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## BAPTISM AND MARRIAGE WITNESSES OF THE CATHOLICS OF DUBROVNIK (1870-1871)\*

ARIANA VIOLIĆ-KOPRIVEC AND NENAD VEKARIĆ

**ABSTRACT:** Based on the data from parish registers, this article analyses godparents and marriage witnesses among the Catholics of the City Parish of Dubrovnik in 1870 and 1871. Also examined is the time gap between birth and baptism, proportion of emergency baptisms due to the infant's weak state of health, weekly distribution of the marriage ceremony, number, gender structure, residence and social status of godparents and marriage witnesses, proportion of kin-based godparenthoods, criteria for the selection of godparents, incidence of godchild—godparent name-sharing, as well as multiple godparenthood.

*Keywords:* baptism, godparent, godparenthood, marriage, marriage witnesses, Dubrovnik, 19th century

### 1. Introduction

This article has been written within the research project entitled "Analysis of demographic trends and social networks in the seventeenth and eighteenth

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**Ariana Violić-Koprivec, senior lecturer at the University of Dubrovnik. Address: Sveučilište u Dubrovniku, Branitelja Dubrovnika 41, 20000 Dubrovnik, Croatia. E-mail: [ariana.violic-koprivec@unidu.hr](mailto:ariana.violic-koprivec@unidu.hr)**

**Nenad Vekarić, member of the Institute for Historical Sciences of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Dubrovnik. Address: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, Lapadska obala 6, 20000 Dubrovnik, Croatia. E-mail: [nenad.vekaric@du.t-com.hr](mailto:nenad.vekaric@du.t-com.hr)**

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centuries based on parish registers and wills”, conducted within the doctoral programme of the *History of Population* at the University of Dubrovnik. Out of the fifteen Croatian parishes to be investigated in this project, here selected is the City Parish of Dubrovnik as a representative sample of a larger urban settlement. The analysis is based on the parish registers of baptism and marriage for the years 1870 and 1871.<sup>1</sup>

The baptismal register under analysis was kept in Italian. In a few cases only an additional note in Croatian was written, which most often refers to the date of death of the baptised person. The register was kept according to pre-printed forms with the following data: 1. ordinal number of birth/baptism (*numero*); 2. date and hour of birth, date of baptism and name of the priest who administered the sacrament of baptism (*data della nascita e della presentazione al battesimo del neonato*). Here entered are also emergency baptisms and the persons who administered them; 3. information on the baptised child (*indicazione del neonato*) with a subheading on sex and name ( *Sesso e nome*) in addition to a subheading on the child’s status (*stato della persona*), legal (*legittimo*) or illegal (*illegittimo*); 4. information on the child’s parents (*indicazione dei genitori*), further divided into four subheadings: a) name, surname and residence of the mother (*nome, cognome e domicilio della madre*), b) name, surname and residence of the father (*nome, cognome e domicilio del padre*), c) information on the parents’ marriage and the parish in which it was performed (*se conjugii, data del matrimonio e parrocchia in cui fù celebrato*), and d) information on the parents’ religion and occupation (*religione e condizione d’entrambi*); 5. information on godparents and witnesses, name and surname, residence and occupation (*nome, cognome, domicilio e condizione dei padrini, testimoni*), a heading containing two subheadings on godparents (*padrini*) and witnesses (*testimoni*). Consistency has been observed in the way godparents were entered with regard to sex. Considering that the practice included two godparents, most commonly one godparent was entered under the *padrini* subheading, and the other under the *testimoni* subheading. Godmothers (with two exceptions), however, were entered under the *padrini* subheading below the male godparent, and not under the *testimoni* subheading; 6. Notes (*annotazioni*), a heading which

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<sup>1</sup> Registers of the City Parish: baptismal register *G23K (1866-1874)* and marriage register *G12V (1858-1876)*. Parish registers are filed at the Diocesan Archives of Dubrovnik. For the purpose of this research digitised transcripts kept at the Croatian State Archives in Zagreb have been used.

most often contained data on subsequently performed ceremonial baptism, in case of emergency baptism, subsequently performed marriage if the child had been born before marriage, father's statement on the recognition of the child when the child had been conceived before marriage, or born within less than nine months of the wedding day, and the data on the child's death.

Entries were made according to the order of application and, apart from rare exceptions, are arranged chronologically. A fairly small number of repeated entries has been observed. In some cases, not all of the headings were filled out (godparents' occupation or place of birth is most commonly omitted). With regard to the handwriting, it is evident that several priests kept the records.

Marriage register was also kept in Italian, its content being organised according to pre-printed forms: 1. date of marriage and name of the priest who performed the ceremony (*data della celebrazione del matrimonio e nome del Parroco che vi ha assistito*); 2. data on the groom (*degli sposi*) with several subheadings: name, surname and occupation (*nome, cognome e condizione*); place of birth and residence (*luogo di nascita e di domicilio*); religion (*religione*); date of birth (*età*); marriage status divided into two subheadings: unmarried (*celibe*) or widowed (*vedovile*); 3. data on the bride (*delle spose*) with the same subheadings as with the groom; 4. data on groom's parents (*dei genitori degli sposi*) with two subheadings: name, surname, region of birth, religion and occupation of the groom's father (*nome, cognome, patria, religione e condizione del padre*), name, surname, region of birth, religion and occupation of the groom's mother (*nome, cognome, patria, religione e condizione della madre*); 5. data on bride's parents (*dei genitori delle spose*) with the same subheadings as with the groom's parents; 6. data on witnesses (*dei testimoni*) with two subheadings: name, surname, religion and occupation (*nome, cognome, religione e condizione*), along with the region of birth and residence (*patria e domicilio*); 7. notes (*annotazioni*). Apart from a few exceptions, entries were made in chronological order.

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<sup>2</sup> Stephen Gudeman, »Spiritual relationship and selecting a godparent«. *Man*, N. S. 10/2 (1975): p. 235.

## 2. Godparenthood

Godparenthood is a religious phenomenon which represents a lasting spiritual bond between a godchild and his godparents.<sup>2</sup> Founded on Church beliefs and norms, it has been adapted into various social practices. In many parts of Italy it was common practice for a child to have several godfathers/godmothers at baptism, however, the Council of Trent restricted the number of godparents to one or two at the most, one of each sex.<sup>3</sup> The couple-godparent model generally established itself within a few years, and in some places it took even several decades.<sup>4</sup> In France, the decrees of the Council of Trent were introduced in the course of the seventeenth century.<sup>5</sup>

Two key elements determine the choice of godparents. The first stems from a Church norm in effect from the ninth century, which explicitly prohibited parents to act as godparents to their own children. This norm is based on the difference that the Church places between physical and spiritual relationship of the parents and child, that is, godparents and child. Godfather becomes the child's spiritual parent. The second element is that the Church did not regulate who should be the child's godparent. In some cultures we find reciprocal models, in that the parents choose their godchild's parents to act as godparents to their own child.<sup>6</sup> However, the Church decrees that followed after the Council of Trent prescribed the minimum age of godfather (14 years) and godmother (12 years). Also, only the person who had received the sacrament of confirmation could qualify for a godfather or godmother.<sup>7</sup>

With the selection of godparents, parents create new and seal the already established social ties. Anthropologist B. D. Paul argues that the choice of

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<sup>3</sup> Guido Alfani, Vincent Gourdon and Agnese Vitali, »Social customs and demographic change: The case of godparenthood in Catholic Europe«. *Working Paper* 40 (2011): p. 7 ([www.dondena.unibocconi.it/wp40](http://www.dondena.unibocconi.it/wp40), accessed on 25 January 2015).

<sup>4</sup> Guido Alfani, »La famille spirituelle des prêtres en Italie septentrionale avant et après le Concile de Trente: caractéristiques et transformations d'un instrument d'intégration sociale«. *Annales de démographie historique* 107 (2004): p. 137.

<sup>5</sup> Camille Berteau, Vincent Gourdon and Isabelle Robin-Romero, »Réseaux sociaux et parrainage: les conséquences de l'application du Concile de Trente dans une paroisse française, Aubervilliers (1552-1631)«. *Obradorio de Historia Moderna* 19 (2010): pp. 283, 305.

<sup>6</sup> S. Gudeman, »Spiritual relationship and selecting a godparent«. pp. 222, 233-234.

<sup>7</sup> Pierre-Yves Quemener, »Le parrainage, rouage essentiel des processus de prénomination«. *Kaier ar Pohor* 41 (2013): p. 6.

godparents reflects two types of relations: *intensive godparent relation* and *extensive godparent relation*. If godparents are selected among the kin so as to affirm kinship relations, we are talking about intensive relations. Extensive relations imply a selection of godparents outside the kin pool with an aim of expanding one's social ties, the choice being made according to a horizontal or vertical paradigm. Horizontal paradigm implies the choice of godparents between equals, that is, of godparents of an equal status and wealth. If godparents are selected from a lower or upper social rank, then we are talking about a vertical selection.<sup>8</sup> The idea of the Church by which the spiritual is above the physical also mirrored in the social practice, in that in the cases including godparents and parents from different social ranks, godparents commonly came from a higher social order.<sup>9</sup>

Godparenthood was considered as spiritual kinship, and for this reason represented a marriage impediment.<sup>10</sup>

## 2.1. Number and gender structure of godparents

According to a census of 1869, Dubrovnik had 6,032 inhabitants. At the time, there were three parishes in the city. The largest in population size, the City Parish (župa Grad), embraced the city area within the walls, and had some 3,580 inhabitants (Table 1).<sup>11</sup> Besides the City Parish, there was also the Parish of Pile which included the suburbs of Pile and Ploče, as well as the village of Bosanka on the Mount Srđ, and lastly the Parish of Gruž, with the adjoining Lapad peninsula. During the years 1870 and 1871, the City Parish recorded the birth of 167 children, 95 births in 1870 and 72 in 1871 (mean natality rate was 23.32‰), with a slight dominance of male births (52.69%) over the female (47.30%).

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<sup>8</sup> B. D. Paul, *Ritual Kinship, with Special References to Godparenthood in Middle America*. Unpublished thesis, University of Chicago, 1942: pp. 56-58, quoted from: Solveig Fagerlund, »Women and men as godparents in an early modern Swedish town«. *The History of the Family* 5/3 (2000): p. 348.

<sup>9</sup> S. Gudeman, »Spiritual relationship and selecting a godparent«: p. 234.

<sup>10</sup> Valtazar Bogišić, *Zbornik sadašnjih pravnih običaja u južnih Slovena*. Zagreb: JAZU, 1874: pp. 202-206.

<sup>11</sup> The 1869 census included a joint registration of the City and Pile (together with Ploče and Bosanka), producing a count of 5,385 inhabitants. An estimate of the City's population is based on an assumption that the ratio between the City and Pile did not deviate from the value of the previously conducted census of 1857 (3,869 : 1,945). See: Mirko Korenčić, *Naselja i stanovništvo Socijalističke Republike Hrvatske (1857-1971)* [Djela JAZU, vol. 54]. Zagreb: JAZU, 1979: p. 219.

Table 1. Number of inhabitants in Dubrovnik in 1857 and 1869

Parish	Number of inhabitants	
	1857	1869
Total (Dubrovnik)	6,518	6,032
City	3,869	(3,580)
Pile	1,945	(1,805)
Gruž	704	647

Source: M. Korenčić, *Naselja i stanovništvo Socijalističke Republike Hrvatske (1857-1971)*: p. 219.

In principle, every child had two godparents, with few exceptions. For fifteen children no godparents have been entered. Out of this number, fourteen were baptised at home on account of their poor health condition, and considering that they died soon afterwards, a ritual baptism was not performed. Only one girl survived and was baptised in the course of 1872, but the date of her baptism and the name of godparents have not been entered. Ten children had only one godparent, and in one case three godparents were recorded. It is possible that in this case the third godparent was actually a proxy acting on behalf of an absent godparent, but a note clarifying this has not been made. For a total of 167 children, 295 godparents were registered—an average of 1.77 per child (Table 2).

More commonly, the role of godparent was performed by a man, at a ratio higher than 4:1 (Table 2, Graph 1). The children who had two godparents, either both were male or one of each sex. Not a single case of both godparents being female has been traced.<sup>12</sup> If a child had a single godparent, as a rule it was a godfather. In only one case involving a baptised girl, the godparent was female.

