

of the town and its surroundings, particular buildings, providing useful tips for merchants, travellers or for those who will content themselves with merely reading about Dubrovnik...«. A short survey of Dubrovnik's economic development illustrated by Diversi's comments constitutes the second part of the preface (»Dubrovnik's 15th century: striving for prosperity«).

The translation and transcription follow, *Description of Dubrovnik* being divided into fifty chapters arranged in four major sections. In the section »On the good location of Dubrovnik« (*De bono situ Ragusii*) Diversi elaborates on Dubrovnik's favourable geographical position with respect to both sea and land, natural advantages and ample water resources. »On buildings« (*De hedificiis*) is a section in which Diversi lauds the civic, public and ecclesiastical buildings, singling out the cathedral, the churches of St Stephen the Protomartyr, SS. Petar, Lovro and Andrija, St Dominic and St Francis, and the Rector's Palace. Accordingly, a special chapter is devoted to the description of the school. With equal detail, Diversi describes the fortifications of Dubrovnik, city walls and forts, gates and streets, fountains and mills. »On the political organisation of Dubrovnik« (*De politia Ragusina*) is a section in which Diversi describes the organisation of the city government, local administration and their jurisdiction, organisation of health care, maintenance of peace and order, grain and wheat supply. »On the praiseworthy customs of Dubrovnik« (*De laudabilibus consuetudinibus Ragusinis, caeteris preaestantior*) or the "last, more excellent part", consists of twenty-two chapters in which Diversi lauds Ragusan customs such as religious devotion, loyalty to the Hungarian king, modest demeanour of the Ragusan office-holders, their hospitality towards foreign visitors, and a commendable patrician custom to merry their equals.

Diversi's work resembles the pattern of the medieval *laudes civitatum*, a genre which flourished in the cities with an accentuated

classical or early-medieval tradition such as Dubrovnik. No other Croatian town has earned a similar praise.

Following the tenets of *laudes*, Diversi enthuses over a perfect city with the perfect government, carefully avoiding criticism of any kind: "Even if Dubrovnik harboured ills of any sort, I do not wish to write about them because my narrative goal is to speak and describe the good and the truth, towards which I myself am naturally inclined".

Vesna Miović

Benedikt Kotruljević, *De navigatione / O plovidbi*, edited by **Damir Salopek**, in: *Hrvatska književna baština*, bk. 2. Zagreb: Ex libris, 2003: pp. 15-129.

Born in Dubrovnik in 1416, Benedikt Kotruljević died in Italy, probably in 1469. His book *On the Art of Trade (Dell'arte di mercatura)*, a must for anyone interested in economy and its history, was completed in 1458 and in the second half of the fifteenth century circulated mainly in manuscripts, only to be published some 115 years later by the Cress-born Croatian philosopher Frane Petrić as "On Trade and on the Perfect Merchant" (*Della mercatura et del mercante perfetto*, Venezia, 1573). At the time, the book was a hit: it saw four editions in Italian and a translation into French in 1602. It soon fell into oblivion, only to be excavated by the end of the nineteenth century by Professor Kheil of Prague, who drew attention to the value of this neglected work. Thanks to this "discovery", the work of Benedikt Kotruljević became the focus of both Croatian and international scholarly concern. Numerous studies have been produced, followed by a reprint of his book published in Venice in 1573 (The Association of Accounting and Financial Professionals of Croatia in Zagreb, 1975, ed. V. Franc); then came a Croatian translation *O trgovini i savršenoj trgovcu* by

Ž. Muljačić, text and commentary R. Radičević and Ž. Muljačić, JAZU, 1985, ed. V. Stipetić). This translation also accompanied the original text in the bilingual edition of DTS - Dubrovnik in 1989, with A. Runjić's afterword.

It is a measure of Kotruljević's contribution to economic science and history that the two-volume collection of essays under the title *Dubrovčanin Benedikt Kotruljević - hrvatski i svjetski ekonomist XV. stoljeća* [A Ragusan Benedikt Kotruljević—Croatian and World Economist of the Fifteenth Century] (published by HAZU and Hrvatski računovođa in 1996 as an outgrowth of an international conference held at Dubrovnik in October 1996) should gather more than 30 distinguished scholars to elucidate the life and work of Benedikt Kotruljević.

