

Reinhold C. Mueller

***Aspects of Venetian Sovereignty in Medieval and Renaissance Dalmatia***

[A stampa in *Quattrocento Adriatico, Fifteenth Century Art of the Adriatic Rim*, Papers from a colloquium, Florence, 1994, edited by Charles Dempsey (Villa Spelman Colloquia Series, 5), Bologna, Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 1996, pp. 29-56  
– Distribuito in formato digitale da “Reti Medievali”]

*The reader is forewarned that this paper, which maintains the character of the original oral presentation, makes no attempt at covering completely such a vast subject, on which there is an extensive bibliography - much of it in Serbo-Croatian, a language I do not know. My intent is simply to offer for discussion some little-exploited historical materials on well-known themes that exemplify contacts between the two coasts of the Adriatic Sea, especially - but not only - during the Quattrocento. Following an overview of the history of Venetian sovereignty in that part of the Stato da mar, attention will turn to aspects of politics and society, that is, to the political, financial and monetary administration of the subject territories and to the movement of people and peoples across the Adriatic.*

## I. AN OVERVIEW OF HISTORY AND MYTH

Venetian efforts at domination of the eastern Adriatic can be said to have begun in the year 1000, with the naval expedition commanded personally by doge Pietro II Orseolo, which put an end to the activity of pirates installed at the mouth of the Narenta River and first avowed control over the Adriatic as the “Gulf of Venice.” Lordship over the Adriatic was central to Venetian historiography and mythology over the centuries: from the supposed papal grant of lordship at the peace of 1177 with Barbarossa and the ceremony each Ascension day of the doge wedding the sea, to invocations of Jove and Neptune - all depicted as part of a political program in the redecoration of the Ducal Palace after the fire of 1577. As late as the eighteenth century, Tiepolo still represented Neptune and the sea as the source of Venice’s wealth, when that was already history.<sup>1</sup>

In the centuries following Orseolo’s expedition, the history of the communes of Istria, Dalmatia and Albania is one of alternating domination by Venice and revolt against Venice. Zara, in a central position, revolted seven times and each time was brutally brought to terms. The most famous repressions were those of 1203, during the expedition of the fourth crusade, and of 1346 - so much to be remembered that they were depicted in the hall of the Great Council itself: next to Andrea Vicentino’s “Attack of the crusaders on the city of Zara, 1203” is Domenico Tintoretto’s “The capitulation of Zara, 1203”, where the archbishop and elders are shown turning over the keys of the city to an ageless doge Enrico Dandolo, while Jacopo Tintoretto painted the “Victory of Venice over the Hungarians during the reconquest of Zara, 1346” in the Sala dello Scrutinio. As a result of its numerous defeated rebellions, Zara is more often depicted in the Ducal Palace than any other subject city of Venice’s colonial empire.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> “Neptune offering Venice the riches of the sea,” Venice, Ducal Palace, Sala delle Quattro Porte. On this painting and in general, see Wolfgang Wolters, *Storia e politica nei dipinti di Palazzo Ducale. Aspetti dell’autocelebrazione della Repubblica di Venezia nel Cinquecento* (Venice, 1987; original title: *Der Bilderschmuck des Dogenpalastes*, Stuttgart, 1983).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 182-83, 345, 350. The painting of Domenico Tintoretto concerns the suppression of 1203 during the expedition of the fourth crusade; the doge, despite his youthful appearance, was Enrico Dandolo, leader of the expedition at age eighty, often confused with Andrea Dandolo, who was doge - and in fact quite young - during the suppression of 1346, but who was not involved in a crusade. A chronicle of the mid Trecento and a contemporary list of “Rectores Sclavonie” from the beginning down to 1357 already underscores the seven rebellions and concludes its account lamenting the loss of Dalmatia in 1358 “after a dominion lasting nearly 360 years”; see *Venetiarum historia*, Roberto Cessi and Fanny Bennato, eds. (Venice, 1964), see index and pp. 254, 278-80. The *Cronaca dolcina* of a century later reports that the rebellions were listed on the cover of a memoriale kept in the Chancery (“In la coverta del memorial secondo in cancellaria queste cose se contien, quante volte è sta’ expugnata la città de Zara e vinta da la sua rebellion...); Biblioteca Marciana, Venice (hereafter BMV), It. cl. VII, cod. 794 (8503), fol. 28.

Why the concern for the domination of the eastern coast of the Adriatic, a coast with a completely different morphology than the western coast? The answers are concrete: for the area's sources of salt and lumber; for the protection of commerce; for the opportunities it offered for landfalls (galleys stayed close to the eastern coast and regularly put into port) and for the provisioning of passing fleets; for salaried government posts for Venetian nobles and, it was hoped, for tax revenue; finally, for a source of manpower, both for galley rowers to enlist in the fleets and for domestic servants, as we shall see below. In short, Venice exercised power for profit, as this paper intends to indicate.

Between 1278 and 1330 the whole coast, from Istria to Ragusa, accepted Venetian sovereignty; Curzola had been a fief of the Zorzi family of Venice already since 1254. But in 1358 Venice had to turn it all over to the King of Hungary at the end of a losing war. Not long thereafter, however, Corfu subjected itself to Venetian lordship in 1386, securing the southern end of the Adriatic; in the 1390s the Albanian coastal towns were added to the *Stato da Mar*, with the exception of Cattaro, which offered itself to Venice six times between 1396 and 1420, before finally being accepted.<sup>3</sup> The definitive turn came with the need for money of king Ladislaus of Naples: in 1409 he sold the regional capital of Zara, plus three major islands and undefined "rights" over the rest of Dalmatia, to Venice for 100,000 ducats, opening the way for the formal and definitive entry of Venetian authorities, the long celebrated "Santa intrada." Representatives of Zara travelled to Venice in August to formalize their subjection.<sup>4</sup> Sebenico was forced into submission in 1412; then in 1420 Venetian domination was imposed over cities and islands all the way down the coast, with the sole exceptions, in the south of Ragusa, which would remain a sovereign city until 1808, and in the north of Segna, a fief of the Frangipani family, who, however, lost the island of Veglia to Venice about 1490. The Turkish success in the long naval war with Venice (1463-79) meant the loss of Albanian Scutari and Alessio in 1479, but there were compensations, across the sea.<sup>5</sup>

A brief passage, therefore, to the other coast, distant no more than 100 miles. Ravenna was annexed in 1441; Cervia, with its important saltpans, in deadly competition with those of Istria and Dalmatia, was acquired in 1463; the Italian wars made Venice overlord of Apulian ports, from Trani and Brindisi down to Gallipoli and Otranto, between 1495 and 1509; and in 1503, with the collapse of Cesare Borgia's signory, Venice ruled Rimini and Faenza, until its own defeat at Agnadello in 1509, early in the war of the league of Cambrai.

---

<sup>3</sup> The fifth time, in 1414, representatives of Cattaro said they "awaited the arrival of Venice with the eagerness of the ancient patriarchs who in Limbo awaited the descent of Christ." Giuseppe Praga, *Storia della Dalmazia* (1954; reprinted in Varese: Dall'Oglio, 1981), 141. For the subjection of Albanian cities, see Giuseppe Valentini, "Dell'amministrazione veneta in Albania," in *Venezia e il Levante fino al secolo XV*, ed. Agostino Pertusi, 2 vols. (Florence, 1973), 1:844-46.

<sup>4</sup> Marin Sanudo reports that they swore fealty, intoning "Gloria in altissimis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis," while the Doge replied in the same vein as the phrase used by Cattaro (see previous note), namely, "Populus, qui ambulabat in tenebris, vidit lucem magnam." *Vite de' duchi di Venezia*, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, vol. 22 (Milan, 1733), col. 844. The tribute (*regalia*) to the doge of 1000-1500 rabbit skins each year (imposed in 1205) was renewed in the Quattrocento but monetized as 80 ducats; idem, *De origine, situ et magistratibus urbis Venetae ovvero la città di Venetia (1493-1530)*, ed. Angela Caracciolo Aricò (Milan, 1980), 233 (where "conigi," Venetian for rabbits, was misread).

<sup>5</sup> An essential handbook remains that of Praga, *Storia di Dalmazia*, but see also Gioacchino Volpe, "L'Italia e Venezia," *La civiltà veneziana del Trecento* (Florence, 1956), 23-83, and Jorjo Tadic, "Venezia e la costa orientale dell'Adriatico fino al secolo XV," *Venezia e il Levante*, 1:687-704. For the earlier period, Frederic C. Lane, *Venice, a Maritime Republic* (Baltimore, 1973), chapter 6 and the bibliography, p. 464. Today the most useful overview for the *Stato da Mar* after 1380 (thus also for the following paragraph), is Benjamin Arbel, "Le colonie d'oltremare," *Storia di Venezia*, vol. 5: *Venezia rinascimentale*, forthcoming (my thanks to the author for allowing me to read it prior to publication). In the same volume, see also the contribution of Donatella Calabi, "Città e territorio nel Dominio da Mar." Still provocative is Fernand Braudel's consideration of the Adriatic in *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (2nd ed., Paris, 1966), 113-22. As banal as its title is promising is Pier Fausto Palumbo, "La Repubblica di Ragusa nelle relazioni fra le due sponde adriatiche," *Storia e civiltà*, 3 (1987):127-54. For a very recent demographic study of a single island, see F. W. Carter, "Settlement and Population during Venetian Rule (1420-1797): Hvar Island, Croatia," *Journal of European Economic History*, 23 (1994):7-47

This basically completes the picture of the Venetian Adriatic Stato da Mar in the period that interests us, a state created both by military action and by more or less voluntary submission. For most of the Quattrocento, the great Golfo di Venezia was largely under the control of the colonial capital.

