SOCIAL AND TERRITORIAL ENDOGAMY IN THE RAGUSAN REPUBLIC: MATRIMONIAL DISPENSES DURING THE PONTIFICATES OF PAUL II AND SIXTUS IV (1464–1484)

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The very first observations on the East Central European records in the registers of the Apostolic Penitentiary during the pontificates of Paul II (1464–1471) and Sixtus IV (1471–1484)[1] have put to the foreground the remarkably high percentage of *de matrimonialibus* cases in the towns of the eastern Adriatic coast, notably the diocese of Dubrovnik (Ragusa). A more precise look at the data has revealed that the striking majority of 31% of the East Central European matrimonial cases originate from this diocese. Moreover, within the total number of cases coming from the Ragusan diocese to the Penitentiary, matrimonial cases comprise as much as 63%.

Unfortunately, there is no scholarship yet on the matter of the recurrent appearance of supplications for matrimonial dispenses coming from certain dioceses or certain regions of Europe.[2] In general, the majority of supplications originated from today's Italy, France, Germany, and Spain; however, those re-

[1] Cases from these two pontificates are registered in volumes 12 to 33; the part of volume 13 belonging to the last year of pontificate of Pius II was not included in the analysis.

[2] The existing studies concerning the matrimonial cases from the Penitentiary registers deal with other sets of questions; see Filippo Tamburini, "Le dispense matrimoniali come fonte storica nei documenti della Penitenzieria Apostolica (sec. XIII–XVI)", in *Le modèle familiar européen: Normes, déviances, contrôle du pouvoir*, Collection de l'École française de Rome 90 (Rome: École française de Rome, 1986), 9-30; David d'Avray, "Marriage Symbolism and the Papal Penitentiary", *Review of the British Academy, The National Academy for the Humanities and Social Sciences* 7 (2003), 43-44. The most recent scholarship on Ragusan matrimonial policy in a socio-political context, including a bibliography, is to be found in David B. Rheubottom, "Genealogical Skewing and Political Support: Patrician Politics in Fifteenth-century Ragusa (Dubrovnik)", *Continuity and Change* 9 (1994), 369-390 (hereafter Rheubottom, "Genealogical Skewing"); idem, *Age, Marriage, and Politics in Fifteenth-Century Ragusa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) (hereafter Rheubottom, *Age, Marriage, and Politics*); Zdenka Janeković-Roemer, *Okvir slobode: Dubrovačka vlastela između srednjovjekovlja i humanizma* [The framework of freedom: Ragusan nobility between the Middle Ages and humanism] (Zagreb: Zavod za povijesne znanosti Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti (hereafter HAZU), 1999), 69-73 and *passim* (hereafter Janeković-Roemer, *Okvir slobode*).

gions are best represented in general, since they formed the core of the Western Christianity world at the time. Nevertheless, the number of matrimonial cases in their overall statistics is not excessive. Dalmatia, however, and also, for example, Irieland show the predominance of supplications related to obstacles in contracting a marriage.

Without an attempt to address the question of the geographical distribution of *de matrimonialibus* cases in general, I will try to find an explanation for the phenomenon of the abundant matrimonial supplications from Dubrovnik, as far as the local history context will allow. At this point already, I have to express my doubts that the results will be applicable to other regions, which show a similar quantitative predominance of matrimonial cases.

The answer valid for the Ragusan case should, in my opinion, be sought in the particularities of a rigid matrimonial policy and practice, as well as in the complex levels of endogamy existing in the Ragusan city-state. Therefore, it is necessary to compare the matrimonial cases from the Penitentiary records with the secular regulations existing in the Dalmatian cities and in Dubrovnik, and, furthermore, to put them into their socio-political context.[3] However, the direction of the research should not lead to further knowledge on the relations between the Church of Dubrovnik and the Holy Penitentiary. Rather, it should lead to conclusions drawn from the data recorded in the Penitentiary registers as far as they reflect the social processes in the late medieval and early modern city. Before analysing the social structures, the foreign policy, and the marital practices in Dubrovnik and the Dalmatian cities, I will briefly point out the main quantitative tendencies related to the matrimonial issues in the region concerned.[4]

Among all the dioceses of the Eastern Central Europe, Dubrovnik appears to be the best represented, with 175 out of altogether 2010 East Central European cases, which amounts to 9%. The case of the second-ranked Church of Zagreb needs a special note: the archdiocese of Zagreb had jurisdiction over the Croatian territory politically subject to the Hungarian king, and, therefore, was in many aspects more similar to the other Hungarian dioceses. As the second-most represented diocese of all of Eastern Central Europe, with 148 cases or 7%, it features only four matrimonial cases, while the great majority of 60% were cases belonging to the *de declaratoriis* and *de diversis formis* categories. The

[3] After the agreement of 1420 between Ladislaus of Naples, pretender to the Hungarian throne, and the Republic of Venice, the eastern Adriatic coast was divided into two political entities. Istria and the Dalmatian cities (including the towns in Boka Kotorska Bay and subsequently the north Albanian coastal cities) were subject to the Republic of Venice, whereas Dubrovnik was finally and officially recognized as an independent city-state. In this context, under 'Dalmatian cities' I mean the cities subject to Venetian rule, Dubrovnik obviously excluded.

[4] The following calculations are only approximate, since the database is still under construction. For a more detailed statistical overview concerning East Central Europe, see the article by Piroska Nagy and Kirsi Salonen in this volume.

best represented Dalmatian dioceses are: Kotor with 43 cases, Korčula and Bar with 36 each, Hvar 29, and Zadar 25 cases.

The percentage of dioceses within the total of the matrimonial cases is shown in Table 1.[5] Of the 365 total matrimonial cases in East Central Europe, as many as 112 cases originated from the Ragusan diocese, which amounts to 31%. As mentioned, the diocese of Zagreb, in general the second-ranked diocese, had only four matrimonial cases (1%). The Dalmatian dioceses generally led in the number of matrimonial cases: Korčula with 31 (8%) and Kotor with 21 (6%), Hvar with 18 (5%), Bar with 14 (4%); Split, Trogir, Zadar, Rab with 6 to 8 cases (2% each). Poreč, located in the Venetian part of Istria, had 3%.

Table 1. Percentage of dioceses within the total of Eastern Central European matrimonial cases

Table 2 shows the percentage of different types of cases within the diocese of Dubrovnik: out of the 175 Ragusan cases, 112 (63%) concerned matrimonial issues; 29 (16%) belonged to the group *de diversis formis*, and 10 (6%) to the related *de declaratoriis* group, which amounts to 22% of the cases dealing with violent acts; 16 cases (8%) concern ecclesiastical promotions, 3 (2%) illegitimacy, and 6 (4%) the granting of confession letters (*de perpetuis*); and only one case was about giving a special licence for absolving a sentence of excommunication.

[5] Only those dioceses that have more than ten matrimonial cases are included in the table.

