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PETAR IVELJIĆ GRGURIĆ OHMUĆEVIĆ: A MAN WITH THREE SURNAMES AND THREE HOMELANDS

STJEPAN ČOSIĆ AND DANKO ZELIĆ

Abstract: The article thematises the life and career of Petar Iveljić Grgurić Ohmućević, Ragusan seaman and captain, born around 1552 in the townlet of Slano. By sailing the Mediterranean as shipowner and naval commander in the service of the Spanish Crown, Petar amassed considerable wealth, which encouraged him to uphold his status by joining the most prestigious European Orders of Christian knights. Considering himself a descendant of the pre-Ottoman elite of the Kingdom of Bosnia, he remained determined in his attempts to substantiate the noble status of the Ohmućević, which gave rise to animosity on the part of the Ragusan noble circles. Upon his departure from Dubrovnik in 1584, he was accused of various criminal offences, as well as unlawful claims to the noble title. He died in Lisbon in 1596, without setting foot in Dubrovnik ever again. In a lengthy address to the Senate written in 1585, he explicated his position, as well as the reasons underlying that conflict. Having realised that the Republic had renounced him, by the end of 1580s he became a subject of the Spanish Crown.

Keywords: Dubrovnik Republic, townlet of Slano, 16th century, maritime history, Mediterranean

Diverse and relatively copious literature covers the history of the Grgurić-Ohmućević lineage of Slano and its most distinguished member, Petar Iveljić Grgurić Ohmućević (Grgurići/Slano, c. 1552–Lisbon, 1596). Other than shipowner

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and skilled naval commander in the service of the Spanish Crown, owing to his genealogical and heraldic confabulations, historiography has mainly perceived Ohmućević as an impostor and falsifier,¹ and many details of his life as well as his business and maritime pursuits have thus remained unknown. This article will not address the already widely tackled relevant topics, such as the formative role that Petar's historiographic and genealogical fabrications—initially targeted at providing proof of the nobility of his own lineage, later expanded to a whole group of closely related lineages as descendants of the nobility of the Bosnian Kingdom and ultimately epitomised in his armorial—played in the emergence of the early modern ideology of Illyrism. The major motive for our research into Petar's biography lies in the documents from the Ohmućević family legacy in the Franciscan Library in Dubrovnik, preserved in two manuscript volumes composed thanks to the endeavours of Petar's descendants. They include collections of the copies of older documents, beginning with an extensive diplomatic and genealogical archival material written, prepared and to a large extent fabricated by Petar himself in the early 1580s.²

Our attention was essentially drawn by the authentic documents of which there is no mention in the historiographic works on the Ohmućević lineage. The oldest of these documents is Petar's letter to the Senate of the Dubrovnik Republic, sent in 1585 from Genoa, containing his statement, i.e., response to the criminal charges filed against him in Dubrovnik the previous year.³ Apart from forging records in official registers, Petar was also accused of many other misdeeds, first of all for the use of the Ohmućević surname, that is, public display of the noble descent of his lineage and the conduct unbefitting his social standing, in a word, various forms of contempt of the Republic's legal order. In addition to his response to the charges and the details on his previous conflicts with the complainant, nobleman Junije (Đonko) Matov Gradi (c. 1549–1594), and his adherents, in that long letter Petar elaborates the history of the Ohmućević and other lineages from

¹ The tracing of genealogies to the early medieval centuries or even earlier, to the antiquity, in search for legendary ancestors was one of the distinctive practices of the European early modern period. Prompted by Humanist literature and the revived interest in the antiquity, that phenomenon witnessed its zenith in the sixteenth century (Roberto Bizzocchi, *Genealogie incredibili. Scritti di storia nell'Europa moderna*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1995). In Croatian historiography and publicist writing such practice (as in the case of the counts of Krk, Ohmućević or Ivan Tomko Mrnavić) has never been thematised as a legitimate cultural pattern. Instead, it was uncritically recounted or stigmatised under a scrutinising eye of scholarly criticism.

² Archive of the Monastery of the Friars Minor, Dubrovnik (hereafter as: AMB), vol. 146, fol. 548 (see also: Mijo Brlek, *Rukopisi knjižnice Male braće u Dubrovniku*. Zagreb: JAZU, 1952: pp. 137–138).

³ AMB, vol. 548, f. 3r–36v.

Primorje, and by so doing reveals an array of already known but also unknown details concerning his own life and deeds, those of his father and brothers. Included in the same volume, under the title *La dichiarazione dell'Albero della famiglia Ohmuchievich*, is a copy of the letter that Petar addressed to the Dubrovnik Senate in 1586, also from Genoa, with a petition, as regards the mentioned criminal charges, that a witness be heard in Genoa, who would corroborate Petar's statement on noble descent, systematised subsequently in 38 articles and illustrated by the Ohmućević family chart.⁴ Enclosed with the letter was a drawing with description of eight coats of arms of the noble families from which Petar's direct ancestors descended three generations back. The following unknown document is a letter written in Spanish which Petar sent to the Senate from Cádiz in 1590 (*Copia de otra carta del General D. Pedro de Ivella Ohmuchievich escripta a los Sennores de Ragusa*). By then, he had already become a Spanish citizen, having realised that the accusations against him would not be withdrawn, and that the chances of returning to his homeland ever again were virtually none.⁵ Lastly, preserved in the second volume of the collection of copies is a document drafted in Naples in 1592 regarding the division of property between Petar and Ivan, the only brother who outlived the other four (*Copia del compromesso e sentenza arbitraria emanata in Napoli tra il quondam signor General Don Pietro d'Iveglia Ohmuchievich con sua fratelli !/ del 1592*).⁶

Grgurići—Iveljići—Ohmućevići in the light of sources and literature

Giuseppe Gelcich's study *I conti di Tuhelj* from 1889 is a meticulous and extensive, yet entirely uncritical description of the history of the Ohmućević lineage over a period of almost seven centuries.⁷ Doubtless, Gelcich must have

⁴ AMB, vol. 548, f. 42r–56v.

⁵ AMB, vol. 548, f. 38r–41r.

⁶ AMB, vol. 146, f. 71r–87v.

⁷ Giuseppe Gelcich, »I conti di Tuhelj. Contributo alla Storia della Marina Dalmata ne' suoi rapporti colla Spagna.« *Ottavo programma dell' I. R. Scuola nautica di Ragusa per l'anno scolastico 1888–89*. (1889): pp. 1–175. See, for example, p. 18, note 23. The conflict that obscured the relationship between the Ohmućević and the Ragusan nobility Gelcich most likely ignored on account of the republican sentiment of their descendants, Bizzaro–Ohmućević and the Pugliesi, who belonged to the Dubrovnik elite of the time. The dispute between Ohmućević and nobleman Gradi, based on Petar's manuscript, has until now been mentioned only in the following article: Josip Sopta, »Franjevci u Slanom i kapetan Petar Ohmućević.« *Zbornik Dubrovačkog primorja i otoka* 9 (2006): pp. 74–89.

had the volumes from the Franciscan Library in his hands, yet in his work, clearly with an aim to avoid controversy, he omitted the data concerning the conflict between Petar Ohmućević and nobleman Đonko Gradi and his adherents. In a study from 1933, Aleksandar Solovjev provided arguments for a connection between Petar Ohmućević and the kinship-based political concept of the Illyrian heraldry, that is, with the Korjenić-Neorić Armorial dating from 1595.⁸ The role of the Ohmućević in the Spanish service, within the context of Croatian maritime history, was in the focus of Vinko Foretić, while the genealogies and biographies of the Ohmućević and other lineages of Slano were investigated by Antun Golušić.⁹ Data on the kinship circle, political ideology and heraldic symbolism promoted by the Ohmućević have, more recently, been revised, corrected and contextualised by Stjepan Čosić.¹⁰

Aside from family tradition and Dubrovnik archival sources, the bulk of data on the Ohmućević in the literature to date has been drawn from two books published in 1663. The first book is an extensive volume of miscellaneous texts entitled *Le Glorie Cadute dell'Antichissima ed Augustissima Famiglia Comnena etc.* (hereafter cited as: *Le Glorie*),¹¹ while the second contains the genealogical

⁸ Aleksandar Solovjev, »Postanak ilirske heraldike i porodica Ohmućević.« *Glasnik Skopskog učenog društva* 12 (1933): pp. 79–124. In his study Solovjev presupposed the existence of a heraldic protograph in the form of an alleged Ohmućević armorial, leading him to an erroneous conclusion that the Korjenić-Neorić Armorial was its copy, which became entrenched in later literature.

⁹ Vinko Foretić, »Udio naših ljudi u stranim mornaricama i općim pomorskim zbivanjima kroz stoljeća.« *Pomorski zbornik* 1 (1962): pp. 296–301; Antun Golušić, *Rodovi Slanskog primorja*. Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti JAZU u Dubrovniku, 1991.

¹⁰ Stjepan Čosić, *Ideologija rodoslovlja. Korjenić-Neorićev grbovnik iz 1595*. Zagreb – Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, Nacionalna i sveučilišna knjižnica, Zagreb, 2015.

¹¹ The full title reads as follows: *Le Glorie cadute Dell' Antichissima, ed Augustissima Famiglia Comnena, De Maestosi Allori dell'Imperial Grandezza, ne' Tragici Cipressi della priuata Conditione. Nelle quali si scuoprono le Preminenze d'alcuni Prencipi Sourani, e di molte nobilissime Famiglie da quella originate nell' Europa; Con varie, curiose, et erudite altre Compositioni. Cauate dal buio dell'obliuione alla luce del Mondo, dall' Abbate Don Lorenzo Miniati (...)*. In Venetia: Per Francesco Valuasense, MDCLXIII. One part of miscellany is dedicated to Petar's nephew, Dominican Vicko Komnen (1590–1667), son of his sister Jela, who, allegedly, by his paternal line descended from the House of Komnenos, a Byzantine Trebizond imperial dynasty. With the genealogical and biographical content Komnen wished to legitimise his noble origin by his father's and mother's side. This massive compilation of over 900 pages was printed in Venice, and some of its parts had already been published in Naples by 1645. The multi-author volume includes texts in Komnen's honour, which vary in terms of genre and content; it consists of nine separately paginated parts, from illustrated genealogies of the Komnen and Ohmućević, unverifiable biographies, poetry and prose composed to mark specific occasions, philosophical and theological treatises, panegyrics, epigrams, rebuses and anagrams to

history of the Ohmućević under the title *Origine della Famiglia Ivegla Ohmuchievich Con Privilegii de diversi Imperadori, e Rè conceduti à detta Famiglia etc.*, in which the author, Giovanni Battista de Rosatis, presents authentic as well as fabricated parts of the genealogical narrative identical to that in *Le Glorie*.¹² The same year of publication points to a coordinated activity of Ohmućević's descendants. Namely, they used a voluminous and largely invented genealogical, heraldic and historical material which, in the early 1580s—with an intent to join the prestigious Order of the Knights of St. Stephen Pope and Martyr in Pisa—was compiled and prepared by Petar Iveljić, apparently, the first member of his lineage who to his own name, besides the patronymic and the name of the Grgurić lineage, also added the lineage “surname” Ohmućević.

