

ON THE INFLUENCE OF BYZANTINE CULTURE ON RENAISSANCE DUBROVNIK AND DALMATIA

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ABSTRACT: Byzantine judicial and institutional heritage, as well as Roman cultural tradition, was built into the foundations of Dalmatian medieval communes. In the Early Middle Ages they owed their specific identity to the Christian values of Western Europe blended with the political, legal, artistic, religious and other influences from Byzantium. The article discusses the activities and influence of the Greek scholars who had fled from Constantinople after its fall in 1453 upon the culture of the Dalmatian cities, Dubrovnik in particular. Special attention is devoted to Cardinal Bessarion's work on the Christian union against the Turks, and to the reception of his ideas in the works of Croatian humanists, primarily Ivan Stojković, Juraj Dragišić (Georgius Benignus de Salviatis) and Ivan Vitez of Sredna.

Foundations of Byzantine tradition in medieval Dalmatia

The influence of Byzantine culture in medieval Dalmatia was neither sporadic nor isolated, but deeply embedded in the history of this region. The province, later theme Dalmatia, was part of the Byzantine Empire during the Early Middle Ages. Eastern and Western influences together marked the

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This article has already been published in Croatian under the following title: »O utjecaju bizantske kulture u renesansnom Dubrovniku i Dalmaciji«. *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 44 (2006): pp. 7-24. Translated by Kristijan Nikolić.

development of early medieval Dalmatia.¹ Byzantine rule in Dalmatia, with greater or lesser intensity, lasted over half a millennium. The beginning of the end was marked by the death of Emanuel Komnenos (1180), the last emperor who wanted to restore the universal Empire, and therefore focused on what once were the Western provinces: Croatia, Dalmatia and Bosnia. After the fall of Constantinople into the hands of the Crusaders in 1204, Byzantine rule in Dalmatia came to an end. However, Dalmatia remained under Eastern influence well after the twelfth century, despite its political, ecclesiastical, cultural and ethnic orientation towards the West. Byzantine Church tried to win jurisdiction of Dalmatian dioceses.² However, the tradition of Latin Church in Dalmatia proved too strong for such attempts to achieve permanent results. Since the jurisdiction areas of the Eastern and Western Church had been separated earlier, the schism of 1054 had no impact upon Dalmatia.³ Slavonicization of Dalmatian cities, including Dubrovnik, was completed by the thirteenth century. Indigenous Romans and Byzantines, inhabitants of the settlements from Roman times and later subjects of the Eastern Empire, were outnumbered by the Slavs. However, the process of Slavonicization and the weakening of the political influence of the Empire did not imply the withering of Byzantine cultural influence. On the contrary, Byzantine legal and institutional heritage, as well as Roman cultural tradition, was built into the foundations of Dalmatian medieval communes. Roman tradition was particularly well preserved by the urban elite, but during the Middle Ages other urban strata also identified with it to a large degree. In the cultural respect, it assimilated Slavic population and distinguished the cities from their Slavic hinterland.⁴

¹ Georgije Ostrogorski, *Povijest Bizanta 324-1453*. Zagreb: Golden marketing, 2002: pp. 122-123, 165; Ivo Goldstein, »Byzantium on the Adriatic from 550 till 800«. *Hortus artium medivealium* 4 (1998): pp. 7-14; idem, »O naravi bizantske prisutnosti na istočnojadranskoj obali 6-12. stoljeća«. *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu* 24 (1991): pp. 5-13.

² Jadran Ferluga, *Vizantiska uprava u Dalmaciji*. Beograd: Naučno delo, 1957: pp. 120-153; Vinko Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika do 1808.*, vol. I. Zagreb: NZMH, 1980: pp. 17-31; Ivo Goldstein, »Bizantska vlast u Dalmaciji od 1165. do 1180. godine«. *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu* 30 (1997): pp. 9-28; Tomislav Raukar, *Hrvatsko srednjovjekovlje: prostor, ljudi, ideje*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1997: p. 260.

³ T. Raukar, *Hrvatsko srednjovjekovlje*: p. 262.

⁴ Konstantin Jireček, *Die Romanen in den Städten Dalmatiens während des Mittelalters*. Wien: Denkschriften der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften: philosophisch-historische Classe, part I, vol. 48.3 (1902): p. 97; Grga Novak, *Povijest Splita*, vol. I, *Od prehistorijskih vremena do definitivnog gubitka pune autonomije 1420*. Split: Čakavski sabor, 1957: p. 254; V. Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika I*: pp. 32-36, 52-54; T. Raukar, *Hrvatsko srednjovjekovlje*: pp. 21, 23, 55-56, 136-139, 275; Zdenka Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode. Dubrovačka vlastela između srednjovjekovlja i humanizma*. Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 1999: pp. 45-49, 343-344.

More than any other Dalmatian city, Dubrovnik was the meeting-point of two medieval worlds (of Europe): Western and Eastern. Dubrovnik embraced the classical Roman heritage that prevailed in Byzantium, and later its specific cultural and spiritual achievements of the Middle Ages. As a result, the city's unique identity blends Western Christian values with the political, legal, artistic, religious and other influences of Byzantium. Similar to the rest of Dalmatia, Ragusan commune remained under dominant influence of the Roman Church throughout the Middle Ages. Newly-acquired Ragusan territories (Ston, Pelješac, Konavle) were somewhat more exposed to the influence of the Orthodox Church, but explicit Catholic policy of the Dubrovnik administration led to a very quick restoration of Catholicism. But this Western-oriented, Catholic Dubrovnik, undoubtedly loyal to the pope, did not close its gates to the spiritual influences of the East. This is well evidenced by a succession of Eastern saints led by the patron saint of Dubrovnik himself, St. Blasius.⁵ Trade also played an important role in the ties between Dubrovnik and the Eastern Empire.⁶ Even after the Fourth Crusade, the citizens of Dubrovnik managed to maintain better relations with the Empire than with the Latin states in the East. Yet as late as 1451, when Constantinople, "a large head on a small body", was facing its fall sealed off by Ottoman territory, the Ragusans still considered this "hope and joy of all the Greeks" an important commercial centre to have privileges in trade with. According to the bull granted by the Emperor, the Ragusans could settle in Constantinople, run their own business, have a consular representative, as well as their own jurisdiction. They could trade freely, paying only two percent customs duty on the value of goods, while they were exempt from all other tolls.⁷ However, the Empire was living its final years, trying hard to keep up former reputation based on universalistic heritage, imperial title and the importance of Constantinople as an international centre of commerce. The reality behind the dazzling façade was quite different: having lost its authority, the Empire became politically, militarily and economically dependent, primarily on Venice and Genoa.⁸

⁵ Joško Belamarić, »Sveti Vlaha i dubrovačka obitelj svetaca zaštitnika«. *Dubrovnik* N.S. 5 (1994): pp. 29-39; Z. Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode*: pp. 363-373.