Table 2. Percentage of different types of cases within the diocese of Dubrovnik

As regards the percentage of matrimonial cases among all entries for each of the East Central European dioceses (Table 3), one has to observe the discrepancy between the Eastern Adriatic dioceses and the continental ones (Hungarian and Polish); whereas in the former group the matrimonial cases are represented by 40–80%, in the latter they remain around 10%. The territory under jurisdiction of the Ragusan Church is the second best represented: out of the total of 175 cases originating from Dubrovnik, 112 or 63% are matrimonial cases. Korčula is leading with 84% and Hvar occupies the third place with 62%.[6]

[6] The table includes all the dioceses that have more than six matrimonial cases.

Table 3. Percentage of matrimonial cases
among the total of cases
within Eastern Central European dioceses

Similar results resulted from Jadranka Neralić's analysis of supplications for matrimonial dispensation from sources other than the Penitentiary registers (Vatican, Lateran, and Avignon registers) for the period 1320–1480.[7] 33.5 petitions or 45% came from the Ragusan diocese.[8] As far as the social status of petitioners is concerned, among the 26 documents involving noblemen, 19 or 73% were Ragusan cases.[9]

Matrimonial issues: canon law and secular authorities in Dalmatian cities

The differences that appear between the Dalmatian cities and the rest of the Eastern Central European dioceses, such as Zagreb, Eger, Alba Iulia, Wroc-

[7] Jadranka Neralić, "'Ut matrimonium libere et licite contrahere possint:' Papal 14th- and 15th-century Matrimonial Dispensations", in *Hereditas rerum croaticarum*, ed. Alexander Buczynski (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2003), 38-43.

[8] Ibidem, 39. There are 32 cases involving spouses who were both Ragusan, and three cases involving a combination of spouses from Dubrovnik and Kotor.

[9] Ibidem, 41. The supplicants to the Holy Penitentiary, even though they rarely stressed their belonging to a noble family by using the title *nobilis*, were, at least in the majority, members of the nobility who can be identified in the genealogical tables compiled by Irmgard Mahnken, *Dubrovački patricijat u XIV veku* [Ragusan nobility in the fourteenth century], Izdanja Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti (hereafter SANU), Odelenje društvenih nauka, 36 (Belgrade: SANU, 1960) (hereafter Mahnken, *Dubrovački patricijat*).

ław, Poznań, or Cracow, can perhaps be explained by the distinctive historical development of the Dalmatian towns as city communes. This type of social and political structure implied a strict demarcation between *maiores* and *minores*, that is, patricians and commoners. In Dalmatia, this separation was underlined by the origin of the members of these social groups: the patricians were mostly of Roman origin, while the majority of commoners constituted the Slavic population. It is a commonplace in the social history of the communes that the upper strata were not officially allowed to mix with the commoners, but the Church did not recognize any similar regulation.

Among the impediments to marriage as set by canon law, the most often violated was the familial relationship (consanguinity and affinity), which was considered an impediment to the fourth grade after the reforms of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215.[10] However, as the Penitentiary records witness, it was difficult to respect these regulations because they limited the possibilities in the choice of a partner which were further limited by other, secular, regulations. canon law allowed marriages among members of different social groups but from the lay point of view, marriage was primarily an economic and political contract, and therefore another set of rules was established for the preservation of the existing social structures. Thus, despite the differences between the lay and the ecclesiastical concept of marriage caused by different priorities, a compromise of those two concepts was necessary. From the fourteenth century onwards, the laity accepted the ceremony of ecclesiastical marriage and its rules, while the church in certain cases allowed divorce and endogamy.[11]

Since all the issues concerning marriage were under the jurisdiction of canon law, one usually does not find regulations on marriage in the city statutes or any other form of secular law except those concerning dowry and inheritance, that is, the most direct economic aspects of marriage. Nevertheless, in addition to the impediments for marriage according to canon law, the secular authorities also set certain regulations for marriages of noblemen, in other words, to promote class endogamy. However, those were usually neither very clear nor strict, and they appear in Dalmatian and Venetian statutes as late as in the sixteenth century.

From the end of the thirteenth century, all questions related to contracting a marriage in Dalmatia were, in general, solved by the ecclesiastical court. This

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[10] For a more detailed analysis of marriage impediments as set by canon law, and their remedy through the institution of the Holy Penitentiary, see Ludwig Schmugge, Patrick Hersperger and Béatrice Wiggenhauser, *Die Supplikenregister der päpstlichen Pönitentiarie aus der Zeit Pius' II. (1458–1464)*, Bibliothek des Deutschen Historischen Instituts in Rom 84 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1996), 68-74; Kirsi Salonen, *The Penitentiary as a Well of Grace in the Late Middle Ages: The Example of the Province of Uppsala 1448–1527*, Suomalaisen Tiedeakatemian Toimituksia – Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae 313 (Saarijärvi: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2001), 103-119.

[11] Zdenka Janeković-Roemer, *Rod i grad: Dubrovačka obitelj od XIII do XV stoljeća* [Family and the City: Ragusan family from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century] (Dubrovnik: HAZU u Zagrebu, 1994), 60 (hereafter Janeković-Roemer, *Rod i grad*).

is evident in the statute regulations; for instance, the Statute of Split (codified in 1312), although the regulation itself might imply the existence of such secular interventions:

> *Item statuito et ordinato che se nela corte del comune de spalato movera alguna questione principalmente di alguno matrimonio perche questa questione e mere spirituale. in quella fiada la corte di spalato secolare di questa questione per niguno modo si intrometta ma rimetasi ala corte di Messer arcivescovo spalatino. del quale e la iurisdictione et cognitione principalmente del matrimonio.*[12]

However, in the case of Dubrovnik there was a somewhat different distribution of authority on matrimonial issues, which demands a more thorough analysis of the context and the roots of Ragusan social endogamy. As early as the thirteenth century, matrimonial relations within the Ragusan nobility were concentrated within the circle of the most powerful families, which led to the separation of the upper social class and its homogenisation. The *serrata* or closing of the Ragusan city councils in 1332 did not represent the ultimate act of class ideology, because even after the closing of the councils the concept of *nobilitas* developed in a more and more exclusive direction. Secular law still did not explicitly forbid marriages between patricians and commoners, but took all possible measures to make such marriages as few as possible. As early as the end of the fourteenth century there were measures of prevention, which are discernible in the case of Nicholas Ser Mathei de Gradi, a Ragusan patrician who married the commoner Caterina Radosaglich in the 1420s: the marriage was approved by the Church, but the children were not allowed to enter the city councils.[13]

This tendency culminated with a regulation on the marriages of noblemen, written down as chapter eighteen of *Liber croceus*, the book of amendments to the Ragusan Statute. The regulation passed the Great Council on March 19, 1462, by a majority of 103 to 23 votes, and represented the conclusion and codification of a custom mentioned as early as the 1440 as ancient. The regulation forbade members of the nobility to marry commoners, under the threat of loss of all patrician offices and benefices, not only concerning the person committing the offence but also all his descendants without the possibility of rehabilitation.[14]

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[12] Giuseppe Alačević, ed., *Statuti di Spalato* (Split: Zannoni, 1878), lib. III, cap. VI, 91.

