter and Paul in the sacristy. Tkalčić 1889, p. 175. The author brings transcription of the letter from 1381 written in Dobrinj, island of Krk, about the relics in the church among which was the one of Saint Jerome. Crnčić 1867, pp. 157-158. During the consecration of the main altar in the church of saint Andrew in Bakar in 1493, Jerome's relics were used. Pantelić 1964, p. 51. However, it is known that the small church of Saint Jerome on the hill Marjan, near Split, was a goal of the local pilgrimages. In the second half of the fifteenth century, present-day church was built on the place of the earlier hermitage.

emperor's envoy⁴⁹. He had received the codex from Luka Rinaldis, canon of the island of Krk, who had close relations with the Frankopan family and who saved the codex after the death of Ivan Frankopan when his belongings were robbed and scattered⁵⁰. Breisacher added the Latin note that the codex was an autograph of Saint Jerome covered in silver and gold binding and was worshipped as a relic⁵¹. He also adds that the codex was written *in lingua Croatina scripta*⁵², referring obviously to the Glagolitic script.

Despite the note's historical incongruity, it provides an important insight into the perception of Jerome as the inventor of Glagolitic letters. There are several reasons why the codex was worshipped as a relic. The first one is the lack of Jerome's bodily remains. Considering the popularity of the saint in Western Europe, it was probably not easy to obtain a relic. Secondly, the codex was written with the older, rounded variant of Glagolitic letters which was indeed different from the angular type of the fifteenth century. Taking these factors together with the tradition of Jerome's invention of the letters – the relic was born. That the receiver of the gift did not understand the text in the book is suggested by the note in which he claims that the book containing homilies is a Bible. As Štefanić argues, it is quite unusual that Luka Rinaldis decided to give the codex to an Austrian military governor who could not have any functional use of it⁵³. The logical explanation, as supported by the note, is that it was actually perceived as a relic. Because of this, it is possible that the codex was scattered and today only a few pieces remained.

There are some other examples which support the idea that Glagolitic books were perceived as the secondary relic of Saint Jerome, even though it is not explicitly stated in the historical documents. Joško Belamarić, for example, presents the case of «the most expensive Croatian book ever» from Šibenik⁵⁴. In 1440, a priest, Marko Marijašević, made a contract with the officials of the parish of Saint Michael in Rogovo, which obliged the parish to pay him around 520 liters of barley, 1280 liters of wine and 1000 liters of oil, in exchange for a book to be received after his death. Additionally, he also was given a house in Zadar. Belamarić agrees with Petar Runje who argues that the high price of the book can be explained by its immense value as a relic rather than its material worth⁵⁵. Both authors convincingly suggest that it is possible that the book was, similarly to the *Glagolita Clozianus*, bound in richly decorated cover and kept in the treasury. And if it was venerated as a relic, whose was it if not Jerome's?

⁴⁹ Štefanić 1953 and 1955. Geary 2013, p. 22. Unfortunately, not many pages from this massive book survived until today. The first 14 pages, including the note added by Breisacher are kept in the Biblioteca comunale di Trento (ms. 2476). The additional two pages are kept in the Ferdinandeum in Innsbruck.

⁵⁰ Štefanić 1953, p. 131.

⁵¹ Ivi, p. 130: «qui librum auro et argento ornatum pro reliquiis venerabatur».

⁵² *Ibidem*.

⁵³ Štefanić 1953, p. 143.

⁵⁴ Belamarić 2008, p. 171.

⁵⁵ Ivi, p. 172.

Other examples in Dalmatia may also underpin the idea of the book as the secondary relic of the saint. One of these is the case of the *Evangeliarum Spalatense*, which has been anecdotally linked to the person of Saint Domnius (Dujam), local martyr and patron saint of the city but was probably written in Split in the eighth century⁵⁶.

Connecting saints and texts in this way is not unique for this geographic area. It can be seen in other examples producing books with divine help, for example of Saint David, a patron saint of Wales, and his *Imperfect Gospel*⁵⁷, or the Reims Gospel, a manuscript of Slavonic origin composed out of two texts written in Cyrillic and Glagolitic letters, most probably in the fourteenth century in the monastery of Saint Jerome (Emmaus) in Prague. Because of its rich binding decorated with precious stones, the latter was venerated as a relic and spurred the unfounded legend that it was the one on which French kings took oath during the coronation ceremony. Another legend, however, attributed the authorship of the text to the Czech Saint Procopius of Sazava⁵⁸.

More relevant analogies for Jerome as saintly inventors of the script can be observed in the context of the spread of Christianity, as was the case of the Armenian alphabet and its inventor Mesrop Mashtots (362-440), or Saint Wulfila (311-383) who invented Gothic letters in order to translate the Bible. Interestingly, all three of them were ecclesiastical dignitaries and were near contemporaries. Whether the attribution is proven, such as Mesrop Mashtots, or alleged as the case of Jerome centuries later, the ideas and the purpose are the same: to show the divine origin of the alphabet, to sacralize the production written in it and to prove the distinctiveness of the people who use it⁵⁹. It is exactly for this reason that Glagolitic letters are called Slavic or Croatian in the sources, for example in Biondo who refers to the script as *littera schiavonica*, or the note of Breisacher who calls it *Croatian*.

The invention of Glagolitic letters by Saint Jerome could be perceived as a miraculous invention of the saint who decided to bring a word of God to his compatriots. Not only were they chosen and not forgotten by this erudite and pious man, but their language was equal to other languages of the Church – Greek and Latin. Furthermore, this narrative also conveys the idea of the distinctiveness of people who used the language. In addition to its sacred nature, the script was created with intention – that of a great Christian, a church father, who despite all his other great accomplishments did not forget his compatriots. Additionally, it provides a certain continuity of the language since ancient times, proving the centuries-long existence of the people who are using it. This argument suggests that Dalmatians/Slavs/Illyrians/Croatians had lived on the same territory from Jerome's time onwards.

⁵⁶ Stipčević 2004, p. 21, Matijević Sokol, Galović 2016.

⁵⁷ Cowley 2007, p. 276.

⁵⁸ Viriville 1854.

⁵⁹ Mathews 1994, p. 38.

This idea did not receive much attention among the Croatian humanists in the fifteenth and early sixteenth century. It was not before the second half of the sixteenth century and the seventeenth century that Dalmatian humanists, largely influenced by Sarmatian ideology and Italian humanist historiography, began to use it as an argument for the Slavic peoples' origins in this territory, as well as that of their language and culture⁶⁰. For example, this idea is surprisingly absent from the work of Jerome's main defenders and promoters in Dalmatia: Juraj Šižgorić and Marko Marulić. Marulić, the author of the only Dalmatian written contribution to the cult of the saint – the 1507 *Vita Divi Hieronimi* – does not reflect upon it at all. The fact that Marulić, as a writer of important vernacular works himself, was familiar with vernacular sources of his time makes this silence even more intriguing. Because of the accepted *opinio communis* at the time, Marulić may have decided to ignore the fact known to him from earlier sources, namely, that Saint Cyril invented the Glagolitic script⁶¹.