Critical appraisal has placed Benedikt Kotruljević's economic contribution exceptionally high. I. Perišin discusses Kotruljević's most insightful financial knowledge (apparently "neglected"); I. Lovrinović points to the financial market of the Mediterranean in the fifteenth century (in the light of Kotruljević's work); Z. Baletić characterised him as a "herald of mercantile society"; H. Šošić placed him in the "pantheon of the world economic thought"; F. Rocco and S. Bratko viewed him as a "pioneer of modern marketing conception"; V. Stipetić envisages Kotruljević as an economic theoretician "far ahead of his own time", but regretfully, "it has taken us more than 500 years to unveil his brilliant economic thought". M. Habek, P. Proklin, V. Belak, M. Buzadžić, S. Tadijančević and I. Spremić come forward with a hypothesis on Benedikt Kotruljević as the first author to expound the theory of double-entry bookkeeping in the world, hypothesis subsequently verified and also widely accepted outside Croatia.

Kotruljević's international appraisal rests largely on the Croatian scholarly promotion abroad (M. Buzadžić, M. Habek, Đ. Jurić, V. Stipetić and others), drawing attention to his ground-breaking contribution to economic sciences with some success. Accordingly, current

Italian scholarship has established Kotruljević as the founder of double-entry bookkeeping method in Europe, recognising him as predecessor of until recently celebrated Luca Pacioli¹ (a chapter under the title »Doubts - pioneer or plagiarist?« tends to shed new light on Pacioli's work). A discovery made by two Dutch professors according to which, drawing on Kotruljević, a Ragusan Marino de Raphaeli compiled a first manual of double-entry bookkeeping (1476?), added to the credibility of our compatriot Benedikt Kotruljević.

Academy's conference on Kotruljević focused on, until then, his only extant book - "On the Art of Trade". However, Darko Novaković pointed to a most recent finding of another of Kotruljević's manuscripts "On Navigation", but as none of the conference participants were familiar with its contents at the time, no discussion followed. Since, in the meantime, the mentioned manuscript has been published, the readership's attention should be drawn to this valuable work.

The titles of Kotruljević's other books have been known for some time, as he cites them in his book "On the Art of Trade". But over the centuries they have been considered missing or lost. They are: "On Marriage" (*De uxore ducenda*), "On the Nature of Flowers" (*Della natura dei fiori*) and "On Navigation" (*De navigatione*).

Thanks to the discovery of P. O. Kristeler (Iter Italicum, 1989) and consuming efforts of Darko Novaković, the manuscript of Kotruljević's book "On Navigation" was found in the *Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library* of Yale University (the full title of this manuscript is *Benedictus de Cotrullis Equitis*

¹ In his book *Origine ed evoluzione del pensiero ragionieristico* (Milano: Giuffrè editore, 2003), Claudio Privitera has devoted as many as 34 pages to Kotruljević (and the consulted and cited Croatian authors) as opposed to 32 pages covering Pacioli.

ad Inclitum Senatam Venetorum de Navigazione Liber). The existence of this manuscript came as no surprise because Lubrano, Naples bookshop, had announced its sale in the catalogue of 1914.² The fact of the matter is that the manuscript had never been printed to date and this Croatian edition is the first in the world, 540 years after it had been written (the text was completed in 1464). This we owe to the scientific zeal of Professor Darko Novaković, classical philologist of the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb, for having acquired a microfilm, but also to Damir Salopek who transcribed and prepared the text for publication. The printing of Kotruljević's *De navigazione* is a publishing event of international importance, and thus special acknowledgement must also be made to the publisher (Ex libris, Zagreb) and editors (D. Fališevac, J. Lisac and D. Novaković). It should be mentioned that Kotruljević's book on navigation is not only the first work of its kind in Croatia but in Europe as well.

The work before us has not survived in its entirety. The end (of the fourth part) of the book is missing. Additionally, this is not an autograph but evidently a scriptorium copy strewn with misreadings. The editor resorted to their correction, but no doubt in the preparation of the documentary edition (hopefully supplemented with a Croatian translation) these inaccuracies will be explained in detail.