[13] Janeković-Roemer, *Rod i grad*, 70. However, Rheubuttom and Mahnken believe that Nicholas was a commoner himself.

[14] *Statuimus et ordinamus quod si quis ex nobilibus nostris de cetero in contrahendo matrimonium acciperet uxorem filiam alicuius Ragusei qui non esset nobilis Ragusii, excepto si talis esset filia alicuius nobilis alterius civitatis maritime aut alicuius ex descententibus ex dictis nobilibus alterius civitatis maritime talis accipiens huiusmodi uxorem, ipso facto, amota omni exceptione cum suis heredibus et successoribus descendentibus ex dicto matrimonio sit perpetuo privatus omnibus consiliis, officiis et beneficiis communis Ragusii, nec ad ipsa consilia, officia et beneficia, ullo (modo) unquam tempore admitti possit ipse contrahens, nec aliquis ex dictis heredibus et successoribus suis ex dicto matrimonio descendentibus. Et alicui qui huiusmodi matrimonium contraheret gratia fieri non possit, nisi*

Contemporary opinion on such marriages is discernible from the description of Dubrovnik and its customs written by Philippus de Diversi de Quartigiani from Lucca in 1440, who at the time held the office of teacher in Dubrovnik. Part IV, chapter 16 of the description is dedicated to the "praiseworthy custom of Ragusan nobility that does not accept plebeian wives, neither give noblewomen to plebeian husbands".[15] Diversi directed praise to "the custom that had been and still was obeyed, and would be obeyed as long as the state of Dubrovnik existed" (*consuetudo antiquissima Ragusinorum pertinaciter cum summa virtute observata, atque nunc servatur, et dum Ragusium regnaverit, observanda*), that is, to take care for the provenance of the ancestors of the spouse (*inter genus proavorum a quo mores plerunque trahi videmus, maxime considerare oportet*). According to Diversi, Ragusans considered it shameful to accept a spouse from a lower social position (*Indignum prorsus iudicant Ragusini nobiles se foeminis ignobilibus matrimonio copulare, aut nobiles dominas viris non claris coniungi.*). Such an attitude culminated in the (probably somewhat exaggerated) statement that "until today it was not discovered that a Ragusan nobleman or woman accepted a commoner for wife or husband" (*Nec inventum est usque in hoc tempus, quempiam nobilem Ragusinum sponte plebeiam in uxorem, aut matronam proavis claram plebeium hominem in maritum ... delegisse.*).[16]

Considering the early date and the radical measures, one is inclined to agree with scholars who consider Ragusan marital practice the most severe social endogamy in Europe.[17] Such rigorous regulations on social endogamy resulted in the fact that mixed marriages were less represented in Dubrovnik than elsewhere.[18] In Dalmatian cities, marriages between different social groups re-

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per omnes consiliarios omnium consiliorum nostrorum, Liber croceus (1460–1803), Historical Archives in Dubrovnik, ser. 21.1, vol. 12a-1, cap. 18, fol. 13r; Branislav Nedeljković, ed., *Liber croceus,* Zbornik za istoriju, jezik i književnost srpskog naroda, 24 (Belgrade: SANU, 1997), 21-22 (hereafter Nedeljković, *Liber croceus*). Shortly afterwards, in 1464, the Great Council made the punishment less extreme by the decision that violators could be rehabilitated if members of the council voted for it. However, although those persons would keep their position and offices, the children of patricians who married a commoner would lose the social status and become commoners, as shown in the case of Laurentius de Mence in 1505 (Janeković-Roemer, *Rod i grad*, 70).

[15] *Philippi de Diversis de Quartigianis Lucensis, artium doctoris eximii et oratoris situs aedificiorum, politiae et laudabilium consuetudinum inclytae civitatis Ragusii ad ipsius senatum descriptio,* Historical Archives in Dubrovnik (no shelfmark), 156-160 (hereafter *Philippi de Diversis descriptio*); Vitaliano Brunelli, ed., "Philippi de Diversis de Quartigianis ... descriptio", *Programma dell' I.R. Ginnasio superiore in Zara*, 25 (1882), 26-28 (hereafter Brunelli, "Descriptio").

[16] *Philippi de Diversis descriptio*, 157; Brunelli, "Descriptio", 26-27.

[17] Susan Mosher Stuard, "Dowry increase and increments in wealth in medieval Ragusa (Dubrovnik)", *Journal of Economic History* 41 (1981), 798; eadem, *A State of Deference: Ragusa/Dubrovnik in the Medieval Centuries* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 63 (hereafter Mosher Stuard, *State of deference*); Janeković-Roemer, *Rod i grad*, 70; eadem, *Okvir slobode*, 69-73.

[18] Janeković-Roemer, *Okvir slobode*, 70.

presented the legit mate means for the rise of fam lies of commoners, and it was usual for descendants of a commoner to acquire patrician status. The city of Trogir only codified the regulations on not accepting the sons from mixed marriages into the city councils in 1553. However, the regulation was not obeyed, since twenty years later, in 1573, concerning *alcuni de nobili di questo spetabil conseglio, li quali con puoco rispetto della condizion loro contrazeno matrimonii con donne vilissime et di bassissima conditione et puoco honorevole,* it was added to the regulation that *de caetero alcuno nobile di questo conseglio non ardisca contrazer matrimonio, ne tuor per moglie alcuna donna, che non fosse gentildonna, o' saltem cittadina honorata.*[19] It should be pointed out that it was still not necessary that a wife was a noblewoman; the council was satisfied w th an honourable commoner. Roughly at the same time, in 1551, the regulation on not accepting illegal patricians' sons in the councils was codified in the Dalmatian city of Šibenik. Such marital practice n Dalmatian cities should be seen as following the example of their Venetian ruler; the Republic of Venice passed a similar regulation, precisely the obligation of writing down the mother's name in the *Libro d'Oro,* the list of nobility, only in the sixteenth century.[20]

Ragusan dispensations for marriage in third and fourth degree of familial relation: Evidence of social endogamy

The earliest preserved papal dispensation for the territory of the Ragusan archbishopric dates to 1321, the fifth year of the pontificate of John XXII, and involves the Ragusan patricians Nicolaus Mathie de Mentio and Rosa Martii