<sup>12</sup> A research that Julie Hardwick carried out for Nantes in 1560-1660 has shown that merely 10% of the godparents in more than 900 baptisms were women. See: Julie Hardwick, *The Practice of Patriarchy. Gender and the Politics of Household in Early Modern France*. State College, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998: pp. 167-169 (accessible on: [https://books.google.hr/books?id=\\_cY6H6q5CycC&pg=PR4&lpg=PR4&dq=Julie+Hardwick,+The+Practice+of+Patriarchy,+Gender+and+the+Politics+of+Household+in+Early+Modern+France&source=bl&ots=2nl9v4wL-j4&sig=m5zdS8YLixd\\_hhJy7DQY9EJIndU&hl=en&sa=X&ei=EDPzVlbeGoXBOafYgYAI&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Julie%20Hardwick%2C%20The%20Practice%20of%20Patriarchy.%20Gender%20and%20the%20Politics%20of%20Household%20in%20Early%20Modern%20France&f=false](https://books.google.hr/books?id=_cY6H6q5CycC&pg=PR4&lpg=PR4&dq=Julie+Hardwick,+The+Practice+of+Patriarchy,+Gender+and+the+Politics+of+Household+in+Early+Modern+France&source=bl&ots=2nl9v4wL-j4&sig=m5zdS8YLixd_hhJy7DQY9EJIndU&hl=en&sa=X&ei=EDPzVlbeGoXBOafYgYAI&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Julie%20Hardwick%2C%20The%20Practice%20of%20Patriarchy.%20Gender%20and%20the%20Politics%20of%20Household%20in%20Early%20Modern%20France&f=false); S. Fagerlund, »Women and men as godparents in an early modern swedish town«: p. 348. According to the study of Solveig Fagerlund, in Helsingborg in Sweden in the period 1688-1709, 1,647 baptisms were registered and 8,870 godparents, out of whom 56% were women.

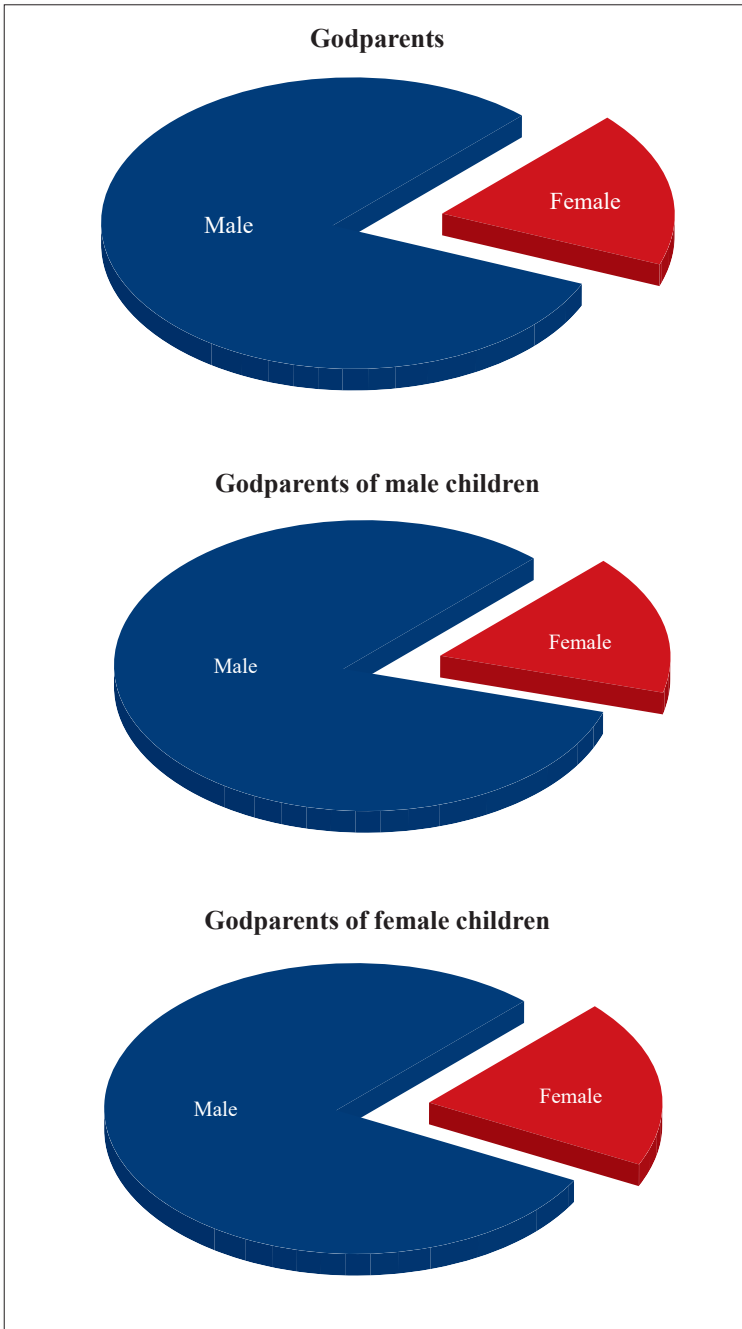
With 54 children the couple-godparent model has been established (35.53%). No significant distinction has been observed in the godparents' sex with regard to the baptism of a male or female child.

Table 2. Gender structure of godparents in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)

Year	Number of births			
	<i>Total</i>	Male	Female	Percentage of female births (%)
Total	167	88	79	47.31
1870	95	51	44	46.32
1871	72	37	35	48.61
Year	Number of godparents			
	<i>Total</i>	Male	Female	Percentage of female godparents (%)
Total	295	240	55	18.64
1870	166	134	32	19.28
1871	129	106	23	17.83
Mean number of godparents per child	1.77			
Year	Number of godparents of male children			
	<i>Total</i>	Male	Female	Percentage of female godparents (%)
Total	151	125	26	17.21
1870	86	73	13	15.12
1871	65	52	13	20.00
Mean number of godparents per male child	1.72			
Year	Number of godparents of female children			
	<i>Total</i>	Male	Female	Percentage of female godparents (%)
Total	144	115	29	20.14
1870	80	61	19	23.75
1871	64	54	10	15.63
Mean number of godparents per female child	1.82			

Sources for Tables 2-9 and Graphs 1-9: *G23K (1866-1874)*.

Graph 1. Gender structure of godparents in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)





A century earlier a couple-godparent model was strictly observed in Dubrovnik,<sup>13</sup> and at that time was dominant in other parts of Croatia, too. From the seventeenth to the start of the nineteenth century, in the town of Pula (Istria) children had two godparents at baptism, most commonly a godfather and godmother.<sup>14</sup> The entries into the baptismal register of the Parish of St Magdalene in Kapela (Bjelovar area in the northern Croatia) from the second half of the eighteenth century (1753-1772) show that the couple model prevailed.<sup>15</sup>

In the rural area of Konavle near Dubrovnik, godfather was given priority over godmother in the baptism of a male child, and vice versa in the baptism of a female child. During the ceremony, it was the godmother who always held the child, while godfather held a candle.<sup>16</sup>

## 2.2. Time gap between birth and baptism and the proportion of emergency baptisms

As decreed by the Council of Trent, a new-born infant was to be baptised as soon as possible, while the dioceses were given discretionary power to decide on the exact term within which the ceremony should be performed. In France, by a declaration of 1698, a rather restrictive decree was passed on baptism, instructing that it should be performed within twenty-four hours of birth.<sup>17</sup> Also, by a decision of the Tridentine Council baptism at home was prohibited unless the new-born was in imminent danger of death.<sup>18</sup>

Nineteenth century brought some changes in the approach to the sacrament of baptism. For example, in nineteenth-century Paris baptism was not mandatory by law. However, Church authorities were determined to revoke some of the rules established during the Revolution and restore old ones, and in their

<sup>13</sup> Vedran Stojanović and Nella Lonza, »Godparenthood in Eighteenth-Century Dubrovnik: Children, parents and godparents as knots of social networks«. *Dubrovnik Annals* 19 (2015): 81-82.

<sup>14</sup> Slaven Bertoša, *Život i smrt u Puli. Starosjeditelji i doseljenici od 17. do početka 19. stoljeća*. Pazin: Skupština Udruga Matice hrvatske Istarske županije (2002): p. 33.

<sup>15</sup> Dubravko Habek, »Prvi žitelji Bjelovara iz matica rođenih/krštenih i umrlih župe Kapela 1753.-1772«. *Radovi Zavoda za znanstvenoistraživački i umjetnički rad u Bjelovaru* 5 (2012): pp. 54-55.

<sup>16</sup> Jovan Vukmanović, *Konavli* [Posebna izdanja, vol. 527]. Beograd: SANU, 1980: p. 210.

<sup>17</sup> Vincent Gourdon, »Les pratiques du baptême à Paris et à Rome au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle«. *Popolazione e Storia* 2 (2006): p. 20.

<sup>18</sup> Alfani Guido and Vincent Gourdon, »Fêtes du baptême et publicité des réseaux sociaux en Europe occidentale. Grandes tendances de la fin du Moyen âge au XXe siècle«. *Annales de démographie historique* 117 (2009/1): p. 165.

recommendations they emphasised the importance of the child's baptism immediately upon birth (*le baptême immédiat*), that is, within three days of birth. The study of the Paris parishes in the nineteenth century shows that the observance of this rule had a downward trend, notably by the end of the century.<sup>19</sup> In the Paris parishes of Saint-Ambroise, Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois and Notre-Dame-de-Bonne-Nouvelle in 1871-1872, most children were baptised eight or more days after birth, and as many as 40% a month after birth. This custom also spread to other parishes, and in the 1880s and 1890s there was an increasing trend of baptising children of several months of age.<sup>20</sup>

A research of the Roman parishes in the period 1831-1879 shows that in 1831 it was common practice to baptise a child immediately after birth or the next day. Two-thirds of children were baptised within this interval.<sup>21</sup> The results for 1851 show that the rate decreased to one-third of the cases. This trend continued, so that in 1879 less than one-quarter of children were baptised within three days of birth. However, the gap between birth and baptism in the Roman parishes rarely exceeded fifteen days. In 1879 baptism was usually performed between the fourth and sixth day upon birth, and most rarely after two weeks or later. In Paris the gap was larger. In 1881 one half of the infants were baptised with a delay of two weeks, and between a half and one-third of them with a month's delay.<sup>22</sup>

In his discussion of this phenomenon, Vincent Gourdon stresses an increasing role of doctors and medicine in the nineteenth century. Numerous manuals warn about the potential danger if new-borns are taken out of the house at such a tender age, including for the purpose of baptism.<sup>23</sup>

In Dubrovnik in 1770, with non-risky childbirths, children were baptised within a few days of birth (average 2.19 days).<sup>24</sup> However, a century later the practice deeply changed, and one-third of the registered 149 baptisms (emergency baptisms excluded) were performed between two and four weeks upon child's birth. Somewhat less than one-third of children were baptised three months upon birth, and two cases have been traced involving children who were baptised above the age of one (Table 3). A few children were ceremonially baptised

<sup>19</sup> V. Gourdon, «Les pratiques du baptême à Paris et à Rome au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle»: p. 20.

<sup>20</sup> V. Gourdon, «Les pratiques du baptême à Paris et à Rome au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle»: pp. 23-24.

<sup>21</sup> V. Gourdon, «Les pratiques du baptême à Paris et à Rome au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle»: p. 25.

<sup>22</sup> V. Gourdon, «Les pratiques du baptême à Paris et à Rome au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle»: pp. 26-27.

<sup>23</sup> V. Gourdon, «Les pratiques du baptême à Paris et à Rome au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle»: pp. 37-38, 40.

<sup>24</sup> V. Stojanović and N. Lonza, «Godparenthood in Eighteenth-Century Dubrovnik»: 80.