## II. POLITICS AND SOCIETY UNDER VENETIAN DOMINATION

Ivan Pederin wrote recently: “Venedig beherrschte Dalmatien nicht mit dem Schwert, sondern mit der Feder und der Kanzlei.” He admits the earlier revolts against oppression and their repression, but he states that, beginning in 1409, Venice helped especially Zara, the major city of Dalmatia, to overcome its “feudal crisis” and take the path of progress. This against a much more negative historiographical position that blames Venice for rendering impossible the social and economic development of Zara.<sup>6</sup> It is not my purpose here to take a position on this debate; I mean in the following section merely to indicate some areas in which Venice made itself felt as a colonial power: its influence on the structure of local government and on law, and the nature of its administrative system.

It is well-known how the Great Council of Venice was “closed” to all but the nobility - and, viceversa, the nobility was defined as constituted of those families belonging to the Great Council - in a constitutional reform initiated in 1297 that lasted about twenty-five years. Angelo Ventura, who discussed at greater length the similar closing of municipal councils in the Terraferma, was struck by the rapidity with which councils in Istria and Dalmatia were closed under Venetian lordship: Zara, according to the statutes of 1305; Pirano (under Venice from 1283) by 1307, when it was decided to make membership in the council hereditary, quite after the manner of Venice (“si hinc retro avus tam ex parte patris quam ex parte matris vel pater eius non extiterit de consilio”); thereafter, Antivari, Nona, Cattaro, Sebenico, Lesina, Pago and Curzola followed suit, as did Ragusa just after 1332 - all “closed” their councils in the course of the fourteenth century. Venice confirmed the noble monopoly of legislative power in the local councils when the Serenissima returned to power in Dalmatia in the early fifteenth century.<sup>7</sup>

The fact that Venice reconfirmed the political role of the nobles did not silence the ranks of the popolari; on the contrary, the latter saw Venice as their protection against despotic and arbitrary actions on the part of the local nobility. It is sufficient to page through the *Listine* of Šime Ljubić to find notice of delegation after delegation that first nobles, then popolari sent off to Venice, each trying to get the capital city to back their cause against the rival social order. Often these organized social ranks even had more or less permanent representatives in Venice, to whom instructions were periodically sent to plea for this or that cause. Venice refused further to take sides and tried to keep the peace by arrogating to itself, that is, to its representative, the rector on the scene, the sole right of *arbitrium*, the final say in civil and criminal cases. But Venice assured the popolari of interpreters to translate the Latin used by the courts and allowed them to choose their own defending lawyers, rather than accept assigned noble lawyers. Venice simply and conveniently declared its own governors supreme judges in the first instance, its own magistracies in Venice supreme in cases of appeal. It must have been difficult, writes Gaetano Cozzi, for the Dalmatians, used to Roman jurisprudence and to the employment of lawyers trained at Padua, Bologna and Perugia during the Hungarian administration, to get used to the pragmatic approach of Venetian

---

<sup>6</sup> Ivan Pederin, “Die Venezianische Verwaltung Dalmatiens und Ihre Organe (XV. und XVI. Jahrhundert,” *Studi veneziani*, 12 (1986): 109; Tomislav Raukar, *Zadar in the Fifteenth Century. The Economic and Social Relations* (Zagreb, 1977), in Serbo-Croatian, with English summary.

<sup>7</sup> Angelo Ventura, *Nobiltà e popolo nella società veneta del Quattrocento e Cinquecento*, 2nd. ed. (Milan, 1993), 116-19; Bariša Kreki, *Dubrovnik in the 14th and 15th Centuries. A City between East and West* (Norman, Okla., 1972), 32-34. For the early modern age, see Antonio Di Vittorio, et al., *Ragusa (Dubrovnik), una repubblica adriatica. Saggi di storia economica e finanziaria* (Bologna, 1994).

law. But Venetian law was a primary vehicle of the “Venetianization” of the colonial territories, especially in the *Stato da Mar*.<sup>8</sup>

Those who exercised *arbitrium* were Venetian nobles who sought election to salaried governorships for the income they offered. Generally the first revenues collected *in loco* were destined to payment of the salary of the rector, as we can see already from the cameral accounts of Arbe in 1334-35, when the treasurer paid “pro salario domini comitis” (at the time Andrea Michiel) 1490 di piccoli (466 ducats) for two years, equal to 45 percent of gross revenues - most of which came from the administration of justice itself.<sup>9</sup> These were generally minor posts, with the exception of the larger cities, such as Zara, where in 1409 Venice sent “de’ primi della terra,” as Sanudo recounts, namely, as “count” Zaccaria Trevisan, *doctor utriusque iuris*, knight and humanist, with a salary of 1000 ducats and a large retinue, including two judges with salaries of 80 ducats each per year; as “captain” Pietro Arimondo, with the same salary and a smaller retinue. Both had recently been rectors in newly-acquired Padua, the most prestigious governorship in the Terraferma, proof that Venice meant to take as seriously its dominion in Dalmatia as that in the larger and neighboring mainland cities.<sup>10</sup> In 1421, the counts of Spalato and Traù received 600 gold ducats per year, while the count of Lesina received only 140 ducats.<sup>11</sup>

It is worth pointing out, particularly in the presence primarily of art historians, three visual “witnesses” to the presence of Venetian noblemen in governmental posts in Venice’s trans-Adriatic dominions. Very likely the earliest *tout court* is the first page of a “catasticus” of the town of Zupa Gerbili, in the contado of Cattaro, a fiscal census made in 1429 under the aegis of the Venetian count of Cattaro, Giovanni Balbi, copied onto parchment in 1457 by the Venetian notary and chancellor of the city, Giovanni di Luxia, and illuminated by a local artist. The illuminated page (see Plate 1) shows St. Trifone, the patron of Cattaro, the lion of St. Mark, patron of the Dominante, and the coat-of-arms of the Balbi family - all three images depicted in a typically central-European style, remote from anything that would have been produced in mid-Quattrocento Venice. The catasto is itself a very interesting and here-to-fore unknown fiscal document, in which the tax burden is divided into “carats” amongst the inhabitants, equally “inter nobiles et populares.” In 1450, just before this copy was made, the community of Zupa had revolted already for the third time against Cattaro and Venice, when the Dominante ordered the local feudal lord, voivod Stefano, to bring it back to obedience - if he wished to continue to receive his retainer of fifty ducats per month.<sup>12</sup> The second “witness,” particularly eloquent, is a painting attributed to Vettor Carpaccio and entitled “The Entry of the Podestà Sebastiano Contarini in Capodistria in 1517” (see Plate 2). The day when a governor officially entered a city to take over his post was the occasion for pomp and circumstance, replete with obvious political-symbolic connotations; it was not common, however, for the event to be immortalized in a painting, as in this case. The painting was preserved in the Municipal Museum of Capodistria but has not been seen since World War II, when it was “exported” to Italy. My showing this poor reproduction of an

---

<sup>8</sup> Gaetano Cozzi in Cozzi and Michael Knapton, *Storia della Repubblica di Venezia, dalla guerra di Chioggia alla riconquista della Terraferma* (Turin, 1986), 198-201; also Pederin, “Die Venezianische Verwaltung,” 137. For the case of Curzola, see Gherardo Ortalli, “Il ruolo degli statuti tra autonomie e dipendenze: Curzola e il dominio veneziano”, *Rivista storica italiana*, 98(1986):195-220. Regarding the appeal procedures, see Alfredo Viggiano, *Governanti e governati. Legittimità del potere ed esercizio dell'autorità sovrana nello Stato veneto della prima età moderna* (Treviso, 1993); the author’s subject of study is the Italian mainland (*Stato di Terraferma*) but he treats tangentially also the rectorships of Dalmatia; see pp. 77, 172-73.

<sup>9</sup> *Listine o odnošajih između Južnoga Slavenstva i Mletačke republike*, Šime Ljubić, ed., 10 vols. (Zagreb, 1868-91), Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum meridionalium, (hereafter simply Ljubić *Listine*, followed by volume numbers of the work, not of the series), 5:229-70.

<sup>10</sup> Sanudo, *Vite de’ duchi*, col. 845. For the extension of his term, in 1412, see Ljubić, *Listine*, 7:38. Note that Venice generally applied the term “count” in Dalmatia and Albania to the rector who elsewhere held the title “podestà.”

