

## **PUBLIC RITUALS IN THE POLITICAL DISCOURSE OF HUMANIST DUBROVNIK**

ZDENKA JANEKOVIĆ RÖMER

**ABSTRACT:** The author analyzes the political significance of religious and secular ceremonies in Dubrovnik in the fifteenth century. The development of humanistic political theory and the political reality of the Republic helped cause the organization of a calendar of state ceremonies with specific political purposes.

In medieval societies the government's political messages were primarily clothed in liturgical robes. Consequently, the liturgy has often been the main focus of research, so that ritual has been studied mainly from the point of view of ecclesiastic structure, devotion, and folk culture. However, ritual occasions are of extreme political importance and can only be truly understood in this comprehensive semantic unity. For this reason, in recent years there have been a growing number of studies that address this phenomenon,

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**Zdenka Janeković-Römer, Assistant Professor at the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Philosophy, Department of History. Address: I. Lučića 3, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia; e-mail: zdenka.janekovic-roemer@zg.hinet.hr.**

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by means of historical, anthropological, or sociological methods.<sup>1</sup> An unbreakable bond links government and ceremony, regardless of whether the government uses known rituals or creates new ones. As a result, holiday festivities, processions, celebrations, public spectacles, and protocol are not simply an indicator, but also an integral part, of political ideology. Not only do rituals express social relations, but also they shape them as well, and thus become a factor that expresses the identity of a community while changing it at the same time. Rituals are manifestations of political and social solidarity that maintain social harmony, steering collective beliefs and feelings in the preferred direction. Through public manifestation we discover reality, but also the ideal picture that the community makes of itself. This vision or intention takes on the force of a realistic fact, because it creates a mentality and because it stimulates and directs the activities of individuals and groups.<sup>2</sup> Although they primarily served the interests of the ruling elite, the influence of rituals cannot be reduced to mere calculated propaganda, because the values that they promoted permeated the entire community. A public celebration is a significant moment in collective life: it not only strengthens religious feelings, but also the feelings of social unity and political loyalty. The Machiavelli's assertion that, for most people, perception is more important than reality was built into the policies of ruling groups who utilized celebrations and spectacles in order to win over the masses.<sup>3</sup> An anthropological interpretation of the symbolism of rituals should certainly be respected and accepted, but changes in time should also be taken into account. However it

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<sup>1</sup> The literature on this topic is very large, so I will only mention a few works that are closely related in theme to this article: Ernst Kantorowicz, *The king's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957; Raymond William Firth, *Symbols, Public and Private*. London: Allen & Unwin, 1973; Clifford Geertz, »Centers, Kings and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power.«, in *Culture and its Creators: Essays in Honor of E. Shils*, ed. Joseph Ben-David and Terry Nichols Clark. Chicago-London: University of Chicago Press, 1977; Steven Lukes, »Political Ritual and Social Integration.«, in: Steven Lukes, *Essays in Social Theory*. London: Macmillan, 1977; Edward Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981; Christiane Klapisch Zuber and Philippe Braunstein, »Florence et Venise: Les rituels publics à l'époque de la Renaissance.« *Annales E. S. C.* 38/5 (1983): pp. 1110-1124; Roy Strong, *Art and Power: Renaissance Festivals 1450-1650*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1984; *Rites of Power: Symbolism, Ritual and Politics Since the Middle Ages*, ed. Sean Wilentz. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985; *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies*, ed. David Cannadine and Simon Price. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

<sup>2</sup> E. Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*: pp. 75, 98, 118-121, 126-134, 302; C. Klapisch Zuber - P. Braunstein, »Florence et Venise«: p. 1112.

<sup>3</sup> Niccolò Machiavelli, *Vladar (The Prince)*, Zagreb, 1975: pp. XXI, 89.

may seem so, the ritual is not unchangeable; in fact, it depends a great deal upon social context. The ritual always upholds the status quo; at the same time, however, it adapts to new historical situations, adding new messages to old traditions through seemingly insignificant changes.<sup>4</sup> In everyday life the ritual is used to make present the ideological ideas of the ruling group and to record them in the consciousness of the masses. Attitudes and goals can be made obvious much more effectively through ceremony than without it. By means of ritual, the ruling elite created models of thought that strengthened order and social relationships. In the medieval world, all civil rituals had religious origins; their religious aspect was preserved through the years, even when their religious purpose was repressed or forgotten. Here, religious symbolism was very important because it was generally accepted and understandable to all. The hierarchy of the “other world” served as a model for the hierarchy of this world, giving support to the government currently in power. Out of the merger of Christianity and the idea of the Roman Empire derived the European concept of holy and God-given government. This was applicable above all to monarchies, but to all other governments as well. Using old customs for new purposes, the political goals of the government adapted to the tradition of the community. Wrapping up a message in familiar and accepted forms was extremely important for the effectiveness of the ritual in the political sense. And through this we can see the community’s maturation and development, it’s sense of continuity and the changed perception of itself at the same time.<sup>5</sup> The Dubrovnik state ceremonial offers an outstanding example of the ritual’s political purposefulness. In the yearly cycle of the city’s celebrations and accompanying legends lies the key to the political ideology of the Republic, which was based upon the exclusive rule of the patriciate and social consensus. Ritual was marked by two intimately connected myths: the myth of freedom and the myth of the nobility. This ideology, presented through ritual, symbols, and legends, attributed to the social order and the

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<sup>4</sup> See E. Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*: pp. 57-58; David Cannadine, »Introduction: Divine rites of the kings.«, in: *Rituals of Royalty*: pp. 3-4.

<sup>5</sup> E. Muir discusses theories in the social sciences which are mainly ahistorical. In his opinion, such an approach illuminates the social and cultural balance, but fails to address the processes of historical change or the discontinuity between society and culture (E. Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*: pp. 58-59). See also Maria Consiglia de Matteis, »*Societas christiana* e funzionalità ideologica della città in Italia: linee di uno sviluppo.« *Bullettino dell’Istituto storico italiano per il medioevo* 88 (1979): pp. 211-216; C. Klapisich Zuber - P. Braunstein, »Florence et Venise«: p. 1111.

nobility not only divine protection and mercy, but also ideal civic virtues. When we are dealing with this fundamental political motive, Dubrovnik can be compared with Venice, which had similar social and political systems, and whose nobility, like that of Dubrovnik, had unified political privileges. On the other hand, the rituals of the small community of Dubrovnik, which had to preserve its independence, and to determine its internal social system, differed in many aspects from the great Venetian spectacles. The brittle security of the Dubrovnik Republic, constantly threatened from abroad, was compensated for by the community's carefully guarded internal stability, which found its expression and support in ceremonial. With much less pomp and circumstance than in Venice, these rituals at least accomplished their political purpose. The ruling group influenced religious ceremonial, using it for the elevation and preservation of order, the state, and the social hierarchy. The nobility had complete control of rituals, which they transformed in the expression of their power and superiority over their fellow citizens. Their consciousness of this becomes obvious when one considers the careful consideration that went into choosing the details and directness of the message.<sup>6</sup> The liturgical calendar, state visits, celebrations of victories or the cessation of epidemics, funerals and marriages of the nobility, coronations of the kings of Hungary—all of these occasions served as opportunities to stress the values of the nobility and the Republic. These rituals exhibited ideal social relations, encouraged particular political and social ideas, and insured mediation between the elite and the masses. It was important to unite the entire community by means of ceremony, since it assigned everyone their own position in the hierarchy. But special happenings were not the only occasions for ritual, for rituals pervaded everyday life as well. Convocations of the councils were subject to ceremony that gave importance to council members in the eyes of the entire community. The ringing of the three bells which called the council members to session, as well as the procession of the noblemen in red togas, stressed not only the institutions of the Republic, but also the class and political distinctions of Dubrovnik society. Just how important this ritual was to nobles can be seen from the indignation with which the Council of *Rogati* reacted against confraternities that dared to imitate that custom in the convo-

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<sup>6</sup> *Liber viridis*, ed. B. Nedeljković. Zbornik za istoriju, jezik i književnost srpskog naroda (hereafter cited as: ZIJKSN), III.23. Beograd: SANU, 1984: c. 416; *Acta Consilii Maioris*, ser. 8, vol. 1, f. 50v, State Archives of Dubrovnik (hereafter cited as: SAD).

cations of their own gatherings.<sup>7</sup> One of the important occasions of state was the ceremony of seeing off envoys representing the Republic and its government. This formal occasion gave the community a purified picture of the highest civic honors. Frequently the envoys had to spend several days in isolation before their departure so that they could better prepare themselves for the task that awaited them. In addition, this stressed the importance of their mission in the eyes of the citizens. The departure itself was subject to a highly elaborated protocol. The envoys would receive the instructions of the rector and were required to swear that they would serve in the interest of the Republic. After this ceremony, which was aggrandized by formal speeches, they would then receive secret instructions about the true purpose of their mission. Afterwards, they would be accompanied by a mass of people and guards in formal red clothes.<sup>8</sup> The Dubrovnik nobles were obligated to socialize with distinguished pilgrims and guests from Europe. In Dubrovnik such visitors were welcomed by “*grandi triumphi*” with banners flying and gun- and cannonfire salutes, while a mass of nobles and citizens would meet them at the port. In return, they would spread the word about the “municipality that manages on its own and which rules itself” and about the nobility “which in that city rules alone, as in Venice.”<sup>9</sup>

Some rituals of the Dubrovnik state ceremonial were adopted as an answer to those from the period of Venetian rule, which also used formal occasions for political purposes. This was not erased from the collective memory; later, therefore, we often see new details in the ceremonial that stress Dubrovnik’s new relationship with Venice. Under Venetian rule, Dubrovnik’s nobility retained its prerogative of power, and this was apparent from the protocol. Whenever a new Venetian *comes* disembarked in the port of Du-

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<sup>7</sup> *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 6, ff. 77v 78.

<sup>8</sup> *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, ser. 3, vol. 5, f. 150v and vol. 21, f. 55rv (SAD); Zdenko Zlatar, *Our Kingdom Come: The Counter-Reformation, the Republic of Dubrovnik and the Liberation of the Balkan Slavs*. New York: Boulder-Columbia University Press, 1992: pp. 90-91; Lujo Vojnović, *Dubrovnik i Osmansko carstvo*. Posebna izdanja Srpske kraljevske akademije, XI. Beograd: Srpska kraljevska akademija, 1898: pp. 165-222; see Richard C. Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*. Ithaca-London: Cornell University Press, 1991: p. 292.