⁶ Bariša Krekić, *Dubrovnik (Raguse) et le Levant au Moyen âge*. Paris-La Haye: Ecole pratique des Hautes Etudes - Sorbonne, 1961, passim; idem, »On some Ragusans in Crete in the 14th century«, in: *Byzantium State and Society. In memory of Nikos Oikonomides*, ed. Anna Avramea, Angeliki Laiou, E. Chrysos. Athens, Institute for Byzantine Studies, 2003: pp. 321-337.

⁷ V. Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika*, vol. I: pp. 117-119, 265-266.

⁸ Ivan Đurić, *Sumrak Vizantije: vreme Jovana VIII. Paleologa: 1392-1448*. Zagreb: Naprijed, 1989: pp. 12-16.

After the fall of Constantinople, the Ragusans maintained relations with the despotcies on the Peloponnese until their fall in 1460.⁹ Despots Demetrius and Thomas Palaeologus issued the Ragusans silver bulls and by doing so granted trading privileges on their territories. They traded most with the land of Despot Thomas. Ragusans were employed in his service, and he also hired Ragusan ships. In 1459, via a Ragusan Juraj Radovanović (Keršman), Thomas Palaeologus sent to the Ragusans the holy relics of the right hand of their patron St. Blasius, *pro remunerationem sententiorum per ipsum Georgium cum nave sua prestitorum dicto domino despoto dum ipse dominus despot infestaretur et premeretur a Turcis*. Upon arrival in Dubrovnik, the ship was greeted by the Rector, nobility and citizens who, having joined in the holy procession with candles and honours, carried the relics to the church of St. Mary. The name of Despot Thomas was recorded on the reliquary, in honour of this great gift.¹⁰ It is worth noting that Dubrovnik prided with the possession of the reliquary of St. Blasius' right hand as early as 1026, while in the middle of the fourteenth century the city also acquired the reliquary of the patron's left hand. The feast of the hand of St. Blasius was then introduced, celebrated on 5 July.¹¹

Greek/philhellene scholars and Greek culture in Dubrovnik and Dalmatia

An important chapter in the cultural relations between Byzantium and its former Dalmatian regions was written in the period of intensified communication

⁹ G. Ostrogorski, *Povijest Bizanta*: pp. 310-311.

¹⁰ *Acta Consilii Maioris*, series 8, vol. 11, ff. 114v, 116 (State Archives of Dubrovnik, hereafter cited as SAD); *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, series 3, vol. 15, f. 258v; vol. 16, ff. 50, 51v-52 (SAD); *Acta Consilii Minoris*, series 5, vol. 2, f. 173v (SAD); Rudolf Eitelberger von Edelberg, *Die mittelalterlichen Kunstdenkmale Dalmatiens in Arbe, Zara, Nona, Sebenico, Trau, Spalato und Ragusa. Gesammelte kulturhistorische Schriften*, vol. IV. Wien: W. Braumüller, 1884: pp. 329, 355-385; Z. Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode*: p. 372; Vinicije B. Lupis and Božo Gjukić, *Emajlirani reljefi na moćnicima svetoga Vlaha*. Dubrovnik: Matica hrvatska Dubrovnik, 2001: p. 26, photographs 29 and 30.

¹¹ *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 2, f. 55; *Annales Ragusini Anonymi item Nicolai de Ragnina*, ed. N. Nodilo. [*Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium*, vol. XIV. Scriptores, vol. I]. Zagreb: JAZU, 1883: p. 227; *Libri reformationum*, vol. II, ed. Josip Gelcich. [*Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium*, vol. XIII]. Zagreb: JAZU, 1882: pp. 15-16; Z. Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode*: pp. 302-303, 372; V. Lupis - B. Gjukić, *Emajlirani reljefi*: pp. 18-19, 25-26.

between Greek and Roman Churches in the fourth and fifth decades of the fifteenth century. This cultural flow continued well after the Byzantine Empire had been conquered by the Ottoman Turks. While the Empire of the Palaeologi was collapsing, the cultural activity of the Greek intellectuals fleeing to Italy was entering a new, lively phase. Greeks/Romans were again bringing their culture to the Latins, who reciprocated by embracing and incorporating it into their own tradition. Ties that connected Rome and Constantinople have once again proved to be indestructible.¹² Many Greeks also arrived in Dalmatia, some of them directly from Byzantium, Italy, Florence in particular. Chronicler Jakov de Luccari speaks of the arrival of Constantinople families at Dubrovnik.¹³ Greek scholars worked as notaries, chancellors, teachers, painters and writers, contributing thus to Dalmatian humanism. Although Croatian humanism was principally Latin, the revival of Plato and Neo-Platonism, as well as the idea of reconciliation between the Catholic and Orthodox churches, tended to shift the scholarly focus to the Greek world too. This approach was accomplished through close contacts with Byzantine scholars, who spread the knowledge of Greek language and culture among the local pupils, training them to read Greek texts, translate and write in Greek.¹⁴ For instance, Xenophon Philelpho, the son of Francesco Philelpho and Theodora Chrysoloras, became the Secretary of the Republic of Dubrovnik in 1460. He taught the Ragusans Greek language and also fostered their interest in the ancient remains. Having married a Ragusan woman, he was granted citizenship and remained in Dubrovnik until his death. In this way, Ragusan humanists had a direct link to the famous Greek colony in Florence.¹⁵ Xenophon's brother Gian Mario wrote two histories

¹² John Monfasani, *Byzantine scholars in Renaissance Italy: Cardinal Bessarion and other émigrés: selected essays*. Aldershot - Brookfield: Variorum, 1995.