Another element that contributed to the formation and acceptance of the idea that Jerome invented the Glagolitic alphabet is the establishment of the vernacular in the spheres of the public life and literacy in the fifteenth century. The importance of Glagolitic literacy in this period can be seen in the first printed books, mostly liturgical, printed in Glagolitic letters and in the Croatian language. One of these is *Tranzit svetoga Ieronima*, a translation of the Italian *Transito di San Girolamo*, printed in Senj in 1509⁶².

The infiltration and the new appreciation of the vernacular among humanists and writers can be also seen in the first vernacular novel written by Petar Zoranić in 1536⁶³. In the prologue of the book he thanks Jerome for teaching him to write in his language, not only accepting the alleged attribution of the Glagolitic alphabet to Jerome but also referring to other literature written in a vernacular and Glagolitic script that he was familiar with.

4. *Glagolitic letters as a saintly attribute?*

Surprisingly, despite the popularity and the acceptance of the idea that Jerome being the inventor of the Slavic alphabet, they were never considered passed as his visual attribute in any of the numerous artworks representing Jerome. Although it is now difficult to find visual representations of this particular element of the cult, the organ doors made by Gentile Bellini in 1489 for the

⁶⁰ See more: Kurelac 2015; Blažević 2008.

⁶¹ At the beginning of the sixteenth century Marko Marulić translated the Croatian redaction of the medieval Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja to Latin. During that work he should have read that it was Saint Cyril who invented Slavic letters.

⁶² Nazor 1999; Štefanić 1964.

⁶³ Zoranić 1998.

Trogir Cathedral hide an interesting detail⁶⁴. The painting was commissioned from the famous Bellini workshop, known for their representations of Saint Jerome in the wilderness. It was entirely executed in Venice and then shipped to Trogir. The standard iconography of the penitent saint does not differ much from usual depictions, except for the detail of the open book filled with letters⁶⁵. Keeping in mind the large dimensions of the painting (150,5x107cm) the observer should be able to clearly read the letters.

The initials are written in red forming the Latin word DOLLEO referring to Jerome's penitence and suffering in the desert. The other letters resemble alphabets used in that period and geographical area – Glagolitic, Cyrillic, and even Greek letters. Still, it is difficult to distinguish meaningful text and specific graphemes of the certain script⁶⁶. Was the mere purpose of these letters to fill the empty space in the book featured as Jerome's attribute or did it have a symbolic meaning connecting Jerome with the local tradition praising him as the inventor of Glagolitic letters?

It is justifiable to suggest that the book in this particular image stood for Jerome's connection with the Glagolitic alphabet, even though the letters do not resemble actual Glagolitic script. There are several reasons behind this incongruence. In the first place, the painter may not have fully understood what was being painted. It is highly likely that the commissioners expressed their wish for a certain message to be written in the book but the painter, not knowing what the letters looked like, invented a script to represent Glagolitic. A similar example can be found in the case of Arabic or Hebrew letters represented in medieval paintings, where the inscription resembles the script only in form, meaningless and impossible to read but still bearing the symbolic meaning⁶⁷. Despite the lack of accuracy, the intention is evident – to represent these scripts.

Thus, it is not unlikely that the letters in the representation of Saint Jerome in Trogir were meant to stand for the Glagolitic script. Although the medieval commune of Trogir, unlike Zadar, was not a center of Glagolitic literacy, the presence of the spoken Croatian vernacular language which was used in Trogir regardless of social class⁶⁸. In this context, it is also understandable why the Glagolitic letters are only represented symbolically: the writing was simply not necessary to be understood, its purpose was to emphasize the connection of the great saint with the mother tongue used in the liturgy.

⁶⁴ Tomić 1997, p. 12.

⁶⁵ See: Belting 2014.

⁶⁶ Here I would like to express my gratitude to Vesna Badurina Stipčević and Mateo Žagar for their help with the palaeographical analysis of the text.

⁶⁷ See the examples for Hebrew script: Rodov 2013.

⁶⁸ Fisković 1971, pp. 100-101. The decision from 1426 obliged all of the members of the Great Council to speak Latin or Italian language, otherwise they will be punished. The reason for this was certainly connected with the use of the Croatian vernacular by the aristocracy. In 1553, Venetian inspector Giovanni Battista Giustiniani writes that in Trogir most of the aristocracy spoke Croatian language in their houses and that their wives spoke very bad Italian or none.

5. Humanist devotion to Jerome

Despite the strong local cult of St Jerome in Dalmatia, it is notable that the rising humanist culture in the Eastern Adriatic also significantly contributed to the spread of the cult of saint and directly supported the dispersion of the material manifestations of the cult – paintings and sculptures, as well as books containing either his own work or texts about his life. Recent research has identified the presence of Jerome's cult in the most of the urban cores in the eastern Adriatic. As discussed above, Jerome's cult was also present in the hinterlands, but it was mostly connected with the Glagolitic veneration among Slavic speaking communities.

It is certain that the expansion of Jerome's cult, and the beginnings of the development of his national cult, are both connected with the humanist elites which transferred elements of the growing cult from Italy back to their homeland through their personal connection⁶⁹. This phenomenon is best demonstrated in the possession of Jerome's works by Croatian humanists. For instance, in his last will, Juraj Benja left his handwritten copy of Jerome's letters to his friend Marin Krešava⁷⁰. In 1461, the bishop of Hvar, Tommaso Tomassini, commissioned a transcription of the Letters of Saint Jerome from a priest, Antun⁷¹. Quotations from Jerome's works by certain humanists certainly prove that his works were read⁷². In the introduction to his collection of poetry, for example, Juraj Šižgorić writes that he «answered his opponents in the same way as Jerome answered his»⁷³. It is similarly indisputable that Marko Marulić possessed works both by and about Jerome⁷⁴, which ultimately inspired him to write the *Vita Divi Hieronymi*⁷⁵.

In humanist circles, Jerome represented a perfect model for an erudite, but also pious, man. The list of the humanists who tried to model their life upon Jerome's is long, ranging from Petrarch and Pier Paolo Vergerio to Erasmus. There are a number of artistic depictions of famous humanists who identified with Jerome and the representation of Jerome working in his study room was to become the model for later representations of humanists in their study.

⁶⁹ The Italian influence came through different channels. In the first place through the people who studied in Italy and had a first-hand experience with the growing cult which certainly included teaching of Jerome's works at universities, but also through the books they brought back to homeland to sell them and earn some money.

⁷⁰ Špoljarić 2017, p. 50.

⁷¹ Stipčević 2004, p. 56.

⁷² See Knezović 2016.

⁷³ Ivi, p. 3.

⁷⁴ Grubišić 2007. The testament of Marko Marulić has a list of his book which were to be given to certain individuals and monasteries, among which are few written by Jerome and about Jerome.

⁷⁵ Novaković 1994. Marulić decided to write a new life of Saint Jerome, decent to his sanctity after he read few of them giving not accurate information.

Identifying with Jerome can be found both in the above – mentioned work by Šižgorić and that of Marulić writing «Ille est meus, et ego suus». This statement indicates not only their parity in the religious and spiritual sense but also their shared origin in the same culture and ethnic group.