<sup>9</sup> Philippus de Diversis, *Situs aedificiorum politiae et laudabilium consuetudinum inclityae civitatis Ragusii*, ed. Vitaliano Brunelli. Zadar: G. Woditzka, 1882: IV, 11, p.117-118; *Reformationes*, ser. 2, vol. 34, f. 233v (SAD); Pietro Casola, »Ragusa nel 1495.« *L’Epidauritano, lunario raguseo per l’anno 1908*. Dubrovnik, 1907: pp. 56-62; Jorjo Tadić, *Promet putnika u starom Dubrovniku*. Dubrovnik: Arhiv za turizam, 1939: pp. 184-186.

brovnik, he was met by an honorary welcoming party of 200 armed young men under the command of the nobility, the rest of the nobles, and the masses. In accordance with the laws of the municipality, the entire community would take an oath of loyalty to the *comes* and the Doge. On the other hand, however, the new *comes* had to respect the privileges of the municipality of Dubrovnik, the symbolism of which was prominently expressed. From the hands of the nobility he would receive the flag of Saint Blaise, the patron saint of Dubrovnik, and while holding it in his hand, he would swear on the Gospel that he would respect and preserve the customs and laws of Dubrovnik. After that he would go to the cathedral, where at the entrance the canons would present him with incense and holy water, and he would kiss the book of Gospels. At the main altar he would repeat the oath that he had already taken at the port. Once one of the canons gave praise to him and the Venetian Doge, he would return with the flag of Saint Blaise before the crowd, who would take an oath of loyalty, unfolding the banner of Saint Mark. Eloquent was the symbolism of this scene, in which the municipality of Dubrovnik pledged allegiance to the *comes* under the Venetian flag, who in turn began his term of office under the flag of Dubrovnik.<sup>10</sup> Lauds that were sung to the Venetian *comes* at Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, and on the feast days of Saint Blaise were unpleasant reminders of the truncated sovereignty of the Major Council of Dubrovnik. This was clearly made known at every mass, when the Venetian *comes* was fumigated with incense and kissed the Gospel right after the archbishop, who was also Venetian. The praising of the Hungarian kings, on the other hand, had a completely different meaning because their protection, obtained in 1358, had enabled the Dubrovnik nobility to have independent rule. Included in the liturgy of the mass, the lauds became a prayer of the masses for their ruler's welfare, which equally meant the people's welfare. During the fifteenth century this symbolism became even more significant because of the institution of Venetian rule in Dalmatia, which ended at the border of the Republic of Dubrovnik. In Dalmatian cities at that time formal occasions and processions were held that celebrated Venetian rule. In

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<sup>10</sup> *Liber statutorum Civitatis Ragusii compositus anno 1272*, ed. V. Bogišić and C. Jireček. Monumenta historico-juridica Slavorum Meridionalium, IX. Zagreb: JAZU, 1904: I, cc. 1, 2; *Libri reformationum*, II, ed. J. Gelcich. Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium (hereafter cited as: MSHSM), XIII. Zagreb: JAZU, 1882: p. 322; *Libri reformationum*, V, ed. J. Gelcich. MSHSM, XXIX. Zagreb, JAZU, 1897: pp. 177, 261; Ivica Prlander, »Dubrovačko posvajanje svetoga Vlaha.« *Dubrovnik N.S.* 5/5 (1994): p. 14.

1359 the people of Zadar had a procession to celebrate their liberation from Venetian rule, while in the fifteenth century they had to celebrate the anniversary of the reinstallation of Venetian rule in the town. Seven days before and after that date, there was a temporary state of freedom in the city, which gave the celebration its central significance, the same as the feastday of Saint Blaise had in Dubrovnik. That, which was an expression of self-consciousness and freedom in Dubrovnik, was a triumph of foreign rule in Dalmatian cities.<sup>11</sup>

The experience of the Venetian period elevated the ceremonial role of the freely elected rector of Dubrovnik, who became a living symbol of the autonomous Republic. The ceremonial role of the rector was converse to his limited political role. At formal occasions he acted as living proof of the social contract and divine mercy. According to travel writings of the time, he would dress formally, in the fashion of the Venetian rulers. He would be escorted to church by twelve servants dressed in red, and trumpeters who played the entire time until the rector's return to the palace, just as the Venetian Doge was escorted.<sup>12</sup> Beginning with 1396, when King Sigismund of Hungary gave Rector Marin de Resti the title of Knight of the Golden Spur, the position of rector was honored with a knightly title. The title of knight and the symbols of dignity—the golden chain, spurs, and sword—were passed on to each new rector. King Matthias Corvinus also bestowed the rectors of Dubrovnik with the honor of the sword, a symbol of knightly honor and justice, as a token of thanks for the Republic's aid in the defense of Christianity. The rector of Dubrovnik was allowed to wear the sword in the presence of the king. This honor was connected with the office of rector, and therefore it was an honor to the city and its government, and only indirectly to the individual. Both kings had stipulated that, upon stepping down from office, the former rector would pass on the title to his successor. In addition, a rector would be laid out in

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<sup>11</sup> Tomislav Raukar et al., *Zadar pod mletačkom upravom 1409-1797*. Zadar: Filozofski fakultet, 1987: pp. 118-119; Maja Novak, *Autonomija dalmatinskih komuna pod Venecijom*. Zadar: Institut JAZU u Zadru, 1965: pp. 26-27; Šime Ljubić, *Listine ob odnošajih južnog slavenstva i Mletačke Republike*. MSHSM, X. Zagreb: JAZU, 1891: pp. 101-102; *Zadarski statut*, ed. Josip Kolanović and Mate Križman. Zadar: Ogranak Matice hrvatske u Zadru - Hrvatski državni arhiv u Zagrebu, 1997: Ref. 1, pp. 520-521.

<sup>12</sup> *Liber statutorum Civitatis Ragusii*, I, c. 2; Giacomo Pietro Luccari, *Copioso ristretto degli annali di Ragusa*. Venetiis: Antonio Leonardi, 1605: p. 159; Mihajlo Dinić, »Tri francuska putopisca XVI veka o našim zemljama.«, in: *Godišnjica Nikole Čupića* 49 (1940): p. 94; J. Tadić, *Promet putnika u starom Dubrovniku*: pp. 254-255.

state with these symbols of knightly dignity only in the event that he died in office. In life and in death, the ceremonial showed everyone, citizens and foreigners, that the rector of Dubrovnik was the representative of a sovereign state, exactly as the Doge, and that Dubrovnik was equally free and independent as Venice.<sup>13</sup>

It was in the period of Hungarian protection that structure of the ceremonial of the Dubrovnik Republic began to take a carefully planned form. Some of its elements were determined already by statute in 1272. Later the rules were elaborated with new decrees and customs that were recorded in the law books. As early as the fourteenth century the holy days to be celebrated on the territory of the municipality of Dubrovnik were listed in the Book of Reformations (*Liber omnium reformationum*). At the beginning of the fifteenth century a special calendar of feast days that must be celebrated according to the decrees of the Republic was installed: *Calendarium festorum celebrandorum secundum ordines Racusii*.<sup>14</sup> Calendars of this type were also common in Italian municipalities. There is much variation among them for the simple reason that they were compiled with intervention from secular governments which would choose particular feast days in the Christmas and Easter cycles of the church calendar that were important for the ritual of the state, and for local customs and legends. The records of the councils and the legal decrees indicate to which degree municipal governments intervened in areas that at first sight fell completely within the activities of the Church and the clergy. For example, as early as 1348 the Major Council compiled a list of holy days that included all local patron saints, as well as all important holy days in the liturgical year. In the course of the fifteenth century the Council discussed the protocol for celebrating individual holy days. To the above-mentioned calendar they added only a few new, important holy days.<sup>15</sup> The

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<sup>13</sup> *Annales Ragusini Anonymi, item Nicolai de Ragnina*, ed. Natko Nodilo. MSHSM, XIV. Zagreb: JAZU, 1883: p. 241; Petar Matković, »Spomenici za dubrovačku povijest u vrijeme ugarsko-hrvatske zaštite.« *Starine* 1 (1869): pp. 166-167; *Pisma i uputstva Dubrovačke Republike*, ed. Jorjo Tadić. ZIJKSN, III.4. Beograd: SANU, 1935: pp. 675-676.

<sup>14</sup> In the eighteenth century all customs were written down in a separate book of ceremonies, the *Ceremoniale. Manuali pratici del Cancelliere: Leggi e Istruzioni*, ser. 21.1, vol. 8, ff.1-2 (SAD).

<sup>15</sup> »Liber omnium reformationum.«, ed. A. Solovjev, in: *Istorisko-pravni spomenici, I. Dubrovački zakoni i uredbe*. ZIJKSN, II.6. Beograd: SANU, 1936, pp. 105-106; *Liber viridis*, cc. 139, 154, 160, 177, 245, 364. See André Vauchez, »Patronage of Saints and Civic Religion in the Italy of the Communes.«, in: *The Laity in the Middle Ages*, ed. Daniel E. Bornstein. Notre Dame-London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993: p. 159.



holy days celebrating the Virgin Mary were among the most important; this was due partly to the growing strength of the Marian cult and partly to the fact that the Dubrovnik cathedral was dedicated to the Assumption. Along with the Feast of the Assumption, much importance was given to the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. In 1413 the Major Council ordered the chancellor to record this holy day “in the book of our chancellery and in our catalogue, where the names of saints to be eternally celebrated are listed.”<sup>16</sup> The Feast of Saints Peter and Paul was added in 1416 to the “cults of state”, for they were attributed with intervening to stop the plague epidemic. Upon the recommendation of Rector Aloysius de Gozze, the Feast of Simon the Prophet was added to the list. Later, in the middle of the century, the Feast of Saint Jerome was made a day of rest “because he was worthy of being chosen and especially honored among the Church fathers, and celebrated the Church with his deeds, but above all because it is worthy for the people of Dubrovnik to celebrate him as do other Dalmatians.”<sup>17</sup>

Church holidays on Republic’s official list of ceremonies were days of rest, as were Sundays. On such days it was forbidden to perform work as a craftsman, to sell wheat and salt, to try court cases, to draw up documents, etc. It was explicitly stated that work was forbidden in order to enhance the festivities. The Book of Reformatations stipulates that on Easter, the feast days of the Apostles, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the Feast of Saint Blaise, Sundays, and the Feast of Saint Mark,<sup>18</sup> all shops had to be closed except for those that sold oil, cheese, and candles. To the joy of the masses, taverns had to be open on all days, which was separately mentioned in the decree.<sup>19</sup> Later, they prohibited entertainment and auctions, which had been customarily held in the cathedral, the church of Saint Blaise, and other churches, “because the laws and customs of any city or place are commendable

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<sup>16</sup> “Et scribatur in libro nostro cancellarie et in tabula nostri cathalogi ubi sunt descripta nomina sanctorum celebrandorum ad perpetue rei memoriam.” (*Liber viridis*, c. 139).

<sup>17</sup> *Liber viridis*, cc. 154, 159, 160, 245, 305, 364; *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 1, f. 51; Kosto Vojnović, »Sudbeno ustrojstvo Republike Dubrovačke I.« *Rad JAZU* 108 (1892): pp. 115-117.

<sup>18</sup> This decree was from 1335, which was during the period of Venetian rule. Later the Feast of Saint Mark ceased to be so fervently celebrated. Ph. de Diversis, *Situs aedificiorum*: IV, 2, p. 96.