¹³ *I suoi cittadini, che porerono salvar la vita si sparesero per tutt'il mondo; et alcuni nati dell'illustrissime famiglie de Lascari, Comneni, Paleologi, Catacusini, Rali, e Boccali, capitarono a Rausa; et fatto lor dalla Republica mutar i panni de Schifo en' qual erano involti, e rivestendogli d'altri nuovi et di preggio, gli mandavano in Italia, facendoli provisione di danari per viaggio. Alcuni altri huomini dati alle lettere, derivati pero dal nobil sangue, e in particolare Giovanni Lascari, Demetrio Calcondila, Manoili Marulo, Paolo Taracagnota, padre di Gioanni Historico e Marrulo Taracagnota et Teodora Spandigino, che scrisse l'istoria de' Turchi i magistrati intendo la loro successi, senza esser richiesti, li sovennero d'albergo, di robba et di danari (Jacomo de Luccari, *Copioso ristretto degli annali di Rausa*. Venetiis: ad instantia di Antonio Leonardi 1605: p. 100).*

¹⁴ Franjo Rački, »Iz djela E. I. Crievića Dubrovčanina«. *Starine* 4 (1872): pp. 156-157.

¹⁵ Đuro Körbler, »Iz mladih dana triju humanista Dubrovčana 15. vijeka«. *Rad* 206 (1915): p. 223.

of Dubrovnik, one in verse (*Ragusaeis*) and the other in prose (*Historia de origine atque rebus egregie gestis urbis Ragusae*). However, Ragusan Senate did not really approve of his works, despite the author's apparent efforts to flatter them. Namely, his interpretations of the origin of Dubrovnik and its nobility departed considerably from the official version. As an uninformed foreigner, he misinterpreted the ideological foundations of the legends, and by doing so, failed their political purpose. However, some later chroniclers accepted his account of the beginnings of Dubrovnik.¹⁶ Famous epigrapher and expert in ancient Greek culture, Ciriaco Pizzicolli of Ancona, also visited Dubrovnik in 1426, on his return from the travels to Rhodes, Beirut, Damascus, Cyrus, Mitylene, Thessalonica and other places, where he collected inscriptions, manuscripts and various antiquities. Ancona equally benefited from his long and fruitful stay. The Ragusan council minutes mention *Demetrius Grecus*, who was offered to teach Greek in 1490, but apparently refused. It seems that this Demetrius was no other than Demetrius Chakokondylos from Florence.¹⁷ Dalmatia inspired yet another philhellene, Paladius Fuscus de Negri from Padua, pupil of Chakokondylos. He was so filled with admiration for the eastern coast of the Adriatic that he wrote *De situ orae Illyrici*. During the 1470s and 80s, he taught grammar, rhetoric, Latin and Greek in Šibenik, Trogir and Zadar. He made lasting friendships with Šimun Divnić, Jakov Naplavčić, Petar Tavelić, Martin Šibenčanin, Juraj Divnić, Ambroz Šibenčanin and Juraj Šižgorić. His pupil from Šibenik, Ivan Polikarp Severitan, translated Isocrates' work on the duties of the ruler from Greek into Italian (*Commentaria in Isocratis moralem philosophiam*).¹⁸ Fuscus' friend from Trogir, Coriolanus Cippico, humanist and soldier who travelled to Levant with his friend Peter Mocenigo, described many famous Greek monuments and historical places.¹⁹

¹⁶ Riccardo Picchio, »Povijest Dubrovnika prema interpretaciji humanista Giovana Maria Filelfa«. *Zbornik Zagrebačke slavističke škole* 1/1 (1973): pp. 15-22.

¹⁷ Konstantin Jireček, »Der ragusanische Dichter Šiško Menčetić (1457-1527)«. *Archiv für slavische Philologie* 19 (1896): pp. 35-36; Ivan Božić, »Pojava humanizma u Dubrovniku«. *Istorijski pregled* 1 (1955): p. 12.

¹⁸ Miroslav Kurelac, »Paladije Fusko – Paladius Fuscus«, in: Fusko, Paladije, *Opis obale Ilirika*. Zagreb: Latina et Graeca, 1990: pp. 25-27; Vladimir Bazala. *Pregled hrvatske znanstvene baštine*. Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1978: pp. 142-143.

¹⁹ *De bello Asiatico Coriolani Cippici Cepionis ... libri tres. Opera Joannis Cippici nunc iterum impressi*. Venetiis: Apud J. A. Rampazettum, 1594; *De origine et rebus gestis Turcorum libri decem ... Adieciimus ... de rebus Turcorum adversus Christianos et Christianorum contra illos ... gestis diversa opuscula*. Basileae: Per I. Oporinum, 1556; *Petri Mocenici imperatoris gesta*. Venetiis: Bernardus Pictor [Maler], Erhardus Ratdolt et Petrus Loeslein, 1477.

Paladius Fuscus taught his sons Alojzije, Ivan, Jeronim and Petar. He left Šibenik to become a teacher in Zadar, where another teacher of Greek, Nardino della Celina from Furlania, worked. From there, Fuscus left for Koper in Istria (*Iustinopolis*), a well known centre of Latin and Greek literacy, where he worked with Peter Paul Vergerius and taught Greek, Latin and rhetoric.

The study of Latin, Greek and ancient history remained the basis of humanistic learning. The scholars from Byzantium, as well as the Italian philhellenes, passed on the Greek language and culture to their Dalmatian students. The task was not an easy one, since there was no tradition of learning Greek in Dalmatia. Eventually, the language shared the fate of its decaying Empire. From the letter of Pope Innocent III to the body of canons of St. Anastasia church in Zadar in 1198, it can be concluded that Greek liturgy and language were still in use.²⁰ In the fifteenth century Dalmatian humanists devoted themselves to the study of Greek, at first without the help of good dictionaries and grammar books. Some authors spoke fluent Greek, were *veri viri plurilingues* and wrote excellent poetry in Latin, Greek and Italian. Nobleman Ivan de Gozze was one of the first Ragusans to learn Greek in the fifteenth century. He wrote in Croatian, Latin and Greek, having earned himself a triple laureate in his native town. His knowledge of Greek helped him in his commercial ventures in the East.²¹ Sixteenth-century Dubrovnik saw several experts in Greek: Frano de Luccari, Matej de Babalio and others, who translated Greek texts and also wrote in Greek.²² Some of them, however, were not as versed, their Greek writings swarming with mistakes in both accentuation and grammar. Errors aside, they were aware that the knowledge of Greek literature and philosophy was essential to scholars. For instance, numerous mistakes can be detected in the Greek elegies and epigrams by the Ragusan nobleman and poet Dominik de Ragnina, but his translations of Greek authors offered to Dubrovnik cultural society are still of great importance. Free translations of Philemon, Meander, Antipatre of Thessaloniki, Nikarchos, Isidore of Aegina, Leonidas of Tarentum, Plato Jr., Theocrites and others, according to an anthology that found its way into his possession, were modest,

²⁰ T. Raukar, *Hrvatsko srednjovjekovlje*: p. 261; *Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*, vol. II, ed. Tadija Smičiklas. Zagreb: JAZU, 1904: pp. 289-290.