<sup>11</sup> The former received half their salary in Venice “ante tractum” and the balance *in loco* every three months, “de introitibus deinde”, while the latter, whose salary was registered as .720 di piccoli, received his from the local treasury; Ljubić, *Listine*, 8:72 ff., 79 ff.

<sup>12</sup> Bibliothèque Municipale of Roanne, France, Fonds Bouiller, ms no. 5, fol. 1. Ljubić, *Listine*, 9:318 (1450), and 409 (1451).

old black and white photograph<sup>13</sup> is meant as a plea that the painting be restored and returned to its rightful place. The third “witness” is an example of a common genre, the illuminated commission of the doge to a rector, containing the laws that were the basis of his activity as governor and chief magistrate. In this case, the commission was granted by doge Gerolamo Priuli in 1560 to Dolfino Valier, elected to the post of conte/podestà of Cattaro. As in many contemporary commissions for Venetian governorships, the figure of Justice predominates - underscoring the concept of *arbitrium* - but here (see Plate 3) she is flanked by another female figure in the act of pouring wine out of a goblet or chalice, perhaps a depiction of Faith, given Cattaro’s position then on the very frontier of western Christendom.<sup>14</sup>

How many paying posts were there for Venetians across the Adriatic? When Marin Sanudo traveled in Istria with the Venetian inspectors (Sindici) in 1483, he reported on twenty Venetian governors there, mostly with the title of podestà, from Capodistria to the smallest population center.<sup>15</sup> Another thirty posts, circa - for governors, castellans and treasurers - existed down the Dalmatian coast and into Albania, not counting viscountships and vice-captaincies, all held by Venetian nobles.<sup>16</sup> In short, the colonial administration across the Adriatic furnished jobs for over fifty Venetian nobles - about half of those in the entire Stato da mar - jobs that provided salaries and experience, both in politics and in commerce. Needless to say, their presence made possible direct control, not only of the judicial system, but of local commerce, especially in salt, the protection of forests for exploitation by the arsenal and of quarries, in the case of Istrian stone needed by the construction industry in Venice. Finally, as can be seen in Table 1, derived from lists compiled by Marin Sanudo in later years, there was also an extraordinarily large number of bishoprics, a point that will be taken up again below.

Table 1  
NOBLE POSTS AND BISHOPRICS ACROSS THE ADRIATIC  
(in 1493 and 1515)

REGION	LOCALITIES		OFFICES		BISHOPRICS	
	1493	1515	1493	1515	1493	1515
ISTRIA	20	18	22	20	4	4
DALMATIA	16	15	32	30	12	13
ALBANIA	3	2	4	3	3	2
	39	35	58	53	19	19

Source: Sanudo, *De origine*, 71-73, 278-79.

The Venetian colonial administration was supervised by “Sindics and provisors”, named as early as 1420 to travel to the cities of Dalmatia and Albania, as had long been the practice in Istria and in the Levantine colonies and naval bases, to guard against malfeasance in office. The earliest extant report presented to the Senate is that of 1525; it gives the names of the Venetian rectors (usually with the title of “count”) and treasurers then in office, their salary, the annual revenues and

<sup>13</sup> Taken from *L’opera completa del Carpaccio*, Guido Perocco, ed., *Classici dell’arte*, vol. 13 (Milan, 1967), pp. 111-12. It goes without saying, of course, that Carpaccio was conversant with Istria and Dalmatia, that his son Benedetto lived and worked in Capodistria, and that he painted for the Scuola degli Schiavoni or Dalmati in Venice.

<sup>14</sup> Bibliothèque Municipale of Roanne, Fonds Bouillier, ms. no. 15, fol. 1. A great many such commissions are to be found in the Biblioteca del Museo Civico Correr, Venice; for somewhat similar and contemporary illuminations, see mss, cl. III (Commissioni), nos. 104 (Umago, 1557), 289 (Verona, 1559).

<sup>15</sup> Cited by Arbel, “Le colonie d’oltremare.”

<sup>16</sup> Sanudo, *De origine*, 71-73, 152-53, 278-79; viscounts and vice-captains, always Venetian nobles, are mentioned in documents of the 1450s (see Ljubić, *Listine*, 10:31-61). Earlier in the fifteenth century there were at least seven Venetian rectors and a castellan in Albania, with annual salaries ranging from 1000 ducats down to 150 ducats, not counting the treasurers (camerlenghi); see Valentini, “Dell’amministrazione veneta in Albania,” 860-62. Also Mirto Etonti, “A proposito dell’Istria veneta: aspetti demografici e amministrativi”, *Studi veneziani*, n.s., 23 (1992):261-88.

expenditures of the treasury, and the number of able-bodied men (“uomini da fatti”). The data are summarized in Table 2, from which one can desume a few noteworthy points. First of all, in that year, after the loss of some Albanian cities to the Turks (in 1479 and 1501) and with the exclusion of Istria, 28 Venetian noblemen held salaried positions, from the Quarnero to Antivari, mostly with the title of count, some as treasurers, two as captains of garrisons, and one “Proveditore generale” over troops (stradioti) and garrisons; although the data are partial (three give no figure while Cattaro and Antivari paid the administrators in Slavonian perperi, at an unspecified rate of exchange), we can estimate the annual payments *in loco* for salaries at easily 5000 ducats; each official seems to have received an initial payment in Venice prior to departure, not included in the list.<sup>17</sup> Secondly, in eight cities expenditures exceeded revenues, while in three others the net balance was below 50 ducats. In short, the Venetian administration of Dalmatia was a deficit operation. According to this report of 1525, only the net revenues of Veglia could be called upon elsewhere, namely, to pay the garrison of Antivari; otherwise, it was the treasury of Vicenza that had to make up the deficit and pay the garrison of Spalato, while the salt works of Corfu sent saleable salt to make up the deficits of Cattaro and Budua. The biggest deficits were those of Cattaro, Zara and Sebenico. Finally, a census had obviously been made, that was particularly detailed only for Veglia (10,461 *anime* for the whole island) and Zara (6670 *anime* in the city alone, 23,459 including suburb, castles and islands); the able-bodied men recorded - potential defenders as well as galley oarsmen and sailors utilizable by Venice - total some 15,430.<sup>18</sup>

Table 2  
ASPECTS OF VENETIAN ADMINISTRATION IN DALMATIA, 1525  
(figures in ducats)

PLACE	RECTORS+ OFFICIALS	SALARIES	REVENUES (NET)	ABLE-BODIED MEN
Cherso & Ossero	1	111.5	300	500
Veglia	2	452	275	2500
Arbe	2	300	43	800
Pago	2	301	30	500
Zara	3	444	900	2630
Sebenico	3	457	600	2200
Traù	2	264	10	--
Spalato	2	430	-200	1200
Cattaro	3	3306 perp.	-1734 perp.	800
Budua	1	?	neg.	100
Antivari	2	1725 perp.	-100 perp.	300
Curzola	1	?	neg.	2000
Lesina	2	608	pos.	1000
Brazza	1	?	?	900

<sup>17</sup> On the “perpero of Slavonia” and Ragusa as worth 12 grossi of account, see Frederic C. Lane and Reinhold C. Mueller, *Money and Banking in Medieval and Renaissance Venice*, vol. 1: *Coins and Moneys of Account* (Baltimore, 1985), 295, 299, and Peter Spufford, *Handbook of Medieval Exchange* (London, 1986), 291, where the gold ducat about 1460 is rated 3.3 perperi. To align these salaries credibly with the others, in ducati correnti (the money of account used in converting the four figures given originally in lire di piccoli), the rate of exchange of the gold ducat in 1525 would have had to have been about 8 perperi.

<sup>18</sup> Not all were considered trustworthy: the populations of Antivari and Budua were singled out as prone to disobedience. S. Ljubić, ed., *Commissiones et relationes venetae*, vol. II (Zagabria, 1877), pp. 9-34. The detailed relation on Zara of 1528 was presented by Vettor di Nicolò d’Andrea Barbarigo, the grandson of Lane’s merchant of Venice, who had turned to public administration (see Frederic C. Lane, *Andrea Barbarigo, Merchant of Venice, 1418-1449* (Baltimore, 1944; reprinted New York, 1967). For the census data, see the relation in Ljubić, as cited in this note, p. 45. The financial deficit continued and worsened; see Pederin, “Die Venezianische Verwaltung,” 125-26. Valentini argues credibly, however, that despite the financial deficit, indirectly the Venetians profited from their dominions, especially in the commercial sector; “Dell’amministrazione veneta in Albania”, 885-99.