Petar's genealogy of the Ohmućević and the rise of the Grgurić lineage in the sixteenth century

Restoration of the old noble title was one of the major goals in Petar's life. The first step towards the achievement of this objective was the creation of a continuous genealogical narrative and the family tree chart containing data on the names, years of birth and death, titles and estates of his own ancestors. The oldest part of Petar's narrative on the origin of his lineage takes place between the end of the twelfth and mid-fourteenth century, includes legendary figures from popular tradition, and without any doubt is fabricated, while the genealogical data on the generations of Petar's less distant ancestors, from the fifteenth century onwards, have proof in the reliable historical sources.

The central place in the constructed part of the genealogy Petar dedicated to the eponym of the lineage, Grgur Ohmutina and his son Hrelja known as Krilatica, whose legendary heroic deeds have found their way into ancient folk songs,

friar Vicko's notations of madrigals. As a compiler of that Baroque *zibaldone*, the title page features Vicko's fellow brother, Lorenzo Miniati from Verona, while the whole volume is dedicated to King Philip IV. On the complex content of *Le Glorie* see: V. Foretić, »Udio naših ljudi u stranim mornaricama i općim pomorskim zbivanjima kroz stoljeća.«: pp. 296–297 (note 43); Zlata Bojović, »Lorenzo Minijati i dubrovački pesnici.« in: *Perivoj od slave. Zbornik Dunje Fališevac*, eds. Tomislav Bogdan, Ivana Brković, Davor Dukić, Lahorka Plejić Poje. Zagreb: FF-press, 2012: pp. 27–41.

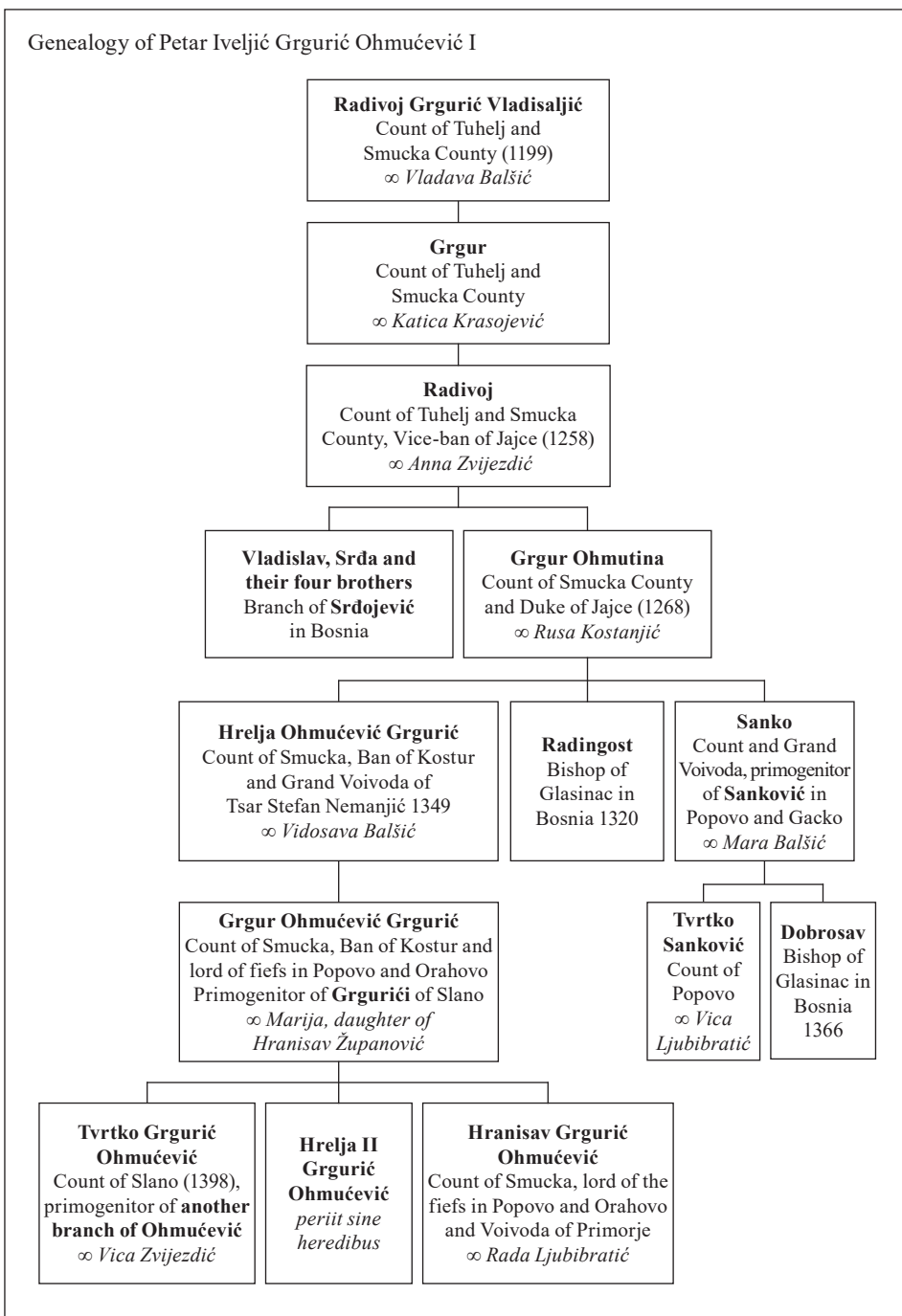
¹² De Rosatis's book was published in Naples (Roncaglio per Cataldo, 1663) by commission of Petar's grandsons, Karlo and Petar Junior, sons of Petar's son-in-law and a distant relative Andrija Nikolin Ohmućević, to whom the volume was dedicated. As captains and shipowners in Naples, Karlo and Petar Junior continued the family tradition of serving the Spanish Crown.

popievkinje.¹³ The Ohmućević, according to Petar, were ancient Bosnian nobility whose most distant ancestor, Radivoj Vladislavić, lived in the late twelfth century. Radivoj's son Grgur and grandson Radivoj were the lords of the city of Tuhelj and County of Smucka (*Smucka župa*, in today's central Bosnia) during the reign of Ban Stjepan Kotromanić. Being an excellent jumper, Grgur (II) was nicknamed *Ohmutina* (horse cub), and it was after him that the whole lineage was surnamed Ohmućević. His son Hrelja (known as *Relja Krilatica* in popular epic) became a general in the army of Tsar Dušan, who granted him huge estates in Macedonia near the cities of Kostur and Prilep. Hrelja's alleged son, Grgur III (born around 1320), was to become an eponym of the Grgurići of Slano. Because of the conflict with the "tyrannical" Mrnjavčevići, after father's death he returned to Bosnia, but having killed a rival in duel, he had to flee from Bosnia as well. Under the protection of the Sanković relatives, he found shelter on Dubrovnik territory, in Dubrave near Ston. He married Marija, only daughter of Hranisav Županović, duke of Slano, and as dowry he received an estate in the Hum County of Primorje, on the northern side of the Slano Bay, later known as Grgurići after his children.¹⁴

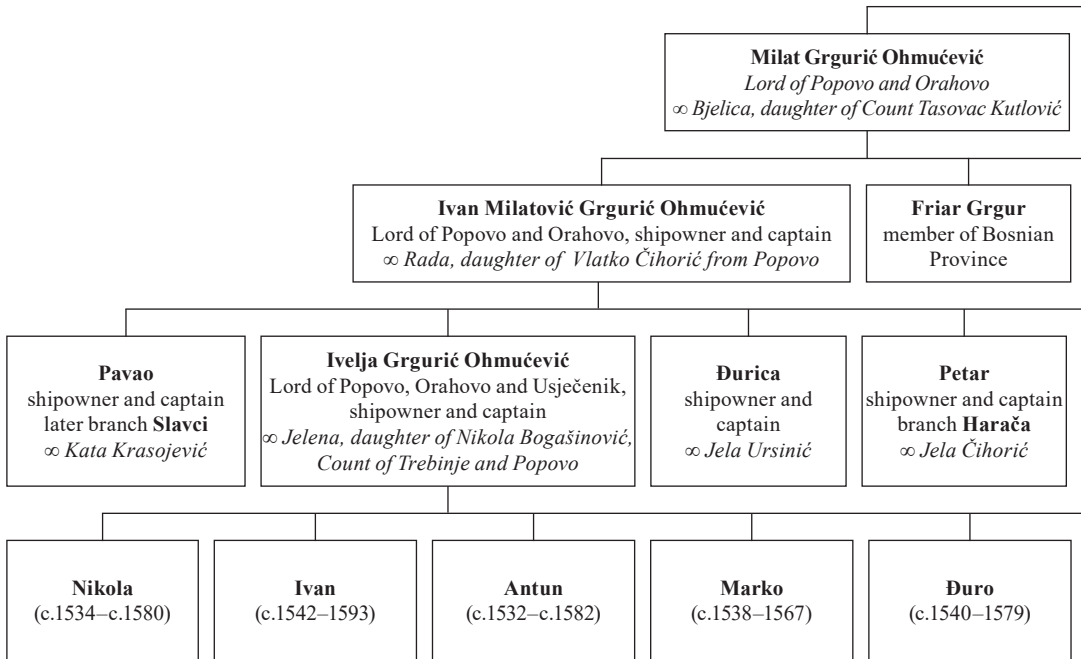
¹³ Petar charted the genealogy in the early 1580s, and described it in several of his writings, which will be dealt with later. According to these data, his son-in-law, Andrija Nikolin Ohmućević, in 1638 published a representative graphic leaf that was added to *Le Glorie* in 1663. At the margin: *Petrus de Avitabili, Artium Magister, fecit, die VI. Junii MDCXXXVIII. Neapolis. Present. Per Capit. Andream de Nic. Ohmuchievich*. For the historical account of the Ohmućević, four parts of *Le Glorie* are particularly important. Genealogical elaboration of the Komnen and Ohmućević on more than two hundred pages had already been written by 1636 by the Slano Franciscan and bishop of Lissos Benedikt Orsini/Medvedjedić (*La verità esaminata intorno al ramo piu principale dell' Imperial albero Comneno, historico e genealogico*), while the Naples nobleman and erudite, Francesco de Petris, is the author of a special treatise on the Ohmućević (*Breve discorso genealogico della antichissima e nobilissima famiglia Ohmuchievich Gargurich*), written, judging by the date of dedication, in 1645. Additional details on the Ohmućević in *Le Glorie*, with biographies of certain family individuals were provided by the Dominican Deziderije Nenchi/Nenković (*Della famiglia Ohmuchievich Gargurich, la dichiarazione piu chiara e piu distinta di questo albero genealogico*), whereas Petar and his nephews Dolisti Tasovčić in the Spanish service were thematised by Vicko Komnen himself (*Compendiosa y verdadera relacion de los servicios hechos, assi en la armada real del mar Oceano, como en las passadas reboluciones de la ciudad de Napoles, a la real corona (...) del rey (...) D. Felipe Quarto, el catolico (...) por el padre fray Vincente Comneno, (...) y de sus praeclaros antecessores*). A detailed genealogy, from which the data in *Le Glorie* have been drawn, was compiled by Petar himself, which he sent to the Senate in his second letter of 1586.