Identifying with Jerome was a commonplace during the Renaissance. Italian humanists identified with the saint on the basis of his erudition, pious and penitent life, and in the Eastern Adriatic coast, the ethnic component was added. While prominent humanists and cardinals being depicted as Jerome were common in the West, in Dalmatia such representations are few and far between⁷⁶. The sole surviving example of such a depiction may demonstrate how the achievements of the Renaissance gained a foothold on the Dalmatian soil.

At this point, it is important to note the importance of Cipiko family in the spread of the cult in Trogir where a large number of visual representations of the saint were executed in the second half of the fifteenth century. The family's devotion to the saint can be portrayed in one example. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, sculptor Tripun Bokanić made a sculpture of Saint Jerome in Trogir, commissioned by Alvise Cipiko (d. 1606) in the memory of his late father, Jerome⁷⁷. This veneration through name choice is not accidental: Cipiko had the sculpture made both for his late father and as the *ex voto* for his only surviving son, also named Jeronim⁷⁸. The sculpture is executed with naturalistic portrait features which resembled the late Jerome Cipiko⁷⁹. It is evident that in both cases the erudition and the pious life of Cipiko brothers were to be compared to those of the represented saint. Their virtues are resembling the virtues of the saints.

Aristocratic families from Trogir, known for their humanist engagement as well as the political activities in the local government, certainly made their mark not only on the intellectual life of the city but also of the region through the several centuries. The most prominent member of the dynasty – relevant to the present discussion – was Koriolan Cipiko (1425-1493), born to a humanist father, Petar Cipiko, and educated in Venice and Padova. He was from a young age familiar with the contemporary discussions and ideas circulating in the Italian humanist scene. Together with Bishop Giacomo Torlon (1452-1483), Koriolan was among responsible for the city's *renovation urbis* in the second half of the fifteenth century. Being the *operarius* of the cathedral, he was in the position to hire the best artists of the time – Niccolò Fiorentino (Nikola Firentinac), Andrea Alessi (Andrija Aleši) and Giovanni Dalmata

⁷⁶ Ridderbos 1984. See chapter 3 and 4, It is assumed that Antonello Messina's Saint Jerome in study is representing cardinal Nicholas of Cusa.

⁷⁷ Belamarić 2001.

⁷⁸ Ivi, p. 470.

⁷⁹ A similar portrait was done nearly a century before when Ivan Duknović portrayed Jerome's brother and Koriolan's son, Alvise Cipiko as Saint John. Belamarić 1998.

(Ivan Duknović) – to work on the new chapel of Saint John of Trogir and the baptistery of cathedral church, as well as other public works⁸⁰. Andrea Alessi's relief of Saint Jerome studying books in the cave, commissioned for the new baptistery which was finished in 1467, is especially pertinent here.

The unique nature of this representation, recently noted by Samo Štefanac, results from the fact that the two most common types of representation of the saint are merged: Saint Jerome in the desert, as suggested by his hermit outfit, and Saint Jerome in the study, suggested by the books he is reading⁸¹. It is beyond the purview of the present study to discuss this representation on the level of detail it deserves, however, the importance of this representation for the spread of Saint Jerome's cult is highly relevant here. After making this relief, several other ones, often smaller in size and different in form, were sculpted by Andrea Alessi and Niccolò Fiorentino and their workshops. These works constitute the single most important body of primary sources to understand the representations of the Dalmatian Jerome.

This type of representation was probably not invented by Fiorentino and Alessi, but rather by the Venetian painters' circle, where Jacopo Bellini introduced the image of the penitent Jerome in the desert. Bellini's landscape certainly resembles the rocky cave on the above-mentioned reliefs. The Venetian tradition of representing Saint Jerome in a landscape of bare rocks and wild animals was continued by Jacopo's sons, Giovanni and Gentile Bellini, as it can be seen in the above-mentioned example from the Trogir Cathedral. The development of representation also brought about a change of medium from painting to sculpted relief, as well as the reduction of the iconographic representation to the most important attributes – cave, books, wild animals and Jerome's galero (cardinal's hat).

These representations can be considered as the "Dalmatian Jerome" for various reasons, primarily because of the popularity and geographical diffusion of the reliefs during the fifteenth century. Second, this is also undergirded by the popularity of the type even later in the century. Finally, it is connected with the function and the presence of the saint in the public sphere. A number of these reliefs survived to this day, which features the same iconography but is unique in their execution⁸². It is evident that they were made in a series: although

⁸⁰ Štefanac 2006; Bužančić 2012; Fisković 1996.

⁸¹ Štefanac 1996.

⁸² The reliefs that are attributed to Niccolò Fiorentino and his workshop are kept in Paris in Musée Jacquemart-André and in the private collection. The reliefs which quality stand out and are today in the church of Santa Maria di Giglio and in the Dubrovnik museum, are also connected with his workshop. The reliefs whose production is connected with the Andrea Alessi and his circle are the one in the church of Marjan near Split, relief from Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool reliefs from the Museum of Fine Arts in Split, relief from the church of saint John in Zadar, relief from the church of saint Duje in Pašman, relief in the Fondazione Roberto Longhi and one that was once built in the wall of the house in the Fondamenta San Giuseppe in Venice. For additional bibliography about the reliefs see the works by Ivo Petricoli, Cvito Fisković and Kruno Prijatelj.

the documentation of the commission of certain reliefs is no longer available, some of the owners can be identified by the coat of arms in the lower part of the reliefs, such as the Gozze family from Dubrovnik or the Venetian rector Alvise Lando in Trogir. The diffusion of the reliefs from Dubrovnik to Zadar is particularly salient for the present discussion. The ownership of Gozze family, for example, supports the argument of the popularity of reliefs⁸³. No masters are known to have worked in Dubrovnik, which means that someone from the Gozze family ordered the relief with a reason. In all, it is difficult to establish the secure provenance of the reliefs but the presence of the one in Venice certainly suggests that they were popular outside the homeland: a relief incorporated in the façade of the private house, on Fondamenta San Giuseppe, Castello 978 in Venice⁸⁴.

The earliest documented position of the relief comes from the beginning of the twentieth century. However, the fact that this part of the Castello district, especially between the streets Secco Marina and Fondamenta San Giuseppe, was inhabited with numerous Schiavoni through the centuries, raises the question whether this relief was put there by someone from the Slavic community⁸⁵. Currently, at this stage of research, it is not possible to give definitive answers. A closer look at this particular relief may shed some light on the purpose of these reliefs. Although it is commonly accepted that they served as private altars, this conclusion was probably made based on the one that Alessi incorporated into an altar in the Church of Saint Jerome on Marjan hill near Split, I believe that their function should be examined with more attention. The relief in Fondamenta San Giuseppe in Venice, as well as the one in the church of Santa Maria del Giglio (not in its original position) and one on the façade of the church of Saint Duje Monastery in Kraj, were incorporated into the wall, what can give us the other possible function of the reliefs⁸⁶. Accepting the theory that they were originally intended to be displayed on façades, they are interesting examples for merging a family's coat of arms with the representation of the saint they worshipped: like the Dubrovnik relief possessed by Gozze family, all these reliefs had a part reserved for inscription or coat of arms.