<sup>19</sup> *Liber omnium reformationum*: p. 58 (28.1.1335); *Liber viridis*, cc. 165, 226, 293, 308, 275; In the city of Split the following were designated as days of rest: Sundays, Christmas, the four feasts of the Virgin Mary, and the feasts of the twelve apostols (*Statut grada Splita*. Split: Splitski književni krug, 1985: Ref., c. 67). See A. Vauchez, »Patronage of Saints«: p. 159.

and tolerable only if they are in accord with God's will, and if they do not oppose His will and the service of God."<sup>20</sup>

The list of holidays in the state chancellery was also a list of the protocol obligations of the rector and his council. These obligations differed from one holiday to another, depending on how elaborate the celebration was. For some holidays the obligations began with the evening mass on the vigils. On the day of the celebration, the rector and the Minor Council had to attend either the morning or the evening mass, sometimes even both. Special obligations were connected with the Feast of Saint Blaise. Eight days after the holiday the rector, the archbishop, and the Minor Council had to honor with their presence the church of Saint Claire, built on the spot of the first church of Saint Blaise, by the city gates at Pile. Fifteen days after the holiday, a mass was served in the church of Saint Blaise.<sup>21</sup> Every official visit to a church included a gift in candles, regulated by ordinances of the Major Council. The value of the gift depended upon the importance that the government officially gave to the particular saint and holy day, and upon the status of the individual who offered the gift. Although holiday protocol was an opportunity for nobles to distinguish themselves, noble functionaries sometimes avoided these obligations, partly because of the loss of time, partly because of the cost of the candles. Because of this, the holiday ordinances always included a clause describing the punishment for a nobleman's unexcused absence from the festivities. In fact, even when they were excused from attendance, they still were required to donate the candles. This indicates how official rituals acquired significance in the eyes of individuals as long as the event was one of prestige. In less formal, routine situations, the nobles were inclined to avoid the honor as well as the obligation that went along with it. For this reason, the state had to remind individuals of their noble duties through legal penalties.<sup>22</sup>

On important holy days, the central event was always a procession. The solemn procession was a fundamental part of the structure of the city cer-

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<sup>20</sup> "Quoniam omnes leges omnesque consuetudines cuiusvis civitatis et loci in tantum sunt laudabiles et tolerande quantum sunt cum Dei voluntate conformes et ipsius honori et cultui minime refragantes." *Liber viridis*, c. 488 (15.3.1459); *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 3, f. 64; *Lamenti politici*, ser. 11, vol. 3, ff. 79v-80 (SAD).

<sup>21</sup> *Liber omnium reformationum*: pp. 103, 176-177; Ph. de Diversis, *Situs aedificiorum*: IV, 2, p. 95.

<sup>22</sup> *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 2, f. 91v; vol. 12, f. 241; Cfr. *Statut grada Trogira*. Split, Splitski književni krug, 1988: Ref. I, 52.

emonial; a narrative march, which clearly showed the order of the dignitaries to the masses, and through this picture, reinforced the rules of society. One's position in the procession expressed the difference in status between the nobility and the common people, and placed individuals within the hierarchies of each class. The elevation of the nobility above the other social classes became apparent with the growing strictness of the ceremonial rules. Although there was no mention of the order of the participants in the earliest regulations on the celebration of holidays, in fifteenth-century sources this is the most important part. Magistrates, foreigners, nobles, commoners, elderly people, young men, women—everyone had their own place in the ceremonial, and that position expressed their actual position in the community. The ritual showed every individual where his or her place was and therefore contributed to the acceptance of that hierarchy. To be sure, there were conflicts over priority and envy due to the prestige of others, but this was never expressed during the procession itself. The scenery of the procession, the order of the participants, the songs, and the rites all created a formalized picture of order that could not be upset under any circumstances. It could be said that the relations between individuals were presented as in the theater. The liturgical context in which the procession took place was dedicated to the hierarchical order and thus stressed its importance. Besides belonging to a particular class, the political function was also important. The procession also drew a picture of the government through the positioning of functionaries. In the late fifteenth century the senators consciously passed legislation that gave officials of the Republic priority before knights and doctors of law, with the reasoning that the magistracy of the Republic commanded more importance than either the honor of knighthood or a doctorate. The order of officials was based upon age and rank in the service, but never upon noble houses. Thus the ceremonial gives witness to the claim that Dubrovnik was not ruled by an oligarchy of powerful families, but was an aristocratic republic constituted by the noble class as a whole.<sup>23</sup> For this reason, commoners held no positions of honor and often participated only as onlookers. The confraternities, which in some other cities played a leading role in processions, had only minor importance in Dubrovnik. Their role in celebrations was limited to the demonstration of their loyalty or, in other words, it formalized their position in relation to the state. The commoners in government service were part of the

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<sup>23</sup> *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 26, f. 153v; vol. 27, f. 164v.

planned scenery of the procession. Guards, heralds, and municipal trumpeters escorted the rector and the senators. The government saw to their clothing, so, as they would represent the Republic in a dignified fashion. Each herald would receive a new uniform of red and blue cloth every year, as well as a red cap decorated with the coat-of-arms of Saint Blaise.<sup>24</sup> The entire scene of a solemn procession took place in the power center of the Republic, which was a carefully built stage in itself. Processions would begin either in front of the Rector's Palace or in the cathedral, depending on the occasion. The most important part of the celebration would take place in the square in front of the Rector's Palace and on *Placa*, as well as in the church of Saint Blaise. The city center was especially planned for the purpose of ceremonies, which in itself proves the importance of the entire complex of regulations dealing with the collective behavior of the community and its rulers.<sup>25</sup>

The state calendar of official ceremonies revolved around the most important holiday of the Republic—the Feast of the passion of Saint Blaise, which fell on the third day of February. The feast of the city's patron, which was important for any city, greatly surpassed the usual limits in terms of elaborateness. The bishop of Sebastia became the primary and absolute symbol of Dubrovnik, just as Saint Mark symbolized Venice.<sup>26</sup> The state calendar of feasts was associatively and symbolically connected with the cult of Saint Blaise, in other words, with the cult of Dubrovnik statehood. This was reflected in the many ordinances, which regulated the celebration of feasts. In charge of the festivities were four noblemen—the so-called commanders—who were chosen by secret ballot. In addition to them, nobles were also chosen to guard the relics during the celebration and to answer for their secu-

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<sup>24</sup> *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 26, ff. 185-186; *Liber viridis*, c. 254. Writing about Trogir, P. Andreis stresses that the Square of Saint Michael was on festive occasions divided between the common people and the nobility. Each group kept to itself and celebrated separately, on opposite sides of the square. See Tomislav Raukar, »Komunalna društva u Dalmaciji u XV. st. i prvoj polovici XVI. stoljeća.« *Historijski zbornik* 35 (1982): p. 113. Cf. E. Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*: p. 85; A. Vauchez, »Patronage of Saints«: p. 154.

<sup>25</sup> See Jacques Rossiaud, »Il cittadino e la vita di città.«, in: *L'uomo medievale*, ed. Jacques Le Goff. Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1987: p. 197. In some cities they have preserved drawings of the itineraries of processions. See E. Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*: pp. 6, 149, 211; Jean-Pierre Leguay. *La rue au Moyen Age*. Rennes: Ouest France, 1984: pp. 221-222.

<sup>26</sup> R. C. Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*: p. 3; E. Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*: p. 300.

rity.<sup>27</sup> Concepts such as the dedication of a state and the heavenly protection of order found their ultimate expression in the procession of Saint Blaise. This was a celebration of the honor of the city and its nobility, a pledge of preservation of the status quo, a prayer for the saint's protection in the future, and an opportunity for the emphasis of the dignity and superiority of the nobility. This celebration was so important in the eyes of the Dubrovnik nobility that, when they were trying to persuade King Sigismund to support their requests for free trade with the Turks, they promised to dedicate the procession of Saint Blaise to his honor and salvation.<sup>28</sup> Philippus Diversi, a teacher from Lucca, an inquisitive scholar with a gift for observation and a strong interest in social hierarchy, gives us an exhaustive description of the processions and other parts of the celebrations in the first half of the fifteenth century. From him we learn that the entire municipality was represented in the procession. First, municipal trumpeters preceded it, and after them marched armed peasants and sailors from the surrounding area who were led by military commanders. Next came the artisans and merchants, to Diversi's surprise, a group that included even butchers, who in his opinion were not dignified enough for such placement. They would enter the cathedral carrying wax-candles. The procession would begin in front of the Rector's Palace, the center and symbol of secular rule. Under the arcades, which open the palace to the public like a theater scene, the rector would sit with the Minor Council, the Senate, and foreign dignitaries, waiting for the monks in their festive robes and the common people to gather. The first wax-candle to be lit, decorated and more beautiful than the rest was presented to the rector, after which candles were distributed to the nobility, foreigners, and commoners, according to a strictly determined order. After this the rector, accompanied by the municipal trumpeters and guards with wax-candles, would leave for the cathedral, where he was met by the archbishop with the relics of Saint Blaise. From there, either the rector and the archbishop would march together, or the rector would walk in front of the archbishop, thereby demonstrating the power relations to the attendant masses. The thing in question was not simply the relationship between ecclesiastical and secular powers, but also the relationship that this scene

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<sup>27</sup> *Statut grada Dubrovnika 1272*, ed. Mate Križman and Josip Kolanović. Dubrovnik: Historijski arhiv u Dubrovniku, 1990: p. 256; *Liber omnium reformationum*: p. 177 (3.3.1403); *Liber viridis*, c. 396.

<sup>28</sup> Giuseppe Gelcich and Lajos Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium relationum Reipublicae Ragusanae cum regno Hungariae*. Budapest: Kiadja a M. Tud. Akademia Tort. Bizottsaga, 1887: p. 384.

presented between the representative of the Republic and the saint whose remains were kept in the reliquary. According to the symbolism of the procession, the rector inherited his authority from Saint Blaise, and through him as a symbol of government, that authority was passed on to all administrative bodies of the Republic, that is, to the nobility. Following this line of thinking, in 1451 the Major Council passed a resolution that stipulated that the rector could, if he so wished, personally carry the relics of Saint Blaise in the procession. In other words, he was allowed to take them from the hands of the archbishop.<sup>29</sup> After Saint Blaise, the rector, and the archbishop, came the nobles, then the abbots, priests and monks with other relics. Some of the relics would not be carried in the procession, but remained by the altar, where they were guarded by older noblemen, who were chosen by the Senate. Younger nobles were given a special responsibility that required them to be positioned all the way up front with the rector, the archbishop, and the relics. They had to beat back with sticks any people who tried to touch or kiss the relics. Foreigners could have a very distinguished position in the procession. Diversi, sensitive about his own position, discusses in detail the special treatment of foreign officials, mentioning that among these people there were members of all classes, doctors, teachers, and merchants. All of them would stand with the nobles near the rector and the Minor Council under the arcades of the palace, while some of them would even take part in the procession of relics, carrying lighted wax-candles along with the nobility. Superiority was given to the chancellors, who had seats near the rector and the Minor Council and who walked directly behind the nobles in processions and funerals. They even received wax-candles from the municipal treasury, which was not the case with the nobility. This custom differentiates the Dubrovnik nobility from their Venetian model, because in Venice foreign officials were not given such a respectable status. Except for the chancellors, foreign officials did not have the right to participate in processions.<sup>30</sup> In Dubrovnik, commoners mostly participated in processions as onlookers, gathering on either side of the square with lighted wax-candles. The choreography of the entire spectacle shows how the social hierarchy was emphasized and consecrated through ritual. In every

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<sup>29</sup> *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 9, f. 172v.