14 (7 islands)	27+1	3368 du. +5031 perperi	-----	15,430
----------------	------	---------------------------	-------	--------

Source: Š. Ljubić, ed., *Commissiones et relationes venetae*, 2:9-34

The Venetian civil administration was sustained by the ecclesiastical hierarchy and by religion. The presence of nineteen bishoprics, of which a dozen in Dalmatia alone, against twenty-five in the whole *Stato da mar*, reflects the attention paid to the *latinitas* of the coastal populations and their adherence to Roman Christianity - a bulwark against both the Orthodox Serbs and the infidel Turks. Venice in practice controlled all the ecclesiastical posts: major sees were reserved for Venetian nobles and candidates faithful to Venice were promoted when vacancies occurred in minor sees. That prerogative regarding precisely Dalmatia was assumed by the Senate in 1423 at the death of the bishop of Traù, “qui erat inimicus noster,” a situation that was not to be tolerated further.<sup>19</sup> Some twenty Venetian nobles were among those who held these ecclesiastical benefices in the Quattrocento; in the year 1512 six were nobles and one a Venetian *cittadino*, while four came from the Venetian Terraferma. The archbishopric of Zara was to be held exclusively by Venetians according to the pacts of submission of 1205 and after the purchase in 1409 it was in fact held by four nobles, from Biagio da Molin (1420-28) to Maffeo Valaresso, who alone was archbishop for nearly half a century (1450-95).<sup>20</sup> The secular and the ecclesiastical were in practice united arms of the colonial power; sometimes power was united in the same person: in the 1440s, for example, the *viceconte* of Cattaro was Marino Contarini, bishop of the same city.<sup>21</sup>

Religious and civil ritual also joined forces to underscore Venetian sovereignty; church space was used for public messages. Ever since the pacts of submission of Zara in 1205, lauds were to be sung at Christmas and Easter in honor of the Venetian officials:

Exaudi Christe...

-...Summo pontifici laus...

(choir): Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat.

-Serenissimo ac excellentissimo principi et domino nostro, gratiosissimo domino domino NN, Dei gratia inclito Duci veneciarum, etc., salus, honor, vita et victoria. (Christus vincit...)

-Illustrissimo NN archiepiscopo Jadrensi... (Christus vincit...)

-Illustrissimo domino domino NN, comiti et capitaneo nostro Jadrae, Laus, honor, dignitas et vita perpetua (Christus vincit...)

-Illustrissimo domino, domino NN, camerario et archispraefecto nostro Jadrae (Christus vincit...)

<sup>19</sup> The law reversed one of 1413, which had promised benefices in the subject territories to citizens of those territories: “Quod in episcopatus terrarum nostrarum Dalmatie, videlicet Sibenici, Spalati, Tragurii et in abbatia S. Grisogoni de Jadra non possint esse nisi Veneti nostri”. Ljubić, *Listine*, 8:231-32.

<sup>20</sup> On the role of the Senate in filling benefices during the Quattrocento, see Cozzi in Cozzi and Knapton, *Storia*, 233-43, and C. Cenci, “Senato Veneto: ‘probae’ ai benefizi ecclesiastici”, in C. Piana and C. Cenci, *Promozioni agli ordini sacri a Bologna e alle dignità ecclesiastiche nel Veneto nei secoli XIV-XV* (Quaracchi, 1968). For the names, see P.B. Gams, *Series episcoporum ecclesiae catholicae* (Ratisbona, 1873) and C. Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica medii aevi*, 3 vols. (Ratisbona, 1898-1910). For the list of 1512, see Sanudo, *De origine*, 196-98. The clauses of the pacts of submission of 1205 are in Vitaliano Brunelli, *Storia della città di Zara* (Venice, 1913), 373-74; new pacts were imposed after the suppression of each rebellion; *ibid.*, 406-74. Important for the Venetian control of benefices, even though dedicated to the Terraferma rather than to the *Stato da mar*, is Giuseppe Del Torre, “Stato regionale e benefizi ecclesiastici: vescovadi e canonicati nella Terraferma veneziana all’inizio dell’età moderna”, *Atti dell’Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti*, 51 (1992-93):1171-1236.

<sup>21</sup> Ljubić, *Listine*, 9:250.

Only beginning at this point were Zaran notables mentioned.<sup>22</sup>

These Lauds were sung in choir stalls for the cathedral canons, carved by Matteo Moronzon of Venice between 1418 and 1450 (see Plates 4-5), with the cathedra of the archbishop on the north side, decorated with his family coats-of-arms (Venetians after 1420: Biagio da Molin, 1420-28, Lorenzo Venier, 1428-49, Maffeo Valaresso, 1450-95) and facing him, on the south side, that of the Venetian count, each under a lion of St. Mark. These were clearly understandable public messages, as much so as were those sung at Lauds. Even the cathedral's bell tower reflects the Venetian presence: it was begun in 1480 by the same Archbishop Valaresso but construction was halted by his relatives who were concerned that he was spending private funds on the project.<sup>23</sup>

The veneration of St. Mark, patron of Venice, up and down the coast, had fundamental political connotations, since it was at the same time the lion of St. Mark that was displayed on all city gates as a symbol both of sovereignty and subjection. But also of protection, especially in the case of the *popolari*, the wealthy middle class, which constantly asked Venice's protection against the local nobility. The invocation is telling that opens the statutes of the confraternity of S. Giacomo in Zara, religious and political locus of aggregation of the *popolari*, statutes that had been confirmed by the very Council of Ten, as though it had been a Venetian confraternity: "Al nome de' santissimo et glorioso eterno Dio et de la sua madre vergine Maria et de miser San Marco evangelista et del buon miser San Jacomo de Galizia et del bon stado de la nostra illustrissima ducal signoria de Venexia, che Dio la salva et mantenga usque ad finem mundi. Amen." If this entreaty was earnest, the promise of the nobles of Cattaro in 1421 to go to the local church of San Marco annually in procession on the feast of St. Mark was perhaps more simply the acceptance of a new political reality. Finally, the anniversaries of the entry of Venetian officials in a city were made annual holidays: in Zara, 31 July, feast of the "Sacra Intrada"; in Sebenico, the governor staged a prize competition for archers and crossbowmen on the feast of SS. Simon and Jude, "the day on which we made our entry into the city of Sebenico."<sup>24</sup>

### *Venetian Coinage Policy*

The message of sovereignty and subjection is diffused even more readily via coinage, for circulating coins bear the symbols of "la Dominante": St. Mark in human guise on coins of value (ducats and groats), as a lion on coins of base metal. At the time of Venice's territorial expansion and the creation of the Stato da mar and the Stato di terraferma, the capital city assumed not only the jurisdiction over monetary matters but the very production of coin; in other words, Venice's mint undertook the production of coin for the new colonial territories and closed the mints that had operated there previously. This policy was first put into practice with the "tornesello," a small,

---

<sup>22</sup> Brunelli, *Storia*, 275-76, 373-74. The same obligation of lauds had been imposed on Ragusa in 1232, to be sung each feast of S. Biagio, patron of the city; see F. W. Carter, *Dubrovnik (Ragusa): A Classic City-State* (London, 1972), 88-91.

<sup>23</sup> The family seems to have had considerable interests in the area; Fantino Valaresso was bishop of Parenzo, 1415-26, before receiving a see in Crete; in 1436 a Giorgio Valaresso was count of Traù and in 1460 he had himself elected captain of Zara, at the same time that Maffeo was archbishop there; Giacomo Valaresso was bishop of Capodistria 1482-1503. For Giorgio Valaresso, see Giuseppe Praga's notes in BMV, It. cl. VI, 507 (12301), fasc. 31, f. 6; Ljubić, *Listine*, 10:220. On the choir stalls and the campanile, see T. G. Jackson, *Dalmatia, the Quarnero and Istria* (3 vols., Oxford, 1887), 1:275-81, Ivo Petricioli, *Umjetnička Obrada Drveta u Zadru u Doba Gotike* (Zagreb, 1972), 38-56, and Cirillo M. Iveković, *Dalmatiens Architektur und Plastik*, 6 vols. (Vienna, 1927), 3:116, and 4-5:126. My thanks to Samo Štefanac for providing the bibliography and the photographs. On the economic importance to Venetian noble families of the major benefices in the subject territories, see Angelo Ventura, "Considerazioni sull'agricoltura veneta e sulla accumulazione originaria del capitale nei secoli XVI e XVII", *Studi storici*, 9 (1968):677-80.

<sup>24</sup> On the cult of St. Mark, see the interventions at the congress entitled "San Marco: aspetti storici ed agiografici" (Venice, April 1994), especially Francesco Semi, "Il culto di San Marco nell'area istriano-dalmata" and Paola Ratti Vidoli, "La diffusione del culto di San Marco, protettore della Serenissima, nei nomi dei sudditi e in alcune piccole chiese lungo la Dalmazia e a Creta". The title page of the mariegola of S. Giacomo of Zara, 1488, is reproduced in Brunelli, *Storia*; see also Pederin, "Die Venezianische Verwaltung", 153. For Cattaro: Ljubić, *Listine*, 8:98; for Sebenico, *ibid.*, p. 65. The Cronaca dolfina (as cited above, n. 2) noted the names of the four Provveditori who made the "intrada" in Zara on 31 July 1409: Lunardo fu Piero Mocenigo, Francesco Corner fu Marco il doge, Antonio Contarini fu Marino, and Fantin Michiel.



largely copper coin produced - often mass-produced as a source of revenue - for the Greek colonies, beginning from the mid-fourteenth century. The mint then substituted its new issues for those previously produced by the signorial mints of Padua, Verona and Udine, as well as that of Pavia (Milan) as regards the territories of Brescia and Bergamo, between 1405 and 1428.