From a modern perspective, the importance of heraldic and other representations in the liminal spaces between private and public is difficult to estimate in the formation of urban visual culture, but they certainly played a role in the dissemination of the cult. Similar examples are easy to find. In Venice, there are numerous examples of similar reliefs incorporated in the façade⁸⁷. However, the Dalmatian examples can be also meaningfully observed in the context of the urban visual system in which they existed, having the

⁸³ Prijatelj 1951, p. 25.

⁸⁴ Schulz 1976, p. 113.

⁸⁵ See before mentioned works by Lovorka Čoralić.

⁸⁶ Schulz 1976, p. 116.

⁸⁷ See: Rizzi 1987.

greater symbolical meaning than it seems at first glance. After 1409, the reliefs of Saint Mark were erected in all the cities under the Venetian rule, being the strong visual marker of the political power. The lion of Saint Mark became omnipresent and superseded all other characters⁸⁸.

Should these reliefs be seen as simple votive artifacts dedicated to a great saint of the Catholic Church? Or do they possess a more complex symbolic representation of certain ethnic affiliation (Dalmatian/Slavic/Illyrian)? This question takes the discussion back to Alessi's relief made for the baptistery of the cathedral in Trogir. The construction of the baptistery began in 1460 and it is difficult to imagine that mounting a relief of Saint Jerome was not part of the original plan⁸⁹. It is important to note here that the feast day of Saint Jerome was introduced to an official city calendar five years before the construction started, and the text clearly states that Jerome should be worshipped because of his ascetic lifestyle and his intellectual achievements – the two attributes which are directly represented on this relief merging two iconographic types – but more than anything because of his regional origin⁹⁰. It is certainly his regional origin which contributed to the choice of Jerome for the lunette in the baptistery, more than the other characteristics of the saint. Importantly, the popular trends in the devotion, based on the devotional literature to the saint, also influenced this representation.

The written model for this representation probably lies in the letters of pseudo-Augustine, Cyril of Jerusalem, and Eusebius of Cremona, which emerged at the end of the thirteenth century in the Dominican circle of Santa Maria Maggiore⁹¹. These forged letters brought more elements into Jerome's hagiography, upon which the cult was built in the Late Middle Ages. Regardless of their provenance, they had a strong impact on the visual representations of Saint Jerome. All three letters emphasize the parallels between the two saints: for example, in Augustine's letter to Cyril, Saint John the Baptist appears to Augustine in the company of Saint Jerome, encouraging him to write down the praise of Jerome. In this sense, the two saints are paired due to their ascetic lifestyle and devotional life, where Saint Jerome can be seen as the new Saint John⁹². Upon this, many other artworks represent two saints paired together. So, it is not surprising that in the baptistery of the cathedral of Trogir, which is referred as *capella sancti Johanni Baptisti* in the documents about the construction, we find the representation of both saints – Saint Jerome on the relief and Saint John on the altar⁹³.

While this type of double representation certainly reflects contemporary trends, the element of Jerome's Dalmatian origin remains an intrinsic part of

⁸⁸ Raukar 1982, p. 97.

⁸⁹ About the construction of the baptistery see: Josipović 2009; Marković 2013.

⁹⁰ See footnote 24.

⁹¹ Rice 1985, p. 55.

⁹² See more: Rice 1985; Lizzi Testa 2007, pp. 306, 313, 324.

⁹³ Josipović 2009, p. 48.

the representation. Detailed and extensive research on this topic is in progress and should yield new conclusions about the representations of the saint in Dalmatia.

6. *Vir Illustris becomes a national saint*

Despite the general popularity of the saint in the fifteenth century, it is hard to imagine that the cult would have become this widespread in the Eastern Adriatic without the element of the local origin which marked the saint as one of “their own”. This appropriation can be seen in the text of the official veneration, as well as in the later writing of the humanists which emphasize his importance as the most prominent individual when writing about Illyrians, Dalmatians or Slavs.

The multifunctional nature of his figure and cult eventually led to his emergence as the national saint, where his importance was emphasized on the several levels. The first factor was the reflection of the common ancient origin, expressed in the Dalmatian/Illyrian/Slav/Croatian affiliation of the saint. Proving Jerome’s origin meant proving not only the long existence of this ethnic group in the eastern Adriatic but also the perennial character of their language and its sacred legitimacy. Jerome’s figure expressed the linguistic unity of the people living in the Eastern Adriatic, through the common language, the Croatian vernacular, which began to penetrate the cultural life at this time.

It is also of note that the political context certainly played an important role in the emergence of Jerome as a national patron saint. As the political context cannot be discussed here at length, observing the two most fundamental factors will suffice: the establishment of the Venetian government and the Ottoman conquest of Balkan. Once medieval Croatian lands found themselves under a different political authority after the establishment of the Venetian government, common language became one of the important elements of the identification of the peoples not living in the same political unity. The fifteenth century was a turning point for the Dalmatian communes which lost its autonomy on many levels and was incorporated into the centralized system of the Venetian Republic which severely restricted their original autonomy. Even though the Serenissima kept the local laws, the influence of the local community, especially the aristocracy, was curbed, and the most influential communal posts came to be occupied by the people appointed from Venice. This resulted in the complete loss of the commune’s ability to make decisions without the approval of Venice⁹⁴. It is evident that in the period of the Venetian government’s consolidation the communes became more aware of their shared past, language and customs.

⁹⁴ Raukar 1982; Novak 1965.

It was due to this increased awareness, too, that Jerome came to be worshipped as the patron of Dalmatia: leaving room for the continued worship of commune patron saints, but representing a higher level of worship and protection as the universal patron of all Dalmatians. There are several surviving examples of this practice. In Trogir, a stone polyptych from the Dominican church features the Virgin Mary with Saint John of Trogir and Saint Jerome⁹⁵. In Dubrovnik, Nikola Lazanić made two statues for the Church of Saint Blaise, a local patron saint: Saint Blaise and Saint Jerome⁹⁶.

The identification of the communes with common past and customs can also be seen in the example of the Republic of Ragusa where Jerome's feast day was officially celebrated from 1445 onwards⁹⁷. In this period, Ragusans frequently emphasized their Dalmatian origin and language to distinguish themselves from the Italians, but also to identify with the other Dalmatian communes, with which they once formed part of the Hungarian kingdom⁹⁸. In the sixteenth century, when the Republic of Ragusa established its boundaries and moved its political focus from what became a Venetian Dalmatia, Jerome's cult was no longer celebrated officially⁹⁹.

Although some researchers see the initial development of the cult of Saint Jerome as a response to the constant threat of the Ottoman army, it is quite likely that this was not the main reason for the formation of the common affiliation expressed through the worship of the saint¹⁰⁰. It is true that in 1464 Cardinal Bessarion gave an indulgence to the Scuola di Santi Giorgio e Trifone in Venice, which can be seen as a way to counter Ottoman activities, but this was years after the cult in Dalmatia had been fully formed¹⁰¹. The preserved documents which refer to the worship of the saint from the middle of the fifteenth century do not explicitly mention the Ottoman threat at all. Furthermore, despite the proximity of the Ottoman army to the Dalmatian cities, their preoccupation

⁹⁵ Bužančić 2009, p. 43. Due to the representation of the city's patron Saint John and the protector of Dalmatian, Saint Jerome, the author suggests that the commissioner for this stone polyptych should have been a local government.