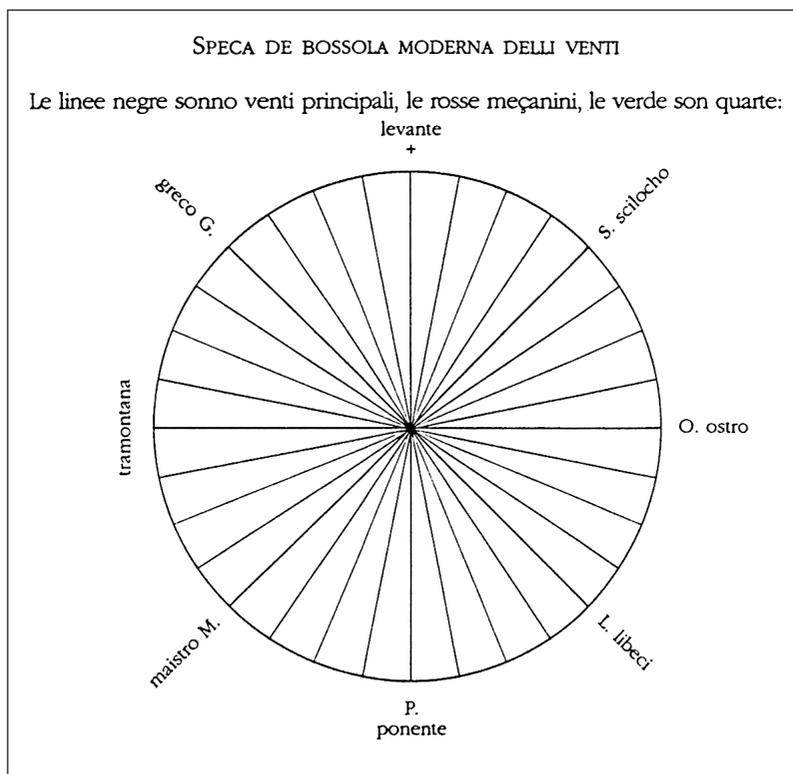
² It was within the legacy of H. C. Taylor, senior marine officer who died in 1904, that the manuscript found itself on the shelves of the Library of Yale University. Does the manuscript announced for sale in 1914 still exist and if so, is it complete (unlike the extant one)? Or did this manuscript become part of the bequeathed collection at a later date? Or was the announced manuscript from 1914 added to the collection after Taylor's death? The answers to these questions will no doubt help solve this bibliographic enigma.

The extant text is voluminous: it consists of 101 printed pages, in addition to the introduction by Damir Salopek, place and name indexes (16 pages in all) compiled for the reader's convenience. The book was written in old Italian (Naples dialect with an abundant use of Venetian words and terms which Kotruljević had probably picked up in his youth in Dubrovnik) except for the foreword and dedication (written in Latin).

The manuscript itself is divided into 4 books. Book One contains as many as 49 chapters and opens with elaborate discussions »On Water in General« and »On Ocean in General«. The following chapters bring the descriptions of as many as 40 seas, bays, swamps and islands, with a comprehensive discussion (in chapter 48) on the quality of harbours. Book Two demonstrates navigation at sea (in 13 chapters) with special references to the types of ships, necessary qualifications of the ship's crew (captain, officers, sailors), navigation charts, etc. Twenty chapters of Book Three dilate upon navigation conditions (winds, compass, meteorological reading, phases of the Moon, heavenly bodies, solstice, passage of time, illnesses affecting seamen, etc.). Following the quotations on navigation from famous geographers and cosmographers, Book Four opens with a chapter on navigation charts as well as a special reference to navigation in the Mediterranean, the end of which is missing.

The aim of this review is not to analyse the book's contents, the bulk of which is a portolan (Mediterranean port charts and sailing directions) and navigation instructions (or "navigation manual" as referred by Novaković), despite a number of most astonishing facts. For example, the names of winds as recorded by Kotruljević resemble closely or are even identical to present-day terminology.

Kotruljević wrote his treatise "On Navigation" six years after the book "On the Art of Trade". Merchant by profession, it is no surprise to find numerous economic observations scattered throughout his navigation manual.



