

Crime in Taverns of Late Medieval Dubrovnik¹

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Medieval Dubrovnik as a large market on the eastern Adriatic coast attracted a great number of various kinds of people. Such a city, naturally, beside its market, had to have resources of amusement in order to entertain its visitors and the inhabitants of the city. Among the establishments which offered entertainment, taverns were one of the possible choices. The amusement in a tavern, of course, consisted not only of drinking, but it was also a combination of other affairs. As the tavern was gathering place, people there probably exchanged information, and indubitably, they would entertain themselves there or they were entertained. In this, liquid refreshments – in the case of Dubrovnik, that was wine – played a considerable role. If we know that even today much of ordinary daily life happens in different kinds of cafés, pubs, and taverns, then the question about tavern life in the past has to be even more interesting to us because in this way we could understand much better this aspect in our present time. Thus, it is not difficult to assume what made the tavern such an interesting place to visit, for even today such places are very frequently visited. Therefore, one can speak about one aspect of everyday life which we could name as tavern-life. As each aspect of life can have many "faces", so the taverns also have, but in this article I will try to discuss only one aspect of tavern-life – crime. When one thinks about criminality, one must be aware that crime has to be viewed as one of the basic social activities and that the patterns of crime can tell us important features of the cultural setting in which people lived.² On the other hand, examining crime in the past is not quite the same as it would be today, for one must take into account that only fragments of the

¹ The article is based on the records of criminal justice of the Republic of Dubrovnik from the 14th and 15th centuries. This material is still unpublished, and one can find it in the archival series *Lamenta de foris* (s. 52, vol. I and s. 53. vol. 1) and *Libri de maleficiis* (s. 50-1, vol. 1-10) in the Historical Archives in Dubrovnik.

² Eva Österberg and Dag Lindström, *Crime and Social Control in Medieval and Early Modern Swedish Towns*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Studia Historica Upsaliensia 152 (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1988), 36.

evidence have survived up to the present time and that our perception of crime is different from the one which existed in the Middle Ages.³

Of course, one cannot just simply jump into a topic like this one; thus, before the discussion about crime in the taverns of late medieval Dubrovnik, we will say something about this establishment in the period. Firstly, it is necessary to determine what the tavern actually was. The victualling houses in the English-speaking regions can be generally divided into three basic groups: the inn, the tavern, and the alehouse. This division is not the only one possible, for different regions in Europe had different names and types of such an establishment, but this one will suit our purpose very well. The inn was an establishment, mainly situated in towns, which offered housing and refreshments, and it was basically orientated towards higher-class visitors. The tavern, usually, offered only refreshments, but one could find some which also provided guests with accommodation. The basic distinguishing feature of the tavern was that wine was its primary refreshment. While the inn and the tavern were mostly orientated towards wealthier customers, the alehouse's visitors came predominantly from the lower strata. The alehouse offered different kinds of liquid beverages and sometimes even meals. In addition, there were some which could also provide visitors with accommodation, but generally they were just public drinking houses.⁴

A typical tavern in late medieval Dubrovnik, considering the offer and clientele, was more or less similar to the alehouse in England, except the fact that taverns in Dubrovnik offered, as regards beverages, only wine. This means that the guest in such an establishment could obtain refreshments (drink and probably also food), but accommodation was not one of the tavern services. It also seems that guests entertained themselves in several ways – playing cards and dice or simply talking over a jug of wine and joking among themselves.

According to the normative sources, it is clear that the government prescribed the working hours of taverns – they could be open only until the third bell (*tertia campana*).⁵ The time of the third bell depended on the season of year – in the summer it was around eleven pm, and during

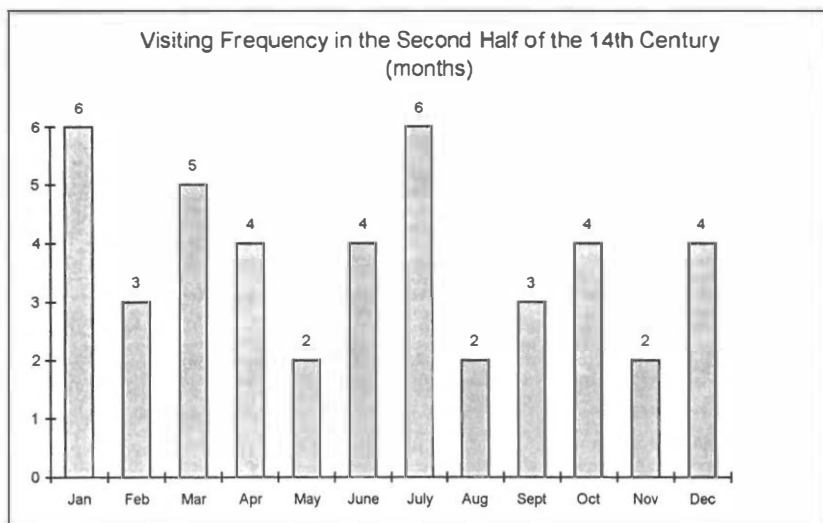
³ Bronisław Geremek, *The Margins of Society in Late Medieval Paris* (Cambridge and Paris: Cambridge University Press and Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1987), 10.