⁹⁶ Fisković 1951, p. 29.

⁹⁷ See a footnote 23.

⁹⁸ Kunčević 2009, p. 159; Radonić 1935, pp. 492-493. In 1444, the merchants of the Republic of Ragusa were forced to pay so-called *Italian tax* in Barcelona. In the protest letter to the authorities of Barcelona sent in 1446, Ragusan clearly stated that «it is clear to the nations of the whole world [...] that Ragusans are not Italians [...] quite the contrary, that both judging by their language and by criteria of place, they are Dalmatians». Even though it seems that this statement was issued only to avoid paying taxes, it is evident that in this period Ragusans are emphasizing their Dalmatian identity, what can be also seen through the worship of Saint Jerome.

⁹⁹ Lonza 2009, p. 258. Nella Lonza argues how in the sixteenth century, when the Republic of Ragusa already established their borders and placed itself on the map of the power in the Mediterranean, there was no necessity for the integration with the other Dalmatian communes, now under the rule of Venice.

¹⁰⁰ Kunčić 2008, p. 16.

¹⁰¹ Čoralčić 1998, pp. 152-154.

with possible conquest was not a real threat until the fall of Bosnia in 1463¹⁰². In the series of the anti-Ottoman orations, mostly from the sixteenth century, there is no reference to Jerome as a Dalmatian, neither he is called upon as a saintly helper¹⁰³. He is, however, mentioned and sometimes even quoted in texts of this genre, where Jerome letter to Heliodorus, describing how barbarians destroyed the Roman Empire and its churches and how they killed the bishops, was used as an analogy for the destruction of Croatian lands¹⁰⁴.

Still, the recent research by Luka Špoljarić revealed the booklet with two texts written at the end of the fifteenth century in Venice, in which Jerome's role of pan-Slavic protector against Ottomans is emphasized and the saint is evoked as the protector against the plague¹⁰⁵. This example just evidences how by the end of the fifteenth century Jerome's role as a national saint becomes universally accepted by his compatriots, so he is being evoked to fulfill his duty of their protector in the time of the great need such as plague or Ottoman threat. While Jerome certainly figured in texts at the time of Ottoman threats to Croatian historical lands and indeed served as an added protection in this period of fear and insecurity, the rise of his cult was not brought initially by the search for the heavenly protection against heathens.

7. Conclusion

Even though this study provided only a brief overview of the factors contributing to the formation of Saint Jerome as a national saint, it aims to help a better understanding of the other texts about saintly patronage of Schiavoni communities in this volume. It is important to stress that this research in progress opens many questions, which will be dealt separately in the forthcoming publications.

¹⁰² Raukar 1982, p. 90.

¹⁰³ Gligo 1983.

¹⁰⁴ Ivi, p. 25. In the letter to Heliodor Jerome describes the ruins left after the barbarians invaded the Roman Empire. He sees the destruction as the punishment for all the sins. In this sense, Dalmatian humanists identify themselves with Jerome since their country was also burned by Ottomans. Reading the works by sixteenth-century humanists such as Marko Marulić, Bernard Zane and Trankvil Andronik, we can notice that they were familiar with this work by Jerome.

¹⁰⁵ Špoljarić 2018. The text will be published in the forthcoming volume of *Colloquia Maruliana*. I express my gratitude to the author for sharing his preliminary conclusions with me. It is also necessary to mention that Jerome's role as the saintly protector against the plague emerges in Italy in parallel to the Schiavoni veneration. It can be seen in several paintings such as Filippo Lippi's 1482 altarpiece in San Michele church in Lucca where Saint Jerome is depicted with Saint Roch, Saint Sebastian and Saint Helen, or Carlo Crivelli's *Madonna with Saint Jerome and Saint Sebastian* from 1490. Despite of this Italian tradition of adjoining Jerome to the other popular plague protectors, in the case of the Venetian texts brought by Špoljarić, Jerome's role is primarily connected to his status of a national saint.

The examples gathered convincingly show that the choice of Jerome was not accidental. His role as the unifier was not only based on his saintly powers but built on the belief that he was born in the territory of Dalmatia and invented the Glagolitic alphabet to bring the word of God to his people. He became a national hero. Was there a better candidate whom Dalmatians/Illyrians/Slavs could be this proud – a truly holy man, the translator of the Bible and author of theological treatises, born among them yet praised across the whole of Western Christendom? A saint that did so much good for Christianity, but still never forgot his compatriots?

The worship of Saint Jerome united people coming from different parts of Eastern Adriatic but gathered under an umbrella of a shared origin and language – and Jerome's heavenly protection. Enjoying a high rank in the *communio sanctorum* and widely celebrated all over Christian Europe, Jerome became an important point of pride among the believers, so it is not surprising that Dalmatians wary of others trying to appropriate their saint. Yet, if it was not for this unwelcome appropriation, humanists would have been so eager to defend the saint as Dalmatian/Illyrian/Slav/Croatian and modern scholarship would be entirely oblivious about the importance of Jerome in the late Middle Ages in Dalmatia and later elsewhere in the Eastern Adriatic.

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Appendix

Fig. 1. Gentile Bellini, *The organ doors in the cathedral of Trogir*, 1489



Fig. 2. Gentile Bellini, *The organ doors in the cathedral of Trogir*, 1489, detail



Fig. 3. Tripun Bokanić, *Saint Jerome*, beginning of the 17th century, Split, Galerija umjetnina Split



Fig. 4. Niccolò Fiorentino, *Saint Jerome reading in the cave*, 15th century, Venice, Church of Santa Maria del Giglio

Searching for Schiavoni Intellectuals*

Neven Jovanović**

Abstract

The art history term of “Schiavoni” – used for artists born in Croatia, or Dalmatia, and active abroad, mostly in Italy – is completely absent from the Croatian literary history. No such history will, however, dare to omit the category of “Croatian authors outside their homeland”. The paper interprets the theoretical framework that is causing such discrepancy between the disciplines and proposes to consider both artists and writers as intellectuals. In that context, inspired by Antonio Gramsci’s theory of the role of intellectuals in the process of social change, the dynamic relationship between the intellectuals and the Schiavoni community can be fruitfully explored; for example, four intellectuals from the island of Korčula, active in the Schiavoni confraternity of St Jerome in Rome in 1550-1565, can be identified as a small social network strengthened by multiple alliances.

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Il termine storico-artistico “Schiavoni” – usato per artisti nati in Croazia, o in Dalmazia, e attivi all'estero, soprattutto in Italia – è completamente assente dalla storia letteraria croata. Nessuna storia, tuttavia, oserà omettere la categoria di “autori croati al di fuori della loro patria”. Il saggio interpreta il quadro teorico che causa tale discrepanza tra le discipline e propone di considerare sia gli artisti che gli scrittori come intellettuali. In tale contesto, ispirato dalla teoria di Antonio Gramsci sul ruolo degli intellettuali nel processo di cambiamento sociale, la relazione dinamica tra gli intellettuali e la comunità di Schiavoni può essere proficuamente esplorata; ad esempio, quattro intellettuali dell'isola di Korčula, attivi nella confraternita Schiavoni di San Girolamo a Roma nel 1550-1565, possono essere identificati come un piccolo *social network* rafforzato da molteplici alleanze.