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[19] Chapter "Quod legitimati per subsequens non possint essere nobiles" of 1553: ... *E ancorche esso tal fiol fosse nato de donna di qualsivoglia stato, grado et condition esser, si sia avanti il matrimonio legitimamente contratto, non ostante, che dappoi la sua natività frà il padre et la madre fosse contratto esso legitimo matrimonio, non possa ne debbia in modo alcuno esser ricevuto ne accettato in detto conseglio: ma' di quello totalmente sia et esser s' intenda espulso, privato e abdicato, si come mai fosse nato de gentilhuomo di questo conseglio,* Ivan Strohal, ed., *Statutum et reformationes civitatis Tragurii,* Monumenta historico-juridica Slavorum meridionalium, 10 (Zagreb: Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti (hereafter JAZU), 1915), *Reformationum Liber* II, cap. 85, 274; and the chapter "De matrimoniis nobilium" of 1573: ... *sono alcuni de nobili di questo spetabil conseglio, li quali con puoco rispetto della condizion loro contrazeno matrimonii con donne vilissime et di bassissima conditione et puoco honorevole.... Che de caetero alcuno nobile di questo conseglio non ardisca contrazer matrimonio, ne tuor per moglie alcuna donna, che non fosse gentildonna, o' saltem cittadina honorata. Et se contrafara' in tuor per moglie qualche donna di bassissima conditione over infame, che li figlioli suoi non possano ne debbano in modo alcuno esser ricevuti ne' accettati in questo conseglio, ma' totalmente siano et esser debbano esclusi et privati, si come mai fossero nati de gentilhuomo di questo conseglio, Statutum et reformationes civitatis Tragurii, Reformationum Liber* II, cap. 86, 275.

[20] For the Venetian matrimonial policy see Stanley Chojnacki, "Marriage legislation and patrician society in fifteenth-century Venice", in *Law, custom and the social fabric in medieval Europe,* ed. Bernard S. Bachrach and David Nicholas, Studies in Medieval Culture 28 (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute, 1990), 163-184.

Lucari, related in the fourth degree of consanguinity.[21] This early dispensation provides in so many words one of the reasons for contracting such a marriage: solving the conflicts between noble families, or their different branches:

> *ad sedandum graves guerras et inimicicias periculosas et odia, que ab antiquo inter parentes, consanguineos et amicos utriusque vestrum fuisse noscuntur, ac periculis animarum et corporum, que ex eis verisimiliter provenire poterant, obviandum, parentum, consanguineorum et amicorum ipsorum interveniente consensu, affectatis ad invicem matrimonialiter copulari.*

Related to this, the direct cause of endogamous marriages, according to Mosher Stuard, is the Ragusan strategy of creating stable network among families by multiple remarrying, which increased the probability of violation of canon law.[22] Rheubottom stresses another aspect that lead to the same result: requirement of patrician parentage on both sides, which differentiated Dubrovnik from cities like Florence and Venice.[23]

However, both interpretations are related to the same general reasons for marriages between cousins: continuation of the family line, preservation of family possessions, acquisition of the stability of the state offices, and, on a wider scale, securing the homogeneity of the social group. Therefore, if one presumes that the reason for marrying between members of the family was to preserve their positions in the secular authority and their possessions within this family, then one should expect that the most powerful families followed this custom more strictly.

Before I start analysing the data concerning some of the most powerful families among the Ragusan nobility, I will explain the criteria for calculating the influence that the Ragusan noble families exercised on the city government. For this I used the results offered by Bariša Krekić,[24] who argued that it was not only economic power, but also the number of grown-up male family members that contributed to the impact of a certain family on the political life of the city. According to him, that impact was proportional to the number of state offices held by the members of a certain family. Therefore, economic power was not

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[21] ASV, *Reg.Vat.*, 71, par. 1, fol. 264v, ep. 587; published in *Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*, vol. 9, ed. Tadija Smičiklas (Zagreb: JAZU, 1911), 9-10; a sketch of the letter in ASV, *Reg. Aven.*, 15, fol. 77r.

[22] Mosher Stuard, *State of deference*, 63.

[23] Rheubottom, *Age, Marriage, and Politics*, 80-81.

[24] Bariša Krekić, "O problemu koncentracije vlasti u Dubrovniku u XIV. i XV. veku" [On the problem of the concentration of power in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Dubrovnik], *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 24-25 (1986), 397-406 (hereafter Krekić, "O problemu"); idem, "Influence politique et pouvoir économique dans Dubrovnik (Raguse) du XIIIe au XIVe siècle", in *Gerarchie economiche e gerarchie sociali nei secoli XII–XVI*, ed. Annalisa Guarducci (Florence: Le Monnier, 1990), 241-258.

equated with political power, and as the main criterium for the latter, Krekić took the number of offices within each family.[25]

According to the early lists of noble families commissioned on the occasion of distributing newly acquired lands in the mid-fifteenth century, there were approximately 34 noble families in Dubrovnik. It should be stressed, which is important for the issue of the class endogamy that the tendency was for a decrease in the number of families and growth of the number of family members. For example, in fourteenth century there were 71 families, whereas in the fifteenth less than half of them survived. In the list of noblemen of 1442 there were 553 males, and the calculations show that there were approximately 800 noblewomen.[26] If we consider that at the time as much as 20% of the Ragusan population were members of the nobility (in sixteenth-century Venice they made up only 4.5%), then the high number of matrimonial cases coming from Dubrovnik is not surprising. It may be added that among the Ragusan Penitentiary cases of matrimonial type 90% involved noblemen, whereas only 10% concerned commoners, who were almost exclusively of Slavic origin, and more than half of whom were inhabitants of the islands subject to the Ragusan Republic.

Another important issue should also be addressed, the concentration of power within a few leading families, a process that reached its peak during the fifteenth century. In the fourteenth century, 3,428 state positions were distributed among 71 families, whereas in the following century there were 5,084 positions distributed among 34 families. Five leading families held 33% and 42% of the positions in the respective centuries.[27] In addition, not all the offices were equally important, and the distinction between upper and lower nobility was created according to the offices held continuously by a family, especially those of rector, judge, senator or member of the Minor council. Only by accepting certain commoners' families into the patrician class in the seventeenth century did the criteria for the distinction within the group change. Prestige was no longer gained through state offices but through consanguine relation to the old nobility. The families were grouped into so-called 'old', 'middle', and 'new' nobility, which practised class endogamy among themselves.[28]

Turning back to the data from the Penitentiary registers, it is important to see what conclusions may be drawn from the comparison of the Penitentiary data with the data gathered from local notary sources. If one compares the list of the fifteenth century's most numerous families with that of the families holding the highest number of positions and the families with the highest number of mat-

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[25] Rheubottom calculated that even if the proportion of family members and offices held were reciprocal, the power exercised by each of the patrician families was the same, since none of the most powerful families used the number of its members in the Great Council to disproportionally enlarge its share of the state offices; Rheubottom, "Genealogical Skewing", 374-376. However, this fact did not influence the issue of matrimonial dispensations.

[26] Krekić, "O problemu", 399.

[27] Ibidem, 401.

[28] Ibidem, 405.

rimonial dispensations (Table 4), it turns out that the top-positioned families in all the three lists coincide, primarily the first four: Gozze, Bona, Gondola and Sorgo. The Gozze family was by far the best represented, with almost 12% of the offices – the second-ranked Gondola had only 8.5%; there were 76 members of the Gozze family, whereas the second-ranked Bona had 45; and, finally, the Gozzes acquired 25 marriage dispensations (22% of all Ragusan matrimonial dispensations), which is three more than the second-ranked Bona.