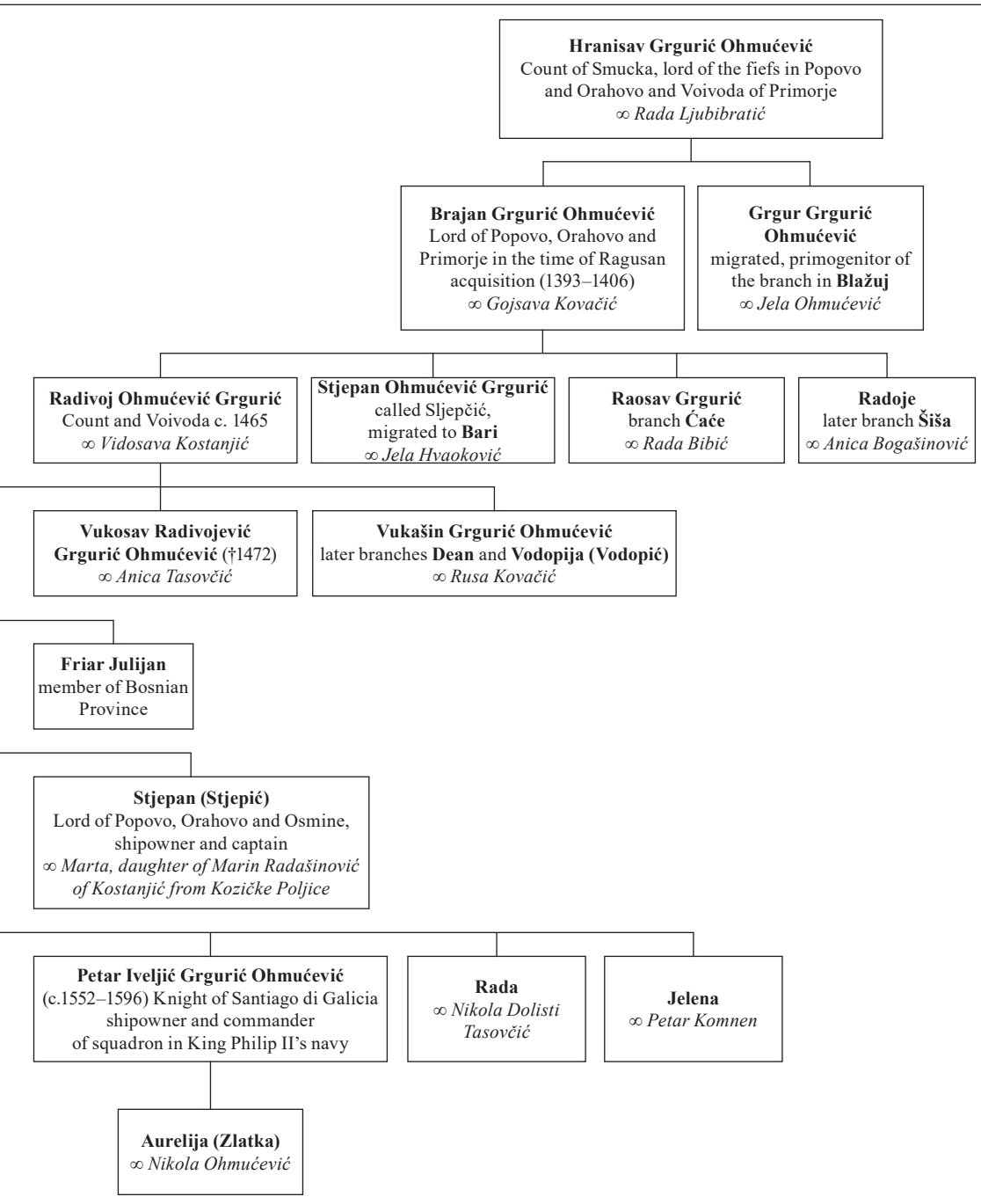
¹⁴ According to Petar's genealogy, interpreted in *Le Glorie* by Deziderije Nenchi, Grgur died in Dubrave near Ston and was buried in the churchyard of St. Vitus (*Della famiglia Ohmuchievich Gargurich, la dichiarazione piu chiara e piu distinta di questo albero genealogico*: p. 20). The toponym of Dubrave in the Ston surroundings has not survived to the present, but most likely it concerns the Hodilje area where the church of St. Vitus (Sveti Vid) is located, around which, despite deconstructions, the remains of medieval graves are still visible. According to the genealogy, Grgur's sons, Hranisav (born around 1345) and Tvrtko (born around 1350), were the founders of two Grgurić lines in the Slano Bay.

Genealogy of Petar Iveljić Grgurić Ohmućević I



Genealogy of Petar Iveljić Grgurić Ohmućević II





Upon Županović's death, Grgur also inherited his estates in Primorje. However, when in 1399 the Ragusans came in possession of Primorje, the lands of the local Hum nobility, including Grgur's heirs, the new government distributed among themselves. The estates in the Slano Bay that belonged to Grgur's grandson, Brajan Hranisavov (born around 1370), were in most part allotted to the members of the Gradi noble family.¹⁵

Despite dispossession, the Grgurić decided to remain on Dubrovnik's territory as its subjects. Data from Petar's elaborate family tree and the Ohmućević genealogy regarding the aforementioned Brajan Hranisavov, his son Radivoj (born around 1402), grandson Milat (born around 1440) and their descendants correspond to the official Ragusan censuses of the household heads in the area of Slano. Judging by personal names and patronymics, these censuses, conducted between the end of the fifteenth and end of the sixteenth century, also make record of Petar's ancestors and countless kin. The hamlets of Grgurići, Osmine and Banja were then inhabited by the members of the Grgurići branches known under patronymics Radivojević, Radosaljić, Stjepanović, Milatović, Vukašinić, Vukosalić and others, and one may rightly conclude that the members of the Grgurić clan constituted the majority of the population of the Slano Bay at the time.¹⁶ The fact that they submitted to the Republic and its lordship greatly determined their fate, because they did not lose their cross-border estates in the nearby Orahov Do and Popovo. Apparently, thanks to the revenues from these estates in the Ottoman realm they were able to join Ragusan maritime conjuncture in the early sixteenth century. Petar's branch certainly owed its rise to the business, kinship and marital ties with a circle of wealthy Vlach and Herzegovinian petty nobility: Čihorići, Dolisti Tasovčići, Bogašinić, Kostanjići, Krasojevići, Medvjedovići/Orsini, Korjenić-Neorići/Jerinići and others, with whom the Grgurić shared the uncertainty of life on both sides of the border.¹⁷

¹⁵ On land partition in *Slansko primorje*, see: Ana Kaznačić-Hrdalo, »Dioba i ubikacija dijelova Slanskog primorja u doba pripojenja Dubrovniku g. 1399.« *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti JAZU u Dubrovniku* 17 (1979): pp. 17–47, with cited older literature.

¹⁶ See: Ilija Sindik, *Dubrovnik i okolina* [Srpski etnografski zbornik, knj. 38; Naselja i poreklo stanovništva, knjiga 23]. Beograd: Srpska kraljevska akademija, 1926: pp. 135–137; For numerous patronymic branches of the Grgurić, see also: A. Golušić, *Rodovi Slanskog primorja*: pp. 50–58.

¹⁷ That is why the insignia of the broader circle of Slano, Primorje and Hum lineages found their way to the corpus of Illyric heraldry conceived in the Korjenić-Neorić Armorial, which in 1595, under the influence of the kinship-political concepts of Petar Ohmućević, was created for the Korjenić-Neorić/Jerinić.

The gradual rise of the Grgurić lineage coincided with the increasing development of Ragusan maritime commerce during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In the genealogy Petar records his grandfather, Ivan Milatov Grgurić (born around 1470) as a feudal lord in Popovo and Orahovo (*Dominus Feudorum in Popovo et Orahovo*), but also as captain and shipowner (*Praefectus et Dominus Navium*), while his close relatives in the same generation, the Vukašinović and the Vukosalić, were also captains. The final establishment of Petar's branch of the Grgurić lineage owes much to the maritime commercial success of his father Ivelja, son of Ivan (c. 1500–1557), who in Petar's genealogy of the Ohmućević is also mentioned as a naval commander and shipowner, along with the captains Pavao and Đurica, two of the four of his uncles, as well as other kin.

Frequent piracy in the Mediterranean in the middle of the sixteenth century gave way to growing concern over food shortage in Dubrovnik. On the Republic's behalf, with the purpose of maintaining regular supplies Ivelja carried grain from Apulia and the Levant by several ships and built a small shipyard in Slano. In the increasingly uncertain circumstances grain supply represented a priority, because of which the Senate wished to renew the privileges granted by the Spanish rulers and their viceroys in the Kingdom of Naples, and by so doing also managed to obtain an exclusive privilege for the export of grain from the Ottoman Empire. Ventures on behalf of the state in the Levantine ports were a lucrative source of income to Ragusan captains and shipowners.¹⁸

Around 1530 Ivelja Grgurić married Jelena (Jeljena) from the wealthy lineage of the Bogašinović/Dobrašinović nobility of Hum, whose dowry included several estates in the hinterland, on the other side of the Ragusan-Ottoman border. Thanks to the revenue from ship chartering, by government permission, Ivelja bought a house with estate in Slano in 1555 from a Ragusan citizen, Nikša Nikolin Kastrati.¹⁹ It was then that he and his brother Stijepić divided the property, and Ivelja left Grgurići to settle on his new hearth.²⁰ The estate was located in the Slano area known as Usječnik, in the vicinity of count's residence and the Franciscan monastery, and which as such found its way into the "title" attributed to the Ohmućević in Petar's genealogy: Ivelja (like his predecessors) is recorded as feudal lord of the lands in Popovo and Orahovo, but also of the estate *Usiecienich* in Slano. On that location his sons were to build a new, majestic house with all

¹⁸ Jorjo Tadić, *Španija i Dubrovnik u XVI. v.* Beograd: Srpska kraljevska akademija, 1932: pp. 86, 87.

¹⁹ *Venditiones Cancellariae*, series 31, vol. 69, f. 238v, State Archives in Dubrovnik.