Table 3. Age of child at ceremonial baptism and emergency baptism in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)

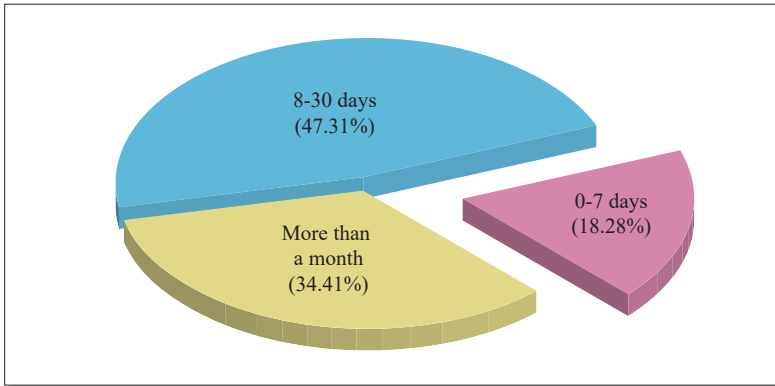
Time gap between birth and baptism	Baptisms					
	Total	Percentage (%)	Ceremonial		Emergency	
			Total	Percentage (%)	Total	Percentage (%)
<i>Total</i>	186	100	149	100	37	100
0 days	27	14.52	-	0.00	27	72.97
1 day	1	0.54	1	0.67	-	0.00
2 days	1	0.54	-	0.00	1	2.70
3 days	-	0.00	-	0.00	-	0.00
4 days	-	0.00	-	0.00	-	0.00
5 days	2	1.08	1	0.67	1	2.70
6 days	-	0.00	-	0.00	-	0.00
7 days	3	1.61	3	2.01	-	0.00
0 to 7 days	34	18.28	5	3.36	29	78.38
More than 7 days	25	13.44	23	15.44	2	5.41
More than 15 days	63	33.87	58	38.93	5	13.51
More than one month	38	20.43	38	25.50	-	0.00
More than 2 months	12	6.45	11	7.38	1	2.70
More than 3 months	11	5.91	11	7.38	-	0.00
More than 6 months	1	0.54	1	0.67	-	0.00
More than one year	2	1.08	2	1.34	-	0.00

within a week of birth (3.35%), which indicates that the rule of immediate baptisms was fairly disregarded (Graph 2).

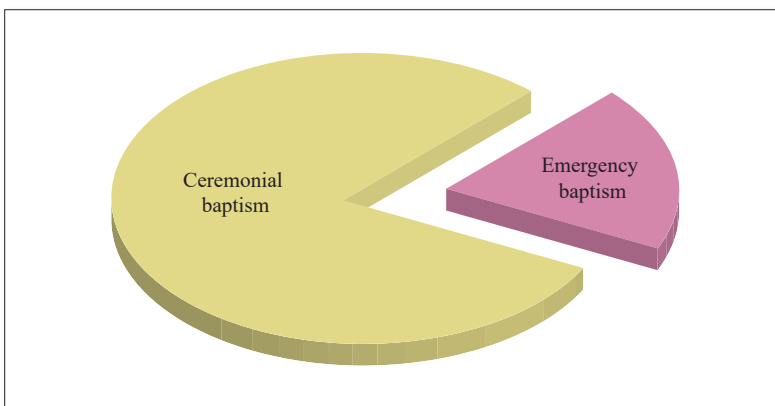
Every fifth child received emergency baptism at the house where it was born (Graph 3) because of the imminent danger of death (*in periculo di morte*). These children were most commonly baptised by the midwives (*levatrice*). Obviously, the largest number of emergency baptisms was recorded on the day of child's birth (72.97%). If the child survived, ceremonial baptism was performed subsequently at church.

In the rural region of Konavle, too, little concern was given to the rule of immediate baptism. A new-born infant was usually baptised ten to fifteen days upon birth. The absence of godfather or an important family member was a good enough reason for the baptism to be further delayed. If the new-born was of poor health, a midwife

Graph 2. Age of child at baptism in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)



Graph 3. Ratio between ceremonial baptisms and emergency baptisms in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)



could baptise the child in the priest's absence. By using an olive twig, she would bless him with holy water and give him a name. When the child recovered, a priest would repeat the rite at church but without sprinkling water on him.<sup>25</sup>

On the island of Murter in the period 1718-1815, the average time gap between the day of birth and the day of baptism was fifteen days.<sup>26</sup> In Pula, the time gap between birth and baptism varied. At times, it was no more than a couple of days, but in some cases it was over a year. With emergency baptisms the

<sup>25</sup> J. Vukmanović, *Konavli*: p. 210.

<sup>26</sup> Kristijan Juran, »Murterske glagoljske matice«. *Studia ethnologica Croatica* 14-15 (2002-2003): p. 219.

child was baptised at home on the day of birth, while the ceremony at church was delayed for several years even.<sup>27</sup>

### 2.3. Weekly distribution of baptisms

Vincent Gourdon draws attention to yet another new practice with regard to baptism in Paris in the nineteenth century, and that was the celebration of the baptismal rite on Sunday. As the families were no longer prompted to a speedy baptism of their child, there appeared an opportunity to plan it as a ceremonial occasion. This practice has already been traced at the dawn of the nineteenth century, while in the period 1861-1881 it became widespread. Over one half of baptisms in this period were held on Sunday. Celebration of baptism on Sunday conveyed religious symbolism but also a practical reason—in urban environments it was much easier to gather godparents, kin, friends and all those expected to attend the ceremony.<sup>28</sup> The same practice has been detected in Rome, though at a somewhat later date, in the second quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>29</sup>

In Dubrovnik the parents followed the same principles, as nearly more than one half of the children born in the City Parish in 1870 and 1871 were baptised on Sunday (Table 4, Graph 4). A century earlier, the baptisms on Sunday were slightly less frequent.<sup>30</sup>

Table 4. The ceremony of baptism performed in Dubrovnik by day of the week (City Parish, 1870-1871)

Day of the week	Ceremonial baptism	
	Total	Percentage (%)
Total	149	100
Monday	15	10.07
Tuesday	12	8.05
Wednesday	3	2.01
Thursday	16	10.74
Friday	7	4.70
Saturday	17	11.41
Sunday	79	53.02

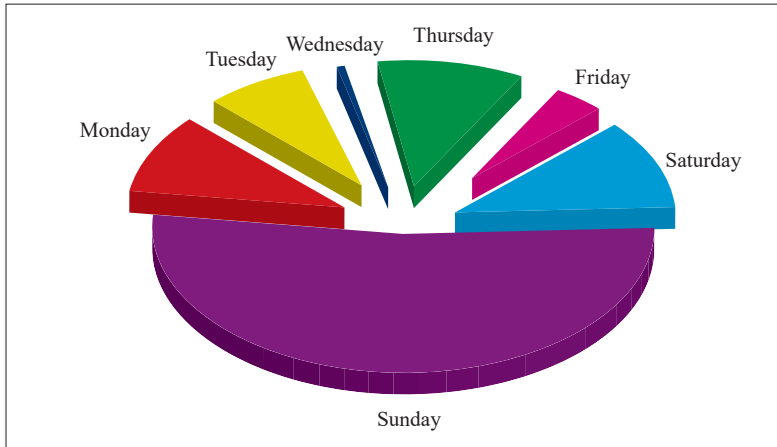
<sup>27</sup> S. Bertoša, *Život i smrt u Puli*: pp. 34, 41.

<sup>28</sup> V. Gourdon, »Les pratiques du baptême à Paris et à Rome au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle«: pp. 34-35.

<sup>29</sup> V. Gourdon, »Les pratiques du baptême à Paris et à Rome au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle«: p. 36.

<sup>30</sup> V. Stojanović and N. Lonza, »Godparenthood in Eighteenth-Century Dubrovnik«: p. 80.

Graph 4. The ceremony of baptism performed in Dubrovnik by day of the week (City Parish, 1870-1871)



#### 2.4. The names of godchildren and their godparents

In compliance with the decrees of the Tridentine Council, it was upon the priests to see that children at baptism were given Christian names (saints' or Biblical).<sup>31</sup> Dubrovnik and its surroundings witnessed an interplay of two onomastic systems, Slavic and Christian. With Slavic names which in the Middle Ages prevailed in the surrounding areas, until some of the territories (Pelješac, Dubrovačko primorje, Konavle) became part of the Dubrovnik Republic, the name was a hallmark (e.g. *Da-bi-živ*, meaning May-you-live-long).<sup>32</sup> As a result of massive Christianisation of the name pool in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries,<sup>33</sup> a prophylactic role of the name was transmitted to the saint. The protection was enhanced by naming the children after ancestors and the closest of kin. Thus the eldest son was named after his grandfather by the father's side, and the next after his grandfather by the mother's side; the eldest daughter was named after her paternal grandmother, and the next after her maternal grandmother. The third son was usually named after the father, the fourth after the father's brother, however, this rule was not strictly

<sup>31</sup> Kristijan Juran, »Stanovništvo Murtera u 18. stoljeću i početkom 19. stoljeća - Građa iz matičnih knjiga 1718.-1815«. *Povijesni prilozi* 25 (2003): p. 260.

<sup>32</sup> Nenad Vekarić, *Pelješki rodovi (A-K)*. Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 1995: p. 12.

<sup>33</sup> For more on this see: Niko Kapetanić and Nenad Vekarić, »Utjecaj kršćanstva na izbor osobnih imena u selima Dubrovačke Republike«. *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti JAZU u Dubrovniku* 28 (1990): pp. 145-168.

observed and there were certain deviations in terms of priority between some villages.<sup>34</sup> Eventually, the naming pattern was defined by the birth order. If the child was born on a saint's feast day, it was named after him. Thus it was not unusual for some children to bear two names.<sup>35</sup> The naming rules were consistently observed unless in cases of serious family feuds, in cases when the father continued the family of his sonless father-in-law by naming the first-born son after the father-in-law, or where the reasons of fashion prevailed.<sup>36</sup>

Due to a firmly established naming pattern in Dubrovnik, godfather as the child's "protector" was but third in a row of candidates for name sharing, while in France, for example, the naming of a child after the godfather or godmother was quite frequent.<sup>37</sup>

The names of children born in Dubrovnik 1870 and 1871 were recorded in Italian, the language of Austrian administration in Dalmatia. At baptism a child could be given only one name (44.91% of the children), or two (11.98%), three (41.32%), or even four names (1.79%). Later, they usually used only the first name. The same was true of the other centres of the Adriatic coast. From the seventeenth to the beginning of the nineteenth century, in Pula children most commonly had two names, sometimes three and very rarely four names.<sup>38</sup> In Murter, around the year 1785 two or three names were no longer rare (21.5%).<sup>39</sup>

In Dubrovnik approximately every eighth child shared the name with one of his godparents. If we take into account all the child's names and not only the first, the portion of godparents with whom they shared the name reaches one-third. The incidence of godparent—godchild name-sharing was twice greater among male than female children (Table 5, Graph 5).

A boy was known, at times, to be named after his godmother, or a girl after her godfather, in that the female or male variant of the name was chosen.

<sup>34</sup> N. Vekarić, *Pelješki rodovi (A-K)*: p. 12.

<sup>35</sup> J. Vukmanović, *Konavli*: p. 209.

<sup>36</sup> N. Vekarić, *Pelješki rodovi (A-K)*: p. 12.

<sup>37</sup> In many French regions it was customary for the godparents to choose the child's name. Commonly, godparents would name the child after themselves. In the eighteenth, nineteenth and first decades of the twentieth century, this practice has been traced in both the city and rural areas in some 60-90% of the cases. The only exception to this rule was if the parents wished their child to be named after a deceased family member. See: Agnès Fine, »L'héritage du nom de baptême«. *Annales. Économie, Sociétés, Civilisations* 4 (1987): pp. 858-859, 861.

<sup>38</sup> S. Bertoša, *Život i smrt u Puli*: p. 46.

<sup>39</sup> K. Juran, »Stanovništvo Murtera u 18. stoljeću i početkom 19. stoljeća«: p. 262.