⁴ For a detailed analysis about differences and similarities between these victualling houses, see Peter Clark, *The English Alehouse – A Social History 1200-1850* (London and New York: Longman, 1983), *passim*.

⁵ *Statut grada Dubrovnika* [Statutes of the city of Dubrovnik] (Dubrovnik: Histořijski arhiv Dubrovnik, 1990), lib. 2, c. 4 and lib. 4, c. 26.

the winter months it was around ten o'clock in the evening.⁶ However, the evidence from the criminal justice records suggests that many tavern-keepers and many of the guests did not obey this limitation. Moreover, from the Major Council's regulation of 28 January 1335, it is clear that taverns in medieval Dubrovnik were open during the whole year – on working days, as well as during the feasts and holidays.⁷

Similarly, the evidence suggests that taverns (see Graphs 1 and 2) were visited regularly throughout the year. The difference between these two graphs can be easily explained by one factor; that is, the data for the fourteenth century is scarce. Thus, the sample for the analysis was smaller than the one for the first half of the fifteenth century. Therefore, even though both graphs can show only tendencies of the frequency of visiting, Graph 1 is slightly less reliable.⁸



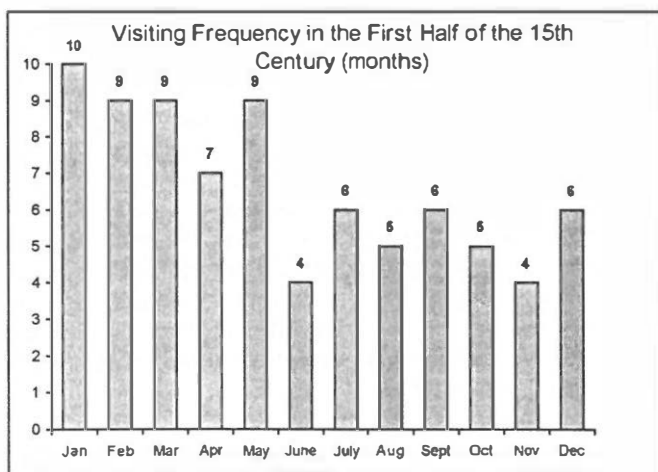
Graph 1⁹

⁶ Zdenka Janeković-Römer, "Post tertiam campanam: dubrovački noćni život u srednjem vijeku" [*Post tertiam campanam: night life in medieval Dubrovnik*], *Otium* 1 (1993): 6.

⁷ *Liber omnium reformationum*, Zbornik za istoriju, jezik i književnost srpskog naroda, s. 3, vol. 6, transcribed by A. Solovljev (Belgrade: Srpska kraljevska akademija nauka i umetnosti, 1936), p. X, c. 3.

⁸ The graphs are not based on data of the entire period but on the samples. Thus, the Graph 1 is based on two sample periods, 1349-50 and 1372-74, while Graphs 2 and 3 are based on the samples from 1402-14, 1422-29, and 1435-40.

⁹ The numbers in Graphs 1, 2, and 3 stand for the number of noted cases which took place in the taverns.

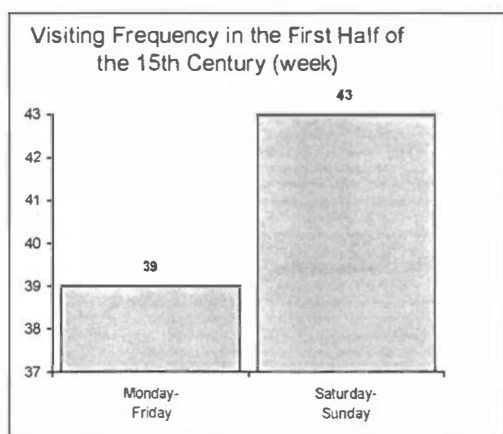


Graph 2

As is obvious from the graphs, the frequency is especially high in the harshest winter month (generally, that is, January). This confirms the hypothesis about the correspondence between medieval man's rhythm of life and nature's rhythm. The unexpectedly high visiting frequency during the months designated for Lent (that is, February, March or April) is misleading because each graph combines fifty years of information, a combination which minimises the real differences. This can be explained because the Lenten months shift from year to year according to the rolling date of Easter which can be anywhere between 22 March and 25 April. If we know this, we can normally expect more frequent visiting in the period just before or just after Lent. This assumption is supported by the fact that, for example, in the year 1437 Easter was on the 31st of March, and that year there were no criminal charges regarding taverns between February 10 and March 31. Later in the year, the relation between the rhythm of labour and the rhythm of nature is also confirmed by increased visits to taverns in July. We cannot explain this only by temperature and climate changes, but I believe that the answer is related to the rhythm of labour throughout the year. Even though the city lived from trade and seamanship, the majority of the population was more or less associated with agricultural production; that is (in the case of Dubrovnik), they owned vineyards or worked in them. Most of the work in a vineyard had to be finished by the end of June, after which the grapes were left to