²⁰ On property division between brothers, see: A. Golušić, *Rodovi Slanskog primorja*: p. 53, note 226.

the stately features. Without doubt, for Ivelja and his descendants the purchase of this property was also a symbolic confirmation of the acquisition of free status. However, on the territory of Primorje, distributed among Ragusan nobility in 1399, feudal legal framework was at work and the mentioned property transaction was a specific legal precedent.²¹ Namely, many Primorje lineages who originated from the hinterland and their branches—such as the Sagrojević, Skočibuha, Krivososović, Radulović, Martolović and others—whose members from the end of the fifteenth century became increasingly engaged in maritime trade, settled in the City, on the Elaphite islands or the territories of Astarea, where such restrictions regarding property acquisition did not exist. By deciding to remain in Slano, the Grgurić opted for a different path. According to Petar, as early as the fifteenth and first half of the sixteenth century his ancestors succeeded in achieving a *modus vivendi* with their direct feudal lords in Slano—the Gradi nobility. Only a year after the purchase of Usječnik, during the loading of grain in Volos, Ivelja was accused of alleged complicity to murder of a Janissary, upon which he was imprisoned. The Republic intervened in the matter to set him free,²² but Ivelja died in the Constantinople jail in early 1557, and his son Nikola took up the reins of the family business. Other members of the Iveljić lineage also acquired their first maritime and trade experiences in the ventures organised by the Dubrovnik Republic. According to Ragusan archival data on ship insurance, from the early sixties to the early eighties the Iveljić owned four vessels (*San Antonio, Santa Cristina, San Spirito e Nostra Signora de Loreto, Santa Maria della Grazia e San Giovanni Battista*), while the brothers Ivan, Nikola, Đuro and Petar are recurrently recorded as ship commanders. Together with other captains of Slano they sailed to Naples, Messina, Palermo, Ancona, Venice, Levantine ports and Alexandria, and registered in 1564 is also the navigation of Nikola Iveljić to Antwerp.²³ The circumstances in the Mediterranean and good relations between the Republic and King Charles V opened new business perspectives for

²¹ On the circumstances surrounding that precedent we may merely speculate. As one of the shipowners in state service, Ivelja at that point enjoyed the Republic's trust, and he bought an estate from Kastrati, a Ragusan citizen, who could prove the chain of title.

²² *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, series 3, vol. 53, f. 278v–279r, State Archives in Dubrovnik.

²³ Josip Luetić, »Slanjani i Primorci – svjetski moreplovci i pomorski trgovci u međunarodnom brodarstvu Dubrovačke Republike 1563–1807.« *Naše More* 3–4 (1985): pp. 143–147. The same period witnessed also the rise of Nikola Ivanov Dolisti Tasovčić, son-in-law of the Iveljić brothers, along with other captains from the Slano coastal region, members of Božina, Letijela, Vodopija, Mrnara and other families, some of whom joined Spanish service together with Petar Ohmućević.

Ivelja's sons. From as early as the 1530s, throughout the Mediterranean Ragusan merchant fleet started transporting Spanish troops and war provision. The ships under the flag of St. Blaise were engaged mainly for logistic purposes, but they were armed and were known to come into conflict with enemy. Apart from trading in Iberian ports and the ports of the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily under Spanish rule, numerous subjects of the Dubrovnik Republic also participated in the Spanish offensive expeditions on the coast of North Africa (Tunisia, 1535; Algeria, 1541; Djerba, 1560), and were active during the War of the Holy League 1571–1573. Despite considerable loss of men and vessels in the North African campaigns and the fact that some Ragusan ships were actually forced to take part in these operations, war conjuncture increased Ragusan interest for sailing in the service of the Spanish Crown.²⁴

Among Ragusan shipowners and captains who during the sea campaigns of the mid-sixteenth century acquired experience in Spanish service by sailing the Mediterranean and the Atlantic—to Flanders and England, and some of them as far afield as Indies—were also Ivelja's sons and nephews. In the latter half of the sixteenth century, the six members of the Iveljić family sailed in the service of Catholic kings. The sources mention brothers Antun (b. around 1532), Nikola (b. around 1534), Marko (b. around 1538), Đuro (b. around 1540), Ivan (b. around 1542) and Petar (b. around 1552). Only the two youngest reached mature age. Following a successful maritime career, Marko, having been conferred a noble title, died in Spain in 1567. While transporting Spanish troops, Đuro was killed in 1579 in a shipwreck of the galleon *Santo Spirito* off Portofino on Ligurian coast. Sailing along the same route, Antun was killed shortly afterwards in a clash with Algerian corsairs near Corsica, while Nikola lost his life somewhat earlier in a clash with Ottoman pirates off Crete. Of them all, Ivan was most attached to Slano, yet he died in Palermo in 1593, so that none

²⁴ With the purpose of strengthening the fleet against the raids of Ottoman corsairs, Charles V had already developed a system of contract service (*asiento*), mainly with entrepreneurs and captains of Naples and Genoa, based on which we may assume that Ragusan mariners were engaged in the same manner. Numerous Spanish contractors played an important role in the Battle of Lepanto in 1571. See: Maria Sirago, »Dalla galera al vascello. L'apporto economico di genovesi, ragusei, fiamminghi, napoletani nella costituzione della flotta napoletana tra Cinquecento e Seicento.« in: *Rapporti diplomatici e scambi commerciali nel Mediterraneo moderno*, ed. Maria Mafrici. Salerno: Università degli studi di Salerno – Rubbettino, 2004: pp. 465–469.

of the brothers are buried in the family grave they built in the Franciscan Church of St. Jerome.²⁵

The Iveljić also had two sisters. The younger, Jela (born around 1544), married a mysterious newcomer, Peter Komnenos, allegedly a descendant of the dynasty of the rulers of Byzantine Trebizond Empire who, after a clash with the Ottomans in 1569, on a heavily damaged ship landed in Slano with his father Alexius. Jela's son is the earlier mentioned Dominican Vicko (Vincenzo) Komnen, credited with the publishing of *Le Glorie*. Older sister, Rada (born around 1530), married Captain Nikola Dolisti Tasovčić. The Dolisti Tasovčić lineage owned estates and houses at Banja on the southern side of the Slano Bay, and also claimed to have descended from the nobility of Hum and had their own coat of arms. Rada's two sons, Stjepan (c. 1555–1599) and Đuro (c. 1560–1629) Dolisti Tasovčić, joined their uncles in the Spanish navy.²⁶

Petar Iveljić Ohmućević in the service of the Spanish king

The joining of Ragusans into the service of the Spanish court developed mainly via Naples, considering that from 1503 the Kingdom of Naples with Sicily was under Spanish rule. The Apennine part of the huge composite monarchy represented the key economic and maritime stronghold of the Spanish Habsburgs in their

²⁵ G. B. de Rosatis, *Origine della Famiglia Ivegla Ohmuchievich*: 82–84. Đuro drafted his last will in Bonifacio, in southern Corsica, and had it registered in Genoa in 1579, and Ivan in Palermo in 1592. Besides Petar, the documents do not record that the other brothers used the surname Ohmućević, but only the patronymic addition Ivelja. Đuro's will was executed in 1582, and given that he was not married, the bulk of his property was to be distributed between his brothers Ivan, Antun and Petar. Ivan left much of his property to his wife Marija and daughters Jela and Nika (of whom there is no data in the genealogy). *Testamenta Notariae*, series 10.1, vol. 46, f. 16r–17v; vol. 49, f. 134r–137v, State Archives in Dubrovnik. On the circumstances and the location of the shipwreck of Đuro's ship *Santo Spirito*, as well as on the undersea archaeological excavations regarding this topic, see: <https://en.antikytherawatches.com/iveglia-la-storia>.

²⁶ Stjepan and Đuro's brother was a Franciscan Nikola Dolisti Tasovčić. On Dolisti brothers in the Spanish service, see: F. de Petris, *Breve discorso genealogico della antichissima e nobilissima famiglia Ohmuchievich Gargurich*: pp. 21–22; G. Gelcich, *I conti di Tuhelj*: pp. 87–92; A. Golušić, *Rodovi Slanskog primorja*: pp. 82–83; Cesáreo Fernández Duro, *El Gran Duque De Osuña y su Marina*. Madrid: Renacimiento, 2006: pp. 266, 267. On Đuro's actions, notably in: Jovan N. Tomić, *Građa za istoriju pokreta na Balkanu protiv Turaka krajem XVI i početkom XVII veka* [Zbornik za istoriju, jezik i književnost srpskog naroda, knjiga VI]. Beograd: Srpska kraljevska akademija, 1933: pp. 353–357, 393–400, 405–410, 428–429, 435–445, 451–462, 538–540.

expansion in the Mediterranean.²⁷ In the fifteenth century Naples was already the seat of the Ragusan consulate, while in the sixteenth it became the centre of an established and sizeable community of Ragusan seafarers and entrepreneurs who traded throughout the Mediterranean. Thanks to the trade privileges granted by kings Charles V and Philip II, Apulia and Sicily had become the major sources of grain for the Dubrovnik Republic. In the second half of the sixteenth century Naples was often frequented by the Iveljić, who also owned a house there. During the early 1580s, in Naples Petar was also engaged in various dealings for the Republic, and that was the residence of his sister Jela, wife of Peter Komnenus.²⁸

The organisation of Ragusan fleet in the Spanish navy before the 1580s is fairly obscure, but we may assume that at that time, as well as later, Ragusan captains, such as the famous Miho Pracat, Vice Bune, Iveljić brothers and others, made individual contracts for their business ventures in which their ships were sailing in different Spanish squadrons. Besides the Mediterranean, they also served as escort to Spanish trade convoys on the voyage from the Indies, thus acquiring practical navigation skill across the Atlantic. In fact, many Ragusan shipowners saw a good business opportunity in the tensions simmering between England and Spain from the beginning of the century, which finally burst into a series of wars that started in 1587. According to a list made by Deziderije Nenchi, between 1584 and 1654 in the service of kings Philip II, III, and IV there were no less than 178 Ragusan ships. This list makes record of the Iveljić–Ohmućević of Slano as captains of five ships of considerable tonnage, while the Dolisti Tasovčić brothers commanded as many as nine galleons of a somewhat lesser tonnage.²⁹

²⁷ Aurelio Musi, »El Reino de Nápoles y el sistema imperial español.« in: *Felipe II (1527–1598): Europa y la monarquía católica. Actas del Congreso Internacional Felipe II (1598–1998), Europa dividida, la monarquía católica de Felipe II (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 20–23 abril 1998)*, ed. José Martínez Millán, vol. I, t. 2. Madrid: Parteluz, 1998: pp. 555–565.

²⁸ G. B. de Rosatis, *Origine della Famiglia Ivegla Ohmuchievich*: p. 14. On trade privileges granted to the Ragusans by the Angevins, Aragons and Habsburgs as the rulers of Naples, see: Đuro Körbler, »Dubrovačka republika i zapadne evropske države. Veze Dubrovnika s Napuljem, Sicilijom, Francuskom i Španjolskom.« *Rad JAZU* 214 (1917): pp. 165–252. For a brief account on the relations between the Republic of Dubrovnik and the Kingdom of Naples in the sixteenth century, see: Ilija Mitić, »Prilog proučavanju odnosa Napuljske Kraljevine – Kraljevstva Dviju Sicilija i Dubrovačke Republike od sredine XVII. do početka XIX. stoljeća.« *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu* 19 (1986): pp. 101–103; Miroslav Pantić, »Ragusa e Napoli nell'epoca barocca.« in: *Ragusa e il Mediterraneo*, ed. Antonio di Vittorio. Bari: Cacucci editore, 1990: pp. 371–381, and other contributions in that volume.

²⁹ Under the title *Nota delle Caracche, Galeoni, e Navi de' signori Capitani della Città di Ragusa*, Nenchi's list saw its first publication in *Le Glorie* (as a sequel to de Petris's treatise *Della famiglia Ohmuchievich Gargurich, la dichiarazione piu chiara e piu distinta di questo albero genealogico*): pp. 25–29.