²¹ Darinka Nevenić Grabovac, »Oratio funebris humaniste Ilije Crijevića dubrovačkom pesniku Ivanu (Dživu) Gučetiću«. *Živa antika* 24/1-2 (1974): p. 344.

²² Mihovil Kombol, *Povijest hrvatske književnosti do preporoda*. Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1945: p. 63; Šime Ljubić, *Dizionario biografico degli uomini illustri della Dalmazia*. Wien - Zara: Rod. Lechner Libraio - Battara e Abelich Librai, 1856: p. 184.

yet to many Ragusans a significant contact with certain Greek authors.²³ Damian de Benessa, another nobleman, wrote a number of epigrams and epitaphs in Greek. He translated original Greek epigrams and the poem of Gregory Nazianzen *Eis ten en tais vesteias siopen*.²⁴ Following a period of cultural stagnation in the seventeenth century, due mainly to Ottoman conquests, the next century witnessed the flourishing of Croatian Latinism, resulting in a number of exceptional Latin translations from Greek. Bernardus de Zamagna (1735-1820) translated the complete works of Hesiod, Theocritus's idylls and Odyssey. Rajmond Kunić (1719-1794) translated almost five hundred epigrams from the Greek anthology, Theocritus, Aesopus and Callimachus, while his translation of the Iliad from Greek is considered the best Latin translation of this epic to date.²⁵

By the middle of the fifteenth century, the West had discovered almost all Latin authors we know of today. By contrast, Greek texts remained practically unknown, mainly because Western scholars were not familiar with Greek language. It was not until the fall of Constantinople in 1453 that this situation began to change. Eastern Adriatic saw the arrival of Greek fugitives who, carrying with them the texts by Greek and Byzantine authors, began to spread the knowledge of Greek language and learning. Many Dalmatians started collecting Greek works and manuscripts for their libraries, the largest collections being those of Frano Petris (Franciscus Patricius) and Ivan Stojković. While working on Cyprus in the sixteenth century, philosopher Frano Petris compiled a collection of 74 rare Greek manuscripts of exceptional value. Financial difficulties forced him to sell the collection in 1575 to King Philip II for the Royal library in Escorial.²⁶ Among many valuable theological,

²³ Franjo Maixner, *Prievodi Ranjine Dinka iz latinskih i grčkih klasika*. Zagreb, 1884: pp. 3-8, 14-27.

²⁴ Đ. Körbler, »Iz mladih dana triju humanista Dubrovčana 15. vijeka«: pp. 227-248.

²⁵ *Homeri Odyssea Latinis versibus expressa a B. Zamagna*. Senis: Fratres Pazzinii Carlii, 1777; *Hesiodi Ascraei Opera omnia. Latinis versibus expressa atque illustrata a Bernardo Zamagna Ragusino*. Parma: Ex Regio Parmensi Typographio (Giambattista Bodoni), 1785; *Theocriti Idyllia et epigrammata Latine conversa a Raymundo Cunichio Ragusino*. Parmae: Ex Regio typographeo, 1799; *Raymundi Cunichii Ragusini Epigrammata, nunc primum in lucem edita*. Ragusii: Raffaele Radeglia, 1827; *Homeri Ilias Latinis versibus expressa a Raymundo Cunichio Ragusino*. Romae: Excudebat Joannes Zempel, 1776.

²⁶ Vesna Cvjetković Kurelec, »Zbirka grčkih rukopisa Frane Petrića«. *Filozofska istraživanja* 19/1-2 = 72-73 (1999): pp. 23-25; eadem, »The Collection of Greek Manuscripts of Frane Petrić«. *Synthesis philosophica* 27-28/1-2 (1999): pp. 3-18; Maria Mucillo, »La biblioteca greca di Francesco Patrizi«. *Bibliothecae selectae da Cusano a Leopardi*, ed. Eugenio Canone. Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 1993: pp. 73-118.

philosophical, historical, legal, mathematical, musical and literary texts, there was also Bessarion's work *De eucharestia*, marked *unicus*. Certain Greek originals as, for example, the works of Homer, Herodotus, Hesiod, found their way to the shelves of the Ragusan private libraries.²⁷

A growing interest in Greek culture, along with the activity of the Greek scholars and philhellenes resulted in a much better knowledge of Greek culture on the whole. Dalmatia was not "the second Byzantium" as Cardinal Bessarion called Venice, but a place where Greek culture was highly valued. The fact that Greece was the cradle of Western culture was generally acknowledged in Dalmatia, giving way to *graecomania*. People who knew Greek were much appreciated and were considered to be highly educated. Eventually, the knowledge of Greek improved to such an extent that certain authors may well have challenged their Greek masters.

Bessarion and his ideas in medieval Croatia

In the years of the decline of Byzantium, superseded by the Ottoman Empire, a state new both in terms of religion and civilization, the Croatian countries found themselves on the borders of two different worlds. In his attempt to unite the Christian world against this force, Cardinal Bessarion²⁸ fastened his eyes on Croatia. He was well aware of the situation in on Croatian territories and of the efforts of the Hungarian kings and Croatian barons to halt, if temporarily, or slow down the expansions of Sultan Mehmed II. All this conditioned Bessarion's frequent contacts with Croatian regions and individuals. In the mid-fifteenth century, the cardinal was the beneficiary of Benedictine monastery of St. Stephen Under the Pine Trees in Split. In 1464 he granted the brotherhood of St. George and Triphon, a fraternity of Croatian emigrants in Venice, known as *Scuola degli Schiavoni* or *Scuola Dalmata*, the right of pardon during the feasts of their patron saints and other important church holidays, sympathizing with the people who had fled from their homeland because of war.²⁹ He maintained particularly good relations with

²⁷ I. Božić, »Pojava humanizma u Dubrovniku«: p. 13.

²⁸ Joannis Bessarion, (Trebizond, ca. 1403, Ravenna, 1472). Byzantine scholar and church prelate, one of the leading men in unitary council in Ferrara/Florence, from 1439 a Cardinal in Catholic Church. See *Il Cardinale Bessarione nel V centenario della morte (1472-1972)*. Roma: Convento dei SS.XII Apostoli, 1974; *Bessarione e l'umanesimo: catalogo della mostra*, ed. Gianfranco Fiaccadori. Napoli: Vivarium, 1994.