mature.¹⁰ Thus, after June everyone had more free time than before, until the vintage in the second half of August. Therefore, in August they did not have the time to visit taverns, so the numbers decrease. With the production of the young wine and the must in September and October, the visiting frequency increases, but again in November, it decreases probably because everyone had to work in the field and prepare the land and the livestock for winter. In December, one can notice another rise in the visiting frequency. However, the visiting rate was not so high as in January, probably because of the fast before Christmas.

The following graph illustrates the pattern of daily visits to taverns. When considering working days, the visiting frequency also shows us a regular connection between going to a tavern (leisure) and the rhythm of labour (work). As Graph 5 shows, the frequency on Saturdays and Sundays was higher than during the rest of the week.



Graph 3

Persons who were attracted to taverns came from different backgrounds and different social strata. Thus, one could find different kinds of petty artisans, such as tanners, shoemakers, butchers, and stonemasons. With them in the taverns were sailors and fishermen as well as hired labourers and other people whose profession is not known to us, for in the criminal records they are noted only by their names. Taverns were also visited by state officials such as the commune couriers, soldiers, and wine officials, who came there in the line of duty – or

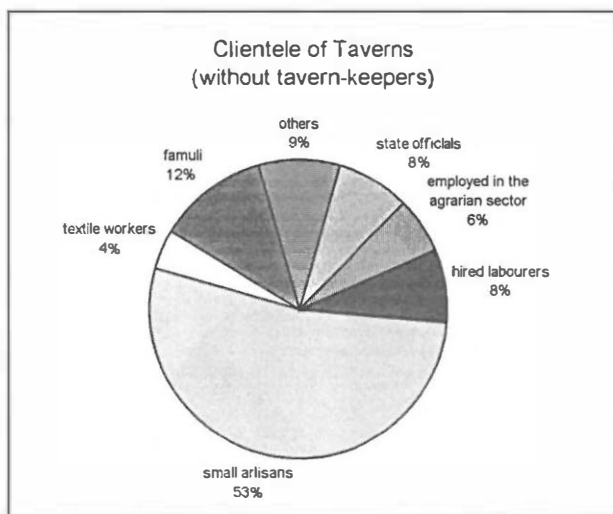
¹⁰ Lučić, *Obrti i usluge u Dubrovniku do početka 14. stoljeća* [Crafts and services in Dubrovnik until the beginning of the fourteenth century] (Zagreb: Radovi Instituta za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskog fakulteta u Zagrebu, 1979), 110.

sometimes just to have a jug of wine. It is interesting to note that tavern-keepers also went as guests to other taverns in which they did not work.¹¹ Another interesting fact is that among those visitors there were no merchants.

As is clear from the following graph, the predominant visitors in taverns were small craftsmen. A similar pattern can also be found in Central Europe.¹² Other groups are rather poorly represented (altogether less than 50%), and only the group of indentured servants (*famuli*) stands out with more than 10%, but it is possible that they visited taverns in the line of their duty, that is, to buy wine for their masters. The next group, the textile workers, appeared in Dubrovnik in the first half of the fifteenth century with the business of Petar Pantella. It is possible that in the later periods, they were much stronger represented as tavern visitors, but in this period there probably were not too many of them in the city at all. Thus, they occupied only 4% of all visitors. Hired labourers were predominantly longshoremen, and probably, they spent their time in taverns waiting for someone to hire them for their services. As has been mentioned, all the citizens and inhabitants of Dubrovnik were somehow involved in agrarian production, but there were a number of people whose sole occupation was work in the fields. In Graph 4 the people employed only in the agricultural sector were mainly gardeners (*ortarii*) and field labourers (*zugolatores*). The group "others" is the most diverse one; here one can find different people mentioned only by their name, foreigners, and a very small number of wealthy artisans such as goldsmiths.

¹¹ E.g. *LM*, s. 50-1, vol. 10, fol. 117'; *LF*, s. 53, vol. 1, fol. 94'.

¹² See Gertrud Blaschitz, "Lehrhafte Literatur als Quelle für mittelalterliche Realienkunde: 'Der Jüngling' des Konrad von Haslau und der 'Magezoge'," *Medium Aevum Quotidianum* 28 (1994): 33.