There is reason to believe that it was Marko Iveljić Grgurić who, thanks to his influential position in the Royal Court of Spain, paved the way to his brothers and nephews (Dolisti Tasovčić), as by the 1560s he had already been granted noble title (*gentilhombre*) by King Philip II and became the king's courtier.³⁰ However, only Antun, Ivan and Petar of all the Iveljić lived to see the dawn of the eighties.

According to de Rosatis, Petar spent 26 years in Spanish service,³¹ which would mean that he joined the service in 1570 during the reign of King Philip II, yet of his activities in the eighth decade of the sixteenth century there is no evidence. With respect to the chronology of Petar's rise in Spanish navy, an undated document from the start of the seventeenth century should be noted.³² It contains the testimonies of several high-ranking Spanish commanders who explicitly confirmed that Petar, together with his nephews, over a period of twenty years (apparently from 1576 onwards) throughout the Mediterranean performed many dangerous operations involving the provision of Spanish troops with ammunition and war supplies, and that for his contributions he had not been appropriately rewarded.³³

In the early 1580s, for the purpose of protection of the convoys from America and the Flanders possessions, as well as the preparations for the invasion of England, Spanish war plans shifted radically towards the Ocean. Following the new maritime policy of Philip II, Petar, apparently even prior to 1580, with a group of Ragusan captains formed a special squadron (*Escuadra Ilírica*), with which, as a commander of two carracks (*Santo Spirito e Santa Maria de Loreto* and *San Antonio*), he distinguished himself in the Spanish invasion of Portugal in 1580 and the Azores in 1582/3.³⁴ Having occupied Portugal, the Spaniards

³⁰ D. NENCHI, *Della famiglia Ohmuchiévich Gargurich, la dichiarazione piu chiara e piu distinta di questo albero genealogico*: pp. 22–23; G. B. de Rosatis, *Origine della Famiglia Ivegliá Ohmuchiévich*: p. 83.

³¹ G. B. de Rosatis, *Origine della Famiglia Ivegliá Ohmuchiévich*: p. 83. In Spanish sources Petar is mentioned as *don Pedro Ibella* (*Ybella*, *Yvella*).

³² It concerned an appeal submitted by Đuro Dolisti Tasovčić. Archivo General de Simancas (hereafter as AGS), E 1707, f. 502.

³³ The same document also reveals that it could discourage his kin and other Ragusans from remaining in Spanish service.

³⁴ José Luis Casabán, »Santiago de Galicia and the Illyrian squadron: Characteristics, dimensions and tonnages of Mediterranean-built galleons for Philip's II Atlantic fleets (1593–1597).« *The International Journal of Maritime History* 29/2 (2017): p. 240; V. Comneno, *Compendiosa y verdadera relacion de los servicios hechos*: p. 8. As a son of Princess Isabella of Portugal, Philip II was a legitimate heir to the Portuguese throne, but in order to ascend it he had to crush resistance of some Portuguese cities and a part of the Cortes. According to a British source, as many as forty Ragusan ships took part in the invasion of Portugal. See: John de Courcy Ireland, »Ragusa and the Spanish Armada of 1588.« *The Mariner's Mirror* 64/2 (1978): p. 252.

came in possession of a large number of well-armed and equipped galleons, while Lisbon became the main stronghold in the struggle against England and France for domination over the Atlantic. In addition, in the ports of Biscay Bay a number of shipyards was opened with berths for building ocean-going ships, along with many centres for recruitment and logistics, which was preceded in the previous decade by massive production of ship equipment, weapons, ammunition and gunpowder.

Large-scale preparations culminated in the invasion of Britain by the Invincible Armada in 1588, which ended in military defeat in the Channel and a naval disaster due to bad weather conditions.³⁵

Apparently, not many Ragusan ships had taken part in this naval operation of 1588.³⁶ Yet, because of the possible confusions and errors in different lists, changes

³⁵ Before the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, the activities of the Spanish navy of some 150 galleys, mostly chartered, concentrated on the clashes with the Ottomans in the Mediterranean. In these sea operations, the Spanish fleet included a considerable number of ally ships. The Battle of Lepanto was followed by a truce, during which the renewed Ottoman fleet continued with piracy. Regardless of the situation, in the last two decades of the sixteenth century Philip II launched ambitious plans of building and equipping a new type of ship for the Atlantic fleet. The Invincible Armada ultimately consisted of 130 ships, that is, 22 war galleons and 108 ships for the transport of cargo and troops, with a total of 2,400 guns. It was manned by 8,000 mariners, and it carried 19,000 infantrymen and gunmen. See: David Goodman, *Spanish Naval Power 1589–1665*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997: pp. 1–7. On various aspects of the failure of Spanish invasion, with voluminous literature, see: *England, Spain and the Gran Armada 1585–1604*, ed. M. J. Rodríguez Salgado and Simon Adams. Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1991.

³⁶ The main reason for this should be sought in poor maritime performance of the Mediterranean *nave* and galleons on the Atlantic. Having thoroughly investigated that issue, Veselin Kostić established that only three Ragusan ships, that is, captains, sailed in the Armada within the Levantine (in fact, Italian) squadron. Apart from the mentioned galleon *Santissima Annunciata* under the command of Stjepan Dolisti Tasovčić, the Armada also included *San Niccolo*, *nava* under the command of Marin Prodanelić, and the ship *Santa Maria della Grazia e San Giovanni Battista* with captain Luka Ivanov Kinković. The three Ragusan ships were heavily damaged in the Channel battles. Later, while sailing around the British coast, *San Niccolo* was wrecked by storm near Streedagh Strand on the west coast of Ireland. The whole crew, including Captain Prodanelić, was killed in the shipwreck. The damaged ship *Santissima Annunciata* Dolisti Tasovčić ran aground further south, in a bay near Limerick, and managed to rescue the crew and reload the valuable cargo. Kinković's ship, also known as *La nave Martolossa* or *San Juan de Sicilia*, the Spaniards seized in 1586 on Sicily. Since the ship was solidly built and well-armed, it was included in the Armada in 1588. The ship was wrecked near Tobermory, off the coast of the Scottish island of Mull, with the majority of the crew killed. For a detailed account of the number of Ragusan ships and their fate, along with different views of Tasovčić's heroic deed, see: Veselin Kostić, *Dubrovnik i Engleska 1300–1650*. Beograd: SANU, 1975: pp. 399–447. Kostić writes that Captain Kinković was killed in the ship explosion near Tobermory, yet later data on the Illyrian squadron and his testimony in favour of Petar Ohmućević in 1596 confirm that he survived after all.

of names and “name sharing”, as well as the changes of commanding officers of particular ships, it is hard to establish the exact number of Ragusan vessels in the Invincible Armada, and equally so, the number of mariners remains in the domain of speculation. Although some English and Spanish sources mention that Petar Iveljić Ohmućević took part in that campaign as a commander of the ship *La Regazona*, this may be discarded with certainty.³⁷

Owing to the recently accessible archival data, the role of Ragusan ships in the Spanish navy after 1588 becomes somewhat clearer.³⁸ Shortly after the defeat of the Invincible Armada, Philip II embarked upon an ambitious project of building a new fleet of Atlantic galleons for the next invasion. As additional enforcement, on 28 February 1590 the king signed a contract (*asiento*) with Petar Ohmućević and Stjepan Dolisti Tasovčić, by which these two entrepreneurs and future commanders of the squadron were obliged to build, equip, arm and to a term of five years lease 12 galleons to the royal navy, which under Spanish flag were to join the Atlantic fleet (*Armada del Mar Océano*). Although the terms of the contract defined the ship properties and equipment, they were mainly of general nature. The ships were to be ocean-going galleons of robust construction of a capacity between 600 and 1,000 tons, with 20 guns and a crew of 20 men per every 100 tons. The five-year term commenced once the contract was signed, but the payment of lease was to start after the verification of the ships’ quality by the royal commission. Squadron commanders obliged to respond to the king’s call to participate in war operations and to carry out all his orders.³⁹

³⁷ J. de Courcy Ireland, »Ragusa and the Spanish Armada of 1588«: pp. 258–262; J. L. Casabán, »Santiago de Galicia and the Illyrian squadron«: p. 240. Of this Ohmućević himself would have certainly left some trace or he would have mentioned it in the knighthood procedure. The fact that Marin Prodanelić gave Ohmućević his money for safekeeping before setting out for the invasion of Britain clearly shows that Ohmućević did not take part in the invasion. V. Kostić, *Dubrovnik i Engleska 1300–1650*: p. 404.

³⁸ For all documents from the Spanish archives we are greatly indebted to our colleague Arturo Pérez Amores from the Murcia University. The mentioned sources are listed in his unpublished dissertation: Arturo Pérez Amores, *Integrarse en la Monarquía Hispánica a través del Servicio al Rey Católico: raguses y escoceses entre 1580 y 1620*. Universidad de Murcia, 2022.

³⁹ J. L. Casabán, »Santiago de Galicia and the Illyrian squadron«: pp. 239–240. Đuro Dolisti Tasovčić also had a copy of the 1590 contract, which he enclosed to his petition submitted in 1617 to Philip III, regarding his appointment as member of the Collateral Council of the Kingdom of Naples (*Consiglio Collaterale del Regno di Napoli*). AGS, E 1763, 11 de julio de 1617.

The new *Escuadra Ilírica* in Croatian literature is known under an incorrect name of the “Twelve Apostles”.⁴⁰ It was built between 1590 and 1593, mainly in the shipyards of Naples (Naples, Castellammare di Stabia and Vietri), while three ships were commissioned in Dubrovnik. Although Petar and his nephews were the main contractors, other members of their kin or native circle also took part in this business venture, as either co-owners and/or ship commanders.⁴¹

In 1592 Petar informed the Royal Council of having built eight ships, while another four would also soon be completed. Due to temporary shortage of merchant cargo, revenue loss and immense shipbuilding costs, he asked to be given, prior to the beginning of lease payment, a specific quantity of copper and pewter from the Naples supplies so that he could cast guns for the ships under construction. Given the terms of the contract, his petition was denied.⁴²

Despite financial problems, the squadron set sail in its full formation in 1593, the annex to the contract being signed on 14 October. It was agreed that the charter lease would run from the start of the war operations, when the king was to activate Ohmućević’s title of the head commander (*Capitan general*), and Stjepan Dolisti Tasovčić’s title of *Admiral*. In expectation of military operations, so as to help the Ragusans compensate the invested funds, Philip II exempted them from paying tax on shipping fee, and allotted them salaries as well as rewards for the transport of grain, ammunition and other provisions for the Spanish army. Spanish viceroy in Naples was responsible for supplying them with ammunition and food for the crew.⁴³ It was then that the squadron began with the transport of grain from the Adriatic ports to Naples, and wool from Spain to Genoa and Livorno.