With Venice's reaffirmation of sovereignty over the Dalmatian and Albanian coastal cities in the fifteenth century, the problem was confronted in the same manner, but with a unique exception - that of Cattaro. Coins minted in Venice became legal tender also in Dalmatia; they had of course not ceased to circulate even under Hungarian overlordship and the Venetian lira di piccoli remained the major money of account.<sup>25</sup> Soon after retaking control of Zara, Venice sought in 1410 and 1414 to impose a new "soldo" especially for Zara and its territory, worth about one-third less than the Venetian soldo. The issue's measure of success in dominating the local circulation of coins - and in providing revenue for the treasury of Venice - however, cannot be known.<sup>26</sup>

The only exception to Venice's policy of closing local mints and undertaking to produce colonial coins in the Venetian mint itself is the case of Cattaro. This mint was permitted to continue to produce its traditional coins, according to a privilege of 1423 that begins: "quod in Catharo cudatur moneta iuxta suas consuetudines." The coins fit into a purely local system of money of account, the "Slavonian perpero," but at some point they were called "grossetti" and "quattrini", the former supposedly worth two-thirds of a Venetian grosso. The diecutters clearly remained the same local artisans of before, as is immediately apparent from the iconography, but they adapted the symbols to carry the message of their new Venetian overlords.<sup>27</sup> A grossetto and two quattrini are sufficient to exemplify the mint production in Venetian Cattaro during the Quattrocento. On the first of these (see Plate 6), St. Mark is represented in a manner very similar to that, used previously, of the kings of Rascia (Serbia) - kings who, by the way, had imitated Venetian grossi a century earlier, as Dante noted<sup>28</sup> - seated on a throne, but with a halo and holding a pen in the right hand, in the left the gospel. On the reverse is St. Trifone, patron of Cattaro, represented rather like the Redeemer on Venetian ducats, but holding the palm of martyrdom in his right hand. While this coin is undated, the first of the quattrini dates from the rectorship of Giovanni Balbi, 1427-29, in the first decade of operation of the mint of Venetian Cattaro, when the above-mentioned Catastico of Zupa di Cattaro was redacted; the second dates from that of Priamo Tron (1488-89). Each has the lion of St. Mark on the obverse, S. Trifone on the reverse (see Plates 7-8).

It is possible that the concession granted to Cattaro soon after its submission to Venice to depict the local patron-saint on the coins gave the authorities in the capital the idea - toward the end of the Quattrocento - of delimiting the radius of circulation on petty coins by portraying the local patrons on coins of several subject cities. These pennies (or "bagattini") were struck in Venice, only upon authorization of the Council of Ten (which had taken jurisdiction over the mint in 1472), after Venice had learned the hard way during the central decades of the century that highly overvalued pennies that could circulate anywhere were readily counterfeited and caused inflation. Now the Ten were adamant to control each issue, so as to avoid inflation and keep the value of the ducat stable (pegged at 124 soldi to the ducat). The experiment was first tried with Sebenico, which had petitioned for an issue, given the dearth of small change, in 1485. That began a series of issues for five Dalmatian cities, next to only one (Treviso, in 1492) in the Terraferma. Each issue had the same obverse: the winged lion of St. Mark, crouched and facing front (similar to the reverse of the

---

<sup>25</sup> Antonio Teja, *Aspetti della vita economica di Zara dal 1280 al 1409*, 3 vols. (Zara, 1936-42), 1: *La pratica bancaria*; Teja's exchange rates for Zara were included in Appendix D, Table D.3 of Frederic C. Lane and Reinhold C. Mueller, *Money and Banking in Medieval and Renaissance Venice*, vol. 1: *Coins and Moneys of Account* (Baltimore, 1985), since the city formed part of Venice's economic sphere of influence, even when not directly subject to Venice politically.

<sup>26</sup> See Reinhold C. Mueller, "L'imperialismo monetario veneziano nel Quattrocento", *Società e storia*, 8 (1980):277-97 (especially p. 283), and Lane-Mueller, *Money and Banking*, 1:523-24.

<sup>27</sup> Vincenzo Lazari, *Le monete dei possedimenti veneziani di oltremare e di terraferma, descritte ed illustrate* (Venice, 1851). The authorizations are in *Il "Capitolare dalle broche" della zecca di Venezia (1358-1556)*, ed. G. Bonfiglio Dosio (Padua, 1984); see index, under the names of the cities.

<sup>28</sup> Lane-Mueller, *Money and Banking*, 1:262-68. My thanks to the director of the Museo Bottacin, Padua, for aid in selecting the coins and for the photographs.

“tornesello,” the base coin struck for the Greek dependencies). The reverse of the five issues, on the other hand, was distinguished by the patron saint of each of the cities: St. Michael for Sebenico, St. Simon the Prophet for Zara, St. Doimo for Spalato, St. Laurence for Traù, St. Stephan for Lesina. (See Plates 9-13.) These coins, in base alloy and weighing just over 1 gram, were issued very sparingly, and then only on condition that the subject city consign the corresponding value in good gold or silver coin.<sup>29</sup>

### III. THE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE AND PEOPLES ACROSS THE ADRIATIC

#### *Intellectuals, Professionals, Merchants*

I will leave to others the high level contacts in the Quattrocento among intellectuals of the two coasts, such as the Franciscan preacher Iacopo delle Marche, who recounts having witnessed a miracle that saved the ship on which he was making the crossing from Segna to Rimini around 1450,<sup>30</sup> or Ciriaco d’Ancona, in Dalmatia in 1453, or Benedetto Cotrugli, Raguseo, author in 1458 of a merchant manual, or Luca Pacioli who, after having tutored students in Venice, spent the year 1480 in Zara, where he wrote a (lost) treatise on arithmetic, or Cornelio Cippico, nobleman of Traù and humanist, who was an officer on the galley commanded by Pietro Mocenigo in 1470-74 against the Turks and narrator of his feats, or, finally, Georgius Tragurinus and his son Marco who attended in Venice in 1508 the public lecture of Pacioli on Euclid.<sup>31</sup> Similarly well-known is the sector of commercial exchange, especially with regard to Zara and Ragusa, where the contribution of Venetian merchants was considerable; through Ragusa, in particular, Venice could tap an alternative source of silver, produced by mines in Bosnia - a topic that would warrant a treatment on its own.<sup>32</sup> Perhaps less well known, however, are two lower levels of intellectual exchange.

Since Dalmatia lacked a university, Venice and the Veneto were often called upon to provide the municipal medical doctors and school teachers needed there. Since these professionals were paid by the local treasuries of the Venetian administration and since there was competition to get and keep the best candidates available, they are often mentioned in the documents. The best evidence of active recruitment of doctors in Venice comes from Ragusa, both during and after direct Venetian domination. Cases dating from as early as 1295 till 1385 have been found and it has been shown that when Ragusa’s sindics were unable to find candidates in Venice or Padua, they extended their searches to Bologna, Mantua, Parma, Lucca and even Salerno.<sup>33</sup> Later examples of recruitment by other Dalmatian cities can also be found. Jacobino de’ Mainenti, doctor and humanist, served in Zara 1382-98; when he returned to Italy he was known as “phiscus Jadre.” Nicolino de’ Nicolini of Padua, fisicus, earned 200 ducats and had a rent-free house as doctor in Sebenico in 1422; in the same year Zara petitioned for a second doctor, needed in that time of

---

<sup>29</sup> Thus guaranteeing a high percentage profit (seigniorage) to the Venetian treasury, albeit on small total values. The issues of pennies for the dependencies - Padua, Treviso, Zara, Spalato, Lesina, Traù, Antivari - were ordered made in pure copper in 1519 and homologized, since the difference in weight and value for different areas had created unnecessary expense (“grande spesa, dispendio et fatica”); Nicolò Papadopoli-Aldobrandini, *Le monete di Venezia*, 4 vols. (Venice, 1893-1919), 2:632-33.

<sup>30</sup> S. Iacobus de Marchia, *Sermones dominicales*, Renato Lioi, OFM, ed., 4 vols. (Falconara, 1978-82), 4:80, n. 99.

<sup>31</sup> See Benedetto Cotrugli, Raguseo, *Il libro dell’arte di mercatura*, ed. Ugo Tucci (Venice, 1990); Luca Pacioli, *Trattato di partita doppia, Venezia 1494*, ed. Annalisa Conterio (Venice, 1994), 47-48 and n. 26.

<sup>32</sup> See Raukar, as cited above. Also Bariša Krekić, “Contributions of foreigners to Dubrovnik’s Economic Growth in the late Middle Ages”, *Viator*, 9 (1978):375-94; idem, “Un mercante e diplomatico da Dubrovnik (Ragusa) a Venezia nel Trecento”, *Studi veneziani*, 9 (1967):71-101; idem, “Italian Creditors in Dubrovnik (Ragusa) and the Balkan Trade, Thirteenth through Fifteenth Centuries”, *The Dawn of Modern Banking* (New Haven, 1979); these and other articles were collected in his *Dubrovnik, Italy and the Balkans in the Late Middle Ages* (London, 1980). Most recently, Ivan Pederin, “Das Venezianische Handelssystem und die Handelspolitik in Dalmatien (1409-1797)”, *Studi veneziani*, n.s., 14 (1987):91-177.