<sup>30</sup> Ph. de Diversis, *Situs aedificiorum*: IV, 3, p. 94; *Liber viridis*, c. 416; *Liber croceus*, ed. Branislav Nedeljković. ZIJKSN, III.24. Beograd: SANU, 1997: c. 67, p. 76; *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 29, f. 52v; vol. 30, f. 211. Cf. *Venice: A Documentary History 1450-1630*, ed. David Chambers and Brian Pullan. Oxford-Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1992: p. 50.

detail one unambiguous meaning can be read: the superiority of secular over ecclesiastical power, the heavenly support of Dubrovnik's independence, the paradigm of power and social harmony.

Serafino Razzi writes about the celebration of the feast of the martyrdom of Saint Blaise, which he witnessed in 1588, from the point of view of a foreigner and a Dominican monk. His description confirms that, for every group of citizens, public rituals brought up the issue of prestige, and that it all boiled down a general feeling of unity that carried a political message about the Republic. The celebration began at the Candlemas, when the rector summoned together the entire clergy in the cathedral. Razzi mentions that the friars sang the patron saint's anthem, accompanied by the city musicians, known as *la musica del Senato*. At that moment, the brothers of the twenty-five confraternities entered the church, also accompanied by music, in order to present their gifts and torches. In comparison to Diversi's description, which was written 150 years earlier, the position of the confraternities here is noticeably different. This was certainly due to the growing strength of the wealthiest class of commoners. As a result of the influence of the confraternities of Saint Anthony and Saint Lazarus, other confraternities gained in status as well. On Saint Blaise's Day, the friars would receive the relics in the cathedral and led the procession to the church of Saint Blaise. The senators, who marched with torches, had the honor of being positioned next to the relics; behind them followed the bishops, abbots, and friars. From the saint's church the procession returned to the cathedral, where choirs of Franciscans and Dominicans sang High Mass. After the readings, they sang lauds for the pope, the emperor, the Hungarian king,<sup>31</sup> the archbishop, and finally, the rector of Dubrovnik. The lauds were written on a sheet of parchment, which the sacristan subsequently presented to the rector. During the mass the relics were carried down to the treasury under the church, and after that, as the friars sang the *Te Deum*, everyone went home for lunch. In the afternoon followed the *fešta temporale*, games, dancing, and a review of the peasants. Many elements of popular festivities entered that part of the celebration: it is recorded that some of the participants were masked and sang lovely songs in Croatian. Diversi even mentioned such activities as popular

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<sup>31</sup> It is interesting that in 1588, when Razzi was present at the celebration, Dubrovnik's loyalty to the Hungarian crown had not yet been forgotten, more than sixty years after the ruin of medieval Hungarian Kingdom and the formal independence of the Republic of Dubrovnik.

entertainment, wheel dancing, and jumping in front of the Rector's Palace. This schedule for the celebration of important feasts consisting of the vigil, procession, and holy mass, and ending with an afternoon celebration reserved for popular entertainment, was also common in Italy at that time.<sup>32</sup>

The Feast of the Hand of Saint Blaise was celebrated to commemorate the day when that relic arrived in Dubrovnik. The vigil, the mass, and the procession of this holy day were not as magnificent as the main celebration on February 3. Just before the feast, a column with the flag of Saint Blaise was erected on the square, and the members of the Minor Council went to the cathedral with the rector for vespers. On the next day, the treasurers carried out the saint's hand and other relics, but for reasons of security, not until broad daylight, immediately before the procession.<sup>33</sup> The rector and the members of the Council had to bring two large candles weighing twenty-five librae with them to mass. The freedom of Saint Blaise, *pax divina*, was guaranteed on this feast, just as was the custom on the feast of the saint's suffering.<sup>34</sup> The government made sure that even Dubrovnik's citizens living in Venice celebrated the feasts of Saint Blaise in a worthy manner, so that they would not be deprived of ceremonies that would strengthen their patriotic feelings. This way they also demonstrated their identity before the Venetians. For this purpose the government imposed certain customs taxes which were then paid to the consul of the Dubrovnik Republic in Venice.<sup>35</sup> Quite early, military reviews began to be held in connection with the celebration of Saint Blaise. As early as 1383 an archery competition was held on both of the feasts dedicated to the saint. The rector himself would present the winner with his prize: a bow and one ducat. Wanting to enhance the spectacle, in 1446 the government began to supply the archers with special clothing of scarlet and brown cloth. By a decree passed in 1454 it became legal to take money from the state treasury for the expenses of both of the feasts of Saint Blaise, as well as the archery and horsemanship competitions. Both Diversi and Razzi mention

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<sup>32</sup> Serafino Razzi, *La storia di Raugia*. Lucca: Busdraghi, 1595: pp. 135-139; Ph. de Diversis, *Situs aedificiorum*: IV, 2, p. 94-95; A. Vauchez, »Patronage of Saints«: p. 156.

<sup>33</sup> In general, security measures were more strict on every occasion when relics were taken out of the treasury. Cf. *Statut grada Splita*: I, cc. 7-9.

<sup>34</sup> *Liber omnium reformationum*: p. 103; *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 2, f. 55; vol. 10, f. 8; *Acta Consilii Minoris*, ser. 5, vol. 2, f. 173v (SAD).

<sup>35</sup> *Liber croceus*: c. 33, p. 33.



the review of armed men from the surroundings of Dubrovnik, first in the procession itself, and later before the rector. Diversi also describes a horsemanship competition similar to the renowned *Alka* tournament (held to this day in the inland Croatian town of Sinj), in which young noblemen took part. With time, the festival of Saint Blaise acquired an explicitly military character, with a double review of sentry troops from Župa, Konavle, and the Elaphite islands in front of the Rector's Palace. Their march was accompanied by a cannon salute. Taking into account the character of Dubrovnik's military organization, these customs were not meant to be demonstrations of force, but of the community's readiness to defend itself in the name of the patron saint. In this way the government placed political importance on the popular part of the festivities.<sup>36</sup>

Without question, at the top of the hierarchy of government operated festivities we find the procession for the Feast of Saint Blaise, but the official calendar of rituals also contained a few other important events. Of all the processions, however, only the one on Corpus Christi continued to be primarily religious in character. The others formed a mosaic of political messages. In many European cities at that time it was common to commemorate important historical dates, such as triumphs, but also days of remembrance for the betrayal or death of citizens.<sup>37</sup> In Dubrovnik, though, there were no commemorations of losses or tragedies. Patriotism and the cohesion of the community were aroused by commemorations of days of victory and days of thanksgiving to the heavenly protectors who guarded the city's liberty and saved it from war or devastation.<sup>38</sup> In the period when people still had faith in the victory of the Christian nations over the Ottoman Turks, Dubrovnik even had a victory celebration. After the first victories in the Crusades of 1443-4, the people of Dubrovnik demonstrated their joy with a solemn Christmas

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<sup>36</sup> *Odluke veća Dubrovačke republike*, I, ed. Mihajlo Dinić. ZIJKSN III.15. Beograd: SANU, 1955: p. 379; *Liber viridis*, cc. 54, 445; Ph. de Diversis, *Situs aedificiorum*: IV, 2, p. 95; Francesco Maria Appendini, *Notizie istorico-critiche sulle antichità storia e letteratura de' Ragusei*, I. Dubrovnik: Antonio Martecchini, 1802: pp. 177-180. Cf. Jacques Heers, *L'occident aux XIVe et XVe siècles: Aspects économiques et sociaux*. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1973: p. 302.

<sup>37</sup> In Venice and other Italian city-states it was also customary to celebrate victories over conspiracies against the regime; E. Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*: p. 300; A. Vauchez, »Patronage of Saints«: pp. 155-156.

<sup>38</sup> *Annales Ragusini Anonymi, item Nicolai de Ragnina*: pp. 248-249, 262; *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii (ab origine urbis usque ad annum 1451) item Joannis Gundulae (1451-1484)*, ed. Natko Nodilo. MSHSM, XXV. Zagreb: JAZU, 1893: p. 48.

procession, but after the catastrophe at Varna, everything changed considerably. The Dubrovnik government had to hush up its connections with Christian rulers, and thus they could hold no public manifestations. In the period of terrible fear after the fall of Bosnia, the Corpus Christi procession was dedicated to praying for the city's protection, but after that, rumors against the Turks died down. From the early sixteenth century on, only in Ston was there a procession for the Feast of Saint Peter in thanksgiving for the liberation of the town from a traitor who wanted to give Ston up to the Turks.<sup>39</sup>

In Dubrovnik, only one historical event was continually celebrated with a procession and rituals. Beginning in 1400, on the Feast of Forty Martyrs (March 10), the people of Dubrovnik celebrated the end of the conspiracy against the nobility's monopoly of power. This formal occasion gave religious meaning to the maintenance of the political privileges of the nobility. The ordinance dealing with this ritual emphasized the heavenly, divine protection of Dubrovnik and its government. Thus the religious feelings of the populace were aroused by the idea of dedication to social order, actually the main purpose of all official events. After a procession through the city, lauds were sung in the church of Saint Blaise to God, to the Virgin Mary, to the forty martyrs, and to their heavenly court. The Major Council deliberated over the celebration of that feast in 1403, emphasizing with elaborate rhetoric the importance of divine intervention in the discovery of conspiracies and in the protection of the city's peaceful state. Some council members suggested that the confraternities participate in the procession, but they did not win the vote. The government later realized the possible political importance of this feast and thus allotted it greater ceremonial significance. Brethren from all congregations had to participate in the procession, which began in the cathedral. They carried the relics of Saint Blaise, while the responsibilities of the rector and the council members were absolutely the same, as on the feast of the city's patron. In fact, on the same day they passed new ordinances connected with the festival of Saint Blaise, unifying the details of the two festivities. Connecting these two feasts was a carefully planned political act, the goal of which was to associate the putting down of the conspiracy with the city's community, symbolized by the image of its patron saint. The symbolism of the connection between the two feasts emphasized the role of the nobility in the his-

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<sup>39</sup> *Annales Ragusini Anonymi, item Nicolai de Ragnina*, pp. 278-280; *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 12, f. 224v; Ivan Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska u XV veku*. Beograd: SANU, 1952: pp. 98-102; *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 18, f. 167.