Graph 5. Name-sharing incidence between godchildren and their godparents in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)

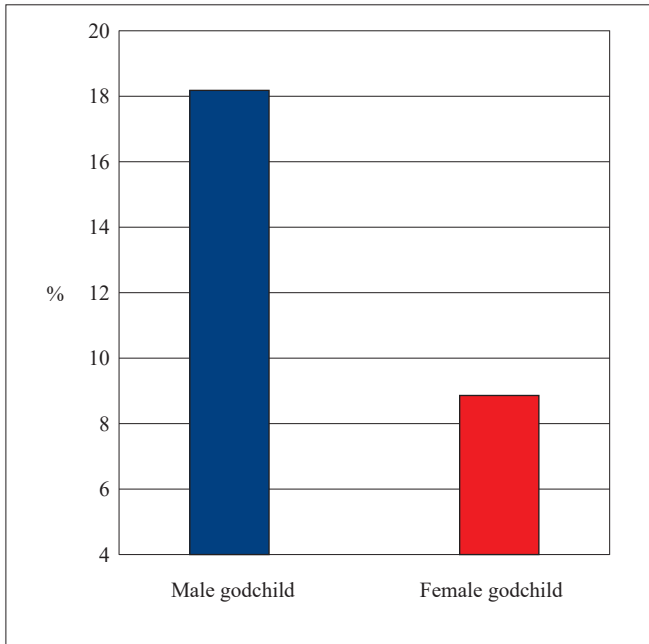


Table 5. Name-sharing incidence between godchildren and their godparents in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)

Year	Number of births					
	Total	Percentage (%)	Male	Percentage (%)	Female	Percentage (%)
Total	167	100	88	100	79	100
1870	95	100	51	100	44	100
1871	72	100	37	100	35	100
Year	Godchild sharing its first name with the godparent					
	Total	Percentage (%)	Male	Percentage (%)	Female	Percentage (%)
Total	23	13.77	16	18.18	7	8.86
1870	12	12.63	6	11.76	6	13.64
1871	11	15.28	10	27.03	1	2.86
Year	Godchild-godparent name sharing (all names taken into account)					
	Total	Percentage (%)	Male	Percentage (%)	Female	Percentage (%)
Total	53	31.74	36	40.91	17	21.52
1870	31	32.63	20	39.22	11	25.00
1871	22	30.56	16	43.24	6	17.14



## 2.5. The surnames of godchildren and their godparents

The selection of godparents and witnesses is based on kinship, friendship or interest (economic and social).<sup>40</sup> Alfani, Gourdon and Vitali argue that the data for the Western Europe indicate that godparenthood in the Middle Ages and the early-modern era was mainly non-kin based. In sixteenth-century Italy the proportion of kin-based godparenthoods was below 10%.<sup>41</sup> In northern Italy the selection of godparents among the kin became dominant only after WW II, in southern Italy even later.<sup>42</sup> In France, this change took place by the end of the eighteenth and during the nineteenth century. The research conducted in Provence has shown that at the start of the seventeenth century the proportion of kin-based godparenthoods was only 10%. This proportion gradually increased, only to reach 40% by the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>43</sup> The research undertaken in Italy, Spain, Portugal, Germany and Sweden confirmed that this trend gained in prominence in the course of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century.<sup>44</sup> In this context, the equality in honouring the families of both parents was given special attention in the nineteenth century.<sup>45</sup> With the establishment of kin-based godparenthood, grandmothers and grandfathers were the most common candidates, especially for the first-born child.<sup>46</sup> They are followed by aunts and uncles on both sides, and by brothers and sisters.<sup>47</sup>

In Konavle, it was customary for the first- and second-born child to have kin-based godparents. For all the subsequent children, godfathers and godmothers were not necessarily chosen from among the kin. Neighbours could qualify for godparents.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>40</sup> K. Juran, »Stanovništvo Murtera u 18. stoljeću i početkom 19. stoljeća«: p. 263.

<sup>41</sup> G. Alfani, V. Gourdon and A. Vitali, »Social customs and demographic change «: p. 7.

<sup>42</sup> G. Alfani, V. Gourdon and A. Vitali, »Social customs and demographic change «: p. 9.

<sup>43</sup> P-Y. Quemener, »Le parrainage, rouage essentiel des processus de prénomination«: p. 6.

<sup>44</sup> The authors argue that the practice of kin-based godparenthood in the nineteenth century may be accounted by the expansion of the bourgeois family ideology, which placed its focus on intimacy and affection, and not on economic interests. Although not among its causes, the process of demographic transition did have certain impact on this phenomenon (G. Alfani, V. Gourdon and A. Vitali: »Social customs and demographic change«: pp. 5-7).

<sup>45</sup> Vincent Gourdon, »Réseaux des femmes, réseaux de femmes. Le cas du témoignage au mariage civil au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle dans les pays héritiers du Code Napoléon (France, Pays-Bas, Belgique)«: *Annales de démographie historique* 112/2 (2006): p. 36.

<sup>46</sup> Agnès Fine, »Parrainage, marrainage et relations familiales dans la société française contemporaine«: *Lien sociale et Politiques* 37 (1997): p. 157.

<sup>47</sup> G. Alfani, V. Gourdon and A. Vitali: »Social customs and demographic change«: p. 9.

<sup>48</sup> J. Vukmanović, *Konavli*: pp. 209-221.

In Pula between the seventeenth and the start of the nineteenth century it was not rare to pick brother and sister as godparents.<sup>49</sup>

For the establishment of kin relationship between godparents and natural parents in Dubrovnik the method of isonomy was used. In a comparatively large proportion (27.54%) a correlation between the surname of the godchild's parents and that of the godparents has been established.<sup>50</sup> An almost identical number of the fathers' surnames (22) and those of the mothers (24) which corresponded with that of the godfather (Table 6, Graph 6) has been detected, which indicates that maternal and paternal kinship ties were equally honoured. These results are in full correlation with the trend of the familiarisation of godparenthood, as exhibited by the mentioned studies regarding the Western Europe.

Graph 6. The surnames of godchildren and their godparents in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)

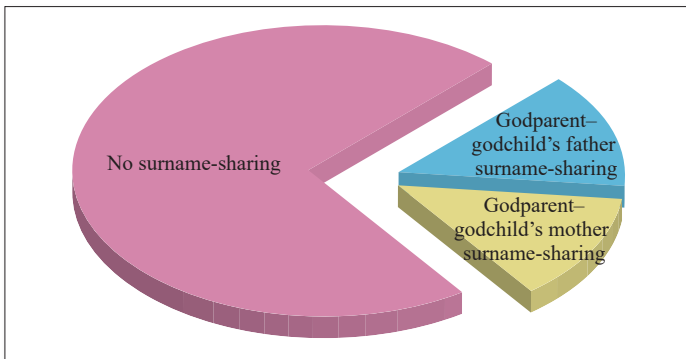


Table 6. The surnames of godchildren and their godparents in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)

Year	Number of births	Number of godparents	Godparent sharing surname with			
	Total	Total	Total	Child's father	Child's mother	Percentage (%)
Total	167	295	46	22	24	27.54
1870	95	166	25	10	15	26.32
1871	72	129	21	12	9	29.17

<sup>49</sup> S. Bertoša, *Život i smrt u Puli*: p. 40.

<sup>50</sup> According to the same method applied to the data from 1770, the kinship based godparenthood was detected in at least 18% of the cases. V. Stojanović and N. Lonza, »Godparenthood in Eighteenth-Century Dubrovnik«: p. 86.

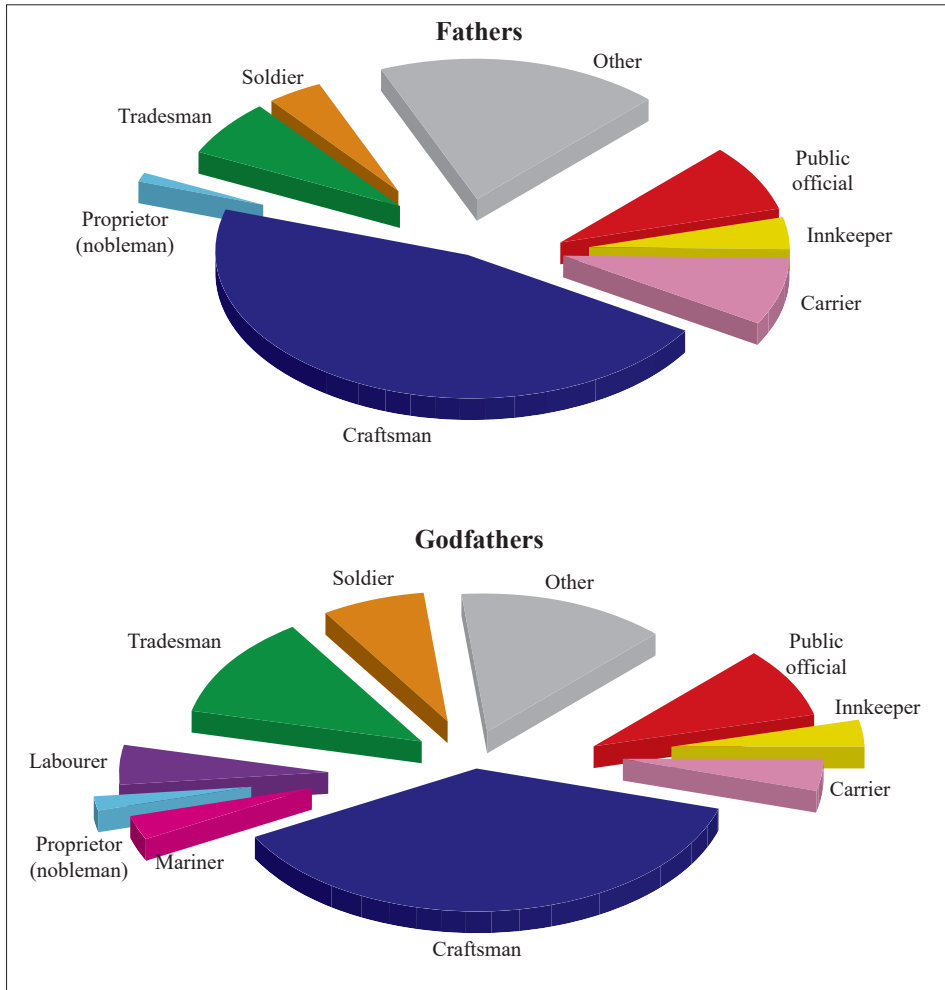
## 2.6. Occupation and rank of parents and their children's godparents

Within the time frame of this study, some sixty years after the fall of the Dubrovnik Republic, the proportion of nobility in the overall population of Dubrovnik was insignificant. Out of 167 children born in 1870 and 1871 only 4 descended from the Ragusan nobility (2.39%). The proportion of nobility-based godparents was slightly higher (2.71%). Six children had nobility as godparents. In two cases, both parents were of noble birth, and so were both godparents. In another two cases, one of the parents was recorded as *nobile*, and so were both godparents. In one case only nobleman Josip Bona acted as godfather to a child of a carpenter and a maid.

Table 7. Occupation and rank of parents and their children's godparents in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)