⁴⁰ That name for the squadron under Ohmućević’s command has been taken from *Le Glorie*; it clearly mirrors the aim of Ohmućević’s descendants to add importance to Petar and his fleet. In the second half of the sixteenth century, several ship formations in Spanish Navy bore the name “Twelve Apostles”. For the most part, these ships sailed the Caribbean and the Atlantic as escort to American convoys, and individual vessels were probably named after the apostles. “Twelve Apostles” was also the name of the first twelve ocean-going galleons which Philip II commissioned between 1589 and 1591. J. L. Casabán, »Santiago de Galicia and the Illyrian squadron«: pp. 239, 240.

⁴¹ Besides Iveljić and the Dolisti Tasovčić, as commanders of these ships the following captains are also mentioned: Jakov Ivanov de Polo, Mato Jerinić, Pavo Deškinović, Frano Šprlenta, Josip Radalj, Marko Brsečina, Ivan Kapural, Frano and Mato Letiela, Ivan Andrija Kunić, Ivan Franov Sagri, Miho Brautti, Bartol Baldi and others. See: J. L. Casabán, »Santiago de Galicia and the Illyrian squadron«: pp. 240–242.

⁴² AGS, GA 364-174, 24 de agosto de 1592.

⁴³ AGS, GA 387-63, 14 de octubre de 1593.

The news of Petar's actions spread widely, as evidenced by the protests of English and French diplomatic representatives at the Porte. In 1592 they already accused Dubrovnik Republic of building twelve ships for the Spaniards, and for supplying them with Ottoman grain. Not surprisingly, having expressed loyalty to the sultan, the Ragusan Senate rejected all allegations.⁴⁴ However, in 1594, near Messina, Turkish corsairs seized three ships from Petar's newly-built squadron under command of Đuro Dolisti Tasovčić (*San Pedro*, *Santa Maria de Loreto* and *Santo Spirito*). After unsuccessful ransom negotiations, Petar was forced to replace them with older vessels of much poorer performance, while two of the three ships commissioned in Dubrovnik were not included in the final composition of the squadron, and they too were replaced by older vessels.⁴⁵

Finally, by the middle of September 1595, the squadron, headed by Petar's flagship *San Girolamo* and vice-flagship *Santiago de Galicia* under the command of Jakov Ivanov de Polo, reached Lisbon. According to an inspection conducted by the Royal Navy Commission, three ships that reached Lisbon did not satisfy the minimum criteria expected of an ocean-going ship, while almost all vessels required additional equipment. In short, the majority of the Illyrian squadron under the command of Petar Ohmučević did not comply with the contract terms regarding either maritime capacity or equipment.⁴⁶ Poorer quality of some of his ships Petar tried to compensate by increasing the tonnage. As concluded by the Commission, Illyrian squadron had the characteristics of merchant ships constructed for navigation in the Mediterranean, and thanks to adaptations and arms only some of them could have been used as logistic support in the Atlantic navy fleet.

⁴⁴ *Litterae et commissiones Levantis*, series 27.1, vol. 38, f. 27v–31, State Archives in Dubrovnik; J. Tadić, *Španija i Dubrovnik u XVI. v.*: p. 126; M. Sirago, »Dalla galera al vascello«: p. 471; Vinko Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika do 1808.*, vol. II. Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske, 1980: pp. 66–68.

⁴⁵ J. L. Casabán, »Santiago de Galicia and the Illyrian squadron«: pp. 246–247.

⁴⁶ As stated in Spanish sources quoted by J. L. Casabán, »Santiago de Galicia and the Illyrian squadron«: pp. 246–247, the Illyrian squadron that reached Lisbon was composed of the following ships and their commanders: *San Gerónimo el Real* (Petar Ivelja), *Santiago de Galicia* (Jakov Ivanov de Polo), *San Mateo y San Francisco* (Mato Jerinić), *Santísima Anunciada* (Pavo Deškinović), *San Miguel Arcángel* (Miho Brautti), *Santa María de Tremidi* (Frano Bakaljauš), *Santa María de la Misericordia* (Nikola Petrov Babić), *Santa Cruz* (Luka Tasovčić), *San Andrés de Caramonda* (Vlaho Ferro, ship owned by the Karamonda family). The following ships were not accepted due to poor quality: *Santísima Trinidad* (Mato Letiela), *San Andrés* (Bartol Baldi), *San Juan Bautista* (Jakov Ivanov Rusko).

That was the main reason why the king was still reluctant about the payment of the charter hire.⁴⁷

A sad fate soon befell the Illyrian squadron. In spring of 1596, the English and the Dutch raided the port of Cádiz, damaging much of the Spanish fleet. On 10 September 1596, Petar died in Lisbon, and despite the risk, in October the Spanish commander Martín de Padilla included some of Ragusan ships under the command of Stjepan Dolisti Tasovčić into the second invasion of Britain. However, shortly after setting sail, the fleet was caught by a storm off the Cape Finisterre. It was there that Petar's largest ships were wrecked—*San Gerónimo* and *La Anunciada*. In the third attempt, in October 1597, the Armada almost reached the shores of Falmouth, but had to return to Spain due to a strong storm. Dolisti Tasovčić's flagship *La Misericordia* was badly damaged, and upon return the last ship *Santiago de Galicia*, once pride of the squadron, sank in the port of Ribadeo.⁴⁸ According to some sources, Petar's loss finally reached a huge amount of 150,000 ducats.⁴⁹

Although, due to a combination of adverse circumstances, the Illyrian squadron failed to meet king's expectations, on account of his loyalty and earlier merits, Petar succeeded in his ambition to be admitted into the prestigious Spanish Order of the Knights of St. James of Galicia. He was knighted only six months before his death. On 1 October 1595, the king gave his recommendation and authorised the Council of the Chivalric Orders of St. James, Calatrava and Alcántara to start the procedure of Ohmućević's admission. From October 1595 to January 1596, the appointed commissioners of the Order, Alonso de Velasco and Diego de Busto Belizio, based on documents and testimonies of witnesses, conducted in Lisbon the regular procedure for the establishment of Petar's eligibility.⁵⁰ To the Royal

⁴⁷ J. L. Casabán, »Santiago de Galicia and the Illyrian squadron«: pp. 242–260. According to author's interpretation, Petar did not count on such strict inspection of the ships' quality, and in a way tried to circumvent the terms of the contract with the king.

⁴⁸ J. L. Casabán, »Santiago de Galicia and the Illyrian squadron.«: pp. 239, 258–260. On underwater archaeological remains of the ships *Santísima Anunciada* and *San Gerónimo*, see: Miguel San Claudio Santa Cruz, »El Escuadrón Ragusano en la Armada de 1596.« *Proa. Revista de la Real Liga Naval Española* IV, época digital (2018): pp. 51–55 (https://issuu.com/hec87tor/docs/proa_a_la_mar_174/53). Two years after Petar, in September 1598, Philip II, disheartened, died at the El Escorial palace.

⁴⁹ F. de Petris, *Breve discorso genealogico della antichissima e nobilissima famiglia Ohmuchievich Gargurich*: p. 23; V. Comneno, *Compendiosa y verdadera relacion de los servicios hechos*: p. 9.

⁵⁰ Archivo Histórico Nacional Madrid, Órdenes Militares-Santiago (AHN OM-S), expediente 5856, "General Pº de Ivella". The only Ragusan admitted to the Order of St. James before Petar was Martin Stjepanov Zamagna (c. 1479–1548), Republic ambassador to Naples and Madrid 1533/34 (Nenad Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika, 6 – Odabrane biografije (Pi–Z)*. Zagreb – Dubrovnik:

Council (*Consejo*) Petar submitted testimonies on his Catholic faith and noble descent in “eight quarters” (*quartieri*), i.e., that from the generation of his great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers all ancestors from the paternal and maternal side were of Catholic faith, of noble birth and born in legal marriages. Given that by around 1580, before an unsuccessful attempt to join the Tuscan Order of St. Stephen Pope and Martyr, he had already compiled genealogical data and forged documents regarding the history of his lineage, Petar submitted most voluminous evidence before the Commission.

Since he, embittered by the Ragusan authorities, left his country to become a naturalised Spanish subject, in his address to the Commission, Petar—*don Pedro Ybella*—made no mention of the Republic. He writes that he is from Slano in Dalmatia, lord of Usječnik and Osmine estates, as well as feudal estates in Popovo and Orahovo in Herzegovina “which is now under the Turks”. He details his origins by describing himself as a descendant of the Ohmućević Bosnian nobility, counts of Tuhelj and lords of Kostur in Macedonia, which had also fallen under Ottoman rule. He explains his presence in Lisbon by claiming to be the commander of the squadron of 12 galleons and 1,500 men.⁵¹

Having accepted the recommendation of the four Order members, the commissioners proceeded with hearing the witnesses according to a set of questions formulated for this specific purpose. Under oath, the witnesses were to confirm the truth of the statement regarding the candidate’s noble and Catholic descent, as well as his virtuous life and chastity. The commissioners heard fourteen Ragusan captains, some of whom commanded the ships of Petar’s squadron anchored in Lisbon at the time. They were: Marulin Ivanov, Bartol Baldi from Lopud, Jakov Ivanov de Polo, Mato Jerinić from Banići, Antun Barbijerić from Slano, Mato Letiela from Lopud, Luka Tasovčić from Slano, squadron chaplain friar Serafin from Popovo, Pavo Deškinović from Koločep, Stjepan Božin from Slano, Luka Ivanov Kinković from Lopud, Frano Mihov from Zaton, Petar Ivanov Vodopija from Slano and Pavo Ivanović from Slano. Apart from providing basic data about themselves, they all responded to the questions concerning the identity of Petar Iveljić: how long they had known him, the nature of their sources of

Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2015: pp. 278–279). In 1623 the Knighthood of St. James was also granted to Petar’s nephew, Đuro Dolisti Tasovčić, and in 1649 to his grandson, Petar Ohmućević Junior.

⁵¹ Archivo Histórico Nacional Madrid, Órdenes Militares-Santiago (AHN OM-S), expediente 5856, “General P^o de Ivella”.

information, the identity of Petar's parents, the origin of his remote ancestors, their knowledge of his generational ancestry, and whether they were all of Catholic faith. They also answered the questions on Petar's marital status, whether he had legitimate and illegitimate children, on his business pursuits and motives for his service to the Spanish Crown, whether any legal actions were launched against him, whether he had ever been imprisoned, whether his Christian faith had ever been under suspicion of the Inquisition, and whether he might have had the slightest traces of Jewish or Arabic descent. Lastly, the witnesses had to state whether they had been paid to testify. All witnesses stated that they knew Petar and his family personally, and also confirmed the statements from his genealogy regarding his pure noble and Catholic descent. To all other questions they answered in Petar's favour. The testimonies of a couple of witnesses who spoke Spanish are much longer, while some of them testified twice, adding new details to the affirmative information about Petar and his forefathers. Finally, the commissioners conducted collective hearing of the Ragusan mariners and captains who happened to be in the Lisbon port at the time, and all of them confirmed Petar's statements. Based on submitted documentary evidence and witness testimonies, on 7 January 1596 it was finally decided that Petar Iveljić Ohmućević be admitted to the Spanish Royal Order of St. James of Galicia. The solemn admission ceremony was held on 22 March 1596 in the famous monastery of Uclés, which from 1174 was the seat of the Order of St. James (*caput ordinis*). With the Knighthood and title of *Capitan general*, Petar was also entitled to life revenues of the *commenda* to an amount of 1,000 scudi per year.⁵²

With Petar's death, only a few months after this solemn event, the original line of the Grgurić-Iveljić-Ohmućević died out. The sources are silent about his immediate family. The name of his spouse, probably due to her low descent, has remained unrecorded in both sources and genealogy, which provides fertile ground for speculation. In order to preserve the legacy by maternal line, shortly before his death, Petar married his minor only daughter Aurelija to a cousin in the third degree, Andrija Nikolin Grgurić (c. 1565–1654),⁵³ who later also started using the Ohmućević surname. Given the consanguinity degree between the spouses

⁵² G. B. de Rosatis, *Origine della Famiglia Ivegla Ohmuchievich*: p. 83.