tory of the city and secured their political position. Already in Diversi's time the senators led the procession for the Forty Martyrs, that is, the upper crust of the society and government.<sup>40</sup> The procession of dignitaries started from the cathedral, passed the *Luža (Loggia)*, and entered the church of Saint Blaise while singing lauds. There, the procession would end with the presentation of the relics and a holy mass.<sup>41</sup> The procession also took place in Ston and throughout the Pelješac peninsula. The local ordinances of Ston state that on that day a procession will celebrate the heavenly protectors, that is, the Forty Martyrs and Saint Blaise, who defended the city's peace from evil thoughts and deeds. The government commanded all the pastors to add this procession to the missals and church calendars and to pray to Saint Blaise and the Forty Martyrs in hope of peace and order in the Republic. Not even on the local level did the nobility miss the opportunity to stress the connection between the feast of the patron saint of Dubrovnik and the feast of thanksgiving commemorating the discovery of the conspiracy.<sup>42</sup> There are no remaining documents from other districts, but it can be assumed that the victory of order over the rebels was celebrated throughout the entire Republic. From the nobility's point of view, it was important to constantly remind any prospective conspirators of how their predecessors ended up. Diversi mentions the feast-day sermon in the church of Saint Blaise, which reminded the people of the benevolence by which God had preserved their liberty and delivered them "from the heavy yoke of slavery."<sup>43</sup>

During the year, several other processions took place in Dubrovnik. These were not as magnificent, but they were important in terms of their messages. The above-mentioned procession in honor of Saint Mark the Evangelist no longer had any political significance by the fifteenth century. It was simply maintained out of tradition, but soon it died out altogether. But some processions, like the ones honoring Saints John the Baptist, Simon and Jude were originally characterized by the community's giving thanks for the end of the plague epidemic. The government of Dubrovnik associated these feasts as well

<sup>40</sup> *Reformationes*, vol. 32, ff. 137v-138, 206v-207; Ph. de Diversis, *Situs aedificiorum*: IV, 2, p. 96; I. Prlander, »Dubrovačko posvajanje svetoga Vlaha«: p. 16.

<sup>41</sup> *Liber omnium reformationum*: pp. 131, 166-167; *Reformationes*, vol. 32, ff. 206-207.

<sup>42</sup> »Ordines Stagni.«, ed. Aleksandar Solovjev. ZIJKSN III.6. Beograd: SANU, 1936: p. 380; Giuseppe Gelcich, *Dello sviluppo civile di Ragusa considerato ne' suoi monumenti istorici ed artistici*. Dubrovnik: Carlo Pretner, 1884: p. 46.

<sup>43</sup> Ph. de Diversis, *Situs aedificiorum*: IV, 2, p. 96.

with the cult of Saint Blaise, so that they could include them in the network of state rituals. In the processions held on those days the relics of the bishop-patron were carried, strengthening faith in the existence of a community of heavenly protectors under his leadership. Among these protectors of the city, three young saints and martyrs from Kotor, Peter, Andrew, and Lawrence, were particularly important. Legend says that their relics arrived in Dubrovnik according to the explicit wish of the saints, which was miraculously proclaimed. In honor of these three soldier-saints from the oldest cast of Dubrovnik's defenders, a procession was held on July 7. The procession for the Feast of Simon the Prophet is also associated with the relics, symbols of heavenly protection over the Republic. On that day the rector, the nobility, the commoners, and the foreigners celebrated one of the most important of Dubrovnik's relics: the diaper in which Saint Simon received the baby Jesus in the temple. This was the only day on which the coveted diaper could be seen, in a reliquary of rock crystal.<sup>44</sup>

In opposition to the processions mentioned so far, it is important to mention the procession for Corpus Christi, the significance of which was different.<sup>45</sup> The celebration of Corpus Christi in Dubrovnik was determined by a law passed in 1422 and by later decisions of the Major Council. The ordinance invites the nobility to have dignified respect for this feast, "superior to all," and calls upon God to have mercy on the city and government of Dubrovnik.<sup>46</sup> The superiority of Corpus Christi among the feasts is always emphasized in the minutes of the councils, but the ordinances related to the holy days of Saint Blaise are far more numerous. In the Corpus Christi procession as well were the noblemen from all councils, paid officials, and respected foreigners. As on other formal occasions, friars of the mendicant orders gathered in the cathedral and awaited the rector, the nobility, and foreigners who entered in procession by twos. The procession was composed slightly differently than for Saint Blaise, because Corpus Christi was fundamentally a sacred rite of the Christian faith, and on this day secular ceremonial was secondary. Undoubtedly, the monstrance containing the host was of

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<sup>44</sup> *Liber viridis*, cc. 245, 305, 160; *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 26, f. 201v; Cvito Fisković, *Prvi poznati dubrovački graditelji*. Dubrovnik: Historijski institut JAZU u Dubrovniku, 1955: p. 29.

<sup>45</sup> See *Venice: A Documentary History*: p. 63; J. Rossiaud, »Il cittadino e la vita di città«: p. 198; J. P. Leguay, *La rue au Moyen Age*: p. 220.

<sup>46</sup> *Liber viridis*, c. 177; *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 2, f. 91v; vol. 12, f. 224v.

central importance. The monstrance was carried under a silk or velvet canopy by the archbishop, who walked in a lead group of friars and priests singing a hymn of Saint Thomas Aquinas. The Rector followed behind the monstrance, accompanied by two municipal physicians, and after him came the nobles and foreigners, in pairs.<sup>47</sup> The differentiation among the nobility was obvious, because *Diversi* mentions commoners and nobles of both sexes in the crowds that followed this prominent procession. Noble women, young noblemen, and those who at the time did not have an important function in the government were all mixed in with the *populus*. The Corpus Christi procession reserved much more space and importance for the common people than any of the other processions.<sup>48</sup> Besides the townspeople, peasants from the surrounding villages also came and took part in the procession. Amazed at the number of people, *Diversi* describes how, at the moment when the rector, following the monstrance, arrived at *Luža*, the women at the tail end of the procession had not yet turned onto *Placa* (today *Stradun*). What is symbolically interesting is the fact that this procession was not limited to the central governmental area on the square in front of the rector's Palace, but went around the town via the *Ulica od crevljara* (today *Ulica od puča*) toward Pile, and returned via *Placa*, the central street of the city. The Corpus Christi procession carried with it no direct political message such as the Feasts of Saint Blaise or the Forty Martyrs. The details of the participants' placement and the choreography of the latter two processions show that they were fundamentally different than Corpus Christi in terms of their political symbolism.

Some rituals were directly connected to secular government, while their religious characteristics were secondary or had completely disappeared. Such occasions were the coronation or death of the Hungarian king, state visits of foreign dignitaries to the city, funerals of the nobility, and all rituals connected with the state administration.

Whenever news of the election or coronation of a new king reached Dubrovnik, there would be a general holiday atmosphere, complete with the ringing of bells, the playing of music, and formal procession. One part of this

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<sup>47</sup> *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 24, f. 252v; vol. 28, f. 20.

<sup>48</sup> The theophoric Corpus Christi procession had been important for the popular piety since its inception in 1264. In the devotion of the common people, it connected the dogma of incarnation with the mystery of the Eucharist and the Passion complex. Very soon after the foundational bull of Urban IV, this feast became popular throughout Europe. In 1295 it was introduced in Venice. See E. Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*: p. 223.

ceremonial, the seeing off of the official envoys, reserved a prominent place for the nobility, in order to show to the commoners their direct relationship with the ruler.<sup>49</sup> Another occasion for procession and general joy was the birth of the king's successor. Upon receiving news of the birth of King Albert's son, Ladislav Posthumous, the Council of *Rogati* ordered that on the following day there would be a religious and formal procession to celebrate their joy, merriment, and consolation because of the birth of the late king's only son.<sup>50</sup>

The envoys from Dubrovnik were present at the weddings of royalty and other important figures. The nobles were happy to attend the festive events connected with the wedding of the Hungarian king and the coronation of his queen. Their attendance there was an honor of the Republic, and of course for the nobles themselves it was especially prestigious to appear on the list of important guests. Upon receiving an invitation to King Sigismund's wedding to Barbara of Celje, Dubrovnik nobles wrote back that they were joyful that the King would be taking a second wife, and that they were glad to accept the invitation, in spite of their difficult situation.<sup>51</sup> The marriages of Herzegovinian and Bosnian lords were obviously not such prestigious occasions, because quite often the council members had a hard time finding someone who agreed to attend them as the Republic's representative.<sup>52</sup>

The general sorrow on the occasion of the death of the Hungarian King, the memorial service, and the speeches given in his honor emphasized the respect for the late king and Dubrovnik's loyalty to the crown of Saint Stephen, but also the independent position of the city under the crown's sovereignty. Since Dubrovnik was a special political unit within the state, with its own administrative structure, it never experienced a crisis due to the succession. And for this reason it could be a completely symbolic occasion, a social event that enabled the rector, the senators, and the other nobles to dis-

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<sup>49</sup> Ph. de Diversis, *Situs aedificiorum*: IV, 10, pp. 115-117; *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 16, f. 210v; Petar Matković, »Prilozi k trgovačko-političkoj historiji republike dubrovačke.« *Rad JAZU* 7 (1869): p. 252; P. Matković, »Spomenici za dubrovačku povijest«: pp. 202-204.

<sup>50</sup> "Prima pars est ad gaudium et leticiam ac consolationem nativitatis novi ungeniti q. domini regis Alberti nobis nuper intimata, de faciundo crastina die pie solemnes processiones per civitatem." *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 7, f. 140.

<sup>51</sup> *Diplomatarium relationum reipublicae ragusanae cum regno Hungariae*: pp. 167-169.

<sup>52</sup> *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 1, ff. 1v, 29v.

tinguish themselves before their fellow citizens. When news of the king's death reached Dubrovnik, the Republic would proclaim a general state of mourning. The nobility would dress in black, and all forms of merriment were forbidden until a new king was elected.<sup>53</sup> The chosen envoys would travel to Hungary to attend the burial, while in Dubrovnik a committee of three nobles saw to the organization of memorial services and all expenses.<sup>54</sup> As for the memorial services dedicated to members of the nobility, before the altar was placed a velvet-covered catafalque surrounded by lighted candles. In addition, a crown, a sword, and other symbols of royalty were displayed in front of the catafalque. The symbolism of ritual here is more than obvious: there was no body, real crown, nor sword, but this staging created an apparent reality in the experience of the participants. This display symbolized loyalty to the crown that Dubrovnik recognized and respect for the foreign ruler who was given the honor of being a member of the Dubrovnik nobility. In return, from the point of view of the present commoners, the dignity of royalty cast its reflection upon the nobility, whose burial rituals were very similar. The protocol for royal, as well as noble memorial services required that the rector and the nobility, marching dressed in black, enter the cathedral, already full of people. All of the clergy and the common people would be present for the service; in fact, all of the stores would be closed until mealtime, so that the entire city could take part in the ceremony. Just as at funeral services for the Dubrovnik nobility, speakers were invited in order to lend solemnity to the affair.