Table 4. Comparative lists of Ragusan families concerning their political power and involvement in marriages of familial relationship (fifteenth century).

State offices (%)		Family members		Matrimonial dispenses	
1. Gozze	11.88	1. Gozze	76	1. Gozze	25
2. Gondola	8.63	2. Bona	45	2. Bona	22
3. Bona	8.55	3. Zrieva	39	3. Sorgo	20
4. Giorgio	7.02	4. Resti	37	4. Gondola	15
5. Resti	6.51	5. Sorgo	36	5. Zrieva / Zamagno	9
6. Sorgo	6.23	6. Gondola	35	6. Caboga / Giorgio / Gradi	8
7. Pozza	5.40	7. Georgio	31	7. Mence / Pozza	6

Although it is expectable that families with more family members would have asked for more matrimonial dispenses, still a certain tendency can be observed for the leading families to make supplications for dispenses more often. Among 224 partners from 112 matrimonial cases registered in the Penitentiary records in the period examined here, 105 (47%) are members of the seven most powerful fifteenth-century Ragusan families (Gozze, Gondola, Bona, Sorgo, Giorgio, Mence, and Zrieva).[29]

Moreover, there are nine cases that involve isonomic partners; again they concern the four leading families: Gozze, Bona, Gondola, and Sorgo, and only one case involves the Pozza family, who ranked seventh according to the state offices they held. The local sources show that throughout the fifteenth century there were at least seven marriages between members of the Sorgo family,[30] and eight between the Gozze in the period 1400–1520.[31] Further on, the same sources reveal that the non-patrician branches of the Ragusan noble families as well as wealthy commoners took over certain customs of the nobility. Thus, by marrying among themselves they formed another endogamous social group, an upper commoners' stratum, but this issue is beyond the scope of this paper.[32]

[29] It should be noted that the seven most powerful families are not the same as in the list of the families who held the highest positions, because Krekić did not calculate the sudden decline of certain families (such as Mence and Sorgo).

[30] Janeković-Roemer, *Rod i grad*, 69.

[31] Rheubottom, *Age, Marriage, and Politics*, 102. Rheubottom also provides patterns of intermarrying families during the same period, 103-107.

[32] Mahnken, *Dubrovački patricijat*, 411-415; Stjepan Krivošić, *Stanovništvo Dubrovnika i demografske promjene u prošlosti* [The population of Dubrovnik and demographic changes

Approximately 40% of the cases deal with the impediment of familial affiliation in the third degree, and there are three cases of second degree and three cases of first degree relation, but those latter concern the affinal relation between a first and second wife/husband. The rest of the cases involve affiliation in the fourth degree.

In 41 Ragusan cases (37%,), there is a supplication for a declaratory letter which bear witness to the social importance of legitimate marriage. This tendency is not surprising if one considers the rigid statute regulations on marriages of the nobility and the danger one was exposed to for breaking this law. The letters almost exclusively concern third degree impediment, except for five cases of the fourth degree, which involved at least one member from each of the four leading families. A peculiar piece of information is that the names of the members of those families were often not only written with the father's but also with the grandfather's; in one case a member of the Gozze family also added the name of his great-grandfather.[33]

Indications of territorial endogamy in the matrimonial policy of the Ragusan Republic

The extremely high percentage of *de matrimonialibus* cases from the Ragusan diocese within the total of matrimonial cases, but also within the total of Ragusan cases, indicates a certain distinction between Dubrovnik and the other Dalmatian cities. I have presented the argument that this is due to the stricter social endogamy. However, this tendency may also be explained by the fact that, unlike the rest of Dalmatia, Dubrovnik was not subject to Venetian rule after the events of 1409–1420, when Dalmatia was sold by the Angevins to the Republic of Venice. On the contrary, from 1420 onwards, Dubrovnik was established as an independent city-state. This independence dated back to the Treaty of Visegrad of 1358, after which Dubrovnik unofficially gained complete independence and began to be referred to as a republic. However, even before 1358, Dubrovnik had enjoyed quite a long tradition of political independence and rivalry with Venice that resulted in a sense of deliberate isolation from Venetian Dalmatia.

The Ragusan attitude towards the citizens of the other Dalmatian cities was far from being the same as that towards the inhabitants of the neighbouring Slavic regions. According to the statute regulations, the Dalmatian cities were nevertheless considered to be 'the others'. This sense of 'independence' is already obvious in the 1272 Statute regulations on the *consuetudines* between Ragusans and the inhabitants of the Dalmatian cities of Zadar, Šibenik, Trogir, Omiš, and Split; the Slavic areas Hum, Bosna, Raška, and Zeta; the *civitates Dalmacie superioris* (that is, Kotor, Bar, Ulcinj, Duros, etc.); and the other *Scla-*

in the past] (Dubrovnik: Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti u Zagrebu, 1990), 105; Janeković-Roemer, *Rod i grad*, 70.

[33] *Jelusa Nicolai Marini Raphaelis de Goze*, ASV, *Penitenzieria Ap., Reg. Matrim. et Div.*, vol. 17, fol. 28r.

voniae.[34] This kind of self-definition of the commune in relation to the neighbouring political entities, notably other Dalmatian communes, does not appear in other Dalmatian statutes; in those the neighbours were mentioned by their ethnonyms only when it concerned the Slavic regions of the inlands.[35]

In the records of the Ragusan city councils, much more often than in other cities, we find cases of the secular authorities forbidding marriages with citizens of other communes. The most striking example is the regulation by which the Ragusan authorities forbade marriages between Ragusans and inhabitants of Kotor, a regulation that stayed valid from the end of the thirteenth century until 1328, and sporadically after that period. The reasons behind this decision were of an economic nature: Ragusans considered that there were too many cases of possessions being transferred to the citizens of Kotor through marriage. It should be noted that Kotor did not set regulations with reciprocal strictness.[36]

David Rheubottom examined all registered Ragusan marriages involving at least one patrician spouse during the period between 1400 and 1520. One of the quantitative outputs important for this issue is that only 2% of males and 3% of females married foreigners, that is, patricians from Kotor, Zadar, and other Dalmatian cities.[37]

However, the Ragusan authorities officially supported marriages with 'amicable' maritime cities, which is mentioned by Diversi: "Ragusan patricians, however, do marry the noblewomen from other cities, such as Duros, Kotor, Split, Zadar, Trogir, and others".[38] But the regulation on contracting the marriage with members of the nobility of the maritime cities, passed in 1499 in the Great Council, shows the double game played by the Ragusans. Under the cover of protecting the dowry of wives coming from abroad, the Great Council banned such marriages unless the husband held stable properties of at least 800 golden ducats.[39] Therefore, although the Great Council principally supported marriages

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[34] Baltazar Bogišić and Konstantin Jireček, ed., *Liber statutorum civitatis Ragusii*, Monumenta historico-juridica Slavorum meridionalium 9 (Zagreb: JAZU, 1904), lib. III, c. XLIX–LVII, 75-80.