²⁹ Lovorka Čoralić, »Kardinal Bessarion i Hrvati«. *Radovi Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Zadru* 40 (1998): pp. 146, 152-153.

the Dalmatian Franciscans. He recommended that six of Dubrovnik's Observant friaries break away from the Bosnian-Dalmatian vicarage and come under the general vicar of the Observants.³⁰ In 1463 Bessarion appointed Nikola, bishop of Duvno and Minorite, commissioner for promoting the Crusades. Nikola was well acquainted with the situation in the Balkans, having felt the consequences of the Ottoman rule on his own skin, so the cardinal expected that his word would be more convincing to the worshippers in the West.³¹

Cardinal's ideas on the religious union between the Latins and Greeks and the Crusade against the Turks found adherents in the Croatian lands too. Among them, three persons stand out: Ivan Stojković, precursor of Cardinal Bessarion's ideas, Juraj Dragišić (Georgius Benignus de Salvatis), his student and friend, and Ivan Vitez of Sredna, who persisted on the cause long after Bessarion's resignation and death. Like the cardinal, all three were men of erudition and scholarship, to which they were not able to devote entirely, being constantly drawn away from it by the turbulent times they lived in. In that crucial period of European history, these humanists answered the challenge with a sword in one hand and a book in the other.

In his lectures, discourses and speeches, Ivan Stojković, Dubrovnik-born Dominican friar and professor at the University of Paris, emphasized the need for the restoration and establishment of a unity of Western ecumenism with the aim of uniting with the Christians in the East. He was deeply convinced that only the united Europe could effectively oppose the advance of Islam and free the Balkan and Eastern European Christian nations and countries from the Ottoman occupation.³² In his speech delivered in Paris on 7 December 1422, he spoke of the need for union with Greeks through the ecumenical council.³³ During the opening ceremony of the Council in Pavia on 23 April 1423, in his speech "There will be one flock and one shepherd" (*Fiet unum ovile et unus pastor*; *John: 10, 16*), he insisted on the need for Church unity,

³⁰ Ante Dračevac, »Braća reda Male braće – dubrovački nadbiskupi«, in: *Samostan Male braće u Dubrovniku*, ed. Justin V. Velnić. Zagreb - Dubrovnik: Kršćanska sadašnjost and Samostan Male braće, 1985: p. 78

³¹ L. Čoralić, »Kardinal Bessarion i Hrvati«: pp. 148-150.

³² Franjo Šanjek, »Ivan Stojković Dubrovčanin (1392/95-1443.) diplomat i pobornik europskih integracija«. *Zbornik Diplomatske akademije* 4/2 (1999): pp. 131-141.

³³ Yves Congar, »La place de Jean de Raguse dans l'histoire de l'ecclésiologie«, in: *Misao i djelo Ivana Stojkovića (1390/95. - 1443.)*, ed. Franjo Šanjek. Zagreb: Kršćanska sadašnjost, 1986: p. 275.

and on 31 October 1423, in Sienna, he explained the idea of unification of European nations and the restoration of Church structures, even at the cost of the abolition of the Papal state. He stressed that Christianity was divided not only by heresy but also by internal wars, the result of which was the shrinking of the Christendom. He reminded that the schism of the Christian West started from the head, that is to say, from the pope, and that the crisis and heresy could only be overcome by general Church Council.³⁴ As a delegate of the Council of Basle in Constantinople, he wholeheartedly mediated in the talks on the union of the Churches.³⁵ Upon arrival at Constantinople on 24 September 1435, he gained trust of Emperor John VIII Palaeologus and ecumenist Patriarch Joseph II, with whom he held a mass according to Greek ritual. The Emperor ecstatically embraced his idea on a joint meeting of Western European nations and countries with the Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbs and Wallachians, convinced that the possible agreement between Christian countries could delay the fall of Constantinople, considered unavoidable in the West. On 10 March 1436, Stojković himself reported to Basle that “if the talks with the Greeks ceased and if the West suspended all efforts aimed at the union with Eastern Church, Constantinople would fall into Turkish hands, and then it was to be expected that the Hungarian kingdom would be plundered far more mercilessly than the year before”.³⁶ The two years spent in Constantinople made Stojković realize that the *Christianitas* is being worm-eaten from both inside and out. This, again, urged him to fight with even greater determination for an authority that would unite the Christian Churches, which he saw in the Church Council. In his view, by representing the entire Church, the authority of the Council was above that of the pope. He said that the world was hoping for a union, but the current pope, Eugene IV, was far from achieving it. Actually, he was an obstruction, he that ... *ecclesiam matrem dividit et dilacerat variisque oppressionibus, quantum potest, opprimit et conculcat*. On Stojković's insistence, the Emperor sent the ambassador Andronicus Cantacuzen to Serbian despot

³⁴ Stojković's speeches *Ini consilium, coge consilium, Fiet unum ovile et unus pastor* and *Reformabit corpus humilitatis nostrae* were published by Walter Brandmüller. *Das Konzil von Pavia-Siena*, vol. II. Münster: Aschendorff, 1974: pp. 89-190. (second edition Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2002).

³⁵ Petar Vrankić, »Johannes von Ragusa im Ringen um die Teilnahme der Griechen am Basler Konzil«. *Annuaire Historiae Conciliorum* 27/28 (1995-1996): pp. 463-486.

³⁶ Franjo Šanjek, »Le christianisme dans les Balkans au temps de Jean de Raguse«, in: *L'Eglise et le peuple chrétien dans les pays de l'Europe du Centre-Est et du Nord (XIV^e –XV^e siècles)*. Roma, 1989: pp. 292-293; Y. Congar, »La place de Jean de Raguse«: pp. 275-276.

Đurađ Branković. The latter replied: “Latins are my neighbours, and I keep with them multiple relations. Since I have often spoken to them, I am well acquainted with their speech, mood and customs. Because I know them so well, I do not consider it necessary to send a single delegate to the council”.³⁷ Stojković’s Constantinople talks were forestalled by the conflict between the conciliarists and the pope. Namely, Pope Eugene IV sent his envoys to Constantinople with forged credentials from the Council of Basle. This sparked an open conflict between the two delegations. Emperor John VIII conformed to Pope Eugene’s invitation to Florence, since he hoped the pope would help his decaying Empire.