The messages of formal ceremonies were not always of a lasting nature: in some cases they were derived from daily politics. In 1387, when king's wife, Queen Elizabeth was executed in Novigrad in the heat of a dynastic struggle, a state memorial service was organized in order for the Republic to express its loyalty to the legitimate ruler. Respecting legitimacy and continuity, the Dubrovnik nobility supported late king's daughter, Queen Mary. The government put to jail everyone who either spoke or wrote anything against the new queen. When the conspirators finally set Mary free, a popular celebration, complete with musicians, was organized in Dubrovnik, while all of the prisoners were released as a sign of rejoicing the freedom of "*domina*

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<sup>53</sup> *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 6, ff. 163, 166rv; vol. 7, f. 107v; vol. 15, f. 189.

<sup>54</sup> Ludovicus Cerva Tubero, *Commentaria suorum temporum*. Rhacusii: Typographia Caroli Antonii Occhi, 1784: pp. 16-17.

*nostra naturalis.*"<sup>55</sup> Interestingly enough, however, a holy day procession and sung mass had also been organized one year earlier in honor of the coronation of Charles of Durazzo, Mary's adversary. Even though Dubrovnik's interests were not on Charles's side, they staged the celebration just in case, in order to pave the way for any possible changes in relations. This serves as yet another argument in favor of the thesis that Dubrovnik was considered a land of the crown, but not the royal individual. Only the person who legally wore the crown of Saint Stephen could rely upon the loyalty of the Dubrovnik Republic. And it was for this reason that the Dubrovnik government quickly pledged its loyalty when Sigismund of Luxembourg, as Mary's husband, took the throne. Because of Dubrovnik's loyalty to Queen Mary, Sigismund awarded the Republic with his favor and support.<sup>56</sup> In return, the Dubrovnik government spent a large amount of money on his memorial service, in order for the loyal city to bid him farewell with great honors. In addition, they sent letters of condolence to his second wife, Queen Barbara, and members of the Hungarian aristocracy.<sup>57</sup> The government honored Diversi with an invitation to give a speech dedicated to the king at the state memorial service in the cathedral. Soon after this, he was given two similar invitations, first in dedication of the coronation of Albert of Habsburg, and then a year later, upon Albert's death. A school headmaster and well-known sycophant, Diversi knew what was expected of him, so his speech about the king was adorned with personal expressions of gratitude to the rector and praise for the noblemen of Dubrovnik who had distinguished themselves in the service of the kings of Hungary. Among Dubrovnik's noblemen and envoys who "were permitted to sit in the presence of the king," he sought witnesses for his praising of the ruler. Diversi particularly extolled the Dubrovnik patricians in his eulogy to Albert, for the king's short rule didn't obligate the speaker to lengthy descriptions of his various accomplishments. Thus, into his speech about the king's

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<sup>55</sup> *Diplomatarium relationum reipublicae ragusanae cum regno Hungariae*, pp. 706-708; Vinko Foretić, »Godina 1358. u povijesti Dubrovnika.« *Starine* 50 (1960): p. 271.

<sup>56</sup> "Prima pars est de faciendo exequias pro domina regina antiqua Ungariae, viam universae carnis ingressa et Jadre sepulta." (*Reformationes*, vol. 27, f. 24v); "Prima pars est quod fiat solemnibus processio et cantetur missa cum gaudiis debitis propter litteras serenissimi domini regis Karoli, continentis eius coronacionem de rege Ungariae: et quod detur libertas domino rectori cum suo minori consilio honorandum nuntium qui dictas litteras nobis portavit." (*Reformationes*, vol. 26, f. 136v); P. Matković, »Prilozi k trgovačko-političkoj historiji«: pp. 209-211; Nada Klaić, *Povijest Hrvata u razvijenom srednjem vijeku*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1976: pp. 653-658.

<sup>57</sup> *Lettere e commissioni, Lettere di Levante*, ser. 27.1, vol. 12, ff. 73v, 74v, 75rv (SAD).



court he was able to weave names of Dubrovnik noblemen such as Johannes de Gondola, Michael de Resti, and Jacobus de Georgio, describing them as witnesses of the king's virtues. He lauded Andreas de Babalio for participating in the defense of Smederevo, and he singled out the Hungarian knight Lodovicus de Gozze, who was given a golden sword and spurs by Albert in confirmation of his knightly dignity.<sup>58</sup> After the death of King Matthias Corvinus, Elias de Crieva (Crijević) spoke at the memorial service, mostly paying tribute to the king's military, bodily, and spiritual virtues, while praising his renaissance broad-mindedness. That commendable speech, which was composed according to the rules of renaissance rhetoric, with its mythological repertoire and tales from ancient history, is yet another example of how such occasions in Dubrovnik were important social events with a deliberately planned effect. The speaker paid homage to the present noblemen and did not fail to mention the event when Matthias gave back the crown of Emperor Frederick, for which the nobles of Dubrovnik contributed a considerable sum of money. Crijević's speech, more than the above-mentioned addresses, expresses a real fear of Turkish danger upon the death of such a defender of Christianity and protector of Dubrovnik.<sup>59</sup>

The burials of Dubrovnik's patricians were among the most important situations in which noble status was overtly emphasized without the political message that accompanied holidays on the official calendar and visits of important functionaries. Such private occasions were also susceptible to ceremony, but with a different significance. Most sources concentrate primarily on collective, public behavior, so there is much less that we can say about the significance of ritual in private life. This is why any information that we come across in this area is all the more valuable. Funerals and weddings of the nobility could be placed somewhere in between the public and the private, because there was an emphasis on both the family and the status of the individuals involved. Of course, funeral rites with which the Christian community bade farewell to its fellow members bare an important religious sig-

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<sup>58</sup> Ph. de Diversis, »Oratio in laudem Alberti regis« and »Oratio in funere Alberti regis«, both in: Filip de Diversis. *Dubrovački govori u slavu ugarskih kraljeva Sigismunda i Alberta*, ed. Zdenka Janeković Römer. Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2001: pp. 84-127, 128-161; *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 7, f. 107v.

<sup>59</sup> Darinka Nevenić Grabovac, »Posmrtni govor kralju Matiji Ilija Lamprice Crijević.« *Živa antika* 28 (1978): pp. 274-284; *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 17, f. 101v.

nificance as well. All of these elements were interwoven in the funeral ritual. The funerals of the nobility were more ceremonious than those of the common people, but no statute or law forbade wealthy commoners funerals with equal pomp and luxury. Still the difference was quite apparent, since the nobility could afford more luxury. Their funeral parties were graced by all the members of the nobility, including the head of state. Of course members of the nobility did attend common funerals as well, but as private individuals and without obligation. A deceased patrician was carried in an open casket by peers of his own age. The rector was required to walk behind the coffin dressed in a black toga. If he was ill, then the oldest member of the Minor Council replaced him, wearing all of the rector's insignia. The family dressed in black robes and walking two by two followed the rector. The rest of the nobility came next, first the men, then the women. According to the Anonymous chronicle, even the horses wore black covers, and as a sign of mourning three lances were driven into the ground in front of the catafalque. The confraternities, who were paid for their participation, also contributed to the ceremonious atmosphere. By the end of the fifteenth century high-ranking members of the clergy began to charge fees, based upon a hierarchical scale, for their participation in funerals. The body of the deceased was displayed during the mass and honored with candles burning on every altar. After the burial the men would go to the house of the mourning family. The order of entrances into and exits from the church where the sung memorial service was held had to be strictly respected. Women were not present at the mass or for the burial speeches, but would go to express their condolence at a different house, which was in keeping with the Mediterranean custom of separating men and women at public occasions.<sup>60</sup> When the rector died in office, the ceremony was much more lavish. It was uncommon that a nobleman actually died while serving as rector: due to the short term of office, it was easy to avoid choosing ill and physically weak individuals for the post. However, on the rare occasions when this did happen, the funeral was always a highly prestigious social event. Symbols of the rector's dignity were displayed along-

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<sup>60</sup> Ph. de Diversis, *Situs aedificiorum*: IV, 18, pp. 128-129; *Annales Ragusini Anonymi, item Nicolai de Ragnina*: p. 17; *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 16, ff. 185-186 and vol. 17, f. 39; *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 26, ff. 185-186; vol. 27, f. 136; vol. 30, f. 21. See David Herlihy, »Women and the sources of medieval history: The towns of northern Italy.«, in: *Medieval women and the sources of medieval history*, ed. Joel T. Rosenthal. Athens-London: University of Georgia Press, 1990: p. 135.

side of the catafalque. These included knightly emblems that, by decree of Kings Sigismund and Matthias, each rector had the right to wear. During the burial the bell of the Major Council was rung, and the gates of the city were locked. If the rector was buried in the Dominican monastery, the friars of that order would say mass in the palace chapel for eight following days. Likewise, the Franciscans would do the same if their monastery was chosen for the burial.<sup>61</sup> The chosen speakers would give funeral addresses in honor of the deceased. Such an oration was an even greater opportunity than a speech commemorating a king's death to emphasize nobility and their government. Every speaker would begin by honoring the attendant rector and senators, after which he would praise the deceased and the members of his family. As a general rule, more would be said about the living, and less about the deceased. As Humanism was in fashion, the speakers would recite their eulogies, competing against each other in terms of eloquence and referring to the poets and philosophers of the Antiquity.<sup>62</sup>

The ceremonial reception of foreign dignitaries was extremely important for international relations. All questions related to the arrival of distinguished foreign visitors were treated with absolute seriousness, because the reception ceremony served as representation of the community not only for the visitors but for the common people as well. When representatives of foreign states and governments arrived in the city, they had to be shown the unity of the city and its social hierarchy. This could only be achieved through formalized behavior, which became the main means of diplomatic communication. Above all, nobody was allowed to come to the city without the government's permission. The possible implications of each visit would be discussed beforehand in the councils, especially in the case of Slavic nobility. Such visits could

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<sup>61</sup> S. Razzi, *La storia di Raugia*: pp. 122-125; G.P. Luccari, *Copioso ristretto degli annali di Rausa*: p. 160; *Liber croceus*: c. 173, p. 191.