At the first glance, it may seem that the field of Croatian literary history – in my specific case, the history of Croatian authors who wrote in Latin from the late Middle Ages to the 20th century – has little or nothing to contribute to the theme of Schiavoni, or Illyrian, confraternities and colleges in Early Modern Italy. The fact is that neither the term “Schiavoni” nor “confraternities” appear in conjunction with “Italy” in general histories of Croatian literature, while in surveys of Croatian writings in Latin “Schiavoni” and “confraternities” do not appear at all¹. The absence itself is worthy of consideration. Does it mean that the arts, politics, religion, and economy *can* provide a context for Schiavoni confraternities in Italy from 1300 to 1850, while only literature *cannot* do so? On the other hand, if we suppose that I am simply not *aware* of the role Schiavoni confraternities have played in Croatian literary history, what has made my ignorance *possible*?

There is actually a disciplinary difference between the ways Croatian art history and Croatian literary history look at their respective fields of study. Here I want, first, to describe the difference in question and propose an explanation for its existence; then I will go on to demonstrate briefly that, once the literary historians change their theoretical framework a little, interactions of Schiavoni confraternities with literature can be identified as an invitation to new interpretations.

1. *A disciplinary difference*

In 1991, a traumatic year for Croatia, the seventeenth volume of the series Dani Hvarskog kazališta (Hvar City Theatre Days) was published in Split². The

¹ For general histories of Croatian literature, cf. Vodnik 1913, Kombol 1945, Frangeš 1987. Even the general historical monograph on Croatian diaspora in Venice treats artists and musicians as “Schiavoni”, but separates the writers into another chapter which does not use the term: Čoralčić 2001, pp. 305-345. A survey of Croatian Neo-Latin is Gortan *et al.* 1971.

² Batušić, Bogišić 1991; from 1975 to this day, the Hvar Theatre Days conference offers scholars a chance to share research on Croatian theatre and literary history.

1991 volume, bringing together papers from the sessions held in Hvar in May of the previous year, was dedicated to the Renaissance Humanism in Croatia, especially in Dubrovnik and other Dalmatian cities. The last paper in the book, written by the distinguished Croatian art historian Kruno Prijatelj (1922-1998), bears the title *Likovni umjetnici 'Schiavoni' iz Dalmacije u 15. stoljeću* (Dalmatian 'Schiavone' artists during the 15th century). It opens with a useful definition:

Our art history uses the term 'Schiavoni' for Croatian artists active mostly during the Renaissance, the Mannerism, and the Baroque, who were born on our soil – mainly in the Venetian Dalmatia – but have developed their careers outside their homeland: in Italy, but also in the region from France to Hungary, from Germany to Austria; their works have a distinguished place in the contemporary European art³.

Prijatelj's paper, however, is the only one in the Hvar volume to use the term *Schiavoni* for Croatians in the diaspora. The other twenty contributions, written by distinguished Croatian literary scholars of all generations, consistently discuss "Croatian Renaissance humanism" even when focusing on such authors as Ivan Polikarp Severitan (Ioannes Polycarpus Severitanus Sibenicensis, 1472 – after 1525), who spent most of his life in Italy⁴, or Franjo Niger (Pescennius Franciscus Niger Venetus Liburnus, 1452 – after 1523), born in Venice by a father from Senj and a mother from Treviso⁵.

The Hvar Theatre Days volume includes also a theoretical reflection on Croatian Latin authors by Pavao Pavličić, a scholar of comparative literature. The reflection is entitled *Po čemu su hrvatski latinisti naši?* (What is it that makes Croatian Latinists ours?). This is how Pavličić formulates his central problem:

because our writers often worked in foreign countries, using foreign languages, it was to be expected that for some of them a question may arise as to what extent are they truly Croatian writers; in the same way, it was to be expected that the nations on whose soil they worked may consider these writers their own national authors⁶.

The authors "working on the foreign soil" would obviously fit Prijatelj's definition of "Schiavoni", but, as we see, Pavličić does not use the term, speaking instead about the "latinisti", the "Latin authors". It is also to be noted that Pavličić chooses to classify these authors in a strictly binary fashion: they are either "our" and "foreign".

Pavličić's categories are well in line with the traditional framework of Croatian literary history. As Nenad Ivić suggests, in Croatia, the literary history has long depended «on the [literary historiographer's] notion of Croatian

³ Prijatelj 1991, p. 260.

⁴ Glavičić 1991.

⁵ Perić 1991.

⁶ Pavličić 1991, pp. 44-45.

national history»⁷. The stories told by historians of literature either supplement the history proper (for example, stressing cultural unity and strength of politically heterogeneous and traumatized regions) or reflect it (for example, demonstrating how the extraordinary political freedom of the city-state of Dubrovnik has enabled the expression of artistic individualities). Such stories have little place for the “diaspora” because these national communities exist outside of the (either modern or imagined) national boundaries. The literary historians are, of course, aware of migrations and of their influence on national culture; for example, this is how in 1945 Mihovil Kumbol (1883-1955) sees movements happening under Ottoman pressure during the 15th and 16th century:

Indeed, in that age, when the country of their ancestors was divided between mighty neighbors, and too feeble to permit, in the tragic historical maelstrom, the creation of stable centers capable of employing all national forces, many Croats were seeking their fortunes in neighboring lands, offering them their heads and their swords⁸.

But the writers, the authors, are not considered in the context of the general diaspora. Their talent makes them exceptional. When they move abroad, they do not simply resettle – they fall into a paradoxical “trap of history” (Frangješ), as exemplified in the career of Janus Pannonius / Ivan Česmički (1434-1472):

he became famous as a Latin poet, but in Italy; became famous as a politician and bishop, but in Hungary; to his homeland, he left the indisputable right to revel in his oeuvre. And though Pannonius cannot be left out of the history of Hungarian humanism, nevertheless he is born in Croatia (which is tenderly mentioned in his poems), nevertheless he is a Croat (that he does not renounce either), and – most importantly – the teachings pronounced every so often by his Muse fit into the traditional insights of the future Croatian literature⁹.

The somewhat bewildering choice of words in Frangješ’s last sentence («*traditional* insights of the *future* Croatian literature») actually announces both the problem of Croatian Latin writers’ allegiance (“what is it that makes them ours?”) and the formula with which Pavličić will try to solve the problem. Some such authors, Pavličić claims, are simply “not ours”: the ones whose “links to their homeland literature and their influence on it” have simply disappeared from history. To the Croatian literature truly belong «only the authors known and read by our writers and our educated people, only those recognized by

⁷ Ivić 2007, p. 403.

⁸ Kumbol 1945, p. 58. For a strikingly similar view of contemporary Italy, cf. a passage cited by Antonio Gramsci (*I quaderni del carcere*, *Quaderno* 7, § 67) from Renaud Przewdziecki, *Ambasciatori veneti in Polonia*, «Nuova Antologia», 1° luglio 1930: «La mancanza di unità patria, di una dinastia unica, creava tra gli italiani uno stato di spirito indipendente, per cui ciascuno che fosse fornito di capacità politiche e diplomatiche, le considerava come un talento personale che poteva mettere, secondo il suo interesse, al servizio di qualunque causa, allo stesso modo che i capitani di ventura disponevano della loro spada». Cf. Soave 2014.