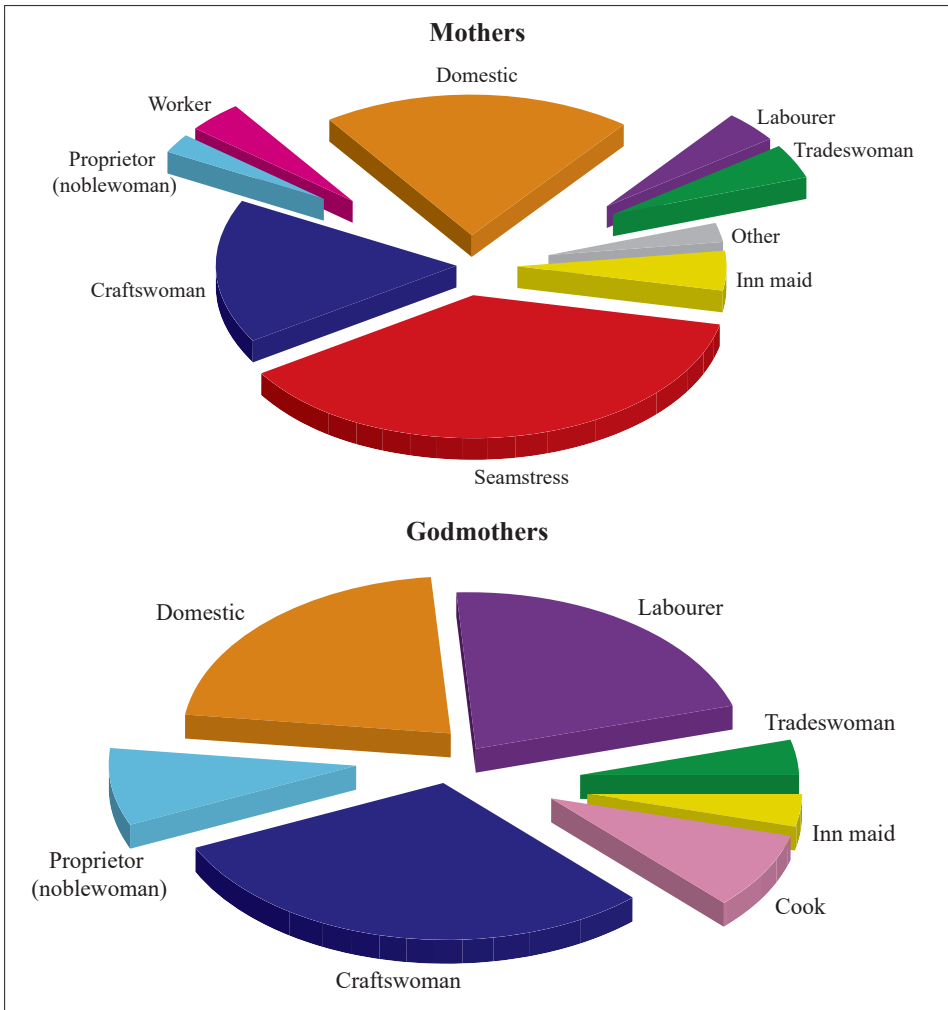
Occupation	Male				Occupation	Female			
	Father		Godfather			Mother		Godmother	
	Total	Percentage (%)	Total	Percentage (%)		Total	Percentage (%)	Total	Percentage (%)
<i>Total</i>	167	100	240	100	<i>Total</i>	167	100	55	100
Public official	13	8.39	20	8.77					
Innkeeper	7	4.52	9	3.95	Inn maid	7	5.30	1	4.35
					Seamstress	50	37.88	-	0.00
					Cook		0.00	2	8.70
Carrier	13	8.39	10	4.39			0.00		
Craftsman	72	46.45	86	37.72	Craftswoman	22	16.67	7	30.43
Mariner	-	0.00	8	3.51			0.00		
Proprietor (nobleman)	3	1.94	6	2.63	Proprietor (noblewoman)	4	3.03	2	8.70
					Worker	6	4.55	-	0.00
					Domestic	27	20.45	5	21.74
Labourer	-	0.00	12	5.26	Labourer	6	4.55	5	21.74
Tradesman	11	7.10	28	12.28	Tradeswoman	6	4.55	1	4.35
Soldier	7	4.52	17	7.46			0.00		
Other	29	18.71	32	14.04	Other	4	3.03	-	0.00
Unknown	12	7.74	12	-	Unknown	35	26.52	32	-

Graph 7. Occupation of parents and godparents of the children born in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)



By comparing these data with the Dubrovnik data from the previous century, a clear downward trend of the proportion of the nobility-based godparenthood is visible, which can be explained by the minorisation of the social role of the ruling class after the fall of the Republic.<sup>51</sup> In the baptismal registers of Pula, if parents were distinguished, so were the godparents, even in a case of an illegitimate child. Nobility, canons, and city dignitaries often acted as godparents.

<sup>51</sup> V. Stojanović and N. Lonza, »Godparenthood in Eighteenth-Century Dubrovnik«: pp. 85-86.



But also several cases have been traced in which the family domestic acted as godmother to a child whose parents were of noble descent.<sup>52</sup>

With regard to the occupation of parents and godparents, in Dubrovnik a comparatively small discrepancy has been established. There is a marked tendency to choose a godfather among the equals, or possibly among a higher rank. There is a mild domination of godfathers having attractive occupations (proprietor, public official, trader, soldier), while parents are engaged in service

<sup>52</sup> S. Bertoša, *Život i smrt u Puli*: pp. 34-35, 37, 40, 45.

industry (carrier, inn keeper, craftsman). On the other hand, a significant proportion of male (5.26%) and female (21.74%) labourers acting as godparents in a city in which labourers were virtually non-existent shows that the strength of kinship ties was much greater than the aspirations to pursue well-off godparents for one's child (Table 7, Graph 7). A bulk of Dubrovnik's city population came from the rural areas of Dubrovačko primorje, Župa dubrovačka and Konavle. Inevitably, a child born in the city would still have his grandfather, grandmother or the parents' siblings living in the country as godparents.

## 2.7. Multiple godparenthoods

Within the period examined, every eleventh godparent acted as such at least twice. Given the city's size and a sample of only two years, it is not negligible. This leads to a conclusion that there were favourite godparents.<sup>53</sup> They commonly stemmed from the middling ranks, such as distinguished tradesmen, artisans or a clerk or two. Only one nobleman, but also only one person from the lower orders (a domestic) were recorded as godparents. Little or no deviation in rank between godparents and natural parents indicates that the favourite godparent did not necessarily owe his popularity to the material status.

There were 26 double and three triple godparenthoods, of which 27 men and only two women as godparents (Table 8, Graph 8). Financial clerk Josip Devčić,<sup>54</sup> trader Baldo Viđen<sup>55</sup> and tanner Nikola Kelez acted as godfathers three times.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> For the multiple godparenthood in Dubrovnik in 1770, see V. Stojanović and N. Lonza, »Godparenthood in Eighteenth-Century Dubrovnik«: pp. 91-92.

<sup>54</sup> Financial administrator Josip Vlahov Devčić (1835-1904) from Gospić settled in Dubrovnik in 1861. *G12V (1858-1876)*. He was a supervisor with the central government treasury in Sarajevo. *G28M (1903-1910)*.

<sup>55</sup> Baldo Nikolin Viđen (c. 1824-1874), tradesman (*negoziante*), settled in Dubrovnik in 1864 from Knežica. *Bg1V (1860-1905)*.

<sup>56</sup> Most likely, this was Nikola Ivanov Kelez (\*1839), born in Dubrovnik. His father, Ivan Nikolin Kelez (1797-1879), shoemaker, settled in Dubrovnik in 1825 from Martinovići (Župa dubrovačka) *P2V (1825-1833)*.

Graph 8. Multiple godparenthoods in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)

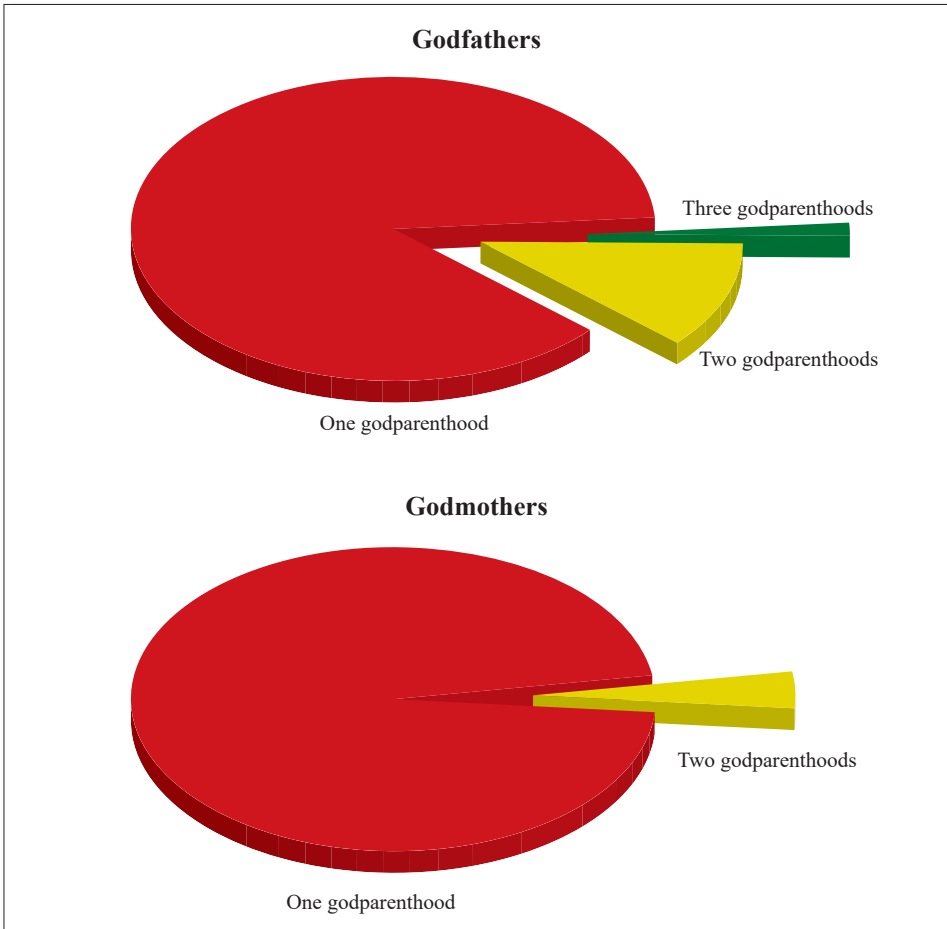


Table 8. Multiple godparenthoods in Dubrovnik (City Parsih, 1870-1871)

Period	Number of godparents	Number of godparent-hoods	Number of godparenthoods						
			Total	Godfathers who acted			Total	Godmothers who acted	
				Once	Twice	Three times		Once	Twice
1870-1	265	295	240	183	24	3	55	51	2

## 2.8. The residence of children and their godparents

As stated earlier, the research conducted in some parishes of France and Italy has shown that the practice of administering baptism immediately upon child's birth or within three days of birth tended to decline in the latter half of the nineteenth century. This opened new possibilities in the selection of godparents. Haste no longer surrounded this ceremony and plenty of time was given for the arrival of the chosen godfather or godmother from the places other than one's own, even remote locations so as to take part in the ritual of baptism. The register under analysis failed to make a clear distinction between origin and residence. Therefore, this analysis is based on the data entered in the birth register in the section "Domicilio" (residence).

For 19 out of 295 godparents there are no data on their residence. Apart from a few local surnames, residence has also been omitted for the godparents whose surname is of foreign origin: Karlo and Antonia Grott, Schala, Schweinberger, Brunetti, Degrandi, Nekermann, Maroli and Jeanpourié.

With regard to godparents' residence, as many as four-fifths were from Dubrovnik. On average every ninth godparent lived in Dubrovnik's surroundings, and every eleventh from beyond the territory of the former Dubrovnik Republic, taking into account that the residence of the majority is unknown (Table 9, Graph 9). Godparents were recorded to have come from Konavle (Gruda 2, Konavle 2, Mrcine, Stravča 3), Župa dubrovačka (Brgat 8, Postranje 4, Župa dubrovačka 4), Rijeka dubrovačka (Rijeka dubrovačka, Rožat), Dubrovačko primorje (Trsteno) and Pelješac (Pelješac, Pijavičino, Ston, Trstenik 3). As godparents' residence from outside the Dubrovnik area, the following were recorded: Croatia, Istria, Zadar, Zagreb, Dobrota, Hungary, Bisceglie (in Apulia) and Milan.

Several children were born to the members of the army, foreigners who were temporarily stationed in Dubrovnik. They also chose foreigners to act as godparents to their children. As a couple, soldier Karlo and his wife Antonia Grott, were godparents to Antun-Fran-Karlo Hlarvaczek, son of Corporal Antun Hlarvaczek. Army doctor Karlo Šperlić and his partner, Ana Cvitovac from Senj,<sup>57</sup> had an illegitimate son Josip, born on 29 May 1871.<sup>58</sup> The child's godparents were the Army Staff doctor Francesco Lörer and Infantry Captain Otto Pettoni. Two months later, Šperlić together with the army surgeon Frano Nekermann

<sup>57</sup> She died in Dubrovnik in 1888 of syphilis. *P8M (1887-1901)*.