At the Council of Florence, the two worlds were striving to unite, but the schism had lasted for too long. The gap between the East and the West that had began by the founding of Constantinople was deepened by the schism of 1054. The idea of the unity of the East and West continued to live throughout the Middle Ages, but reality swollen with prejudice tended to move them further apart. The union could not be achieved because of the fundamental misunderstanding which bred intolerance. Rare were the Greeks who forgot and forgave the plunder of Constantinople in 1204, and the conquering of most of Greece and the Aegean islands. The Latins, however, did not understand the Byzantines with their strange beards and non-Catholic form of Christianity. To them, Byzantium was the East, and Eastern scholars arriving in the West was the most they could accept from this world. They perceived Europe as exclusively Latin, not Greek. Given the circumstances, it was in the Orthodoxy that the Greeks sought the tradition of their Empire, any form of union naturally being beyond their consideration.³⁸ From 1054 onwards, the West showed little interest in the idea of the Church Councils based on the union of the Eastern and Western Church with the Roman pope and Eastern patriarchs, making Stojković’s efforts at conciliarism even harder. Renaissance popes relied more

³⁷ Vitalien Laurent, *Les “Mémoires” du Grand Ecclésiarque de l’Église de Constantinople Sylvestre Syropoulos sur le concile de Florence (1438-1439)*. Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1971: p. 599; F. Šanjek, »Le christianisme dans les Balkans«: p. 294; Augustin Pavlović, »Katolici i pravoslavni u našim krajevima prema grčkim vrelima iz 15. stoljeća«. *Croatica Christiana periodica* 14/25 (1990): pp. 106-107.

³⁸ I. Đurić, *Sumrak Vizantije*: p. 8; John Hale, *The Civilization of Europe in the Renaissance*. New York: Atheneum, 1994: p. 39; Jacques Le Goff, *Il cielo sceso in terra. Le radici medievali dell’Europa*. Roma-Bari: Laterza, 2004: pp. 7-13; Peter Linehan and Janet L. Nelson, »Introduction«, in: *The Medieval World*, ed. Peter Linehan and Janet L. Nelson. London – New York: Routledge, 2003: pp. 1-13.

on their state than on the Council, so instead of the much wanted reform, the Reformation took place. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Ragusan historian Ludovik Crijević Tubero spoke regretfully about the failure to unify the Christian world: “Catholics and Orthodox, by their own madness or God’s vengeance upon the Christian world, consider each other heathens and heretics, who for reason of schism ought to be excommunicated, although both Churches, if we put aside the perniciousness of their contentious wording think of God in the same way, differing from each other only in the ritual and not in religion. For who could deny that Greek Church like the Roman one has not offered to God dear men, whom the Church Fathers named saints, and whose birthdays Christians of the Roman ritual would not celebrate if the Christians of the Greek ritual differed from them in religion”.³⁹ Diplomatic action following an Ottoman threat could not unite what the centuries had divided.⁴⁰ Cultural union was achieved only in humanistic circles—they welcomed the refugees from Constantinople, yearning to learn the secrets and the wisdom of the East, *orientale lumen*.

Cardinal Bessarion and Juraj Dragišić shared the same disposition towards Franciscan Observants, Christian unity against the Ottoman menace, and Neo-Platonism. It was during his journey through Dalmatia and Italy that this Franciscan friar from Srebrenica, Bosnia, met Cardinal Bessarion in the convent of Dodici Apostoli in Rome. He became Cardinal’s protégé and friend. In defence of his protector from the accusations of George of Trebizond, he wrote *Defensorium Bessarioni*. Unfortunately, this text was lost in England, but Dragišić mentions it in his other work *De natura angelica* or *De natura caelestium spiritum quos angelos covamus* (Florentiae 1489). He also noted there that Bessarion was his *pater and protector et eruditione humanarum divinarumque rerum precipuus fautor*, “his father, protector and main supporter

³⁹ ...alteri alteros sive mentis insania, sive nescio qua Dei in Christianum nomen ira numero impiorum ac sceleratorum habent, schismaticos et sacris arcendos putant, quamquam utraque Ecclesia, modo absit verborum perniosa contentio, idem de Deo sentiat, ceremoniis tantum, non autem religione, altera ab altera differens. Quis enim neget Graecam Ecclesiam, aequae ac Romanam, viros Deo acceptissimos et inter divos a sanctis patribus relatos tulisse, quorum quidem natales dies Romani nequaquam celebrarent, si Graeci religione a Romanis dissentirent (Ludovici Tuberonis Dalmatae Abbatis Commentarii de temporibus suis, ed. Vlado Rezar. Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2001: p. 277).

⁴⁰ Ivica Tomljenović, »Dubrovčanin Ivan Stojković (1390/95-1443) borac za jedinstvo Zapada i zbližavanje s Istokom«. *Croatica Christiana periodica* 6/9 (1982): p. 8; F. Šanjek, »Ivan Stojković Dubrovčanin«: pp. 136-138.

in the pursuit of human and divine things". The fact that Dragišić dedicated to the cardinal his *De libertate et immutabilitate Dei* (Urbino 1471), currently housed at the Vatican Library, speaks of how close their relationship was. The same year he witnessed a dispute between Cardinal Bessarion and Cardinal Francesco della Rovere (later Pope Sixtus IV), which he recorded in the aforementioned text.⁴¹ At first member of Bessarion's Academy, he later became a member of the Platonic Academy of George Ghemistus Plethon in Florence.⁴² Cardinal Bessarion gave Dragišić his well known Latin nickname - *Benignus*, testifying thus to his character. Like his tutor, Dragišić remained faithful to the idea of a united Christian Europe up until his death. He, too, was reconcilable, aware of the necessity for tolerance between nations and was thus close to the idea of the union of the Churches.⁴³

Ivan Vitez of Sredna (1405/8 - 1472), called *Lux Pannoniae*, Croat from Slavonia, chancellor to King Sigismund of Luxembourg, tutor to King Matthias Corvine, archbishop of Esztergom, *primas Hungariae* from 1465, intellectual without equal and writer of excellent style, whose activity was guided by the ideal of *virtus et honor*.⁴⁴ After the battle at Varna in 1444, he wrote to Pope Eugene IV, expressing his regret at the discord between Christian states and the incapability of European forces to act together.⁴⁵ In the autumn of 1448, he wrote to Pope Nicholas V in Hunyadi's name about the Turkish violence that subjugated Greece, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Albania and other countries. It penetrated almost to the heart of Europe and took a stronghold on the borders of the Hungarian kingdom, becoming "a private concern of Hungary and Croatia". Christian forces being disunited, he asked the pope to support

⁴¹ Ivica Martinović, »Humanist, filozof i teolog Juraj Dragišić«. *Dubrovnik* N.S. 6/4 (1995): pp. 214-215.