Graph 4

It is not surprising that we cannot find here any merchants or patricians, for the common opinion existed that visiting the tavern was quite below their social rank. Moreover, if some merchants visited taverns, they certainly avoided fights and situations of conflict because such things were bad for their business. Many examples from the rest of Europe indicate a similar attitude. Thus, even if noblemen sometimes went to taverns, they did it in order to escape their ordinary way of life.¹³ It appears that the same attitude existed in late medieval Dubrovnik, for one example directly points to this. The witness of one tavern fight, among others, was a patrician Ser Johannes Marini de Zrieua, but next to his name it was written *qui transibat per viam*, probably in order to point out that he was not part of that crowd which visited taverns.¹⁴ However, exceptions occurred. For example, Ser Michael de Martinusso, who owned a tavern in the city, often visited his own tavern and drank there. Moreover, occasionally he was not only a witness but also a participant in tavern fights and quarrels.¹⁵

Similarly, one cannot note many females in the taverns. As is clear from Graph 5, they were a fairly insignificant part of tavern life. Generally, they visited taverns in the company of their husbands¹⁶ or just

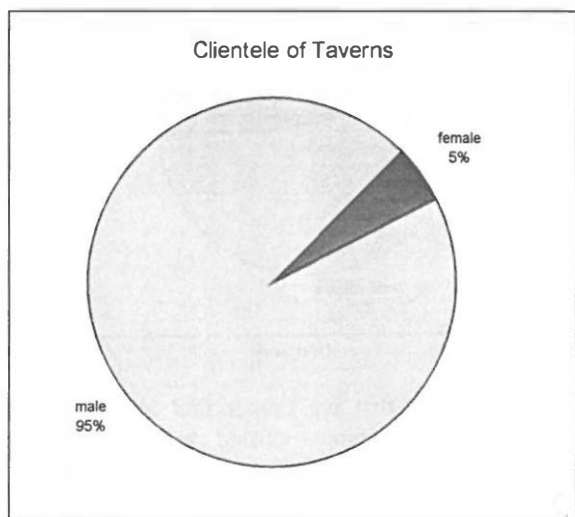
¹³ Ibid., 34.

¹⁴ *LM*, s. 50-1, vol. 3, fol. 128.

¹⁵ E.g. *LM*, s. 50-1, vol. 2, fol. 153 and 153'.

¹⁶ E.g. *LM*, s. 50-1, vol. 10, fol. 117'.

to purchase wine, after which they would have returned to their homes.¹⁷ It is interesting that even prostitutes are not noted as regular guests of taverns in medieval Dubrovnik although it is known that in this period they existed in the city and occupied one district called Castelletto where they ran a brothel called *castelletum*.¹⁸



Graph 5¹⁹

The possible reason why women were such rare guests in taverns is that tavern life was very often quite violent and thus dangerous for women. Men in taverns, while they drank, used to joke among themselves, often at the expense of women.²⁰ An additional explanation might be the general attitude towards women's role in family and society, which still exists today in some parts of Mediterranean – the tavern was a public place, and women were supposed to be a part of the domestic sphere. This perfectly corresponds with the fact that even the female tavern-keepers, who had to spend much time in taverns because of their profession, did not have the best reputation.²¹

¹⁷ E.g. *LM*, s. 50-1, vol. 7, fol. 175^v.

¹⁸ Dinić-Knežević, *Položaj žene u Dubrovniku u XII i XIV veku* [The position of woman in Dubrovnik in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries], *Odeljenje istorijskih nauka 2* (Belgrade: Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti, 1974), 141.

¹⁹ As the absolute numbers of this opposition are males=165, females=9, this graph can only reflect tendencies in this fluctuation.

²⁰ Janeković-Römer, *Post tertiam campanam*, 8.

²¹ Lučić, *Obrti i usluge*, 123.

When considering the common image of tavern, one must admit that, unfortunately, the Dubrovnik Archives did not preserve any sources from which one could read what image of the tavern existed in the minds of the inhabitants of late medieval Dubrovnik. Therefore, we will use the comparative method. Thus, in German medieval literature one can find direct and explicit assessments of taverns. According to different poets and writers, taverns were places where people drank too much alcohol and gambled, where bad manners and dishonesty ruled – and places which were visited only by bad people and "where the devil often stays long, for there he can find many suitable customers."²²