<sup>58</sup> The child died in less than four months, on 12 September 1871. *P6M (1862-1875)*.



were godfathers to Leopold, illegitimate son of the Army doctor Leopold Grossmann. Foreigners were also chosen by the public officials whose term of office in Dubrovnik was temporary. Ivan Metličić from Zadar, financial

Graph 9. Godparents in Dubrovnik by residence (City Parish, 1870-1871)

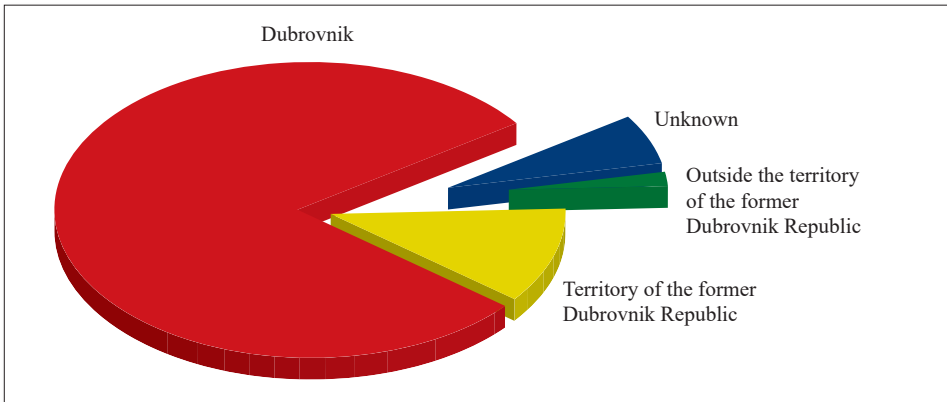


Table 9. Godparents in Dubrovnik by residence (City Parish, 1870-1871)

Residence	Godparents	
	Total	Percentage (%)
Total	295	100
Dubrovnik	235	79.66
Territory of the former Dubrovnik Republic	33	11.19
Astarea	18	6.10
Dubrovačko primorje	1	0.34
Konavle	8	2.71
Pelješac	6	2.03
Outside the territory of the former Dubrovnik Republic	8	2.71
Croatia	4	1.36
Montenegro	1	0.34
Italy	2	0.68
Hungary	1	0.34
Unknown	19	6.44

administrator, and his wife Marija-Fortunata Maldini from Dubrovnik, had two children in this period: son Stjepan, born on 27 February 1870, and daughter Barbara, born on 5 October 1871. Stjepan's godfathers were his grandfather—Stjepan Maldini from Dubrovnik, proprietor, and Josip Metličić from Zadar, clerk (who was absent at baptism, his proxy being Ana Damiani), while Barbara's godfathers were *commisario d'intendenza* Antonio Maroli and *ufficiale contabile* Giuseppe Degrandi. Lujó Hembs arrived in Dubrovnik with the military. With Jelena Kvestić, domestic from Ponikve, he conceived a child and decided to stay in Dubrovnik. They married on 7 May 1871,<sup>59</sup> and their son Antun was born six months later, on 6 November. His godparents were Maria Kronreif, an Austrian from the environs of Graz and wife of a Czech artillery sergeant Venceslav Neužil,<sup>60</sup> and nobleman Miho Bona.

In some cases foreigners were godparents to a child of the local parents. Lucia Jeanpourié, wife of the French consul, and Alberto Visetti of Milan were godparents to Justin, son of the trader and captain Mato Pržić<sup>61</sup> and Marijeta Defranceschi from Split, born on 26 September 1871. Several other children also had foreigners as godparents.

These Dubrovnik examples indicate that godparents were selected from “one's own yard”—the locals were godparents to the locals, the foreigners to the foreigners, apart from a few exception.

### 3. *Marriage witnesses*

The Council of Trent was one of the pivotal moments when the regulation of marriage was concerned. *Tametsi*, a decree passed during the Council, was in effect until 1908 and introduced a number of novelties. Therefore, it was decreed that the ritual of marriage should be performed in public, in the presence of a priest and two or three witnesses.<sup>62</sup>

Besides the decrees of the Tridentine Council, many laws regulated the ritual of marriage and choice of witnesses in the Western Europe of the nineteenth

<sup>59</sup> *G12V (1858-1876)*.

<sup>60</sup> They got married in Dubrovnik in 1869. *G12V (1858-1876)*.

<sup>61</sup> Mato's grandfather, Mato Antunov Pržić (\*c. 1770) from Vitaljina, captain, settled in Dubrovnik in 1799. Mato's father, Antun Matov Pržić (1800-1866), was a Turkish consul to Dubrovnik. See: Niko Kapetanić and Nenad Vekarić, *Konavoski rodovi (Pi-Ž)*. Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2003: p. 73.

<sup>62</sup> Marija Mogořović Crljenko, *Druga strana braka*, Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2012: p. 77.

century. In France, the Netherlands and Belgium the future spouses were to be joined in a civil marriage first, solemnised by a church marriage. Only civil marriage was rightful by law (inheritance, legal status of children etc.). In Italy, from 1865 to the end of the nineteenth century civil marriage was not obligatory.<sup>63</sup>

In France, civil marriage was always witnessed by four witnesses (as regulated by the *Code Napoléon*), while church marriage was witnessed by two or three witnesses (which corresponds to the minimum norm decreed by the Tridentine Council).<sup>64</sup> The number of witnesses in civil marriage dropped to two by the start of the twentieth century.<sup>65</sup> In Italy, towards the end of the nineteenth century there were two witnesses at both church and civil marriage. In France, a person was eligible to witness marriage at the age of 21, while in the Netherlands at 23.<sup>66</sup> It was not until the end of the nineteenth century or early twentieth century that women were allowed to act as marriage witnesses (in France since 1897, in Belgium since 1908, in the Netherlands since 1927).<sup>67</sup>

Canon laws regulate that marriage witnesses should be referred as such, their status being different from that of the godparents.<sup>68</sup> In the colloquial idiom of Dubrovnik<sup>69</sup>, however, the terms *kum* (godfather) and *kuma* (godmother) are used, the same terms being applied to the godparents.

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<sup>63</sup> Vincent Gourdon, »Les témoins de mariage civil dans les villes européennes du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle: quel intérêt pour l'analyse des réseaux familiaux et sociaux?« *Histoire, économie & société*, 27/2 (2008): pp. 64-65.

<sup>64</sup> V. Gourdon, »Les témoins de mariage civil dans les villes européennes du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle«: p. 66.

<sup>65</sup> V. Gourdon, »Les témoins de mariage civil dans les villes européennes du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle«: pp. 64, 67.

<sup>66</sup> V. Gourdon, »Les témoins de mariage civil dans les villes européennes du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle«: p. 67.

<sup>67</sup> Vincent Gourdon, »Réseaux des femmes, réseaux de femmes. Le cas du témoignage au mariage civil au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle dans les pays héritiers du Code Napoléon (France, Pays-Bas, Belgique)«: p. 35.

<sup>68</sup> Eugene A. Hammel, *Alternative Social Structures and Ritual Relations in the Balkans*. Englewood Cliffs, Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc. (1968): pp. 8-9.

<sup>69</sup> In the Republic of Dubrovnik, marriage fell within the jurisdiction of the Church. From 1812 on, under a short French rule *Code Civil* was observed. After the Vienna Congress when Dubrovnik became part of the Kingdom of Dalmatia, Austrian laws were applied. A General Civil Law Book, which, among other issues, also defined the marriage law, was enacted on 1 January 1816. Laws regulating marriage leaned on the Catholic canon law, taking into account the independence of the state. It was prescribed that "the state permits a contract of marriage if performed before an authorised priest, who in this capacity acts as a public official". In Dalmatia these regulations were valid until 1857, when it was decreed that for "the members of the Roman Catholic faith canon i.e. church law was valid". This provision was revoked in May 1868, after which the norms of the old General Civil Law Book were reinstated. See: Ljiljana Dobrovšak, »Ženidbeno (bračno) pravo u 19. stoljeću u Hrvatskoj«. *Croatica Christiana Periodica* 29/56 (2005): pp. 80, 86-87.

### 3.1. Weekly distribution of the marriage ceremony

According to Vincent Gourdon, familiarisation, that is, privatisation characterises the marriage ceremony in the latter half of the nineteenth century. This is best evidenced in the selection of witnesses as well as in the planning of the ceremony itself.<sup>70</sup>

In Dubrovnik, judging by the marriages held in 1870 and 1871, there was no aspiration towards the privatisation of marriage. Conversely, marriages were commonly held on Sunday (39.62%). Three-quarters of marriages were held between Saturday and Monday, in the rest of the week only one-quarter, with Friday at the bottom of the list (Table 10, Graph 10).

Researching the Istrian Parish of Svetvinčenat, Danijela Doblanović established that in the period 1896-1900, the bulk of marriages were contracted on Wednesday (36%) and on Saturday (35%), as contrasted to Friday (none) and Sunday (2.2%). The avoidance of Sunday she explained with the emergence of marriage privatisation. Many people attended Sunday mass and it seemed desirable to restrict the circle of persons present. According to popular belief, Tuesday and Friday should be avoided as days for the marriage ceremony. Friday was also the day of the Lord's Passion, and for this reason proved inappropriate for any church celebration.<sup>71</sup>

In southern Croatia and in western Herzegovina privatisation of marriage, apparently, was not at work. By contrast, there was a tendency towards massive ceremonies, in the rural areas it was a major social event. In Komin, in the Neretva Valley, from 1796 to 1856 most marriages were held on Monday (54.45%), Sunday being the next option (23.56%). The smallest number of marriages was held on Saturday and Friday.<sup>72</sup> In Ravno, Herzegovina, most marriages were also held on Monday (38.81%) and Sunday (17.41%), Friday being the least popular day (5.85%). According to Marinko Marić, "meat, bread and wine were most commonly served at wedding celebrations, and considering that the Church recommended abstinence from animal meat on Fridays, that proved to be a day with the fewest marriages".<sup>73</sup>

<sup>70</sup> V. Gourdon, »Les témoins de mariage civil dans les villes européennes du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle«: p. 84.

<sup>71</sup> D. Doblanović, »Demografska slika župe Svetvinčenat od početka 17. do početka 19. stoljeća«: pp. 117-119.

<sup>72</sup> Maja Šunjić, »Prirodno kretanje stanovništva Komina na kraju 18. i u prvoj polovici 19. stoljeća«: *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 50 (2012): p. 368.

<sup>73</sup> Marinko Marić, *Stanovništvo Popova u Hercegovini: Ravno*. Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2015: 140.

Graph 10. Marriage ceremony in Dubrovnik by day of the week (City Parish, 1870-1871)

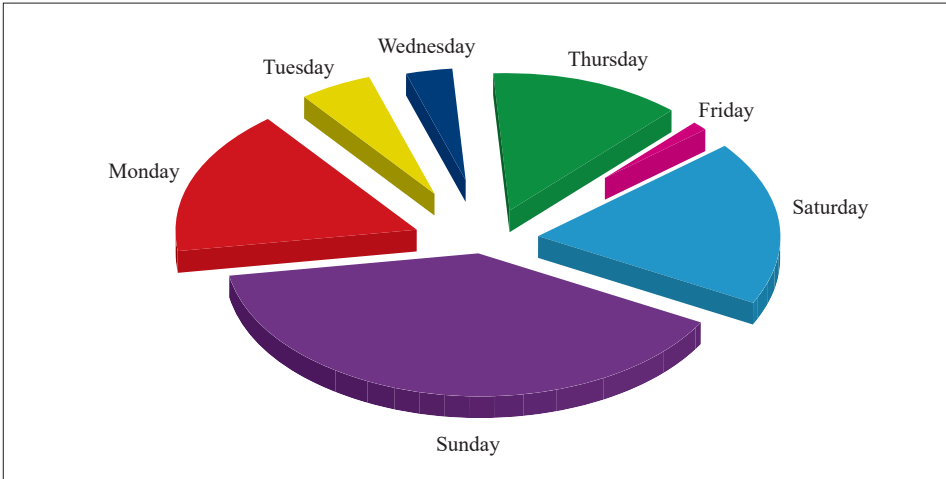


Table 10. Marriage ceremony in Dubrovnik by day of the week (City Parish, 1870-1871)

Day of the week	Marriage ceremony	
	Total	Percentage (%)
Total	53	100
Monday	9	16.98
Tuesday	3	5.66
Wednesday	2	3.77
Thursday	7	13.21
Friday	1	1.89
Saturday	10	18.87
Sunday	21	39.62

Source for Tables 10-14 and 16, and Graphs 10-14: *G12V (1858-1876)*.

### 3.2. Number and gender structure of marriage witnesses

In his study of the Balkan customs, Hammel established that a woman could not act as witness at marriage.<sup>74</sup> In Pula (Istria), in the period from the seventeenth to the start of the nineteenth century marriage witnesses were commonly selected among the couple's close kin, such as mother (sic!), father, brother,

<sup>74</sup> E. A. Hammel, *Alternative Social Structures and Ritual Relations in the Balkans*: pp. 8-9.

aunts and uncles from both sides, cousins, even children from former marriages. The number of witnesses varied to as many as four in some cases.<sup>75</sup> In the second half of the seventeenth century, according to some data from the marriage registers of Betina (Dalmatia), there were two witnesses at marriage, one of whom was the priest who administered the sacrament of marriage.<sup>76</sup>

Through 1870 and 1871, the City Parish of Dubrovnik recorded the marriage of 53 couples—24 couples in 1870, and 29 couples in 1871. Each couple had two marriage witnesses (Table 11), and all marriage witnesses were male.