[35] For example, in the Tragurian Statutes only one regulation from 1347 mentions foreigners by ethnonyms: "De non mutuando Sclavis, Bossinentibus seu Croatis supra pignus", but it does not involve citizens of Dalmatian cities; *Statutum et reformationes civitatis Tragurii, Reformationum Liber* I, cap. 43, 163-164. Moreover, there is an addition to the chapter which includes an agreement between the cities of Split, Trogir and Šibenik from 1327 not to pay any tribute to Slavic *barones*, ibidem, 164.

[36] Janeković-Roemer, *Rod i grad*, 73-74. In 1362 Hungary requested that Ragusans, when marrying patricians from other cities, choose among those under Hungarian rule; Mosher Stuard, *State of Deference*, 90, n. 15.

[37] Rheubottom, "Genealogical Skewing", 381-382; idem, *Age, Marriage, and Politics*, 81.

[38] *Philippi de Diversis descriptio*, 159; Brunelli, "Descriptio", 28.

[39] *Ordo super matrimoniis contrahendis. Captus sub die xi martii 1499. Quoniam Inter alias bonas et laudabiles observantias et consuetudines quas nostri predecessores tenebant hec etiam fuit: Quod delectabantur contrahere matrimonia et affinitates cum Nobilibus civitatum maritimarum ut dictam consuetudinem hac potissimum causa ut per huiusmodi affinitates conservarentur amicitie quae erant inter civitatem nostram et nobiles dictarum civi-*

between members of the nobility of Ragusa and of other maritime cities, that is, Dalmatia and Venice, the limitations set by this regulation significantly diminished the chances of marrying a foreign person, and thus show evidence of a somewhat different matrimonial policy with elements of territorial endogamy.

If one examines the level of social endogamy in other Dalmatian cities (as shown by the matrimonial cases in the penitentiary registers), it becomes evident that Korčula with 31 and Kotor with 21 cases, the southern and the northern neighbouring dioceses to Dubrovnik, are the best represented among the cities of Venetian Dalmatia. The high percentage of cases from Kotor and Korčula among *de matrimonialibus* could possibly be explained by their proximity and economic orientation to Dubrovnik with whose inhabitants they had difficulty in agreeing on marriages. The Hvar and Bar dioceses had 18 and 14 matrimonial cases, respectively. These four cities might have been influenced by the Ragusan marital practice and, in the case of Korčula and Kotor, even restricted in the choice of partners because of the difficulties of marrying persons from the diocese of Dubrovnik.

Sixteenth-century evidence: variations

Considering all the regulations as well as the rigour of following the customs, the patricians of Dubrovnik had an extremely limited choice of partners, which resulted in an excessive number of marriages between blood relatives and relatives through marriage. It seems that, in addition to the social endogamy typical of Dalmatian communes, Ragusans practised another kind of endogamy limited to the confines of the city-state. Thus, we find a remarkably high number

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tatium maritimarum. Idcirco ne sub pretestu dictarum affinitatum que contrahebantur ad conservationem antique amicitie aliquando sequi possit contrarium videlicet dissensio et inimicitia Dominis provisoribus videtur quod provideri debeat hoc modo, videlicet. Quod aliquis ex nobilibus nostris de caetero non possit contrahere matrimonium cum aliqua ex nobilibus mulieribus Civitatum maritimarum si talis nobilis noster contrahens non habebit de stabili in Civitate nostra: aut in eius districtu de bonis suis propriis ad minus valorem dotis que dari solet comuniter inter Nobiles nostros in Ragusio videlicet ducatorum 800 vel circa. Et si quis ex nobilibus nostris non habens in bonis suis dictum valorem dictorum ducatorum octingentorum ad minus vel circa contraxerit matrimonium cum aliqua ex nobilibus dictarum Civitatum maritimarum ipse contrahens, et proles tam masculina, quam faemenina ex dicto matrimonio nascitura ac ipsius prolis descendentes sint perpetuo privati omnibus officiis et beneficiis communis nostri. Et hoc quia intentio nostra est quod nobiles mulieres dictarum civitatum maritimarum contrahentes cum nobilibus nostris pro conservatione amicitie et pro honore civitatis nostre in omnem casum et eventum sint caute, tute et secure pro dotibus quas dabunt dictis nobilibus nostris. ..., *Liber croceus*, pars 1, cap. 178, fol. 123v-124r; Nedeljković, *Liber croceus*, 194-195. The regulation was passed by 153 to 20 votes. As evidence that the regulation was not *pro forma*, I quote here the case of Ciprianus Petri de Lucari, who was expelled from the councils in 1502 for marrying a woman from Korčula without having the prescribed property; Janeković-Roemer, *Okvir slobode*, 72.

of supplications for dispensation to marry in the third and fourth degree of familial affiliation originating from the Ragusan diocese in the fifteenth century.

In that sense, it is not altogether surprising, although it was quite bold for the secular authorities, that the Ragusan Great Council in 1535 passed a regulation which forbade marriages in the third grade of consanguinity and affinity under the threat of deprivation of all patrician privileges, without leaving the possibility of remedy through papal dispensation:[40]

> *Vedendo che le pene delle censure et excommunicationi inposte dalli sacri canoni alli contrahenti matrimonio in gradi prohibiti, non suono sofficienti ad obviare che non si contrahi, ma molti non curando le censure. Sotto pretexto da poi esser' absoluti et dispensati dalla sede apostolica, vengono ad contrahere in detrimento delle anime loro, e scandalo di tutta la citta nostra. Pero par' alli signori proveditori della terra, che rimanendo le pene ecclesiasticae in suo robore di piu si habbia di provedere inquesto modo: Che qualumche persona, quale di qua in avante, havesse ardimento di contrahere matrimonio in terzo grado di consanguinita et affinita, e piu stretti gradi, cio e primo e secundo, essendo delli nobili, Lui con tutti suoi descendenti, se intenda essere privato in perpetuo da tutti gli ufficii e beneficii del comune nostra.*[41]

The possibility of papal dispensation was restricted to the fourth degree of consanguinity:

> *Lassando la solita liberta a quelli quali per' impedimento di quarto grado di consanguinita, non potessero contrahere, che secondo lo consueto, et senza alcuna altra pena, possino dalla sede apostolica impetrare la dispensa supra tal impedimento.'*[42]

Penitentiary records confirm the statement that many marriages had been contracted under the pretext of later acquisition of papal dispense. Out of one third of Ragusan cases transcribed so far, only eight concern couples asking for dispensation in advance, whereas thirty couples requested it *a posteriori*. Moreover, confirmation can even be found in contemporary papal bulls; in 1555, Paul IV issued a bull regarding this very matter.[43]

Let us examine another sixteenth-century source reflecting the development of Ragusan endogamy over the centuries, and also the ambivalent policies of the city's Great Council, which are probably due to different priorities of individual families, the nobility as a social group, and the State as representative of all its inhabitants.