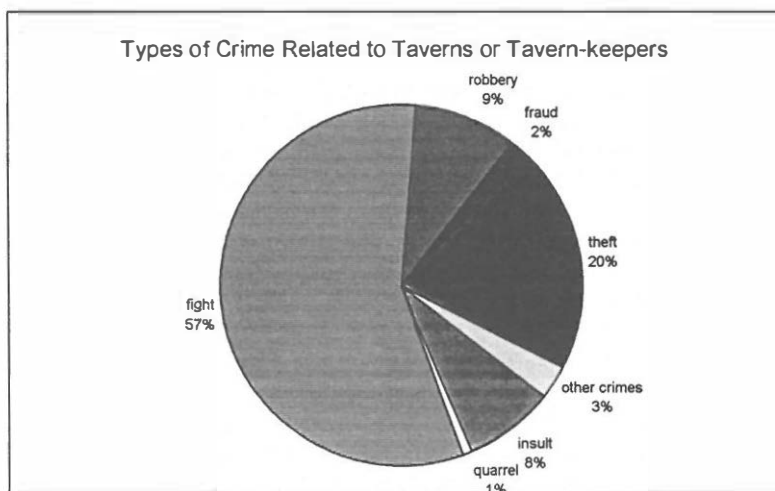
If such a negative image also existed in Dubrovnik, then we should not be surprised by the fact that women were not generally involved in tavern life. By the same token, it seems that all the others who did visit taverns frequently felt themselves to be in a pleasant ambience. This does not mean that all of the customers were comfortable because they were bad or dishonest persons (though some of them obviously were) but probably because of the social role of the tavern – it was a general gathering place.

If we assume that people in taverns, while they gambled and joked, often drank too much, it is not difficult to imagine what would be the normal result. As Graph 6 shows, a brawl or fight was the most common "answer" to any kind of unpleasant "question" or remark. A similar pattern – that is, that different types of assaults were the most common crime – can be found in the rest of Europe.²³ As is clear from the sources, most of the fights were not premeditated acts but simply responses caused by bad temper or intoxication. Fights could break out because of unpaid bills for the wine, or because the tavern-keeper did not want to give wine on credit, or sometimes because of an insult, or for any other reason which a guest or a tavern-keeper considered inappropriate and offensive. However, one must admit that some of those actions were obviously planned, such as the case of 1350 when Peter from Korèula (*Petrus de Cruçola*) immediately attacked a tavern-keeper Slavoe after entering the tavern.²⁴

²² Blaschitz, "Lehrhafte Literatur", 33.

²³ See the graph in Österberg and Lindström, *Crime and Social Control*, 47.

²⁴ *LM*, s. 50-1, vol. 10, fol. 117.



Graph 6²⁵

Thefts and robberies obviously are organised acts, and the tavern was an ideal place for such crimes, for in the crowd which usually gathered in taverns, thieves could operate almost without any risk of being caught. Therefore, in the criminal records one can find many cases where the perpetrator (thief) is unknown.²⁶ Similarly, fraud was also probably a planned crime, but as its percentage is not high, one can assume that either the perpetrators were usually well organised (and, thus, they were rarely caught) or that the "fear" of the punishment was the reason why there are not so many cases of deceit. The group of insults is probably the most interesting one, for one can find there many interesting everyday offences, such as *tua mater est meretrix et magica*²⁷ or *tu es bastardus*²⁸ or *filius meretricis*.²⁹ These forms of the personal insult follow the pattern which can be found everywhere in Europe.³⁰ It is interesting to note that pulling someone's beard was considered an

²⁵ The absolute numbers for Graphs 6, 7, 8, and 9 are fraud=8 (males 6, females 2), fight=166 (males 141, females 16, unknown 9), robbery=28 (males 23, females 2, unknown 3), theft=69 (males 26, females 8, unknown 35), insult=23 (males 19, females 4), quarrel=4 (males 3, females 1), and other crimes=9 (males 8, females 1). Even though it is clear the sample is not big enough to be reliable for an accurate statistical analysis, the graphs still show certain tendencies.

²⁶ E.g. *LF*, s. 52, vol. 1, fol. 88; *LM*, s. 50-1, vol. 3, fol. 134'; *LM*, s. 50-1, vol. 5, fol. 114.

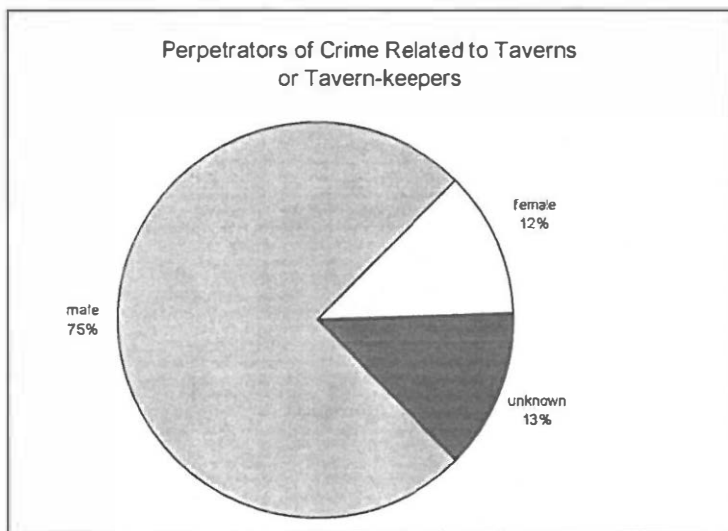
²⁷ Your mother is a whore and witch: *LM*, s. 50-1, vol. 4, fol. 210.