Table 11. Number and gender structure of marriage witnesses in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)

Year	Number of marriages	Number of witnesses	Witness sharing his surname with				Percentage (%)
			Total	Groom	Bride and groom	Bride	
Total	53	106	6	2	1	3	5.66
1870	24	48	4	2	0	2	8.33
1871	29	58	2	-	1	1	3.45

### 3.3. Selection of marriage witnesses

The research conducted in the north of France shows that in the selection of witnesses greater priority was given to family ties than it was the case in the south of France. In urban areas the proportion of witnesses not related by kin to the bride and groom was 40%, whereas in the rural areas it was somewhat lower, 31%. Therefore, the selection of kin-related witnesses, though not significantly, dominated in the rural areas. The analysis undertaken for Belgium and the Netherlands has produced similar results. As one of the plausible reasons underlying a larger proportion of witnesses not related by kin to the couple is a massive influx of people who migrated to urban areas during the nineteenth century.<sup>77</sup>

When witnesses were selected among the kin, reciprocity between the bride's and groom's side was respected as with godparents. French results point to

<sup>75</sup> S. Bertoša, *Život i smrt u Puli*: pp. 60-62.

<sup>76</sup> Kristijan Juran, »Građa iz dosad nepoznatih betinskih, prvickih i tribunjskih glagoljskih matica i drugih spisa«. *Čakavska rič* 31/1-2 (2003): p. 133.

<sup>77</sup> V. Gourdon, »Les témoins de mariage civil dans les villes européennes du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle«: pp. 70-71.

certain discrepancy between rural and urban areas in the choice of marriage witnesses in the nineteenth century. In the urban practice, close family dominated as witnesses, and the relations were not burdened by family hierarchy and inter-generational ties as in the traditional rural areas.<sup>78</sup> In higher ranks, the selection of witnesses was guided by the logic of family and social endogamy (horizontal line of selection), while in the lower, working classes the choice was more complex and varied. It included family members (if not geographically remote), neighbours, colleagues from work, members of higher ranks or dignitaries (vertical line of selection).<sup>79</sup>

Regardless of the social environment, witnesses were carefully chosen from whichever pool they came. The choice is an expression of a most thoughtful approach and has little to do with randomness. This practice resulted in a decrease of “professional” witnesses at marriage (*les témoins professionnels*), who in the second half of the nineteenth century were deemed rather inappropriate.<sup>80</sup> In the Istrian Parish of Svetvinčenat same persons witnessed the marriage of many couples. Mainly, they resided in the church’s vicinity or were related to the church, such as bell-ringers, sacristans, organ players). The proportion of “professional” witnesses was much larger at the beginning of the seventeenth century than at the start of the nineteenth century.<sup>81</sup>

In order to establish the proportion of kin-based relations between bride and groom and their witnesses in Dubrovnik, the method of isonomy was used. A thorough analysis of kin-based relations between spouses and their witnesses calls for a detailed genealogical reconstruction, which could not have been undertaken within the scope of this article. However, on the basis of isonomy, it is possible to roughly outline the phenomenon. Surname-sharing between male witness and one spouse has been traced in only 6.60% of the cases, which implies that every fifteenth witness was for sure a close kin of one of the spouses (Table 12, Graph 11). In comparison to godparents, selection of marriage witnesses among kin was less common. According to the customs of Konavle,

<sup>78</sup> V. Gourdon, »Les témoins de mariage civil dans les villes européennes du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle«: p. 73.

<sup>79</sup> V. Gourdon, »Les témoins de mariage civil dans les villes européennes du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle«: pp. 77, 79.

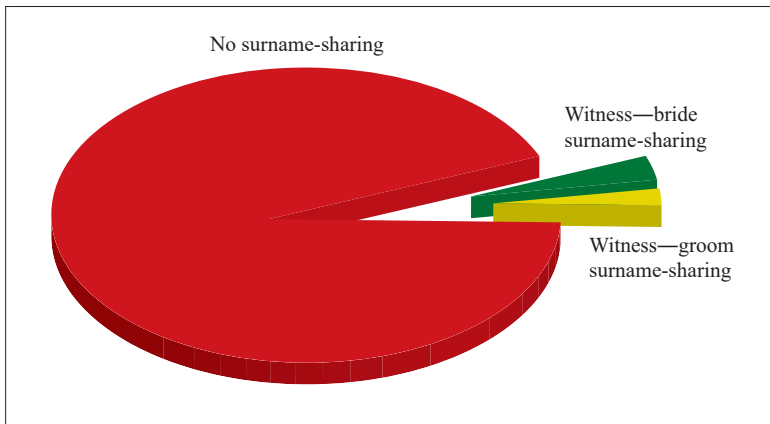
<sup>80</sup> Research in the industrial town of Saint-Chaumont shows that in the first half of the nineteenth century marriage witnesses were mainly “professionals” (V. Gourdon, »Les témoins de mariage civil dans les villes européennes du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle«: p. 84).

<sup>81</sup> Danijela Doblanović, »Demografska slika župe Svetvinčenat od početka 17. do početka 19. stoljeća«. Zagreb: Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, doctoral dissertation, 2013: pp. 122-123.

Table 12. Surnames of spouses and their marriage witnesses in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)

Year	Number of married couples	Witnesses			Mean number of witnesses per couple
		Total	Male	Female	
Total	53	106	106	-	2
1870	24	48	48	-	2
1871	29	58	58	-	2

Graph 11. Surnames of spouses and their marriage witnesses in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)



marriage witness was not chosen among the kin but among close friends.<sup>82</sup> Among a modest number of witnesses related by kin to the spouses, the bride's and groom's side are equally represented, which indicates an equal respect of both families, similar to the results pertaining to the Western Europe.

#### 3.4. Status and occupation of brides and grooms and their marriage witnesses

Four noblemen have been traced among marriage witnesses. Marina-Ignacija Gozze, illegitimate daughter of nobleman Ivan Rado-Ignacijev Gozze, married a policeman Ivan Bürger (born in Vodice, Dalmatia), and their witnesses were

<sup>82</sup> J. Vukmanović, *Konavli*: p. 221.





Figure 1. Nikola Marko-Marijin Pozza-Veliki (1820-1883)

Source: *Slovinac* 6/15 (1883): p. 353.



Figure 2. Eugenio (Ugjo) Stjepanov Saraca (1836-1899)

Source: *Unclassified photographs*, SAD.

Table 13. Occupation of bride and groom and their marriage witnesses in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)

Occupation	Male				Occupation	Female	
	Groom		Witness			Bride	
	Total	Percentage (%)	Total	Percentage (%)		Total	Percentage (%)
<i>Total</i>	53	100	106	100	<i>Total</i>	53	100
Public official	-	0.00	10	9.43			
					Seamstress	15	28.30
Carrier	2	3.77	-	0.00			
Craftsman	20	37.74	34	32.08	Craftswoman	1	1.89
Mariner	4	7.55	-	0.00			
Proprietor	-	0.00	9	8.49	Proprietor	2	3.77
					Laundry worker	1	1.89
					Midwife	1	1.89
					Domestic	16	30.19
					Labourer	2	3.77
Tradesman	2	3.77	12	11.32			
Soldier	14	26.42	14	13.21			
Other	9	16.98	20	18.87	Other	-	0.00
Unknown	2	3.77	7	6.60	Unknown	15	28.30

a distinguished physician and writer Ivan-August Kaznačić<sup>83</sup> and Niko Veliki Pozza, politician, equally dedicated to cultural pursuits.<sup>84</sup> Nobleman and lawyer Eugenio Saraca<sup>85</sup> witnessed the marriage of a carpenter Đuro Moysze and Marija, orphan, domestic from Čilipi. Mariner Nikola Beusan from Mandaljena

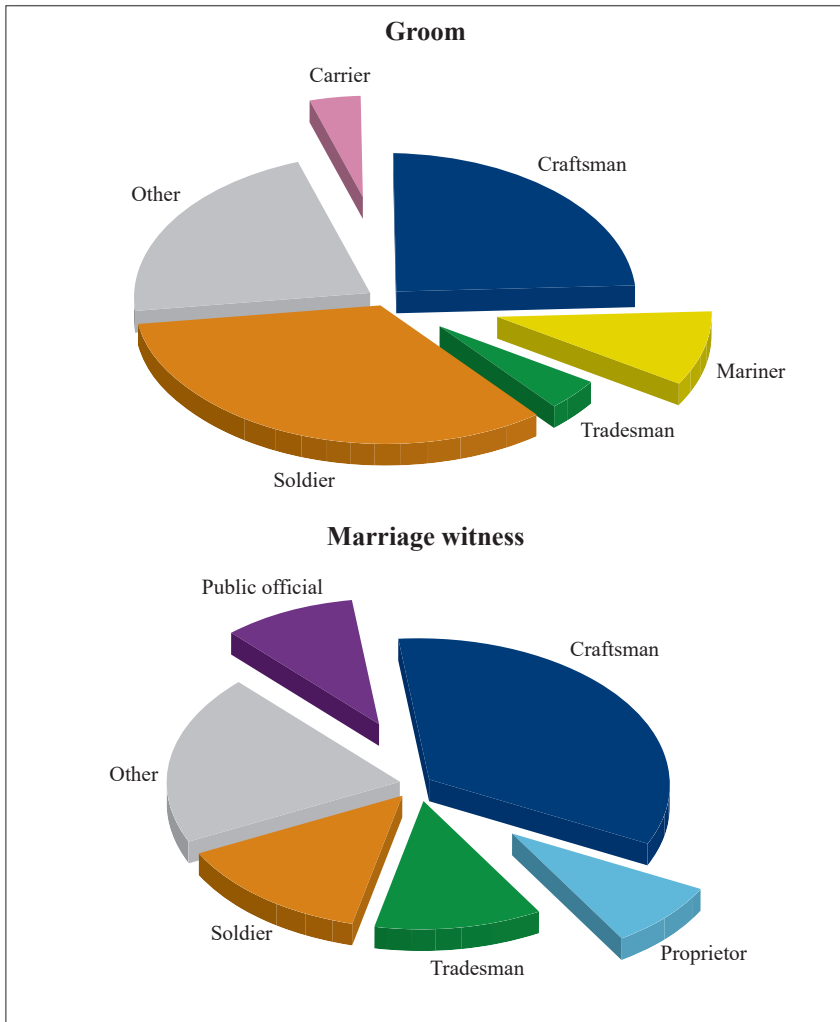
<sup>83</sup> Ivan-August Antunov Kaznačić (1817-1883), doctor, hospital director, was a renowned man of letters and culture in Dubrovnik in the latter half of the nineteenth century. See: Slavica Stojan, *Ivan August Kaznačić, književnik i kulturni djelatnik*. Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijene znanosti HAZU, 1993; *Stoljeća hrvatske književnosti: Pasko Antun Kazali - Mato Vodopić - Ivan August Kaznačić - Orsat Medo Pucić*, ed. Slavica Stojan. Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 2005.

<sup>84</sup> On Nikola Marko-Marijin Pozza (1820-1883) or Niko Veliki, see: N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika* 6: pp. 59-63.

<sup>85</sup> On Eugenij Stjepanov Saraca (1836-1899), see: N. Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika* 2: p. 241.

married Mara Popović, servant from Mandaljena, and their witnesses were priest Grgur Boschi and nobleman Giorgi (name omitted). Lujo Hems, soldier from Vienna, married Jelena Kvestić, maid from Ponikve, their witnesses being nobleman Miho Bona (later also godfather to their son) and sacristan Antun Gašparović.

Graph 12. Occupation of bride and groom and their marriage witnesses in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)



Similar to godparents, there is a mild rank deviation between witnesses and the bride and groom. Proprietors, civil servants and traders dominate among the witnesses, while craftsmen, carriers, soldiers and mariners represent a comparatively larger portion among grooms than among witnesses (Table 13, Graph 12).

