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RAGUSAN MANUSCRIPT STUDIES IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY:
THE LETTERS OF IVAN MARIJA MATIJAŠEVIĆ (1714-1791)
AND MIHO RASTIĆ (1716-1768)

This essay discusses and publishes in their entirety several hitherto unknown letters exchanged between Ivan Marija Matijašević (1714-1791) and Miho Rastić (1716-1768), two enthusiastic admirers and tireless collectors of Ragusan literature. Since the letters almost exclusively concern Ragusan manuscripts, they serve here as the basis for a discussion of the state of Ragusan manuscript studies in the eighteenth century as well as of our current knowledge of the Ragusan manuscript tradition. The special interest of the letters is the fact that they are partly written in Croatian, which makes them stand out as extremely rare witnesses of local vernacular conversations focused on Ragusan manuscripts before the nineteenth century.

Keywords: Dubrovnik (Ragusa), manuscript studies, history of the Croatian language, letters, Ivan Marija Matijašević, Miho Rastić