²⁸ *LM*, s. 50-1, vol. 6, fol. 312.

²⁹ [You are] a son of a whore. *LM*, s. 50-1, vol. 8, fol. 287'.

³⁰ Österberg and Lindström, *Crime and Social Control*, 107.

especially rude insult.³¹ In the group of "other crimes," one can come across different cases such as disturbances,³² the devastation of someone's property,³³ the selling of foreign wine,³⁴ and I have found even one homicide.³⁵



Graph 7

The perpetrators of those crimes which took place in a tavern or which were related to tavern-keepers, as is clear from Graph 7, were predominantly males. This should not surprise us if we bear in mind that the most frequent visitors of taverns were men. The group of unknown perpetrators was mostly related to the crime of stealing (that is, theft and pickpocketing).³⁶ Moreover, if we consider that males were the predominant tavern customers, we can assume that this group of unknown perpetrators probably consisted mostly of male persons.

Among males the most common crime, as could be expected, was fighting and brawling (see Graph 8). It is quite normal that men were more prone to tavern fights, for a fight is the most usual response to lack of argument, and by the same token, it was a way to show off their

³¹ E.g. *LM*, s. 50-1, vol. 7, fol. 262.

³² E.g. *LM*, s. 50-1, vol. 8, fol. 225.

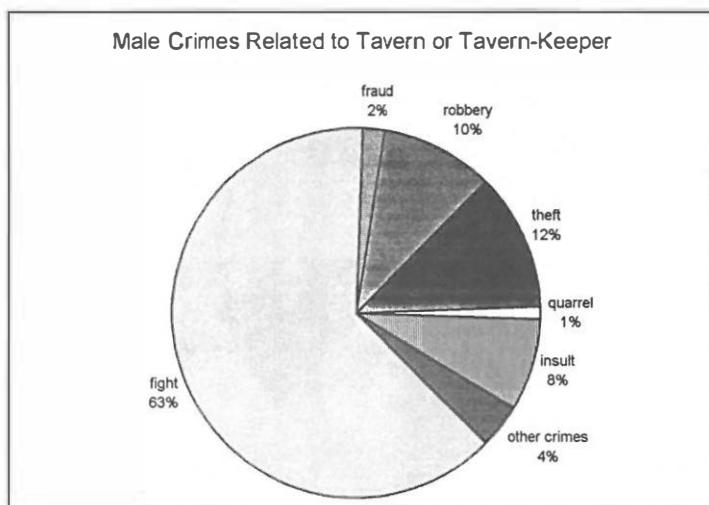
³³ E.g. *LM*, s. 50-1, vol. 7, fol. 165.

³⁴ E.g. *LM*, s. 50-1, vol. 5, fol. 316.

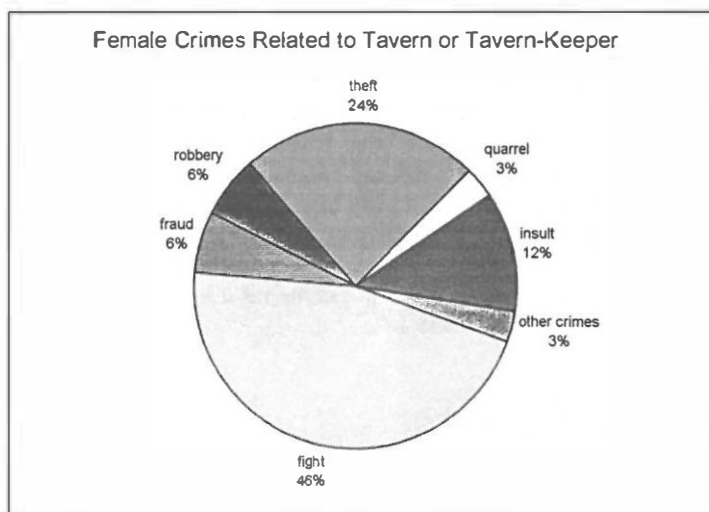
³⁵ *LM*, s. 50-1, vol. 7, fol. 259'.