<sup>33</sup> Susan Mosher Stuard, “A Communal Program of Medical Care: Medieval Ragusa/Dubrovnik”, *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 28 (1973):126-42. The author recounts three occasions, moreover, in which even the “protomagister arsenatus” of Ragusa was hired from Venice (p. 135).

plague; in 1446 “maestro” Zan Fedel, “fisico e ciroyco,” threatened to leave Cattaro and asked an increase in salary (which Venice refused).<sup>34</sup> As regards schoolmasters, the case of Traù is particularly interesting. There, beginning 1443 at the latest, the Council recruited schoolmasters directly in Venice. It regularly authorized its envoys and representatives in Venice to negotiate with prospective candidates (“quod invenire deberent unum magistrum scholarum aptum, sufficientem et doctum”), offering them 300 lire di piccoli as annual salary, a free house and a two-year contract. In this manner, a kind of humanistic school was founded and maintained in the city; from 1479 to 1495 the master was Palladio Fosca of Padua.<sup>35</sup>

Merchants, of course, tended to move continually back and forth. It was probably rare that Venetian nobles with economic interests in Dalmatia actually married into the local nobility, but there is at least one case of some interest. Early in the Quattrocento Agnesina, daughter of Donato Giustinian, was given in marriage to messer Luca Cosićić (Chosichi, Choxicich), knight of Sebenico. When he died, probably in 1430, he left to her extensive arable lands and vineyards, of which a detailed inventory, listing each parcel with its *lavorante*, remains. Dionisio, Agnesina’s brother, travelled often to Sebenico. In 1463 the family purchased half a palace in the quarter called “Oriental,” with five shops on the ground floor, rented especially to shoemakers. Sometime thereafter, the heir to the property (either Alvise or his son Zaccaria), upon making his testament, gave the usufruct in life to a brother, Zorzi, primicerio of the cathedral chapter in Sebenico (note another ecclesiastical benefice in the hands of a Venetian noble), and had a drawing made (see Plate 14). The drawing cannot be later than about 1470 - and lacks credibility completely; the Renaissance style would have been very progressive for Venice at the time and architectural historians have always assumed a “lag” in the passage of styles to the other shore of the Adriatic; in short, the style ought to be Venetian gothic. The drawing was most likely made in Venice by someone who had no more than a description of the palace to work from. Be that as it may, the family continued to have interests in Sebenico in the following century, for in 1525 we find a Dionisio Giustinian on the payroll there as castellan.<sup>36</sup>

### *Venetian citizenship*

Movement in the other direction at the level of merchants and artisans can be traced in part through grants of citizenship, in part through the foundation of the confraternity or Scuola degli Schiavoni of Sts. George, Trifone and Jerome. Alas, of the latter little for the Quattrocento can be known, beyond the date of foundation, 1451, and the grant of an indulgence by Cardinal Bessarion in 1464.

First of all, when Venice took definitive control of Dalmatia, the Zaratini petitioned for full rights of Venetian citizenship; Venice responded with a blanket privilege, similar to that granted to the conquered cities of the Terraferma, namely, that citizens of Zara were Venetian citizens, but only “de intus,” a status of practical value only if one wished to move to Venice and open a retail shop or invest in Venetian government bonds.<sup>37</sup> That privilege seems never formally to have been extended to citizens of the rest of Dalmatia, but the extension was somehow taken for granted. When in 1444 a bishop (Giovanni de Dominis, bishop of Varadino), a native of Arbe, wanted to

---

<sup>34</sup> BMV, Carte G. Praga, It. cl. VI, 506 (12300), fasc. 27, and Ljubić, *Listine*, 8:149, 168; 9:251.

<sup>35</sup> BMV, Carte G. Praga, It. cl. VI, 507 (12301), fasc. 31, passim.

<sup>36</sup> Archivio di Stato di Venezia (hereafter ASV), Procuratori di San Marco (hereafter PSM), Misti, b. 10, fasc. 9-10; the family had a commercial company also in Corfù, for which an account book dated 1440-44 is extant, further proof of their interest in the eastern Adriatic area in general (fasc. 11); an Andrea Giustinian was count in Lesina in 1488 (see the letter addressed to him by Cristoforo di Pavia, “pictor in Liesina”, fasc. 7). The testament of Agnesina (of 1434, “published” at her death in 1452) is in ASV, Notarile, Testamenti, b. 1157 (atti Croce), prot. II, fol. 59; it names her deceased husband but refers only generically to her real estate holdings, which she bequeathed to her brothers and their legitimate heirs, “non in capite sed in stirpem”. The mention of Dionisio Giustinian in 1525 is in the report of the Sindics, as cited above. (My thanks to Jürgen Schulz for drawing attention to the pitfalls inherent in this architectural drawing.)

<sup>37</sup> The privilege was published by Ljubić, *Listine*, 6:11-12 (5 September 1409); see also Cozzi in Cozzi-Knapton, *Storia*, 137-38.

invest in government bonds, he asked the Venetian Signory whether he was considered a foreigner and would thus need a license. The answer was negative: “quod episcopus non est forensis sed ipse et eius fratres sunt cives arbenses, subditi nostri Dalmatini, et quod cives Jadrenses tractantur tamquam cives Venetiarum de intus et per consequens alii nostri cives et subditi Dalmatini non habentur esse forenses.”<sup>38</sup> Doubts were expressed regarding the status of citizens of Sebenico later in the century, when an envoy claimed that in the very treaty of surrender it had been granted that citizens were to be treated as Venetians (“quod debent haberi et tractari pro Veneti”); the matter was important, for citizenship meant lower customs rates if understood as *civitas de extra*; surprisingly, the Council of Ten ordered the customs office to treat “Sibinicenses tamquam Venetos,” although it carefully avoided further specification.<sup>39</sup>

Who were the persons who, as individuals, received grants of citizenship, either honorary or as actual immigrants to Venice? In a data base of some 3650 grants of naturalization, about 130 indicated their place of origin as in Istria, Dalmatia or Albania. Some 25 of these were honorary grants of Venetian noble status to local feudatories in small buffer states that Venice tried to keep on its side with privileges and incomes. One well-known example will suffice, that of Sandalj Hranic, vojvod of Bosnia, whose fief controlled the entry to the Bay of Cattaro. Made honorary citizen in January 1411, Sandalj in April sold Ostroviza and ceded Scardona to Venice; then he deposited 12,000 ducats (of which 5000 received from Venice) in the Camera del Frumento, a kind of public savings bank in Venice, for about 18 months at 4 percent interest. In 1429 Venice donated to the Croatian lord a palace in Venice, in the parish of S. Trinita, with full rights of ownership; he also received a house in Cattaro and a retainer of 600 ducats per year payable by the salt office of Cattaro - privileges passed on in 1436 to his successor, vojvod Stefano. At his death, Sandalj donated the *castrum* of Novi, at the mouth of the bay, to Cattaro.<sup>40</sup> Venice’s attempt to bind the interests of these small feudal lords to the interests of Venice did not always meet with the same success.

Two examples, a century apart, from the rather short list of permanent immigrants who applied for citizenship. The first regards a well-known privilege granted in 1366 to a painter from Zara - “Nicoletus pictor, quondam magistri Cipriani de Jadra” - who had lived in Venice ever since he was a boy, with the exception of five years, during which time he had been an apprentice of Paolo Veneziano.<sup>41</sup> The other regards a gold- and silversmith known throughout the second half of the Quattrocento simply as Zorzi Orese of Ragusa (he himself used only once the surname de Alegretis), to whom full citizenship was granted in 1460. Zorzi worked as an artisan - we know of a commission for a garment of cloth-of-gold, with six gold buttons ordered by a feudatory of Bosnia, Lanzilago Vochotich, about 1470. But primarily Zorzi owned a shop for refining of gold and silver, run by the goldsmiths Marco da Ragusa and Nicolò di Giovanni, and during the last quarter of the century he was one of the principal bullion merchants in Venice, a major supplier to the Venetian mint. Very likely he had special contacts back in Ragusa through whom he could import Bosnian silver to Venice. Bullion was a risky investment, however, and when Zorzi died in late 1491, his son found him to be indebted for 40,000 ducats - including 7700 ducats owed to the Archbishop of

---

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., and ASV, Collegio, Notatorio, reg. 8, fol. 11v (10 July 1444).

<sup>39</sup> The envoy had complained that citizens of Sebenico were being forced by the Extraordinari to pay customs on their ships as foreigners (“cogantur ad solutionem pro navigiis eorum tamquam extranei et forenses”). The Ten reached its decision on the basis of the privilege granted in 1412 and of earlier rulings by the same Council in 1486, 1488 and February 1493. This was an important ruling for it had the effect of considering these subjects as citizens “de extra”, that is, with the rights of Venetians in maritime commerce, not merely citizens “de intus”, as the privilege for Zara and the Terraferma cities clearly read. ASV, Capi del Consiglio dei Dieci, Notatorio, reg. 2, fol. 71v (9 December 1493).