First of all, although the book is entitled “On Navigation”, Kotruljević explains that he is rather concerned with ‘the art of navigation’, following the title pattern of his previous book (p. 17). In the foreword he stresses how essential navigation is for trade, and if deprived of it, the quality of life would be much poorer. On the basis of his own experience, Kotruljević asserts that the wealth of the Mediterranean towns—from Barcelona, Naples, Dubrovnik to Alexandria—rests on merchant shipping. It is upon navigation that the prosperity of individuals and towns lies, and that is why he chose to write about it. For this reason navigation ought to be improved by new ship designs and inventions, as well as the training of shipowners and seamen. Apart from theoretical basis, education should also be practically imparted by witnessing professionals at work. In addition to an impressive list of philosophers,

geographers, and cosmographers quoted on the subject-matter, Kotruljević describes his own experience while sailing aboard Venetian galleys and Ragusan vessels. As a crew member, he also took part in a naval battle between the fleet of the Aragon king of Naples and the Genoese in 1454.

His manual aims to qualify seamen in geography, astronomy, meteorology and even medicine, for only in doing so the shipowners as well as the crew would benefit from such an activity. Kotruljević seeks confirmation of his views from the authorities in the past but also his own experience. Intended for the general readership, the book was written in Italian (not Latin), the same as his previous book “On the Art of Trade”. Here, too, Kotruljević holds a combination of theory and practice the only recommendable approach.

Kotruljević places special attention on the training of seamen, helmsmen and shipmasters. Only the best crew can maximise the business results. Judging by these statements, Kotruljević virtually pioneered modern economic thought by emphasising qualifications and training as the most essential factor of economic development. Accordingly, certain traditions would have to be abandoned. Kotruljević illustrates this with an episode involving a Genoese crew who joined in Sunday service at the local church, during which their unattended ship was robbed. Theory supported by empirical knowledge is the ideal that Benedikt Kotruljević pursues in this book: e.g., Venetians excelled thanks to their merchant galleys, the Genoese to large vessels and the Catalonians to galleys with improved navigational properties.

This book throws additional light on the humanistic character and mind of Benedikt Kotruljević. He explicitly states that only most thorough knowledge of classical tradition makes a man in the true meaning of the word, citing about fifty classical authors who had written on this topic as confirmation. Appended is the *Index nominum* which provides the reader with an array of sources Kotruljević consulted and quoted in his book (from Albert the Great, Ambrose, Anaxagoras, Aristotle, St. Augustine, to Thales, Thomas Aquinas, Thucydides, Varro, Virgil, etc.). Bearing in mind, as rightly pointed by Darko Novaković, that each of these quotations had to be looked up in the manuscripts which, in his day, were rare and not easily accessible, the breadth of Kotruljević's humanist foundations seems even greater. No doubt, years spent at the court of Naples midst numerous humanists (from the philologist L. Valla and philosopher B. Facio to A. Beccadelli and F. Biondo) broadened Kotruljević's horizons in such a way that his second book is largely influenced by the spirit of humanism. It is not by surprise that Virgil is being quoted as many as 14 times, by far surpassing other authors, whether scientists or writers. This adds to Novaković's view according to which not a

single piece of Croatian literature of the period may be said to have adopted such a genuine humanistic approach to the world as this one.³

Benedikt Kotruljević was banished from Dubrovnik in the 1450s on account of his business transactions apparently disapproved of by the Ragusan fellow-merchants. Notwithstanding, Kotruljević's *amor patriae* lingered on as demonstrated by the recurrent references to Dubrovnik in his book from 1464, describing it as "the most pleasant noble town of Dalmatia, known as Epidaurum in the past" (I, 25). He mentions the islands of Koločep, Lopud, Šipan and Mljet. His attention is caught by unusual natural phenomena in Dubrovnik's vicinity (underground cave in Popovo polje which produces cold air, "colder than winter air in Italy", I, 48), type of vessel known as "bark" in Dubrovnik (II, 13), etc. It is with affection that he speaks of the entire eastern coast of the Adriatic, bearing witness to the deep attachment to the country of his birth.