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[40] *Liber croceus*, pars 1, cap. 252, fol. 186v-187r; Nedeljković, *Liber croceus*, 278. The regulation was passed by 130 to 22 votes.

[41] *Liber croceus*, pars 1, fol. 186v; Nedeljković, *Liber croceus*, 278.

[42] *Liber croceus*, pars 1, fol. 187r; Nedeljković, *Liber croceus*, 278.

[43] Franciscus Gaude, ed., *Bullarium diplomatum et privilegiorum sanctorum romanorum pontificum*, vol. 6 (Turin: Franco et Dalmazzo, 1860), 507.

On March 5, 1566, the Great Council commissioned the bishop of Ston, who was travelling to Rome on other business, to request a general dispensation for marrying in third and fourth degree of consanguinity and affinity from Pope Pius V. Here is part of the letter which is the most indicative of the Ragusan matrimonial policy:

> *Da più di cinquecento anni in qua, per evitare molte confusioni, et per giusti, et convenienti rispetti, e' stato in usanza nella città nostra, et per legge statuito che alcuno nobile nostro non possa contrahere matrimonio, se non con nobiles, la qual cosa, fino a' poco tempo fa, agevolmente si e' osservata, senza incorrere in terzi, o' quarti gradi di consanguinità, et afinità, siando si qui ritrovete circa 100. casate di nobili, le quali col tempo, et per la mortalità i poco a' poco si sono consumate, et del tutto estirpate in modo tale, che hora sono ridotte a' 28 casate solamente di nobili, fra le quali, stretti ad aparentarsi, giornalmente siamo venuti a' tale, che quasi tutti, siamo congionti in terzo, et in quarto grado di consanguinità, et afinità, et per che hora i Canoni del sacro concilio Tridentino, sub vinculo anathematis prohibiscono il contrahere matrimonio in tali gradi, noi desideriamo sopra modo per nostra conservatione, di ottenere da sua Beatitudine una dispensa che si assolui da i Canoni del detto concilio, contrahendo matrimonio in tali gradi, et che del tutto ci concedi poterlo fare.*[44]

It is interesting that the strategy of obtaining authorisation for matrimonial dispensations was based on the quest for preservation of the Ragusan patriciate, which came to be identified with the state itself, referring to the quest as *giustissima domanda a' conservatione della Patria nostra.*[45]

Another interesting (but false, however) excuse for such marriages appears in the letter, namely, the obstacle of marrying members of the nobility of neighbouring regions which were under Ottoman occupation. Such an interpretation was obviously misleading, since Ragusans were never inclined to relate to the nobility of those areas but limited their choice of foreign spouses to the Dalmatian cities.[46]

The apostolic visitation of the Ragusan diocese by Iohannes Franciscus Sormano, bishop of Montefeltro, in 1573, provides an intereresting insight into

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[44] *Littere et Commissiones Levantis*, Historical Archives in Dubrovnik, ser. 27.1, vol. 30 (1565–69), fol. 100r-101r.

[45] *Littere et commissiones*, fol. 100v.

[46] "*... vivendo noi in questa Patria cosi angusta et per le cause che vi habbiamo detto, contrahendo solamente matrimonii li nobili, con nobili, et siando ridotti a' tanta stretezza di casate, et queste quasi tutte congionte in 3.o et in 4.o grado di consanguinità, et affinità, et non potendo più aparentarci con nobili di terre qui vicine, per che sono in potere di Turchi, noi supplichiamo sua Beatitudine che si degni concederci di poter contrahere matrimonio in 3.o et in 4.o grado ...*", *Littere et commissiones*, fol. 100v.

the actual marital practice of the Ragusan nobility.[47] On October 21, the visitor/visitator? interrogated the Ragusan Archbishop Chrisostomus Calvinus (1564-1575), on, among other issues, the contracting of marriages. From the archbishop's answers it is clear that the patricians were still neglecting certain church regulations, notably, they refused to make the announcements for marriage in the church, a custom which served precisely to discover possible impediments for marriage:

> *Interrogatus an debite denuntiationes in ecclesia fiant pro matrimoniis contrahendis iusta formam sacri Tridentini concilii, et alia qua in dicto concilio mandantur,*
> *Respondit non si osserva questo capo perche i signori non permetano che i Preti faccino queste denonciationi nella città ma fuori le facio fare come ho' ordinato e' non vogliano i signori che si faccino per certi loro rispetti quali e bene a tacerli, ma si dirano cosi senza metterli in scritto...*[48]

The Archbishop mentioned the faculty of dispensation in the fourth degree granted by Pius IV, finally admitting the number of such marriages:

> *Interrogatus an sciat aliqua matrimonia contracta in gradibus a' iure canonico prohibitis, Respondit io non so' che si siano contratti matrimonii tali eccetto per ho alcuni in quarto grado, i quali mi furno [sic!] concessi dalla bona memoria di Pio quarto di dispensarli in detti gradi per diece anni, come appari [in] un breve apostolici ch'e presso me, e' lo mostraro a Vostra santita Reverendissima e' in essecutione del qual /comme ho' detto/ ho' fatto molte dispense in detto grado.*[49]

The Ragusan concept of social groups as hermetically closed and self-sufficient bodies changed radically during the first half of the seventeenth century, when Dubrovnik faced a drastic reduction in the number of noble families. As if foreshadowing the great earthquake of 1667 that erased a large part of the Ragusan nobility, in 1666 the Great Council passed (though with only a slight majority) the regulation *Super libero matrimonio nostrorum nobilium*. This removed three intolerable hindrances to the matrimonial agreement of a nobleman: marriage with a commoner (except with daughters of physical workers), marrying in the third degree of consanguinity provided papal dispensation was acquired, and marrying members of the nobility from all neighbouring cities, not only Dalmatian.[50] It is indicative of the new liberal policy of openness towards lower social

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[47] ASV, *Congr. Vescovi e Regolari, Visita Ap.*, 28.

[48] *Visita*, fol. 47v-48r.

[49] *Visita*, fol. 48r-v.

[50] *... Che si debba levare la prohibitione della legge di poter aparentare nel terzo grado tanto per affinità, quanto per consanguinità in modo che in avenire non osti alli Nobili nostri la detta prohibitione, ma ogn'uno della nostra Nobiltà possi aparentare nel detto grado. Che dove fin' hora li nostri Nobili potevano aparentar con le Gentildonne delle città maritime solamente, possino in avenire aparentar ancora con le Gentildonne di qualumque altra*

groups that in the same year the first two families *de populo* were introduced to the Great Council, that is, were accepted to the patriciate.[51]

Although as early as 1682 the article on marriage with commoners was withdrawn by decision of the Great Council,[52] a century later the most radical regulation followed: in 1791 the Great Council decided to allow all marriages between relatives (except for those in the first degree of consanguinity and affinity), provided there was a corresponding papal dispensation.[53] For the time being, any interpretation of these later regulations, would certainly be far-fetched because the contemporary Penitentiary sources have not been gathered nor the papal policy on marriage compared. However, a wider perspective on research lies exactly in the comparison of ecclesiastical and secular sources over a longer period of time.