⁴² Žarko Dadić, *Egzaktne znanosti hrvatskoga srednjovjekovlja*. Zagreb: Globus, 1991: p. 164.

⁴³ L. Čoralić, »Kardinal Bessarion i Hrvati«: pp. 151-152; Stjepan Zimmermann, »Juraj Dragišić (Georgius Benignus de Salviatis) kao filozof humanizma«. *Rad JAZU* 227 (1923): pp. 59-79.

⁴⁴ Miroslav Kurelac, »Hrvatski humanisti rane renesanse«. *Croatica Christiana periodica* 11/19 (1987): pp. 98-104.

⁴⁵ *Ioannis de Zredna, cancellariae regis Hungariae olim prothonotarii Epistolae in diversis negotiis statum publicum regni Hungariae concernantibus, ab anno Christi MCDXLV usque ad annum MCDLI etc. Per Paulum Iwanich, dioeceseos Zagrabienensis presbyterum, altaris s. Pauli in ecclesia Waradiensi rectorem et cancellariae regiae olim notarium etc.*, ed. Johannes Georg Schwandtner. [*Scriptores rerum Hungaricarum, Dalmaticarum, Croaticarum et Sclavonicarum veteres ac genuini*, vol. II]. Vindobonae: Impensis Ioannis Pauli Kraus, 1746: pp. 3-106; Olga Perić, »Zbirka pisama Ivana Viteza od Sredne«. *Živa antika* 29/1 (1979): pp. 99-111.

his military campaign. Among his numerous anti-Turkish speeches, the one delivered before Emperor Friedrich III in Wiener-Neustadt in 1457 may be singled out for its warning of the danger that threatened the whole of Europe. He warns of cultural and religious heritage overrun and destroyed by war and Turkish conquests, and mourns the fall of Byzantium, Eastern Empire and Eastern, Orthodox Church: “The Eastern Empire is destroyed, to a great disgrace of the Christians. The Eastern Church, once the foundation of our religion, now lives in the sorrow of slavery. The temples have been desecrated. Holy secrets are profaned”. *Oriente imperium abolim infesta diurnitate oppugnatum hostili tandem mole, sociorum desidia et omnium Christianorum gravi infamia subversum est, ac tetri hostis calcaneo proculcatum. Orientalis ecclesia, precipua olim fidei nostrae basis, in depressionem acta, captive religionis condicionem deplorat. Templum civitatis regie quod manebat adhuc ab omni prava contagione intactum et a maioribus nostris captivis perduraverat asyllum, omni dedecore prophanatum, omni imundicia pollutu cognovimus. Quid de caeteris templis, quid de clero, quid de salutaribus ecclesiae sacramentis – que vasa quedam graciaram confitemur – quid denique de violata sanctorum reverencia dignum pietate referam? Heu pietas, heu prisca fides! Ubi Christiana compassio, ubi gratitudo debita? Nempe Grecia in amaritudine degit, occupatque memoriam eius tristis recordacio felicitatis sue: ex libertate in servitutem redacta est, imperatrix imperia patitur, nec minus eam dominii pudet, quam servitutis. Nunc itaque ipsa Grecia, et cum ea omnes pariter afflicti vos appellant, vos interpellant, vos deprecantur, ut assistatis, et – si ausim dicere – Deum contestantur, si non assistetis.*⁴⁶ Ivan Vitez personally participated in the battle for Belgrade in 1456, alongside St. John Capistran and János Hunyadi. Like Cardinal Bessarion, he, too, urged for an offensive against the Ottoman Turks and for the unity of Christians. He advocated for the union of European Christian states opposed to the autocracy of certain rulers, realizing that only such an alliance could defend Europe from the Ottoman Turks.⁴⁷ Vitez’ nephew, Janus Pannonius, was taught Greek by

⁴⁶ Ioannis Vitéz de Zredna ep. Varadiensis in Hungaria, *Orationes in causa expeditionis contra Turcas habitae item Aeneas Sylvii Epistolae ad eundem exaratae 1453-1457*, ed. Vilmos Fraknói. Budapest: Bécsben and Holzhausen Adolf, 1878: pp. 13-22; *Iohannes Vitez de Zredna opera quae supersunt*, ed. Iván Boronkai. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1980: pp. 259-261; Vilmos Fraknói, *Vitéz János esztergomi érsek élete* [The Life of Ivan Vitez, archbishop of Esztergom]. Budapest: Kiadja a Szent-István-Tórsulat, 1879: pp. 121-122; Miroslav Kurelac, »Hrvatski protutorski pisci XV. stoljeća«. *Rasprave iz hrvatske kulturne prošlosti* 1 (1998): p. 81.

⁴⁷ Borislav Grgin, *Počeci rasapa: kralj Matijaš Korvin i srednjovjekovna Hrvatska*. Zagreb: Ibis grafika and Zavod za hrvatsku povijest, 2002: p. 47.

Guarino Guarini of Verona, pupil of Chrysoloras.⁴⁸ This exceptional Latin scholar wrote a lament for European countries, in which he asks them whether they do not feel ashamed that their “mother Greece has from sovereign turned to slave”. He addresses dormant states of Europe, indifferent and self-contained, while only Hungary remains true to its heritage and faith.⁴⁹ Commitment to the cause tended to drive him further away from humanistic pursuits, just as it did Cardinal Bessarion. Their attempts to convince European rulers of the difficult position of the south-east Europe remained futile—none of them offered help.