The questions which arise with the publishing of Kotruljević's treatise "On Navigation".

The fact that Kotruljević decided to dedicate his book to the doge of Venice and the Senate poses a number of questions. Why would he, an official of the Aragonese state during the reign of Alfonso V (1442-1458) and his successor king Ferrante (1458-1494), dedicate his book to a rival party? Was his position at the Aragon court threatened? Could it be the result of a diplomatic manoeuvre (following the peace of Lodi in 1454) aimed at initiating a more peaceful atmosphere between the warring

³ Darko Novaković, »Prvi hrvatski udžbenik plovidbe«. *Vjesnik*, 18 March 1995 (Danica n.o 17); idem, »Novopronađeni rukopis Benedikta Kotruljevića«, in: *Dubrovčanin Benedikt Kotruljević, hrvatski i svjetski ekonomist XV. stoljeća*, ed. Vladimir Stipetić. Zagreb: HAZU and Hrvatski računovođa, 1996: pp. 19-32.

Italian sides? This explanation can hardly be accepted *a priori*, since the dedication to Venetians is accompanied by the words of praise addressed to the Genoese, with whom both Naples and Venice competed for the Levantine markets in the Mediterranean. Until a more thorough investigation in the Italian archives fills the gaps in Kotruljević's life, the answers to these questions will remain mere speculations.

From the perspective of economic scholarship, the publishing of Kotruljević's treatise "On Navigation" has made an invaluable contribution to bringing to light the work and mind of this pioneering figure of economic thought and humanism. Future efforts will hopefully result in the preparation of an edition of this treatise in Croatian, which will enable wider perception of this outstanding work.

Vladimir Stipetić

Ignacij Voje, *Poslovna uspešnost trgovcev v srednjeveškem Dubrovniku* [The Prosperous Merchant Venturers of Medieval Dubrovnik]. Ljubljana: Znanstveni inštitut Filozofske fakultete, 2003. Pages 367.

The rich Dubrovnik archives continues to attract successions of historians seeking to unravel the secrets of Dubrovnik's commerce-based prosperity. Indeed, should this labourious research take up as many as 50 years of one's life, its fruit by far outgrows the frame of any scientific project and becomes a specific guide to the Dubrovnik archival fund, its characteristics and creators. That is exactly what Ignacij Voje, retired professor of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Ljubljana, who formerly chaired the History of the South-Slavs up to the end of the eighteenth century, offers in his book. Placing the focus on Ragusan credit trading, Voje traces the development of

this phenomenon in *Debita notariae* (Book of Debits) by sifting the evidence from the first recorded documents in 1282 to the end of the Middle Ages around the year 1500. On the basis of these data Voje argues that it was in the fifteenth century that Dubrovnik peaked politically and economically, a thesis much disputed in historiographic circles. The dual character of this volume—equal space being devoted to the evolution of credit commerce on the one and the building up of archival funds on the other hand—provides an insightful and critical survey of the development and interaction of the two phenomena.

Voje weaves a comparative approach through a gallery of notaries and merchants from the period under study. He draws attention to Tomasino de Savere as initiator of the archival series *Debita notariae* but also his successors as late as the end of the fourteenth century, who remained consistent to early-thirteenth century formulas laid down by the notary Pasqualis. Brevity may be said to be the main feature of all Ragusan notarial documents as contrasted to those from Italy, Dalmatian towns or Kotor. The influence of the Byzantine legal formula reflects in the predominantly subjective first person style. By contrast, Italian documents were drafted in the third person style, a practice tending to be spread to the towns of the eastern Adriatic coast, Dubrovnik being an exception. The author then shifts his focus away from diplomatic analysis of the Ragusan debits to the enquiry of their contents, accompanied by a short palaeographic survey. By placing emphasis on bookkeeping, Voje points to Benedikt Kotruljević and his major contribution to double-entry bookkeeping, but also to great many lesser-known merchants whose enterprising spirit contributed to Dubrovnik's commercial growth and prosperity. The effect of cash shortage on trade balance led the author to the topic of loans and credit practice in medieval Dubrovnik. Concentrating on the lender's security interests (capacity to repay and collateral), Voje devotes special space to the terms of credit transactions and the