<sup>40</sup> Reinhold C. Mueller, “La Camera del frumento: un ‘Banco pubblico’ veneziano e i gruzzoli dei signori di Terraferma”, in *Istituzioni, società e potere nella marca trevigiana e veronese (secoli XIII-XIV)*, ed. Gherardo Ortalli and Michael Knapton (Rome, 1988), 350-54. Ljubić, *Listine*, 6:127-28; 9:35-36, 77-78, 88. On the protection offered to the cities against these feudal lords, see Pederin, “Die Venezianische Verwaltung”, 102.

<sup>41</sup> See Michelangelo Muraro, *Paolo da Venezia* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1970), 80, n. 142, and 85.

Spalato.<sup>42</sup> A final example worth mentioning concerns an immigrant from Cattaro, Andrea di Iacopo Paltašić, a printer whose shop in Venice produced over forty titles between 1477 and 1499.<sup>43</sup> No matter how important, such cases were exceptional. Were we to restrict our attention to them, we would miss the massive immigration from the eastern Adriatic of seamen and servants. Both formed an essential part of the labor force in Venice but they left little precise documentary evidence behind - with the exception of criminal records, where immigrants from Istria and Dalmatia, including female servants, were second only to natives of the Veneto among foreigners sentenced for theft, beginning in the later thirteenth century.<sup>44</sup>

### *Immigration and the labor force: seamen and servants* Galeotti

Already in the fourteenth century and from then onward increasingly, Venetian “great” galleys (“da mercato”) and light war galleys alike depended upon recruiting Dalmatian, Albanian and Greek rowers to fill out their crews as they headed down the eastern side of the Adriatic. “Interzare” was the term that came to be used: hiring the third man on a bench; but in practice shipmasters often left the port of Venice with many fewer rowers, knowing they could recruit as many as half or two-thirds of the crew in Dalmatia. Even those who signed on in Venice were often immigrants from Dalmatia. For example, the fleet outfitted in 1499 against the Turks needed about 20,000 men; of these only some 5000 were Venetians; 13 galleys were completely manned by Dalmatians, many others by conscripts from the Terraferma - but Benedetto da Pesaro, the commander, said that one galley of “Schiavoni” was worth 20 of “Lombardi.” The Dalmatians were prized as rowers and sailors but also as men willing to work for less pay, even half or one-third that paid in Venice, wrote Frederic Lane, who cited this passage from Donato Gianotti (ca. 1525): “A vogadori non si usa dare molto gran stipendio perchè tutte queste galere s’armano in alcuni luoghi, siccome nella riviera di Schiavonia e Dalmazia, dove gli abitatori, essendo poveri, per poco prezzo pigliano tale impresa volentieri.”<sup>45</sup>

Inside views of a galley crew are rare. A first occasion: In 1396 members of the crews of two Venetian “Flanders” galleys staged a strike for wages, a kind of mutiny, while the galleys were moored in the port of London. The ringleaders, who assembled many other crewmen ashore, were an Albanian, two Ragusans (one of whom was so proud of his native city that he denigrated Venice in front of an officer), a man from Spalato, and two Venetians. They divided their authority: one was elected “king” of the Albanians, another “caput Sclavonorum,” a third leader of Latins, Venetians and Greeks. Further details are not given in the case but the “national” make-up of the crews is credibly reflected by that of the leadership.<sup>46</sup> A second occasion: a notary’s log for voyages of “Flanders” and Barbary galleys in the 1470s names 27 rowers: 13 of them, plus a boy and a petty officer, are Dalmatians. A third: the wages paid to the whole crew of oarsmen on a Flanders galley of 1504 are registered in an account book; according to Ugo Tucci, who studied it, the places of origin of the crew members, all of whom were recruited in Venice, were overwhelmingly

---

<sup>42</sup> Zorzi was in Venice by 1450, when he was sentenced to prison for stabbing another goldsmith (ASV, Quarantia criminal, reg. 18, fol. 94v). For the commission, see the suit brought by the feudatory in Giudici di petizion, Sentenze a giustizia, reg. 161, fols. 36v-39 (21 July 1475). The refinery is described in another suit against Zorzi: *ibid.*, reg. 172, fols. 57v-59v (17 June 1480). His bankrupt son’s petition for a safeconduct was granted by the Senate: Senato Terra, reg. 11, fols. 92-93v (9 January 1492).

<sup>43</sup> Miloš Milošević, “A court procedure between Andria Paltašić and his partner..., in 1477” (in Cyrillic characters with English summary; 1994).

<sup>44</sup> Stefano Piasentini, *“Alla luce della luna”: I furti a Venezia, 1270-1403* (Venice, 1992), especially p. 261.

<sup>45</sup> Frederic C. Lane, *Studies in Venetian Social and Economic History*, Benjamin G. Kohl and Reinhold C. Mueller, eds. (London, 1987), VIII, 160, 166; X, 18, 24, 31-32. Also Knapton in Cozzi-Knapton, *Storia*, 295.

<sup>46</sup> The case, mentioned by Alain Ducellier, “Albanais dans les Balkans et en Italie à la fin du Moyen Age: courants migratoires et connivences socio-culturelles”, in *Les migrazioni in Europa, secc. XIII-XVIII*, Simonetta Cavaciocchi, ed., *Atti delle Settimane di Studi of the Istituto internazionale di storia economica “F. Datini”*, 25 (Florence, 1994), 257, has been studied thoroughly by Stefano Piasentini in “La setta di Londra: un ammutinamento di ciurme veneziane del 1396”, *Studi storici*, in press.

Dalmatian, especially from the area of the Bay of Cattaro, against only ten Venetians and smaller groups of Albanians and Greeks, as well as two Montenegrans and a Serb.<sup>47</sup> In short, for centuries Venetian galleys were in a position to operate, in peace or in war, only with crews recruited directly in Dalmatia or in Venice but made up of immigrants from Dalmatia. Not surprisingly, it was not until the mid-sixteenth century that Venice allowed the formation of a guild of seamen.

### *Slavery and indentured servitude*

“Zara zarattini e compra i nostri schiavolini.” The saying that Sanudo reports had originated in 1409 plays consciously on the linguistic ambiguity slavo-schiavo, Slavonia-Schiavonia. It probably originated when Venetian authorities, in order to get back the Zaratini sequestered on Apulian ships by commanders contrary to the king of Naples’ sale of the city, had to convince them the Zaratini had been purchased by Venice together with the city of Zara. Here I do not intend to deal with the slave trade as such<sup>48</sup> but merely to recount a court case and analyse two account books that reflect the transport of unfree persons and the immigration of servants from Dalmatia and Albania to Venice in the Quattrocento.

It should be said, first of all, that Ragusa outlawed trading in slaves within the city in 1416-18, in a deliberation that opens with an extremely enlightened preamble about the abomination of reducing human beings, made to the image and likeness of the Creator, to merchandize.<sup>49</sup> This at a time when the Turks had begun ravaging in the hinterland, creating a flood of refugees, not all Roman Christians, who were a prime target for slave-traders. In 1436 a certain Giacomo di Sovero filed a suit for damages before the Venetian commercial court against Tommaso da Zara, already held in prison, for having stolen 15 slaves (“teste”) that he had purchased in Cattaro. His plea is telling: in 1419, he had concluded a barter agreement in Cattaro, receiving silver for his merchandise. Right at that time, the Turks were pillaging the countryside in Bosnia and the pope, he asserted, had conceded to the “signore” (perhaps the king of Serbia or one of the independent voivods, like Sandalj Hranić) the right to sell to Christians as slaves persons who had been displaced by the raids, rather than let them be enslaved by the Turks and sold in Turkey. On that basis, recounted Giacomo, I bought 15 “heads” (*teste*); but since the authorities refused to allow the slaves to be exported if they had once entered the city, he had to keep them in a vineyard and asked Tommaso da Zara to deliver them to his ship. According to Giacomo, Tommaso appropriated them and sold them as his own. Giacomo won the suit - seemingly after 17 years - and Tommaso was sentenced to restitute the 15 “empticias seu testes” and pay 200 ducats damages.<sup>50</sup> The judges must have had evidence, not reported, that Tommaso had sold the slaves in Venice, where the slave trade was legal.

If this represents an isolated case, much more significant were the importation and immigration of Dalmatian servants. The use of indentured servants in Venice, a practice utilized later in colonial America, created a condition of semi-slavery or semi-freedom, from which actual slavery was only a step away. All of the known cases regard persons transported to Venice from the eastern coast of the Adriatic. The practice seems to have been in place already in 1386, when the Venetian Capi dei Sestieri fixed the conditions for the crossing by ship and by boat, especially of Albanians: they could come as free persons for 6 ducats or sign an indenture for four years, that is, an agreement to work off their passage in the service of the persons to whom ship-captains “sold” them. The conditions were raised in 1391 to eight ducats or an indenture of six years. According to Alain

---

<sup>47</sup> Lucia Greco, “Sulle rotte delle galere veneziane: il cartulario di bordo del prete notaio Giovanni Manzini (1471-1486)”, *Archivio Veneto*, series V, vol. 137 (1991):28-29. Ugo Tucci, “Costi e ricavi di una galera veneziana ai primi del Cinquecento”, reprinted in his *Mercanti, navi, monete nel Cinquecento veneziano* (Bologna, 1981), 188-189.