<sup>62</sup> Georgius Benignus, *Oratio funebris habita pro magnifico et generoso senatore Junio Georgio patritio Rhagusino in aede Divi Francisci XIII*. Cal. Martias MCCCCLXXXVIII, Ink. 5, a2r-a6r (Library of Baltazar Bogišić in Cavtat); Aelius Lampridius Cervinus, »Sigismondo Georgio, philosophiae professori salutem.«, *ibid.*, a1r; Aelius Lampridius Cervinus, »Epigramma Iunio Georgio.«, *ibid.*, a1v; Karolus Puteus, »Epigramma in Iunium Georgium.«, *ibid.*, a1v; Darinka Nevenić-Grabovac, »Ilija Lamprice Crijević: Posmrtni govor svojem ujaku Juniju Sorkočeviću.« *Živa antika* 27/1 (1977): pp. 231-262; *eadem*, »Oratio funebris humaniste Ilije Crijevića dubrovačkom pesniku Ivanu (Dživu) Gučetiću.« *Živa antika* 24/1-2 (1974): pp. 333-364; *eadem*, »Ovenčani pesnik Ilija Crijević drži posmrtno slovo Dubrovkinji Pavli Džamanjić.« *Živa antika* 30 (1980): pp. 205-216.

be dangerous for the security of the city or embarrassing for Dubrovnik's relations with other powerful states. For Dubrovnik's prudent diplomacy this was the decisive issue, although even such embarrassment could be avoided through carefully planned protocol or an appropriate justification before a third party. When a state visit was accepted, the government would send its representatives to determine the distinguished visitor's exact itinerary and time of arrival. When such a visit was refused, the senators would make sure that they had an honorable excuse. Giving homage to an important guest was certainly an expression of respect for his dignity, but at the same time, it also demonstrated the identity of the city. For this reason, the protocol of such visits varied according to the guest's status. Every detail was carefully planned—who would greet him upon arrival and in what way, whether the guest would be met in the port or at sea. The more the guest was accommodated and the higher the rank of the magistrate whose duty it was to await him, the greater the honor.

Honorable guests could be accommodated in the Rector's Palace, the Archbishop's Palace, the monasteries, the duke Sandalj Hranić's Palace, or in the private homes of the nobility or citizens, depending on their own status, merit, and the decision of the Dubrovnik government. The same factors also determined what gifts they would receive.<sup>63</sup>

The government was very careful to utilize every opportunity to demonstrate its loyalty to the Hungarian Crown, which had enabled Dubrovnik to have sovereignty in the wake of its protection. The Hungarian kings were given all honors in Dubrovnik even in situations when Hungary was not triumphant. When the defeated King Sigismund returned from Nicopolis in 1396, the Dubrovnik nobility received him reverently, as a supreme ruler. The rector awaited him with the Senate at the port, carrying the keys of the city. Honored by this sign of loyalty, the king immediately returned the keys to the rector, a gesture that expressed his recognition of the special position of Dubrovnik among the cities of the Hungarian realm. Furthermore, he dubbed Rector Marinus de Resti a Knight of the Golden Spur and presented him with a gold chain, a pair of golden spurs, and a sword. By order of the king, this honor was to be passed on to every future rector of the Dubrovnik Republic. Sigismund spent Christmas that year in Dubrovnik, where he was honored

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<sup>63</sup> *Annales Ragusini Anonymi, item Nicolai de Ragnina*: pp. 28-29; *Liber statutorum civitatis Ragusii*: VIII, c. 70.

with the constant accompaniment of the highest nobles and was accommodated in the Rector's Palace. The king then returned to Hungary carrying gifts, including a piece of one of the most sought-after relics, the diaper of the baby Jesus.<sup>64</sup>

When rulers from Dubrovnik's hinterland visited the Republic, their treatment varied according to their power at that moment and their relations with the city-state. Special care was taken to avoid honoring these guests too much, so as not to offend the dignity of the Republic's own nobility. The chronicler Junius de Resti bluntly describes the result of these rituals in his comments about the Slavs from the interior "to whom outward appearances are important and to whom one has to show one's power in order to receive their respect."<sup>65</sup> The government also received visitors who were in danger and had come seeking protection. Regardless of their awkward position, these guests formally received all honors appropriate for their status. Within this protocol, the government always found a way to express either deference or arrogance, depending on the political moment. When honoring foreign dignitaries, the Dubrovnik nobles would sometimes distance themselves from their guests. Small details in the protocol played a great part in this because they indicated precisely the status of the visitor and the relation of the community towards him. Leaving out particular ceremonial honors was also significant, and such changes in protocol were calculated to have a particular effect. At the top of the hierarchy of honored guests stood those who enabled the Dubrovnik government to realize one of its main goals: the acquisition of new territories. One of the most festive receptions was prepared for the duke Sandalj Hranić in 1426 as a sign of thanks for the acquisition of the region of Konavle. Junius de Resti describes how the duke was received with respect, and how elegantly the noblemen of Dubrovnik behaved.<sup>66</sup> There is also a plentitude of data about this occasion in the minutes of the various councils. The ceremony had already begun out on the galley in which the nobles who had been chosen to accompany the duke awaited his arrival. Every detail was anticipated: the Senate instructed six noblemen to meet the duke with

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<sup>64</sup> *Reformationes*, vol. 30, ff. 46v, 93v-96, 136-140, 149v; *Annales Ragusini Anonymi, item Nicolai de Ragnina*: p. 241; Johann Christian Engel and Ivan Stojanović, *Povijest Dubrovačke Republike*. Dubrovnik: Knjižara J. Toškovića, 1922: pp. 86-87; P. Matković, »Prilozi k trgovačko-političkoj historiji«: p. 214; J. Tadić, *Promet putnika u starom Dubrovniku*: pp. 154-155.

<sup>65</sup> *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*: p. 170.

<sup>66</sup> *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*: p. 230.

a brigantine accompanied by a large number of boats full of the local people. They also advised them as to which topics were appropriate when talking to the duke on the way to the city. Sandalj was also given a rare honor: they offered to accommodate him in the “palace of the government,” even though he had his own, very luxurious palace in Dubrovnik. Before duke’s arrival, his apartments were supplied with the appropriate furniture, tableware and carefully chosen food supplies. For such a visit there was no spending limit: when it came to ceremonial occasions, the usually budget-conscious Ragusan authorities did not worry about costs. To insure splendid decorations in front of the house where the duke chose to stay and in front of the palace, they made an arch decorated with golden stars. The noblemen from the duke’s entourage, the rector, and chosen members of the Minor Council were required to have lunch and dinner with the duke, and if they failed to show, they were fined 25 perpers. In the procession for St. Blaise, Sandalj stood at the right hand of the rector and had the honor of choosing one nobleman out of a group of candidates to guard the relics on display. In addition, it was anticipated that Sandalj himself would be able to be chosen as one of the four guards of the relics, since he was an honorable member of Dubrovnik’s nobility. The ceremony of the procession reveals the tendency that the duke be given the highest honor, without the restraint that was noticeable in other cases. This was a well thought out diplomatic game which is apparent from the treatment of the duke’s entourage. They were carefully watched and were not allowed to enter the city in large numbers. Potential danger was never forgotten, so the guard was reinforced to such a degree that around five hundred armed soldiers from the Dubrovnik area were summoned in and around the city. The noblemen who commanded them were given powers equivalent to commanders in war (*capitanei guerre*). In addition, the citizens, as well as the nobility, were forbidden to address the duke with neither requests nor accusations or insults.<sup>67</sup>

The example of the relations between the Dubrovnik government and the Serbian despot Đurađ Branković eloquently shows how ritual could be used to express a change in relations according to the political situation. Branković

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<sup>67</sup> *Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*, III, ed. Tade Smičiklas, Zagreb: JAZU, 1905: pp. 404-405 and vol. VI, ed. Tade Smičiklas, Zagreb: JAZU, 1908: pp. 389-392, 542-543; *Reformationes*, vol. 32, f. 132; *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 3, ff. 101v, 125v; *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 3, ff. 276, 279v-281v, 284-285, 288 and vol. 5, f. 126v; J. Tadić, *Promet putnika u starom Dubrovniku*: pp. 42, 44-45, 114-117.

first visited Dubrovnik in 1426, when there was still hope that he could succeed in resisting the Turkish offensive. The rector and the nobility gave him a similar welcome as Sandalj Hranić received, with musicians, feasts, honors, and expensive gifts. Confidence in the despot's protection and respect for his dignity was expressed by high honors: the rector offered his own living quarters in the palace. Branković again visited the city in 1440, by which time his status had already begun to falter. This time the Rector's Palace was not offered to him. Instead, he could choose between the Archbishop's Palace and two houses belonging to aristocrats. His entourage was supplied with food and wine, but the great feast that had been planned for the despot and distinguished Dubrovnik noblemen was cancelled. By canceling ceremonies where he was to receive honors, the nobility clearly indicated that there had been a change in political attitude and formally let the despot know how far he would be able to depend upon them. Before the Turks, they depicted that visit to be even more modest than it actually was. The third visit of the despot was in 1441. This time there was no official welcome in the port, and the lodgings offered him were in a commoner's house. He was granted a longer stay in the city, but with certain limitations and without honors. In the name of the old alliance, the government enabled him to escape at his own expense. When the Turks complained about this, they proudly replied that anyone is welcome in a free country. "And many times did it happen that the city harbored lords, dignitaries, and nobles who never thought it possible that they would find themselves in such a need, for God governs the people and realms however he pleases."<sup>68</sup> Chroniclers even wrote that the Sultan himself was surprised by the behavior of the people of Dubrovnik, though it was not in fact so surprising, because they acted similarly on several other occasions, as well. In a similar way, but in less danger, the senators answered the Bosnian king, saying that he didn't have the right to say who they could receive in their own free city, and how. The government was always very cautious in its international relations, especially when the Turks were concerned, but primarily because they wanted to preserve Dubrovnik as a free city, as well as the power of the city's nobility. In spite of the government's diplomatic retreat due to

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<sup>68</sup> *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*: p. 253; G.P. Luccari, *Copioso ristretto degli annali di Rausa*: p. 93; *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 3, ff. 123v, 125v; *Acta Consilii Minoris*, vol. 4, ff. 29v, 31v-32, 34-36 and vol. 8, f. 184v; *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 7, ff. 170v-172, 178v-180v; *Lettere di Levante*, vol. 12, f. 192rv and vol. 13, f. 39rv; J. Tadić, *Promet putnika u starom Dubrovniku*: pp. 72, 75-85.

pressure from the Turks, the Dubrovnik's welcome of despot Đurađ became a metaphor for the preservation of faith, goodness, and sensible decision-making. This event fit into the image of Dubrovnik as a haven for those in exile, and it stressed the virtues of noblemen who keep their word and uphold the city's honor.<sup>69</sup>

The right to give asylum also meant the preservation and confirmation of sovereignty, and therefore the government defended it even when the presence of certain individuals was embarrassing to the Republic.<sup>70</sup> In the 1460s, when it had become clear that the changes that had occurred in the Balkans were not temporary, exiled dignitaries were either received with great caution and secrecy, or they were turned away in order to avoid bringing danger upon the city and its people. Only Gjergj Castriota Skenderbeg, famous Albanian duke, could hope for an official reception, because the pope considered him to be one of the most important fighters against the infidels.<sup>71</sup>

As relations with the Turks necessarily became closer, Turkish diplomats and dignitaries began to receive official welcomes. Important Turks would stay in the city as guests of the rector, and the Minor Council would take care of all the arrangements for their visits. For these guests the government decorated special houses which were both an honor for them and means of surveillance over them. Turkish emins would live in the city for long periods of time collecting information, and therefore, they were carefully watched. In addition, special measures were necessary due to the undesirable reactions

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<sup>69</sup> S. Razzi, *La storia di Raugia*: p. 56; D. Nevenić-Grabovac, »Ilija Lamprice Crijević«: p. 250; *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 6, ff. 50, 51rv; *Acta Consilii Minoris*, vol. 8, f. 192v; *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 7, ff. 193, 208v-209, 211; *Lettere di Levante*, vol. 12, ff. 201, 213-218 and vol. 13, f. 39rv.