The aforementioned persons were also experts in Greek culture. During his stay in Constantinople, Stojković had two professional copyists in his service: Doukas, a native, for Greek and Klement, a Pole from Wislica, for Latin manuscripts. He showed an interest in original Islamic texts, and in his collection of manuscripts there was a translation of the Koran, as well as a few texts on Islam, in Greek and Latin. The latter were translated in 1142 and 1143 from Arabic to Latin by Herman Dalmatian and his friend Robert of Ketton.⁵⁰ To Stojković we owe apologetic scripts *Adhoratio* and *Oratio ad Graecos*, Athenagora’s *Apologia* and epistle *Ad Dignetum* that humanist Johannes Reuchlin borrowed from his legacy. He also bought off the codex of Athenagora’s and Pseudo Justin’s texts that a student of Greek, Tommaso d’Arezzo, came across at the Constantinople market. By a strange twist of fate, the codex was salvaged from becoming a fish wrapper by being carried to the West where it survived until 1870, when it was destroyed in a library fire in Strasbourg during the French-Prussian war. The manuscripts Stojković brought from Constantinople were used to prepare many Western editions. Erasmus prepared his critical edition of the New Testament on the basis of these manuscripts. He should also be credited for the publishing of *editio princeps* of Ptolemy’s *Geography* in 1553, based on the Greek original transcribed for Stojković by Doukas the Greek. Among the contents of Stojković’s luggage were also Strabo’s *Geography*, Pseudo-Plutarch’s work *On rivers and mountains*, Hermogen’s text *On rhetoric*, Plato’s *Phedrus*, Greek grammar and other valuable works.⁵¹

⁴⁸ M. Kurelac, »Paladije Fusko – Paladius Fuscus«: pp. 6-8.

⁴⁹ Ivan Česmički – Janus Pannonius, *Pjesme i epigrami*, translated by Nikola Šop. Zagreb: JAZU, 1951: pp. 41-43.

⁵⁰ Franjo Šanjek, »Herman le Dalmate et la connaissance de l’islam dans l’occident médiéval.« *Revue d’histoire ecclésiastique* 88/2 (1993): p. 499.

⁵¹ F. Šanjek, »Ivan Stojković Dubrovčanin«: pp. 138-139.

In 1443, Stojković bequeathed his library containing many Greek manuscripts to the Dominicans of Basle.⁵²

Ivan Vitez also compiled an impressive humanistic library. At his Renaissance archbishop's court, first in Varadin and then in Esztergom, he gathered scholars who studied literature, history, mathematics, medicine and particularly astronomy. Among them was his teacher and friend Peter Paul Vergerius, but also Philippus Podocatherus, Martin Bylicza, Martin Krol from Žrnovica, Gregor Sanocki, Nikola Lassoeki, Ivan de Dominis, Johannes Argyropulos, Georg Peuerbach, Johan Müller - Regiomontanus, Ragusan Ivan Gazul and Enea Silvio Piccolomini. John Argyropulos translated Aristotle's *De coelo* into Latin there and dedicated it to Vitez with the following words: *Si res praeclarae viris insignibus probitate sunt offerende cuinam potius hoc opus alii, pater optime, quam excellentia rerum de quibus extrucum est in nobilitatis culmine collocatum est, contendereque cum primis, si qua sint gradum hunc consecuta, videtur. Est enim auctor quidem Aristoteles ille divinus, res vero mundus ac universum ipsum omni cum suppellectili sua. Quo quid natura praestabilis excogitari fingique potest, ette, pater, praestabilissimum hominem esse perfectumque celeberrima fama nostras ad iam aures detulit... Accipe igitur hosce libros, sapientissime pater, in Romanam e Graeca linguam a nobis nuper tua, vir optime, causa tuoque nomine versos, et perlege felix.*⁵³ Vitez himself translated Ptolomaius from Greek (*Magnae Compositionis libri*), while his nephew Janus translated Plutarch and Demosthenes and passionately collected Greek manuscripts in Italy. Their extraordinary library was later stolen by King Matthias Corvin.⁵⁴ Vespasiano Bisticci commended Vitez in his work *Vite di uomini illustri*, as an archbishop of Slavic origin, an expert in liberal arts and a great theologian, virtuous and conscientious. He also mentioned his beautiful library, amassed in Italy and elsewhere, regardless of the cost or effort. In addition, his reputation in the kingdom, in Italy and especially Rome, was earned by his exemplary behaviour, learnedness and his virtuous ways.⁵⁵

⁵² André Vernet, »Les manuscrits grecs de Jean de Raguse«. *Basler Zeitschrift* 61 (1961): p. 76.

⁵³ Jenő Abel, *Adalékok a humanizmus történetéhez Magyarországon (Analecta ad historiam renaissance in Hungaria litterarum spectantia)*. Budapest: Kiadja a Magyar Tud. Akadémia Könyvkiadó-Hivatala, 1880: pp. 170-171.

⁵⁴ Miroslav Kurelac, »Kulturna i znanstvena djelatnost Ivana Viteza od Sredne«. *Zbornik Zavoda za povijesne znanosti Istraživačkog centra JAZU* 12 (1982): pp. 21-27.

⁵⁵ J. Abel, *Adalékok a humanizmus: pp. 221-222.*

In the rich biography of Cardinal Bessarion there is a passage testifying to his connection with the Croats and Croatian regions. Croats remembered the cardinal as a friend, the one who understood their troubles upon his own experience. The tragedy of his futile attempts to save the Greek world that he knew reflected in the failure of his plans in Ancona in 1464, when, together with the pope, doge and the Crusaders, he was to set sail for Dubrovnik and further for the liberation of the Empire. A detailed plan describing the preparations for the reception of the pope, cardinal, doge and the Crusaders is still kept at the Dubrovnik Archives.⁵⁶ His noble head is carved in stone in the apse of the cathedral of St. Jacob in Šibenik, among the heads of 71 distinguished men of the day, the work of the famous master Juraj Dalmatinac (Georgius Mathaei Dalmaticus). Bessarions' portrait, one of the most outstanding, is placed next to that of the Byzantine Emperor John VIII Palaeologus, fellow-fighter for the common cause.⁵⁷ It was through their friendship with this man that these renowned Croats became acquainted with Greek tradition, embracing it and encouraging further Western interest in Greek scholarship and culture.

⁵⁶ *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 12, f. 169; vol. 18, ff. 35, 53v, 56-59, 63, 89; *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 12, f. 169; *Acta Consilii Minoris*, vol. 16, f. 142rv; Vicko Lisičar, »Program dubrovačkog Senata za doček pape Pija II (1464)«. *Croatia sacra* 3 (1933): pp. 97-109; Z. Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode*: pp. 320-322; Zdenka Janeković Römer, »Public rituals in the political discourse of Humanist Dubrovnik«. *Dubrovnik Annals* 6 (2002): pp. 39-42.

⁵⁷ Ivana Prijatelj Pavičić, »Pokušaj identifikacije pojedinih glava Jurja Dalmatinca na šibenskoj katedrali«. *Radovi Instituta za povijest umjetnosti* 18 (1994): pp. 7-22.