³⁶ Thefts are represented by 67.6%, among all crimes committed by unknown persons.

masculinity. The second most frequent crime by males was theft, something which, again, should not be surprising if we realise that the tavern was a public place with a high fluctuation of all kinds of people. Also, it is significant that purely verbal quarrels did not so much occur here, possibly because the men thought that something other than words would be a better argument.



Graph 8



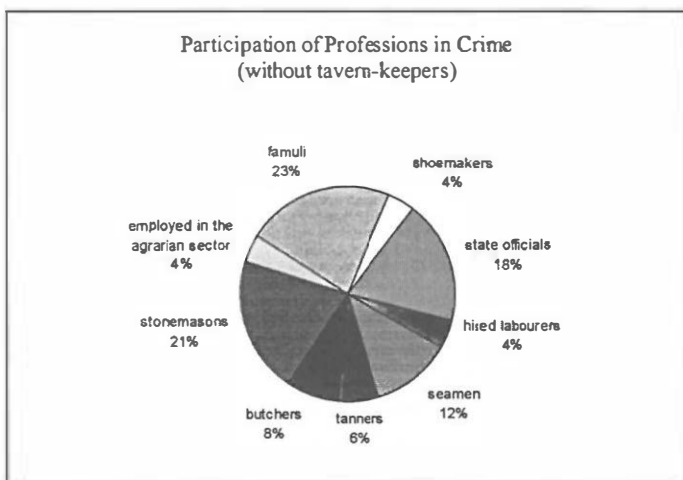
Graph 9

On the other hand, if we look at Graph 9, we will see that the predominant female crimes, other than fights, were thefts and verbal insults. This corresponds to the trends in the rest of Europe in the period. It is interesting to note that among "female crimes", robbery is represented by 6%, which is quite a high percentage if we consider the fact that such a crime often included a violent assault against the victim. However, one must recall that women in general participated much less in crime than men.

As we are approaching the end of this section, we should say something about the distribution of crimes in the tavern among the professions. Tavern-keepers are excluded from Graph 10, for they were obviously the most prone to tavern crime because they had to be present there.³⁷ However, this does not mean that tavern-keepers were just passive witnesses or victims of the situation. Quite the contrary, they were very often the main promoters and perpetrators of tavern fights. For example, in January 1374 a tavern-keeper Sriedan (*Sriedan tabernarius domine Philippe*) accused his guest Ostoja of having beaten him in the tavern while Sriedan was selling wine. Then the witness, another tavern-keeper, Miloslav (*Miloslauus tabernarius*), testified that Sriedan himself started the quarrel and the fight because he had not wanted to accept the money which Ostoja had offered him for the broken jug.³⁸ As Graph 11 shows, it appears that tavern-keepers were in fact the main trouble makers.

³⁷ The absolute numbers for Graph 10 and 11 are butchers=4, shoemakers=2, stonemasons=10, *famuli*=11, state officials=9, hired labourers=2, seamen=6, employed in the agrarian sector=2, tanners=3, tavern-keepers=28, persons recorded only by their name=15. Thus, for this graph one can say the same as for the previous – it can only reflect a tendency.

³⁸ *Lamenta de foris*, s. 53, vol. 1, fol. 258.



Graph 10



Graph 11

By the same token, persons recorded in the sources only by their names are also excluded from both graphs, for a determination of their occupations, unfortunately, is impossible. It is clear from Graph 10 that the most numerous group is that of indentured servants (*famuli*). Since we know that in the rest of Europe, servants were one of the most frequently convicted social groups, then this result fits perfectly into this pattern.³⁹ The next group, in terms of numbers, are stonemasons (*petrarii, camenarii, lapicidae*), and what is interesting in the third place are state

³⁹ Österberg and Lindström, *Crime and Social Control*, 138.

officials. This proves that government representatives did not visit taverns only in the line of duty but also in order to have a drink, which occasionally ended in a fight or quarrel that came before the court of justice. The group which comes next are seamen, and it should not be surprising that they are represented by more than 10%, for after long voyages they were usually looking for fun which, again, sometimes ended in trouble. The other groups of small artisans, except the stonemasons, are represented by relatively low percentages. This can lead us to the assumption that, even though small artisans were the predominant tavern customers, only the stonemasons among them could be "blamed" for especially violent behaviour in the tavern.

Finally, we can draw several conclusions. First, the classification of crimes committed in taverns shows a significant prevalence of fights. This result perfectly reflects the functioning of medieval man, who was probably more violent (or maybe one should say more free) than we are today. Moreover, this result corresponds with results from other regions of Europe where various types of assaults were also the predominant crime. In addition, the prevalence of males as tavern customers fits into this scheme of crimes, for one could expect that intoxicated men occasionally expressed their masculinity in a violent way. This might also be due to the fact that women rarely visited taverns. However, this "scarcity" of females in taverns was more affected by the common opinion about women's role in the society – her place should be more in the domestic sphere than in the public. The comparison between male and female crimes in the tavern indicated that females tended more than males to crimes (excluding fights) such as theft and verbal insult, which did not involve physical violence. However, as males were the predominant tavern guests, the absolute number of offenders even in these crimes was higher on the male side. The last issue which was discussed in this section – the distribution of crime among different professions – showed that, even though the largest number of tavern visitors were small artisans, most of them (except the stonemasons) were usually not guilty of the fights and other crimes which took place in the tavern, rather they were spectators or even victims of the situation.