⁵³ According to the Ohmućević genealogy, Andrija Nikolin was a descendant of Tvrtko Grgurić (born around 1350), son of Grgur III, founder of the ancestral settlement in the Bay of Slano, as well as of the brother of Petar's antecedent, Hranisav Grgurić.

and the age of bride, Pope Paul V confirmed that marriage only in 1617.⁵⁴ Andrija sailed in Spanish convoys across the Atlantic, and in 1594 became Petar's adjutant and first officer (*Gentilhombre de la boca*) in the Illyrian squadron.

Between Bosnian, Ragusan and Spanish homeland

One can say with certainty that Petar started using the "old" lineage surname Ohmućević around 1580. He found inspiration and encouragement in the vague family history of the alleged Grgur's father, Hrelja Ohmućević, a legendary figure glorified in oral tradition and folk epic, "lord of Kostur and the whole of Macedonia", who lived in the middle of the fourteenth century.⁵⁵ Petar expanded this genealogical confabulation with a story of an even older Bosnian descent of the Ohmućević, by which their roots go back to the thirteenth century when they bore the title of the counts of Tuhelj in the County of Smucka and *bans* of Jajce, and they were related to the Balašić and Sanković nobility (Bogopanković, Srđović).

Genealogical and heraldic symbolism of his noble circle Petar Ohmućević constructed following the revived concept of humanist Illyrism, which, instead of Dalmatian, Bosnian, Slavonic (Slav) and Croatian ethnonyms, used the ancient synonym "Illyrian" (*natio Illyrica*). It concerned a heterogenous ideological programme which, after the first Christian victories in the second half of the sixteenth century, shaped in the circles of the Croatian Church and intellectual elite; the attribute Illyrian was mainly used to describe the ethnic borders of the peoples inhabiting Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Early modern Illyrism had its political foundations in the ambitious anti-Ottoman plans of the Curia, the Habsburgs, Spanish kings, and Italian rulers dependent on them.

⁵⁴ G. B. de Rosatis, *Origine della Famiglia Ivegla Ohmuchiévich*: p. 87. Petar's decision is reminiscent of an ancient inheritance practice originating from Greek tradition (*epiklerate*). This practice was essentially aimed at securing succession of the family hearth and legacy. It concerns a surrogate of the male issue in which the sons of an only daughter, from her consanguineous marriage, became fictive sons, and therefore the heirs of their grandfather.

⁵⁵ The myth of the Ohmućević and the narrative of their origin as presented in *Le Glorie*, Gelcich mainly adopted uncritically in his study *I conti di Tuhelj*. Following in the footsteps of diplomatic critique of Ilarion Ruvarac, Mihailo Dinić provided a thorough analysis of the early genealogy and "history" of the Ohmućević, proving the fictional character of these historical narratives partly originating from popular tradition. The historic Hrelja had no heirs, and he died as monk in the famous Rila monastery in Bulgaria. See: Mihailo Dinić, »Relja Ohmućević – istorija i predanje.« *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 9 (1966): pp. 95–118; Hristo Matanov, *Jugozapadnite bulgarski zemi prez XIV vek*. Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1986: pp. 33, 34.

The idea of revived Illyria was infused with the Crusaders' and proselyte spirit and implied a belief into an imminent fall of the Ottoman Empire, and the forming of a new Catholic Empire which, under papal authority, would stretch across a wider territory of South-East Europe. In this atmosphere, Petar Ohmućević started developing an extensive genealogical, heraldic and political activity aimed at the confirmation of old and acquisition of new chivalric and noble titles, as well affirmation of his kinship circle. In expectation of the *reconquista* in the Balkans, Slano lineages, headed by the Ohmućević, hoped for the distribution of power over the states of the invented Illyrian Empire, anticipating their future among the highest ranks next to the imperial throne. In various ways Petar's plans also included the Franciscans of Slano, who remained in close contact with their brethren under Ottoman rule, and as symbolic bearers of "Bosnian" political traditions for the Slano circle of the "Illyrian" elite they represented a spiritual and intellectual authority.⁵⁶

Although Petar's attempts to prove his descent from the old nobility of the Kingdom of Bosnia were essentially targeted at winning favour of foreign courts and admission to the most prestigious Orders of Christian Knights of his day, the Ohmućević were equally keen on confirming their rise in the homeland. The palace on the Usječnik estate the brothers probably built in the 1570s, while in 1580, in the Franciscan church of St. Jerome in Slano they erected a votive side altar and, for Ragusan circumstances, fairly monumental marble gravestone commissioned in Pisa, with an incised family coat of arms (sable, two bars d'or, a bend gules dexter embattled).⁵⁷ The gravestone inscription evokes their descent from the nobility of the Kingdom of Bosnia, traced as far back as the distinguished

⁵⁶ On the genesis, as well as the symbolic and political aspects of the early modern Illyrism, with relevant literature, see: Zrinka Blažević, *Ilirizam prije ilirizma*. Zagreb: Golden marketing – Tehnička knjiga, 2008; S. Ćosić, *Ideologija rodoslovlja. Korjenic-Neoričev grbovnik iz 1595*; Mate Božić and Stjepan Ćosić, *Hrvatski grbovi. Geneza, simbolika, povijest*: Zagreb: Hrvatska sveučilišna naklada, Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 2021: pp. 131–152.

⁵⁷ In that period the church was restored and extended, and according to Petar's words, the Ohmućević also added the sacristy. The altar of the brothers Iveljić Ohmućević is dedicated to St. Anthony of Padua. At the top of the altar is an oval cartouche with the Ohmućević coat of arms, while carved on the column pedestals is the Ohmućević coat of arms and a combined Ohmućević/Bogašinović coat of arms in honour of Jelena/Jeljena, Ivelja's wife. Erected on the north side of the triumphal arch is a virtually identical altar of Nikola Dolisti Tasovčić dedicated to the Assumption of Virgin Mary. It is adorned with the coats of arms of the Dolisti-Tasovčić and a combined coat of arms of the Dolisti Tasovčić and Ohmućević in honour of Rada, Nikola's wife.

ancestors Grgur and Hrelja, and the former titles and estates of the Ohmućević in Bosnia and Macedonia:

IOANNES ET FR(atr)ES SVI DE
FAMILIA OHMVCHIEVICH.
IVEGLIE FILII. GREGORII ET
HREGLIE BANIS CASTORIE
PRONEPOTES. BANOR(um)Q(ue) YAYZE
DESCENDENTES REGNI BOSSINEN(sis)
NOBILITATE CLARI SIBI POSTERISQ(ue)
SUIS PARAVERE. ANNO · D ·
M · D · LXXX

The gravestone and altar were most likely installed by Ivan Iveljić, as elder of (the then living) brothers, who spent most of his time in Slano, though given the content of the inscription, there is no doubt that its text was conceived by Petar.

During Petar's advancement in Spanish service, his name, despite frequent absences, also appears from time to time in Ragusan documents. According to archival data, he stayed in Dubrovnik and in Slano, though intermittently, from December 1582 to the middle of 1584. The purpose of these visits usually revolved around business disputes, settlements, along with the obtainment of customs and other receipts.⁵⁸ From an entry on the payment of the *arboraticum* (port tariff charged by mast) for 1576/77, we conclude that his ship *Santa Maria de Loreto* still sailed under the flag of St. Blaise at the time.⁵⁹

Of particular importance is the information confirming that by that time Petar had already been compiling various documents and material pertaining to the status and origin of his lineage. By the end of 1582, he decided to register officially in Dubrovnik a certain document (*litterae testimoniales speciales*) written in Cyrillic, issued to him by the Franciscan friar Grgur Masnović, provincial of Bosnia Argentina.⁶⁰ Having arrived at the chancellery, he introduced himself as Ohmućević (*Petrus Iveglia Ohmucelich !/!*), and that is the first (and only) occasion that Ragusan sources have him recorded under that surname. The copying of the

⁵⁸ *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 66, f. 227r–v, 233r (26 April and 10 May 1582); *Diversa Cancellariae*, series 25, vol. 169, f. 66r, 70v, 79r, 92r (4 May, 11 May, 21 May, 22 May and 18 June 1582), vol. 171, a tergo, f. 90v–91r (1 March 1584), f. 117r–119r (20 April 1584); *Diversa Notariae*, series 26, vol. 122, f. 98v–100r (21 May 1582).

⁵⁹ *Diversa Cancellariae*, vol. 169, f. 92r (18 June 1582).

⁶⁰ *Diversa Cancellariae*, vol. 170, a tergo, f. 45r.

document text into official chancellery register was suspended by order of two Ragusan Franciscans—Luka Gojsavić Vladimirović from Visoko, definitor and former provincial of the Dubrovnik Franciscan province, and Marko Burmasović from Fojnica—who were summoned to confirm the authenticity of the document.⁶¹

In 1582, in Naples, Petar delivered to the viceroy Juan de Zúñiga de Pietraperzia a letter of King Philip II, issued on 4 June that year, which lists the special merits of the Iveljić brothers, especially those of Petar as captain and owner of the galleon *Santa Maria de Loreto*, and instructs the viceroy to propose the form and amount of the reward for Petar Iveljić, of which the king would pass a separate decision. Wishing to spread the news of this distinction back home, on 30 April 1583 Petar also had this document registered in the Ragusan chancellery.⁶²