Città. Che similmente li detti Nobili nostri sinche altrimente sarà terminato con altro provedimento possino contrattar matrimonii con le figliole di persone honorate e civili di questa Città, li cui Padri non hanno essercitato alcun'arte mechanica. Liber croceus, pars 1, cap. 328, fol. 263v-264r; Nedeljković, *Liber croceus*, 384. However, the regulations were passed by slight majority: the first 54 vs. 36, the second by 60 vs. 30, and the third concerning marriage with commoners by tight 48 vs. 42.

51 Dragoljub Pavlović, O krizi vlasteoskog staleža u Dubrovniku XVII veka [On the crisis of the patrician class in 17th-century Dubrovnik], *Zbornik radova Instituta za proučavanje književnosti SAN*, 17 (1952), 27-38.

52 *... Che si debba rivocar il terzo Capitolo del Provedimento preso nell' Eccelentissimo Maggior Conseglio sotto li 3 Novembre 1666 in cui si concedeva alli Nobili nostri di poter contrahere Matrimonii con le figliole di persone honorate, e Civili di questa Città, li cui Padri non hanno essercitato arte mecanica ..., Liber croceus*, pars 1, cap. 350, fol. 275v-276r; Nedeljković , *Liber croceus*, 403. The regulation was accepted by 41 vs. 28 votes.

53 *... Che da oggi all'avvenire non ostante qualunque proibizione faciente in contrario sia, e s'intenda permesso ad ogniuno di qualunque stato, grado, e condizione il contrarre gli sponsali, e li matrimonii fra' i primi cugini tanto per affinità, quanto per consanguinità previa la necessaria pontificia dispensa ..., Liber croceus*, pars 2, cap. 441, fol. 70v-71r; Nedeljković, *Liber croceus*, 532-533. The regulation was passed by 24 vs. 18 votes.

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Edited by

Gerhard Jaritz, Torstein Jørgensen, Kirsi Salonen

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ABBREVIATIONS RELATED TO THE COLLECTIONS OF THE VATICAN SECRET ARCHIVES

ASV = Archivio Segreto Vaticano

Arm. = Armadio

Congr. Vescovi e Regolari, Visita Ap. = Congregazione dei Vescovi e Regolari, Visita Apostolica

Instr. Misc. = Instrumenta Miscellanea

Penitenzieria Ap., Reg. Matrim. et Div. = Penitenzieria Apostolica, Registra Matrimonialium et Diversorum

Reg. Vat. = Registra Vaticana

Reg. Lat. = Registra Lateranensia

Reg. Suppl. = Registra Supplicationum

Reg. Aven. = Registra Avenionensia

RPG = Repertorium Poenitentiariae Germanicum

PREFACE

The present publication contains selected papers from two international conferences: the first was held at the Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Bergen (Norway), in October, 2003[1] and the second at the Department of Medieval Studies, Central European University, Budapest (Hungary), in January, 2004.[2] The purpose of these meetings was to gather researchers interested in the history and significance of the papal curia and, in particular, the Apostolic Penitentiary, in the later Middle Ages. The main emphasis was placed on a comparative approach and on the role of peripheral areas of Western Christendom in their communication with the Holy See.

There are various kinds of centre-and-periphery hierarchies.[3] There are geographic, social, economic, and cultural peripheries and centres. "The general textbooks ... address materials from the geographical and social peripheries of privileged cultures only as adjuncts to their central narrative. ... The history of Scandinavia and Eastern Europe become excursus to a central narrative."[4]

However, concerning the communication of the Holy See with various areas of Christendom in the Middle Ages, the impact of 'peripheries' has attracted a new interest in recent years. Since the opening of the archives of the Apostolic Penitentiary to researchers in 1983 relatively few scholars have exploited the sources, but recently their number has increased. Most of them have studied the supplications to the Penitentiary of petitioners from their own home countries and edited material on a national basis. The German Historical Institute, under the leadership of Ludwig Schmugge, has already published several volumes of entries concerning German-speaking territories. Also, the Norwegian and Icelandic material has recently been released by Torstein Jørgensen and Gastone Saletnich. Similar enterprises are in process in several other countries: Poland, Denmark, Sweden and Finland, England and Wales. The examination of territo-

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[1] "*The Late Middle Ages and the Penitentiary Texts: Centre and Periphery in Europe in the Pre-Reformation Era.*"

[2] "Ad Confines. *The Papal Curia and the Eastern and Northern Peripheries of Christendom in the Later Middle Ages(14th – 15th c.).*"

[3] For this and the following, see Teofilo F. Ruiz, "Center and Periphery in the Teaching of Medieval History," in *Medieval Cultures in Contact*, ed. Richard F. Gyug (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003), 252.

[4] Ibidem, 248.

ries on the geographic peripheries in their relation to Rome has been a main focus in these studies.

The archival material of the Penitentiary and the communication of the papal curia with the various regions of late medieval Europe should, however, not be studied only on national levels. There is an increasing need for such studies to be supplemented by comparative searches for differences and analogies in how Christians from different corners of Europe used the papal offices and were treated by them. It is well known that even though the regulations of canon law were in theory the same for everyone, regional differences in interpreting and applying them emerged in the Late Middle Ages. The need to turn to the papal authority in matters of canon law varied depending on the role of local bishops and the presence or absence of papal legates or collectors, who often had the power to deal with similar matters *in partibus.* Also, people in the central territories of Christendom had different opportunities for turning to the papal curia with their requests than those living on the peripheries of the Christian world.

Questions like these played the central role in the discussions of the two conferences noted above. In this book we will render an overview of the present status of this new field of research. As an introduction, Piroska Nagy deals with the question of how to apply centre-periphery models to a comparative analysis of the sources. Kirsi Salonen uses the Penitentiary registers from the period of Pope Pius II to analyse the supplications, their provenance, and the role of peripheries.

Two peripheral parts of late medieval Europe and their significance concerning the communication with the Holy See represent the main part of the publication: Northern Europe and East Central Europe. Comparative analyses of Scandinavian and Scottish source material from the Penitentiary Registers are made by Torstein Jørgensen, Kirsi Salonen, and Irene Furneaux. The studies on East Central Europe are introduced by an inquiry concerning the general importance of the area for the papal curia (Jadranka Neralić), and an overview of the communication of the Holy See with Albania (Etleva Lala). Piroska Nagy and Kirsi Salonen offer a quantitative analysis of East Central Europe and the Penitentiary (1458–1484), followed by contributions on individual territories, such as the Czech lands (Lucie Doležalová) and Dalmatia (Ana Marinković). The contribution by Gastone Saletnich and Wolfgang Müller indicates that in any studies of the role of peripheries one must not neglect the more central areas. Blanca Szeghyová and Ludwig Schmugge show that local archives and their contents are an indispensable additional source for comparative analyses.

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