<sup>48</sup> For which see Antonia Teja, *La schiavitù domestica ed il traffico degli schiavi*, vol. II (1941) of his *Aspetti della vita economica di Zara dal 1289 al 1409* (3 vols., Zara, 1936-42); and Susan Mosher Stuard, “Urban domestic slavery in medieval Ragusa”, *Journal of Medieval History*, 9 (1983):155-71.

<sup>49</sup> Krekić, *Dubrovnik in the 14th and 15th Centuries*, 37-38.

<sup>50</sup> “Et perchè in quella volta l’era i Turchi corsi in Bossina, et robava el paixe, e per el Sancto Padre papa fo conzesso che tuti che comprava teste lo signore le podesse vendere a Cristiani avanti le fosse vendudi in Turchia....” ASV, GP, Sag, reg. 69, fols. 1r-1bis (28 September 1436).

Ducellier, the deals ceased after 1396 when most of Albania submitted to Venetian sovereignty, only to be revived in the period 1420-50 with, as objects of the trade, both Dalmatians and Albanians. And he gives an example of the way that misery forced people even to trade their own family members: the case of a young woman of Ragusa who declared, before a notary in 1418, that she refused to accompany her husband on the crossing to Apulia, on the suspicion that he meant to sell her there to Venetian merchants.<sup>51</sup>

It is probable that the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 stimulated the trade, in that it made importation of Circassian and Tartar slaves from the Black Sea area, the traditional source of slaves sold in Venice, much more difficult. In any case, it is from that time that we find direct testimony, in the account books of two Venetian noblemen, that both indentured servitude and free domestic service, both based on immigrants from Dalmatia and Albania, were widespread and common.

In 1462 Nicolò and Alvisè Barbarigo, sons of the Andrea Barbarigo made famous by Frederic Lane, registered the first of nine indentures at the office of the Capi dei Sestieri; the last was registered in 1477; four were male (*fameio, famiglio*), five female (*fantasca*). The official registration (of which Nicolò noted the details) was clearly aimed at protecting the rights of the servant, for the number of years of the indenture and the amount promised at the end of the contract were carefully recorded. The data are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3  
INDENTURED SERVANTS OF THE BARBARIGO FAMILY, 1462-77  
(contracts registered with the Capi dei Sestieri)

DATE	NAME, TERM OF INDENTURE, WAGE AT TERM
26.2.1462	Gasparo, 5 years, 8 ducats.
5.7.1462	Manoli da Modon, 4 years, 7 ducats.
13.4.1463	Perussa da Cattaro, 7 years, 10 ducats.
3.12.1465	Caterina da Sebenico, 9 years, 10 ducats, "of which (blank) owed to the ship that transported her to Venice."
8.6.1468	Nicola da Lesina, 7 years, 10 ducats, of which 4 di piccoli given to the boat (barchoxo) that brought him. Annotation: 3.7.1475 "El dito fo pagado, apar a conto de spese straordinarie" [= reg. 6, ledger, fol. 141], after exactly 7 years.
23.10.1469	Maddelena da Cattaro, 8 years, 10 ducats, plus 2 to the "barcha" that conducted her to Venice. Annotation: 15.2.1479 "la ditta fo pagada."
1.8.1474	Agnese da Scuttari, 8 years, 10 ducats, plus 2 to the "barcha". Annotation: "La ditta schanpò da nui a dì 5 ottobre 1479 a Montebelluna per esser graveda".
6.4.1475	Piro da Clissa, 8 years, 10 ducats plus 2 to the barca.
8.3.1477	Vissa da Budua ("la qual chiamemo Catarina"), 7 years, 10 ducats, plus 2 to the barca.

Source: ASV, Archivio Grimani-Barbarigo, b. 43, reg. 5 (journal, fol. 1) and reg. 6 (ledger; see rubric, under the names)

One would have to study the accounts more closely to find expenditures actually made for these servants and eventual news about them. In any case, the Barbarigo family clearly considered indentures a good method for guaranteeing domestic labor services. Evidence that these people were used more on the family's landed estate at Montebelluna than at the palace on the Grand Canal at S. Barnaba are the annotations that Agnese da Scuttari, having become pregnant, ran away while there, clearly without pay for five years' service, and that Caterina "schiavona," that is, Caterina da Sebenico, was given in marriage to Sacoman of the nearby Montello, in 1472, two years before the termination of her indenture. Some stayed on, like Maddelena da Cattaro, who received a salary of 4 ducats per year after working off her indenture; others probably offered their services

<sup>51</sup> Lane, *Venice a Maritime Republic*, 332-33, and Cozzi in Cozzi-Knapton, *Storia*, 201. Ducellier, "Albanais," 254-56.

elsewhere, once they had regained their freedom. A century later we still find as servants in the Barbarigo family immigrants from Dalmatia, now salaried rather than indentured.<sup>52</sup> Guglielmo Querini was a bachelor merchant, born about 1400 and died in 1468; when he was getting on in years, he had continual recourse to male servants; he even hired a nobleman (Lorenzo di Lorenzo Morosini), probably more as a companion than as a “governante,” for the very high salary of 50 ducats per year (1459); the other seven servants were all “Schiavoni,” hired for a tenth of that, but with regular one-year contracts. They were thus free men, but very likely persons who had originally come over as indentured servants; in any case, they were usually referenced, since Querini often gives the name of the person, always a nobleman, with whom they had served previously; one who could not provide a reference was brought in on a trial basis (“a prova”). The data are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4  
DALMATIAN SERVANTS HIRED BY GUGLIEMO QUERINI, 1459-66

YEAR	NAME	SALARY
1459	Lorenzo di Lorenzo Morosini	50 du. p.a.
1460	Bartolomeo “schiavon” da Sebenico	£ 42 di pic. per mo.
1461	Nicolò del teren di sopra Segna steva con Nicolò Capello	£ 4 di pic. per mo.
1464	Zorzi da Cattaro	£ 4 di pic. per mo.
1465 Mar.	Nicolò da Veglia	£ 4 di pic. per mo.
----- Oct.	Luca schiavon, a prova for 2-3 mo.	5 du. p.a.
----- Oct.	Matio schiavon, stete con Andrea Boldù	6 du. p.a.
----- Nov.	Zane schiavon, stete con Zian Mocenigo, cavalier	7 du. p.a.
1466 June	Francesco da Spalato, stete con ser Mafio Zustignan	£ 3 di pic. per mo.

Source: ASV, PSM, Citra, b. 271, vacchetta, fols. 221v, 224, 226v-227, 234v, 235v-236 (modern numbering).

It might be pointed out that servants were not the only Dalmatians with whom Querini came into contact, for Zorzi Traù (de Tragurio), qd. Antonio, was shipmaster (“patron”) of a “naveta” of which Querini was part-owner.<sup>53</sup>

Comparison of the two situations shows just how well the Barbarigo brothers did: paying only 2 ducats for the crossing gave them the right to 5-10 years service, for which, at the end, they spent an average of only 1 ducat per year, compared to the salaries of 5-8 ducats per year that Querini was required to pay.

The idea that one gets, if only from two cases, is one of a very evident presence in Venice of male and female servants from Dalmatia and Albania, many of whom were probably indentured before being able to contract freely on their own account, all of whom were at the same time pushed by poverty in their places of origin and attracted by opportunities offered by the great capital city of the colonial empire, to whose well-being they contributed.

...

One can only conclude this account of relations between Venice and the eastern Adriatic in the Renaissance by underscoring the obvious theme, dear to Frederic Lane, of the profits that derive

<sup>52</sup> ASV, Archivio Grimani-Barbarigo, b. 43, reg. 5, the journal, fol. 1, and reg. 6, the ledger (see the rubric, under the names, and fol. 39, “Spese de maridar Caterina schiavona”). For the later period, see the unnumbered “vacchettone” dated 1569-81 in the same series, b. 47.

<sup>53</sup> ASV, PSM, Citra, b. 271; for a portrait of Querini as merchant, see Gino Luzzatto, “L’attività commerciale di un patrizio veneziano del Quattrocento”, reprinted in his *Studi di storia economica veneziana* (Padua, 1954), which, however, does not deal with the aspects here discussed.



from power: Venetian sovereignty was exercised on a day-to-day basis to the direct profit of the imperial capital and its inhabitants. Despite the fact that in fiscal terms the rule over Dalmatia constituted a deficit operation, Dalmatia was an essential part of the colonial empire. The contribution of its peoples to the well-being of Venice is indiscutable; the contribution of Venice to Dalmatia is and will remain a subject of debate, to be researched, objectively, sector by sector.