MEDIUM AEVUM
QUOTIDIANUM

38

KREMS 1998

HERAUSGEGEBEN
VON GERHARD JARITZ

GEDRUCKT MIT UNTERSTÜTZUNG DER KULTURABTEILUNG
DES AMTES DER NIEDERÖSTERREICHISCHEN LANDESREGIERUNG

Titelgraphik: Stephan J. Tramèr

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Vorwort

Medium Aevum Quotidianum legt mit diesem Heft 38 die erste Veröffentlichung des Jahrgangs 1998 vor. Der Band widmet sich im besonderen den Statements zu einem Round-Table-Gespräch "History of Daily Life: The Variety of Approaches", welches im Juli 1997 am *International Medieval Congress* in Leeds mit reger Publikumsbeteiligung stattgefunden hat. Dabei zeigte sich wieder, daß einerseits die interdisziplinäre Analyse unterschiedlichsten Quellenmaterials im jeweiligen Kontext, andererseits die vermehrte Heranziehung bildlicher Überlieferung im Zentrum der Diskussion stehen. Aspekte der digitalen Bildverarbeitung spielen dabei eine relevante Rolle sowohl in bezug auf Bilddokumentation als auch hinsichtlich der Analysen. Zwei Einzelstudien behandeln Wirtshauskriminalität im spätmittelalterlichen Ragusa, sowie die Ausgestaltung von Kaufmanns- und Handwerkerfesten im spätmittelalterlichen Baltikum.

Heft 39 wird bereits anfangs Juli 1998 erscheinen und sich vorrangig mit verschiedenen Möglichkeiten der Bildanalyse in der Geschichte des Alltags auseinandersetzen. Die einzelnen Beiträge werden den nord- und zentraleuropäischen Raum behandeln und konzentriert von Beispielen mittelalterlicher Wandmalerei ausgehen.

Unser Heft 40 wird – mit Schwerpunkt auf dem ungarischen Raum – vor allem der mittelalterlichen Ernährung gewidmet sein und soll neue interdisziplinäre Forschungsansätze vorstellen; dabei werden besonders die Möglichkeiten einer Verbindung der Analyse schriftlicher Quellen und archäologischen Materials im Zentrum der Argumentation stehen.

Heft 41 wird sich wiederum in starkem Maße mit jenen Ergebnissen auseinandersetzen, welche am *International Medieval Congress*, Leeds 1998, in dessen alltagsgeschichtlichen Sektionen zur Vorstellung gelangen werden. Damit soll neuerlich vermittelt werden, auf welcher intensiven Weise sich die Anwendung moderner Methoden und die Verwirklichung neuer Ansätze in aktuellen Studien zu Alltag und materieller Kultur des Mittelalters – im internationalen Rahmen – verfolgen läßt.

Medium Aevum Quotidianum dankt seinen Mitgliedern und Freunden für das anhaltende bzw. steigende Interesse an den Anliegen und an der Arbeit der Gesellschaft.

Gerhard Jaritz, Herausgeber

History of Daily Life: The Variety of Approaches

At the *International Medieval Congress*, Leeds 1997, a round table discussion was organised as part of the strand "History of Daily Life" that dealt with the variety of possible approaches towards this, still rather young field of Medieval Studies. The international panel consisted of Axel Bolvig (Copenhagen), Gerhard Jaritz (Krems), Françoise Piponnier (Paris), Norbert Schnitzler (Chemnitz), and Melitta Weiss Adamson (London, Ontario).

As a kind of basis for the discussion, it was emphasised that the history of medieval everyday life is a field of research dependent on interdisciplinary approaches. Written and pictorial sources, as well as archeological evidence play important roles for any analysis. The different contexts of information and their interpretation determine our (re)construction of everyday life in the Middle Ages decisively. The aim of the round table was to discuss some of the methods and approaches which are relevant for today's research. It should also show that "History of Daily Life", generally, has to be seen as an indispensable field of Medieval Studies that also offers relevant methodological aspects and results for many other historical disciplines.

We are happy to be able to publish the modified short statements of the panelists in this volume of *Medium Aevum Quotidianum*. The originally English statements of Françoise Piponnier and Gerhard Jaritz were translated by their authors into French and German respectively.