⁹ Frangješ 1987, pp. 31-32.

them as their own authors and their representatives – regardless of whether the recognition happens while the humanist is still active, or decades, even centuries later»¹⁰.

Pavličić carefully avoids any modish theoretical language, but it may be inferred that for him a history of national literature is what we would call *socially constructed*. A writer, or a group of writers, become “ours” because “we” – national literary historians, as well as national consumers of literature – decide we *need* them: «Croatian literature, so poor in cultural centres and authors, finds it very hard to renounce anything»¹¹. The purpose of the national literary past is to be *used* – to be used to reinforce the *current* national self and the national culture. Consequently, even a long-forgotten author such as Franciscus Patricius (Frane Petrić, Petriš or Petris / Francesco Patrizi, 1529-1597) may «after he has been recognized as our countryman, become part [of national literature] if he exerts sufficient influence on Croatian literature»¹².

As potential, unrecognized, unresearched sites of literary life, Schiavoni confraternities in Italy pose a further problem to Croatian literary history. I would call that problem sociological. In Croatia, the literary history traditionally focuses on *individuals* and assigns *communities* only support roles. No history addresses systematically, from the Middle Ages to the Modern Period, «the extent to which particular social structures find expression in individual literary works and what function these works perform in society»¹³. Literary historians share the view of Frangeš that «the complete image of a literature depends first and foremost on works and activities of the greatest writers», and concentrate therefore on great authors and great works. The everyday facts of general, or “average”, literary culture get short shrift. This means that, because we have not discovered a literary equivalent to Carpaccio’s paintings commissioned by the Scuola di San Giorgio e Trifone in Venice, there is no sufficient reason for us to care about Schiavoni confraternities as factors in a system of Croatian literature¹⁴.

In 1991, the initiative implicitly introduced by Prijatelj’s article – a suggestion to use the art historian concept of “Schiavoni” to reconsider or recontextualize the historical group of “Croatian Latin writers” or “Croatian Humanists” – found no adequate response. In the seventeenth volume of the Hvar City Theatre Days, Prijatelj’s paper remained, to an extent, isolated. But today, twenty-seven

¹⁰ Pavličić 1991, p. 53.

¹¹ Ivi, p. 48.

¹² Ivi, p. 53.

¹³ Lowenthal 1932.

¹⁴ Precisely in the case of the Venetian Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, a recent reinterpretation of an anonymous Latin hymn and a prayer to St Jerome “the Illyrian”, composed in 1498 and preserved among the papers of Jeronim Vidulić from Zadar (1440-1499), shows that the Schiavoni confraternity may have encouraged literary production as well as artworks; Špoljarić 2018.

years later, scholars may profit from exploring ways to meaningfully integrate the categories of “Schiavoni” and “Latin writers”.

One such way consists in applying Antonio Gramsci’s theoretical framework of intellectual activity to the phenomena of Renaissance cultural history, as outlined in 1978 by Margaret L. King.

Here we do not need to go into all the aspects of Gramsci’s theory of the role of intellectuals in the process of social change. It will be enough to let the Italian philosopher remind us that there is a common category for artists and writers: both groups are intellectuals. Moreover, in Gramsci’s terms, both groups belong to the “traditional intellectuals”:

Traditional intellectuals include those persons most of us would spontaneously consider being intellectuals: philosophers, artists, writers, and perhaps teachers, religious leaders, and journalists. These intellectuals share a common language, the refined language of high culture acquired through meticulous education, and a common heritage extending back to Plato and beyond. Joined by these rich cultural links, traditional intellectuals tend to see themselves and to be seen as detached from society, from the shifting currents of economic and political life. They perceive themselves and are perceived as an independent social group. But they are not; they too are possessed by history. Generation after generation, they are absorbed into new social groups through the activity of the organic intellectuals of these groups¹⁵.

On the other hand, members of Schiavoni confraternities may be considered as Gramsci’s *organic* intellectuals:

Organic intellectuals are the members of each social group who, whatever their profession or economic role, create the ideas which rationalize and justify the interests of their own social group and its claim to dominance. Within the ruling class, they might include engineers, managers, bureaucrats; within the proletariat, trade union leaders¹⁶.

Here we should also bear in mind that within the “intelligentsia” there are differences in quality; the spectrum of talent forms a pyramid, at the base of which «reside those intellectuals most closely related to the economic activity characteristic of the social group in question, and who perform routine types of intellectual work (managerial, administrative)»¹⁷.

The Schiavoni diaspora communities in, for example, Venice or Rome certainly did not, would not strive to achieve cultural or political hegemony in their respective cities. They did, however, as aliens and strangers, need to secure the respect of their fellow citizens. To that end, they must have adopted the same strategy Gramsci, on a much grander scale, recognizes in effecting social change: they «harnessed the energies of traditional intellectuals»¹⁸ to organize

¹⁵ King 1978, p. 25.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹⁷ Ivi, p. 27.

¹⁸ Ivi, p. 26.

and present the Schiavoni, or Illyrian, or Croatian identity in a conception shared and appreciated by all members of the social group.

The traditional intellectuals to be engaged by Schiavoni communities obviously did not have to come from across the Adriatic themselves (as was the case with Carpaccio in Venice, or the painter Giuseppe Puglia in Rome), just as the intellectuals of Slavic, or mixed, origin may have been recruited by Italian “organic intellectuals” (of the authors mentioned above, Polikarp Severitan by the della Rovere, Dukes of Urbino, or Franciscus Pescennius Niger by the Ippolito I d’Este, the Cardinal of Ferrara)¹⁹. If we follow Gramsci instead of Pavličić, a vision in which a national literature is defined by national borders, and by the (current) needs and values of the nation inside these borders, may be replaced by a vision of a much more dynamic, fluid, open cultural arena. There nation interacts with class and the native with the immigrant.

2. *Croatian Renaissance intellectuals and the national confraternity of St Jerome in Rome*

To demonstrate the new vista which opens to literary historians with a shift of perspective from the traditional *belles lettres* to general intellectual activity, I will briefly consider a group of intellectuals from the island of Korčula, active in 16th century Rome, and connected with an important Schiavoni institution.

In Croatian cultural history it is well known that a Schiavoni/Illyrian national confraternity functioned in Rome from the year 1453, at the Ripetta, on the left bank of the Tiber, near the Mausoleum of Augustus; the brotherhood provided social support to immigrants and pilgrims from the other side of the Adriatic, but also kept the Roman Schiavoni community «in constant touch with the homeland, providing access to very different angles for defining oneself as a Schiavone/Illyrian»²⁰. Almost a century after its official founding, in 1544, the confraternity statutes were confirmed, and forty-five years later, in 1589, its Church of Saint Jerome was rebuilt, while at the church a college of clerics was established as well. The institution functioned until 1901 when it was transformed into a college “for the Croatian people”.