### 3.5. Multiple marriage witnesses

Almost every eighth witness acted in this role at least twice in the period under analysis (Table 14, Graph 13). Habitual witnesses came from the middle ranks. Trader Baldo Viđen acted as marriage witness three times. The following were chosen twice as marriage witnesses: craftsman Cvijeto Mujo, soldier Adolf Bein, craftsman and cathedral attendant Antun Gašparović, financial administrator Josip Devčić, carrier Antun Radić, craftsman Mato Podić, goldsmith Frano Montani, trader Vlaho Kristović, slipper maker Matija Jarak, trader Pero Gvozden and carrier Pasko Bršenda from Istria.

A comparatively large number of multiple witnesses whose status departed little from that of the bride and groom, indicates that these witnesses mainly owed their popularity to their individual characteristics, the respect that they enjoyed in society, and not necessarily to their material status. Indeed, this assumption is grounded on the statistics, while the personal circumstances of the witnesses remain obscure.

This knowledge is further enhanced by a correlation between godparents and marriage witnesses, which reveals that same persons repeatedly acted in both the ceremony of baptism and that of marriage. The proportion of persons who in the City parish in the period 1870- 1871 acted as both godparents and marriage witnesses was 6.73% (Table 15). Most popular among them was the trader Baldo Viđen, a six-time witness, i.e. as godfather three times and as marriage witnesses also thrice. Financial administrator Josip Devčić was invited as godfather three times, and twice as marriage witness, tanner Nikola Kelez (as godfather three times and once as marriage witness) and craftsman Cvijeto Mujo (twice as marriage witness and twice as godfather). Twelve men acted as witnesses on three occasions, and eleven on two occasions: at baptism and at marriage.

Graph 13. Multiple marriage witnesses in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)

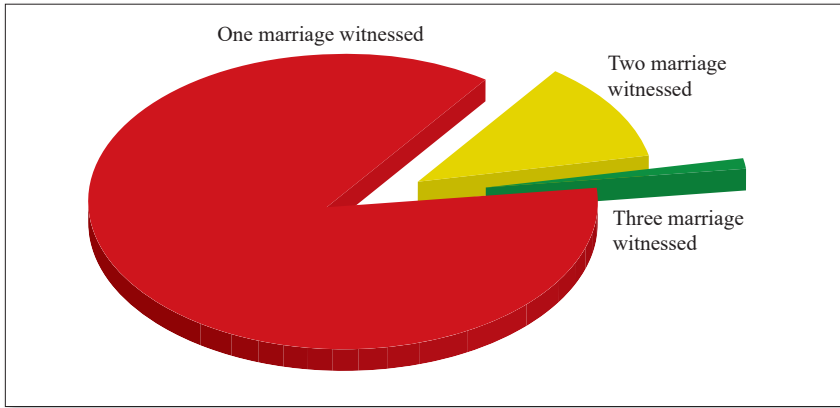


Table 14. Multiple marriage witnesses in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)

Period	Number of marriage witnesses	Number of marriages witnessed			
		Total	Witnesses who acted		
			Once	Twice	Three times
1870-1	93	106	81	11	1

Table 15. Multiple godparenthoods and marriage witnesses in Dubrovnik (City Parish, 1870-1871)

Year	Number of godparents			Number of marriage witnesses			Number of persons acting as both godparents and marriage witnesses				
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male		Female	
								Number	Percentage (%)	Number	Percentage (%)
Total	295	240	55	106	106	-	27	27	6.73	-	-

Sources: *G23K (1866-1874)*; *G12V (1858-1876)*.

### 3.6. The place of origin/residence of the marriage witnesses

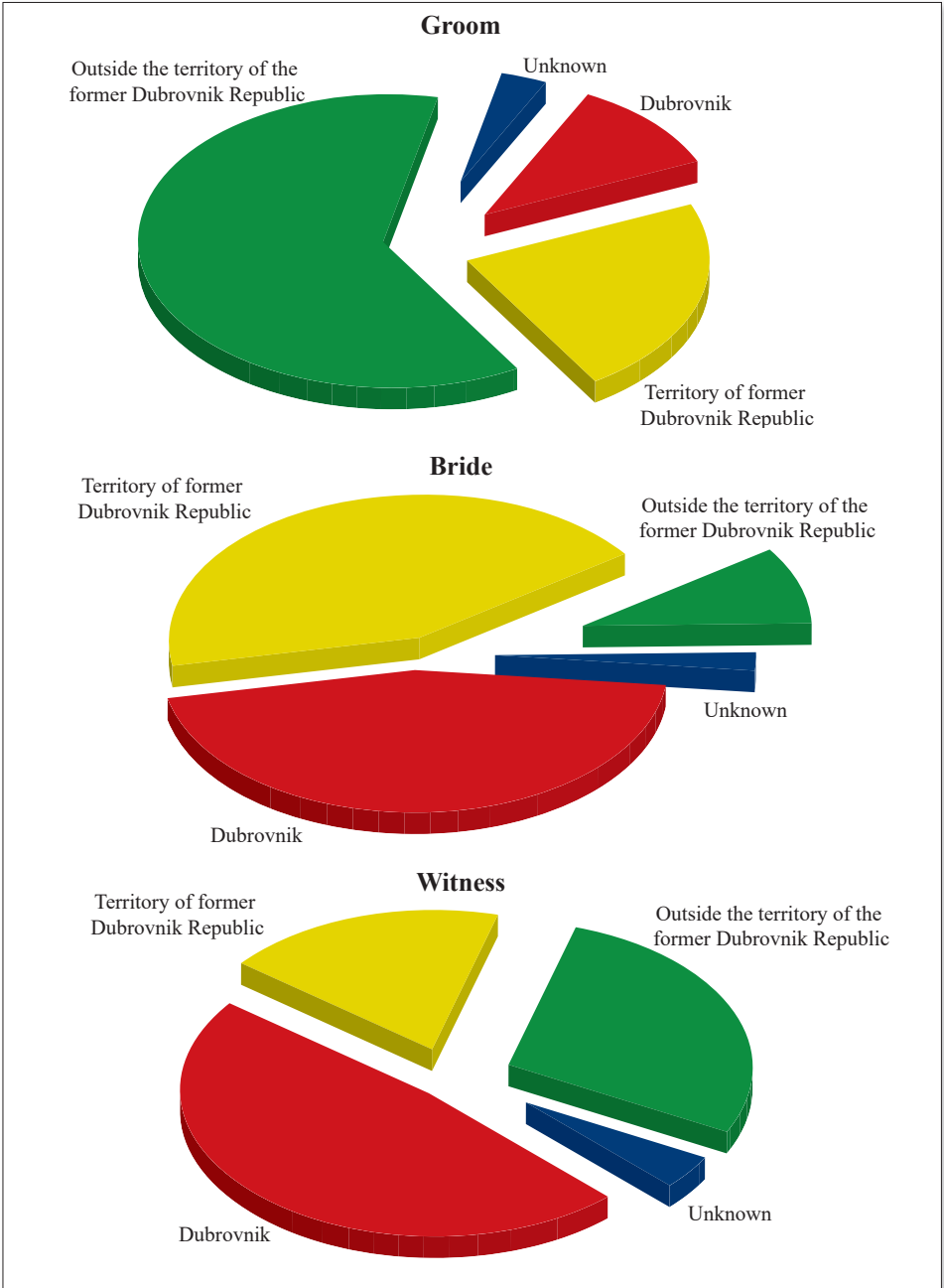
While brides mainly came from Dubrovnik or its environs (88.68%), grooms were often outsiders (62.26%), from other parts of Croatia (9), Bohemia (7), Italy (5) and Slovenia (5). The locals dominated among marriage witnesses: two-thirds (66.98%) were from Dubrovnik or its surroundings. Among the

witnesses from more remote areas (29.70%), those from other parts of Croatia dominated (9) as well as from Bohemia (8) (Table 16, Graph 14). In the majority of cases, foreigners witnessed the marriages when both spouses or one were foreigners. In a couple of cases involving foreign grooms, the witnesses were from Dubrovnik. If both spouses were from Dubrovnik, a foreign witness was rarely chosen.

Table 16. Bride and groom and their marriage witnesses in Dubrovnik by place of origin/residence (City Parish, 1870-1871)

Origin/Residence	Witnesses		Grooms		Brides	
	<i>Total</i>	Percentage (%)	<i>Total</i>	Percentage (%)	<i>Total</i>	Percentage (%)
<i>Total</i>	106	100	53	100	53	100
Dubrovnik	51	48.11	6	11.32	24	45.28
Territory of the former Dubrovnik Republic	20	18.87	12	22.64	23	43.40
Astarea	9	8.49	5	9.43	5	9.43
Dubrovačko primorje	7	6.60	2	3.77	7	13.21
Konavle	3	2.83	3	5.66	8	15.09
Pelješac	-	0.00	1	1.89	2	3.77
Dubrovnik islands	1	0.94	1	1.89	1	1.89
Outside the territory of the former Dubrovnik Republic	30	28.30	33	62.26	5	9.43
Croatia	9	8.49	9	16.98	2	3.77
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2	1.89	2	3.77	-	0.00
Montenegro	-	0.00	-	0.00	1	1.89
Slovenia	2	1.89	5	9.43	-	0.00
Albania	-	0.00	1	1.89	-	0.00
Italy	4	3.77	5	9.43	-	0.00
Germany	-	0.00	1	1.89	-	0.00
Austria	3	2.83	2	3.77	1	1.89
Hungary	2	1.89	1	1.89	-	0.00
Bohemia	8	7.55	7	13.21	1	1.89
Unknown	5	4.72	2	3.77	1	1.89

Graph 14. Bride and groom and their marriage witnesses in Dubrovnik by place of origin/ residence (City Parish , 1870-1871)



#### 4. Conclusion

On the basis of the analysis of godparenthoods and marriage witnesses in the City Parish of Dubrovnik in the period 1870-1871, we have established the following:

1. Children most commonly had two godparents, with some exceptions (on average 1.77 godparents per child).

2. Spouses always had two marriage witnesses, with no exceptions.

3. In the selection of godparents men were given priority over women (4:1), which implies that the couple-godparent model (godfather and godmother) was abandoned, although it prevailed in the Dubrovnik Republic in the eighteenth century and was recommended by the Church.

4. Marriage witnesses were exclusively male.

5. The bulk of baptisms were performed after the second week of birth, which indicates that the rule of baptism immediately upon birth, decreed by Tridentine Council, was not observed, and that medical instructions not to expose the infant to the risks of leaving his home prematurely were applied.

6. The ceremonies of baptism were most commonly celebrated on Sundays (in more than 50% of the cases), according to the customs of the European urban centres, probably because the festive sphere of Sunday was most appropriate for holding any kind of ceremony; the ceremonies of marriage were also most commonly held on Sundays, which indicates that the privatisation of marriage had not yet taken roots as in the other urban centres of Europe.

7. Due to firmly-established naming patterns, the name of godparent as the child's "protector" came third in the incidence of name-sharing (preceded by the names of ancestors and kin). Only with the practice of giving several names to the child, one of the names was shared with the godparent.

8. There is a significant correlation between the surnames of the child's parents and those of child's godparents (27.54%), and a modest correlation between the surnames of the bride and groom and those of their marriage witnesses (5.66%), which shows that kin relations were very important in the selection of godparents, and less so in the choice of marriage witnesses.

9. In the selection of kin-based godparent or marriage witness there was a reciprocity between the male and female side (father-mother, groom-bride),



10. A deviation in rank, though not drastic, has been established between the godchild's parents and godparents, that is, between the spouses and marriage witnesses, in that the godparents and marriage witnesses were selected from among equals, or desirably, from a higher rank.

11. There were godparents and marriage witnesses who enjoyed greater popularity. Every eleventh godparent and every eighth marriage witness acted in this role at least twice. The fact that there was not a considerable status gap between godparents and parents may lead to a conclusion that the most favoured godparent did not necessarily owe his popularity to his material status.

12. Godparents and marriage witnesses were most commonly chosen from "one's own yard"—locals with the locals, outsiders with the outsiders, though with some exceptions.

The analysis of godparenthood and marriage witnesses in the largest City Parish of Dubrovnik has shown that their selection was a result of a carefully constructed strategy aimed at establishing new alliances and the consolidation of old social networks. This practice was defined by legal and religious norms, customs, environment, social class, but equally so by the new socially-based influences that spread throughout Europe in the nineteenth century.

Translated by Vesna Baće