<sup>70</sup> Although they feared the pope's reaction, in 1512 the senators welcomed Pietro Soderini, exiled Florentine chancellor, with all honors. The reason for this was his strong support for the republic, and his opposition to a tyrannic government run by one family. And therefore the political refugee Lorenzino de Medici was coldly denied asylum in the Republic of Dubrovnik. See Giuseppe Gelcich, *Piero Soderini profugo a Ragusa: Memorie e documenti*. Ragusa, 1894: pp. 27-28; see also J. Tadić, *Promet putnika u starom Dubrovniku*: pp. 108-109, 208-210, 212.

<sup>71</sup> *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 16, f. 99rv, 164, 173-174v, 195v, 199, 203v and vol. 17, ff. 5, 6v, 8v, 14, 28, 37, 47rv, 49rv.

<sup>72</sup> I. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska u XV veku*: p. 52; *Lettere di Levante*, vol. 10, ff. 191-193, 199v-200; *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 3, f. 262; vol. 6, f. 18; vol. 9, f. 223v; vol. 19, ff. 4rv, 5v, 6v-7; vol. 28, ff. 152v, 258, 283v; vol. 29, ff. 77, 90v, 162; Toma Popović, *Turska i Dubrovnik u XVI veku*. Beograd: Srpska književna zadruga, 1973: pp. 31-67.



of the citizens who expressed animosity towards Turks.<sup>72</sup>

The refinement of the Dubrovnik ceremonial was repeated in a new way during the preparations for the arrival of duke Stjepan Vukčić, ten years before he would wage war on Dubrovnik. The duke was not invited to live in the palace, but it was planned that he would be invited twice to dine with the nobility. This was meant to be both an honor and a lesson for the duke, as he was expected to be overwhelmed by the luxuriousness of the palace as well as the dignity of noblemen. For the same reasons it was also planned that he would be invited to a session of the Major Council. At that time there was already some suspicion of a possible conflict, and accordingly, extra guards were stationed in the city, and the duke's honorary escorts had to keep him and his men in view to protect the city from any possible disturbances. It seems that even the duke himself was aware of the double meaning of the invitations, for he neither came to the city, nor did he stay in Dračevica.<sup>73</sup> During the war with duke Stjepan Vukčić, his son and opponent, Vladislav, was received in Dubrovnik. The Senate gave instructions regarding his welcome, which was neither very official nor grand. Particular attention was paid to the military protection of the Ston area, through which Vladislav passed, as "it would not be good nor an honor to our nobility, if our country were not secured as well as possible in such a situation." The duke's people were not allowed to go to Ston, but had to stay on Pelješac. Fear of riots and theft was always present whenever there were many visitors from the hinterland on the territory of the Republic. Because the arrival of powerful foreigners accompanied by military personnel could be dangerous, the ceremonial often dictated more security measures than honors for these guests. The visitors themselves were aware of this, but they too were bound to the form of the ceremonial. The great pomp of an official welcome could be completely insincere, but its form still bore meaning.<sup>74</sup>

All of the above-mentioned official welcomes and honors, however, were nothing in comparison to one ceremony, which was very carefully planned, but was never realized. After the fall of Bosnia in 1463, the papacy and Christian rulers planned a liberation campaign, which was supposed to be directed

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<sup>73</sup> *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 7, ff. 150-152, 153-161 and vol. 13, f. 13v. J. Tadić, *Promet putnika u starom Dubrovniku*: pp. 119-132.

<sup>74</sup> *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 13, ff. 154v-155v, 179.

from Dubrovnik. The nobility spent that entire year in great fear, and this is evident if one reads between the lines in the minutes of the councils. The idea that their unprotected city was to become the central base for military operations against the Turks magnified their anxiety and feeling of insecurity after the deep-rooted changes that had occurred in their hinterland. In addition, there were rumors that the great Turkish army was approaching Dubrovnik. In spite of this, the council members planned a magnificent welcome ceremony for the spiritual leader of the operation, Pope Pius II, who wanted to meet with the main opponents of the Turks, the Albanian duke Skenderbeg and King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary. Due to the pope's sudden death in Ancona, however, what was to be Dubrovnik's grandest celebration of the fifteenth century never actually occurred. Had the pope's ships sailed across the Adriatic, all of the boats from the ports of Gruž, Rijeka, Vrbica, Lozica, Zaton, and the city itself would have set out to meet them all decorated with banners and olive branches and greet them with "shouts and other signs of celebration." At the island of Calamota the Holy Father would have been welcomed by the rector and the nobility in two decorated boats, as well as a "seafaring procession" in which the entire clergy of Dubrovnik was supposed to take part. Upon disembarking from his ship, the pope was to be taken through the town to his destination, the Monastery of the Minorites. Along the way the streets would have been completely clean and strewn with flowers, sage, and other fragrant herbs, while banners and luxurious textiles would have been hung from the buildings. The pope would not have walked; he was to be carried in a sedan chair by none other than the rector himself and the members of the Minor Council, while the senators would have carried a parasol made of golden brocade. They were to be followed by the clergy, singing hymns, and then a procession of citizens of the city. The Senate allotted 2,000 perpers to the rector and his councilors for the reception of the pope and his entourage. This was a great expense, but a profit was also expected, because they set prices for the transportation of rich crusaders. The directions of the Senate indicate just how prestigious it was to take part in this ceremony and how the members of the nobility fought over who would receive a higher function in the hierarchy of responsibilities. Commoners did not take part in the preparations, because this was an honor that the nobles kept for themselves. They utilized the occasion to promote themselves individually and as members of their class. Responsibilities were assigned according to the criteria of service, status, and age. In addition to the rector and the Minor Council, fifty-

three noblemen were directly assigned responsibilities for the preparations, while the remaining nobles participated through their regular posts or as on-lookers, if they were not so lucky. The curators of St. Mary were in charge of preparing the port. Two envoys were sent to Ancona to make arrangements, three were responsible for supplying the pope's apartments with the necessary furniture. The directors of the cloth-making trade were given the job of acquiring cloth from the best cloth-makers to cover the streets. District officials and military commanders were required to collect food and drink from the peasantry and send it to the city. Young nobles had unprestigious responsibilities. They had to search for boats and rowers throughout the Dubrovnik region and were to maintain a night watch during the pope's stay. The greatest competition, however, was for the ten places in the escort party of the pope and the doge, in addition to the rector and the Minor Council. Many distinguished members of the nobility were not chosen, but at least the Senate tried to insure that only one member represented each of the strongest noble houses. Politically important details were not forgotten in the excitement: the doge was not to be put up in the palace or in any of the palaces normally set aside for guests of state, but "two of the best houses" would be prepared for him. His position in the procession was directly behind the pope's sedan chair, which meant that he was also behind the rector, the Minor Council, and the senators carrying the pope's parasol. At a time when the Venetian *Stato da Mar* was established in Dalmatia, Dubrovnik's nobility planned to proudly tell the doge, through the language of ritual, that their city was free, and that they were its independent rulers. The experienced senators did not look over the possibility that some individuals among the nobility might be tempted to break up this united front of the nobility. For this reason they warned all the patricians that anyone who requests a title or anything else from the pope would receive a jail sentence and a large fine. Out of diplomatic caution, the Major Council passed a resolution that at its next session none of the members would be allowed to speak against the pope, his military plans, or the armies of the crusade. That whole year the general opinion of the council had been against any type of military action against the Turks, but this was not to be given away at the ceremonial session of the council, when the pope himself would be present. This great ceremony, of course, is recorded only in the decisions of the council, because Dubrovnik never did receive the pope, the cardinals, the doge, and other nobility, nor were the people of the Republic entertained by the arrival of the crusaders. Neverthe-

less, the written preparations for the ceremony are a manifesto of the Christian faith and the loyalty to the pope, but also of Dubrovnik's statehood and the social position of its nobility.<sup>75</sup>

During the fifteenth century in Dubrovnik occurred the final merge of the medieval mentality, completely saturated with religious feelings and the new atmosphere of patriotism and political purpose. This is why the traditional rituals and symbols of identity were so important for the new aristocratic ideology. Under the influence of a general affirmation of secular values, the development of political theory, but also because of particular political situation of the Republic of Dubrovnik, the government came to understand and consciously utilize ritual. Symbols and gestures of medieval rituals, ecclesiastic ceremonies, relics, and holy days, enriched with new elements, shaped the myth of the Republic. At this time in other places as well, rituals began to come out of the churches onto the urban public scene, legitimizing secular activities, institutions, and values.<sup>76</sup> The Dubrovnik government kept the cult of Saint Blaise and the cult of holy relics under the tightest control and made them the holy basis of the state. The nobility used the religious values of holy days and consciously supplemented them with a secular purpose. They realized that prestigious ceremonies were an exceptional instrument of power. For this reason they were reluctant to allow popular ceremonies to be held, because there was always a chance that they might bear unwanted messages.<sup>77</sup> The official ritual created a hierarchy of values for the nobles, citizens and inhabitants of Dubrovnik, which made it possible for people to express their feelings about their city's relations with the outside world. Thus developed the city's exceptional self-esteem with a built-in vision of a united commu-

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<sup>75</sup> *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 12, f. 169 and 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.

<sup>76</sup> E. Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*: pp. 6, 301; R. C. Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*: p. 281.

<sup>77</sup> *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 10, f. 233 and vol. 14, f. 115; Antun Cvitanić, »Lastovsko statutarno pravo.«, in: *Lastovski statut*. Split: Splitski književni krug, 1994: p. 150. Laws banning masked costumes and popular celebrations were passed in 1499, 1505, 1512, 1514, 1525, 1537, 1545, 1548, 1549, and 1550. See Miljenko Foretić, »Marin Držić i kazališni život renesansnog Dubrovnika.«, in: *Zbornik radova o Marinu Držiću*, ed. Jakša Ravlić, Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1969: pp. 233-234. Cf. C. Klapisich Zuber - P. Braunstein, »Florence et Venise«: p. 1114; R. C. Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*: p. 277; E. Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*: pp. 158-179.

nity. Just how strong these ideas were can be seen in the fact that certain individual rituals continued to be carried out, even when they no longer had any true content. For example, people in Dubrovnik would still sing lauds to the Hungarian king one hundred years after the Hungarian kingdom ceased to be an independent entity. Similarly, the procession of Saint Blaise upheld the symbolism of the Republic even when it no longer existed. And when the true political power of the nobility and their Republic disappeared, all that was left were forms, symbols, and customs. This tradition was built into the identities of later generations, supplying them with traces of lost meaning.