In 1826, Matej (Matteo) Kapor (1789-1842), a historian from the Croatian island of Korčula, compiled a list of members of the Schiavoni confraternity of St Jerome in Rome connected with Kapor’s native island. More than 150 years

¹⁹ This is a conscious simplification and vulgarization of Gramsci’s much more nuanced theory; recruitment of traditional intellectuals by the organic cannot, of course, be reduced to commissioning art works or educational tractates. My intention here is primarily to sketch an alternative to the commonly held opinions of Croatian literary historians, not to develop a systematic explanation of cultural dynamics in Renaissance diasporas.

²⁰ Gudelj 2016, p. 20.

later, Ambroz Kapor published the list from the manuscript²¹. Reading it, a historian of Croatian literature will notice four familiar names.

First, during 1528-1564 various positions were held by Jakov Baničević (Giacomo Banisio) the Younger, president of the confraternity in 1555-1556 and 1559-1560. He was the nephew of the Habsburg and papal diplomat of the same name (1466-1532). The uncle is famous in Croatia as one of Erasmus of Rotterdam's correspondents, Dürer's model, and sponsor of several humanist publications. From Baničević the Elder the nephew inherited several church duties and benefices in Trento. Nothing is known, however, about the literary activity of Baničević the Younger.

Second, from 1560-1568 – overlapping partly with Baničević – the Schiavoni confraternity was administered by another nephew of Baničević the Elder. This nephew's name was Nikola Petrović (Nicholas Petreius or Petreo, 1486-1568)²². Petrović was not a priest; he is known as a Latin poet, translator from Greek, and a teacher. He has learned Greek in Apulia during the 1520s, then studied in Padova, spent most of the 1530s in Rome, and later taught in Dubrovnik for twelve years (1538-1550). In 1550 Petrović returned to Korčula, visiting occasionally Venice and Bari, before relocating, in 1559, to Rome, where he stayed until the end of his life (on leaving Korčula he prepared his will). In Perugia, there is an autograph manuscript with fifty of his poems, eleven orations and sermons, and five translations from Greek.

Kapor's list goes on to record Antun Rozanović (Antonio Rosaneo or Ružić), who served the confraternity in 1560-1564 (again, concurrently both with Baničević and Petrović; Petrović was Rozanović's immediate successor as president of the confraternity). Prior to Rozanović's Roman stay, we find him in 1524 at the University of Padova; afterwards, in 1571, the priest will organize the defence of his native city of Korčula against the Ottoman pirates prior to the battle of Lepanto, when some 150 islanders managed to repel 20 Ottoman galleys from the fortified city. To commemorate the heroic struggle, Rozanović composed a Latin history and two lyric poems²³.

The fourth distinguished member of the Schiavoni confraternity is Vinko Paletin (1508-1575), who joined in 1564, just when Rozanović's activity in Rome ended. From Rozanović's history of Korčula's defence we know that Rozanović and Paletin were distant relatives²⁴. Paletin was a Dominican

²¹ Kapor 1983.

²² Jurić 1993. Petrović himself refers to Baničević as his *avunculus* in a Latin letter from Rome, written in 1537: *quanto amore ac benevolentia Jacobum Banisium, avunculum meum, dum viveret, prosequeris*, quoted in Ivi, p. 172.

²³ Pantar 2012 has shown that at least two manuscripts of Rozanović's history differ significantly: the version dedicated to the Venetian doge Nicolò da Ponte (doge 1578-1585) omits passages on founding of the city of Korčula, on Hungarian customary law regarding property that is used in the inland Korčula, on miraculous intervention of the Virgin in the decisive battle.

²⁴ Rozanović writes: «Ex ea [Palletinorum familia] Pater Vincentius Theologiae Magister insignis ex ordine Praedicatorum fuit Archidiacono [Rosaneo] amicissimus, et jure sanguinis quarto gradu conjunctus», Pantar 2012, p. 56.

missionary in Latin America 1530-1541, later a student at Bologna and teacher at Vicenza. He also served as a diplomat of the king Philip II of Spain, as geographer and translator. Having moved to Rome in 1563, the Dominican from Korčula first held the post of a penitentiary of the St Peter's basilica. From 1564 he was also a member of the monastery of St Nicholas in Korčula. The monastery will sustain damage during the Turkish siege in 1571, the one that Rožanović will write about; as the abbot of the monastery, Paletin will help repair the damage.

The small group of educated men from the Dalmatian island of Korčula located in Rome during 1550-1565 functioned on several levels. As intellectuals (three of them priests: Baničević, Rožanović, Paletin), they were members of an international, cosmopolitan community (all of them studied in Italy; remember also Paletin's missionary work, Baničević's benefices in Trento). Three of them were authors of writings that their time would classify as literature (Petrović, Rožanović, Paletin). As islanders from Korčula, they shared local, regional, national, religious identity; as often happens in a small community, they shared familial ties as well (Baničević with Petrović; Rožanović with Paletin). Their distinguished duties in the confraternity, chronologically overlapping, suggest that they may have supported each other in the elections, perhaps having used the authority of the famous countryman and relative Jakov Baničević the Elder as a starting point for their network.

What we don't know, however, is whether the *intellectual* work of the four men from Korčula interacted with the Schiavoni emigrant community in Rome – whether they managed to contribute to the communal identity, or whether, in return, the needs and interests of the community affected the intellectuals' writings and ideas²⁵. In other words, we do not know whether the Schiavoni community in Rome at the time tried, as Gramsci and King put it, to “harness” the intellectuals. Neither do we know whether their interests might have *clashed* with those of the community – as was the case, for example, some twenty years later with Aleksandar Komulović from Split (1548-1608), member of the confraternity from 1576, expelled from it in 1579, but returning again in 1582 as the confraternity's president, no less, who requested (and obtained) from the confraternity financial support to print a catechism in Croatian; nevertheless, soon afterwards, in 1590, as the first archpriest of the Schiavoni community in Rome, Komulović quarreled with the confraternity again and was again expelled²⁶.

²⁵ Support of the national confraternity might have been financial, because it seems to have functioned as a savings bank as well; Nikola Brautić (Brauzzi, Brautius) from Dubrovnik (1566-1632), member of the confraternity from 1587 and its president in 1594, bishop of Sarsina 1602-1632, and a Latin poet, had deposited with the confraternity on interest, at least from 1612, a sum of 500 scudi; Körbler 1912, p. 69.

²⁶ Pignatti 2004 and Gudelj 2015, p. 316; Komulović's tumultuous relationship with the Schiavoni community has not been sufficiently recognized or explained in Croatian scholarship.

The scattered facts we possess about the intellectuals from Korčula in the national confraternity in Rome – Jakov Baničević the Elder as a prestigious figure to whom two of the confraternity's presidents were related; a certain political dimension of the former president Rozanović's memoir of the Korčula siege, provocative enough to be suppressed in a version dedicated to the Venetian doge; our inferences about later cultural interests of the confraternity itself, as visible from paintings in the chiesa di San Girolamo dei Croati²⁷ – it all suggests that a search for the 'Schiavoni' preoccupations of the four men from Korčula could enable us to understand their intellectual activity better. This understanding could lead us, also, to reconsider what we usually include or exclude in the national literary history, as opposed to the national art history.

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²⁷ For an interpretation of the paintings' programme, see Gudelj 2015.

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