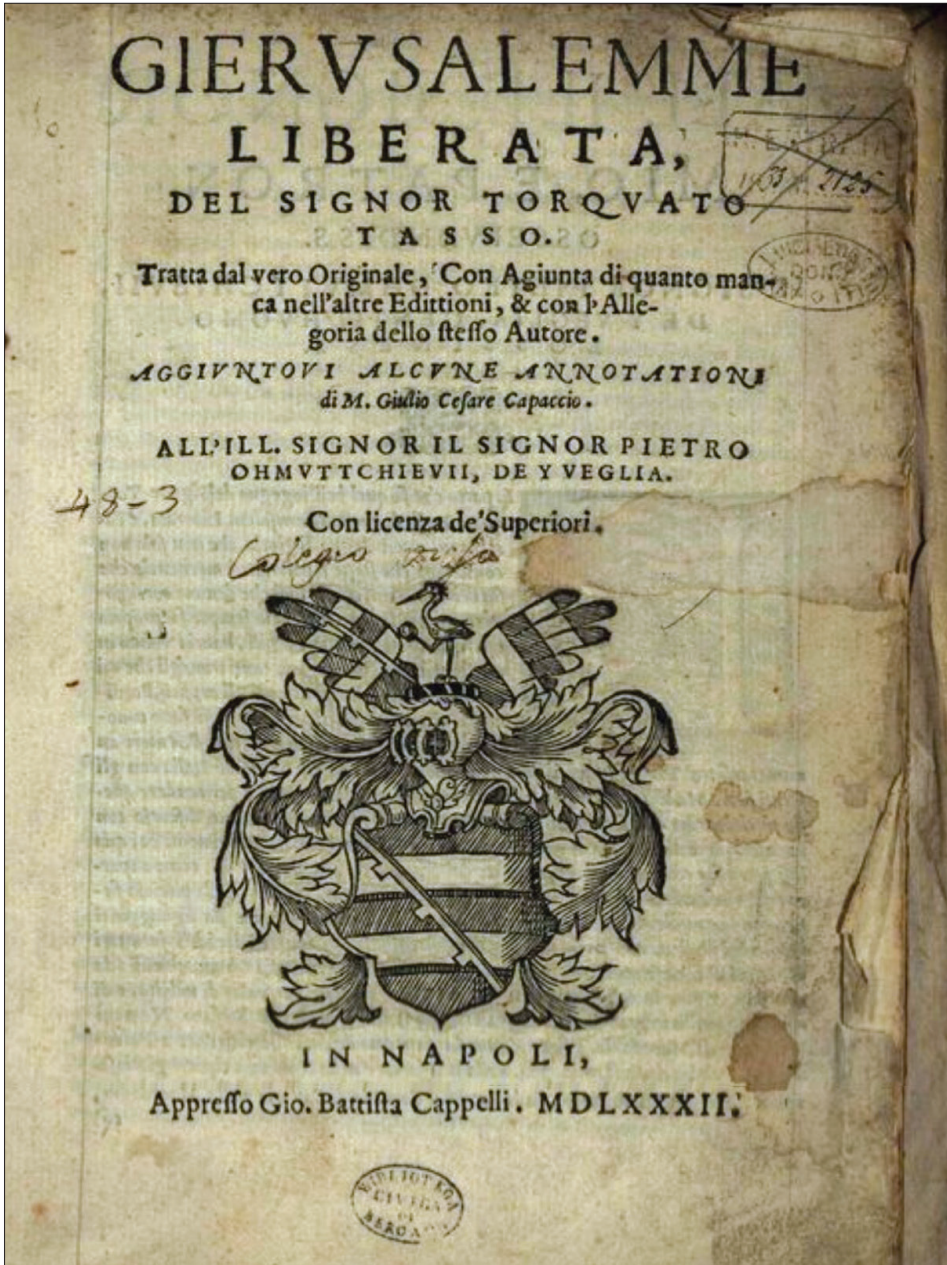
In the early 1580s, in Naples, Petar came into contact with a distinguished Italian man of letters and erudite theologian, Giulio Cesare Capaccio (1552–1634),⁶³ who was preparing an edition of Tasso's epic *Gierusalemme liberata*, accompanied by his own annotations and interpretation. The book was printed under the patronage of Petar Ohmućević in 1582.⁶⁴ Appearing on the title page for the first time is the “composite” coat of arms of the Ohmućević, while the patron is introduced as *Il signor Pietro Ohmutchievii de Yveglia gentil'huomo Bossinese*. In the text of Capaccio's dedication, the epic aspect of Tasso's work is linked to

⁶¹ The surnames of all the three Bosnian Franciscans mentioned, together with the coats of arms of their lineages, would eventually find their place in the Korjenić-Neorić Armorial from 1595, which owes its creation to Ohmućević's ideas about the Illyrian Empire.

⁶² *Diversa Cancelariae*, vol. 170, a tergo, f. 94v.

⁶³ On Capaccio and his work, see: Daniela Caracciolo, *Giulio Cesare Capaccio tra arte e letteratura*. Lucca: Maria Pacini Fazzi editore, 2016.

⁶⁴ *Gierusalemme Liberata, del signor Torquato Tasso. Tratta dal vero Originale, Con Aggiunta di quanto manca nell'altre Edittioni, & con l'Allegoria dello stesso Autore aggiuntovi alcune annotationi*. Napoli: Giovanni Battista Cappelli, MDLXXXII. Printed at the same time were two different Capaccio's editions of Tasso's book. The edition with a somewhat changed title does not contain the dedication to Ohmućević. In 1592, Cappaccio published a three-volume iconological tractate on emblems, signs, symbols and mottoes: *Delle imprese trattato di Giulio Cesare Capaccio. In tre libri diviso. Nel primo, del modo di far l'impresa (...) nel secondo, tutti ieroglifici, simboli (...) e come da quegli cavar (...) l'imprese (...) nel terzo, nel figurar degli emblemi (...) per l'imprese si tratta*. In Napoli: Ex officina Horatii Salviani, appresso Giovanni Giacomo Carlino, e Antonio Pace, 1592. In the third volume (*Del trattato dell'imprese di Giulio Cesare Capaccio Libro terzo ove nel figurar de gli emblemi e nella proprietà delle piante e de gli animali di molte imprese si fa mentione*. In Napoli: Ex officina Horatii Salviani, appresso Giovanni Giacomo Carlino, e Antonio Pace, 1592: p. 46), Capaccio writes that Petar Iveljić Ohmućević on two of his galleys that sailed to the Indies for the Spanish king, flew flags with two letter-shaped arms, which, when the flag was raised, formed a victory sign with the motto *In hoc signo vinces*.



The cover of Capaccio's edition of Tasso's epic poem dedicated to Petar Ohmućević (Naples, 1582) with the oldest known graphic representation of the complete coat of arms of the Ohmućević

the heroic deeds of *ban* Hrelja Ohmućević, loss of family estates in Bosnia after Ottoman invasions, but also to the reascent to prominence of Grgur's descendants, Ivelja and Petar Ohmućević. Special emphasis is placed on Petar's loyal service to the great ruler Philip II, who in his letters showers Petar with expressions of appreciation and offers him the commanding post of a twelve-ship squadron in the Indies convoys. The king's attitude to Petar in these letters, as quoted by Capaccio, was very cordial, familiar even, which Capaccio illustrates with a phrase *Me hará placer*, commonly used by the king in his address to Petar.⁶⁵

By acting as patron of Capaccio's edition of Tasso's epic, it was Petar's intention to spread the word in the Kingdom of Naples and Tuscany about his ancient noble descent and confirm the reputation that he enjoyed at the Spanish court. Namely, his activities in Dubrovnik, Bosnia and in Italy in that period were aimed at his admission into the Order of St. Stephen Pope. Upon approval of Pope Pius IV, this chivalric Christian Order was founded in 1561 by Cosimo Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, its main objectives being the struggle against infidels in the Mediterranean, particularly the protection of Christian ships against the raids of Barbary corsairs, as well as ransom of enslaved Christians. The Order was seated in Pisa, and its Statute demanded that the knights be of noble birth; admission candidates had to submit reliable proof and documents issued by public and church authorities of their states.⁶⁶ Petar began to collect the proof together with his nephew Đuro Dolisti Tasovčić. For a number of years Dolisti had been in the service of Duke Francesco Medici, and despite repeated attempts of "some Ragusans" to prevent it, on 11 March 1583 he joined the chivalric Order. Petar, however, did not succeed in becoming a member. In the same period, through Franciscan connections in Bosnia, he gathered material which he correlated with the folk and family traditions, creating thus a genealogical narrative of the Ohmućević, to which he continued to add new symbolic and political components in tune with the ideology of early modern Illyrism.

⁶⁵ F. de Petris, *Breve discorso genealogico della antichissima e nobilissima famiglia Ohmuchievich Gargurich*: p. 23.

⁶⁶ Giuseppe Rossi Sabatini, »Gli Statuti dell'Ordine di S. Stefano.« *Annali della Reale Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Lettere, Storia e Filosofia* 1/2 (1932): pp. 182–190. According to the Statute, in his application the candidate, apart from general moral conditions, had to enclose proof on the stable patrimony, along with a legal genealogical line of descent with confirmation of noble status traceable back to four generations with coloured coats of arms, while the local bishop had to testify to his noble status. The candidate was not allowed to engage in farming or manual trades, had to be suitably educated, especially in military skills, and had to be well-versed in Latin.

During his stay in Dubrovnik in the early 1580s, Petar probably visited Bosnia as well. It was then that he initiated the creation of yet another curious document—*Rodoslovlje gospode bosanske* (Genealogy of Bosnian nobility; hereafter cited as *Rodoslovlje*)—whose complex illustration and textual content (in Cyrillic), along with its symbolism legitimises the heraldic, genealogical and political programme of creating an invented “Illyrian Empire” with Bosnia as its seat. It is a coloured drawing on parchment which at one point, perhaps even soon after its creation, was fixed to the back of a painting by a Ragusan painter Lovro Dobričević, depicting a motif with the resurrected Christ and Bosnian king Stjepan Tomaš from 1461. The border of this complex drawing composition includes a series of apocryphal and real coats of arms of the “Illyrian kingdoms”, as well as those of the dynasties of the Nemanjić and Kotromanić. The top part depicts St. Gregory the Great as protector of Bosnia, while at the very bottom stands the composite coat of arms of the Ohmućević.

In the legend, the author of *Rodoslovlje* reveals his motives and double identity: “Petar Ivelje Ohmućević son by ancient descent Bosnian and due to wretched feud and war of his forefathers is now Ragusan who for the mercy of his old lords compiled and exhibited this genealogy for the memory and glory of Bosnia and every worthy Bosnian, until God allows for better fate, and His will holy be done. Written in the year of Christ 1482”.⁶⁷

In creating the concept and realisation of the *Rodoslovlje*, as well as in the gathering of the material for the genealogy of his own family, besides his brother Ivan, Petar must have been assisted by the Franciscans of Slano and other members of the Bosnian Franciscan province with whom he was in close contact. In this period, the monastery of St. Jerome in Slano was the home of learned friars Franjo Radalja (1530–1607) and Toma Medvjedović/Orsini (1537–1607), who are mentioned in *Le Glorie* as friends of the Ohmućević, and from whom Petar may have learnt about Bosnian history. The aforementioned cryptical drawing remained among Franciscan possessions together with the painting of King Stjepan Tomaš. The hopes that the Ottomans would soon be driven away proved illusory, and the “dual relic”, through missions, found its way to the Bosnian Franciscan

⁶⁷ Since 1871 the painting and the document have been housed in Strossmayer Gallery of Old Masters of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb. On older literature, authorship, dating, content and political symbolism of *Rodoslovlje*, see: S. Ćosić, *Ideologija rodoslovlja. Korjenić-Neoričev grbovnik iz 1595*: pp. 94–113. For reliable text reconstruction and a black and white hand drawn copy of *Rodoslovlje*, see: Nikola Žic, »Rodoslovlje gospode Bosanske.« *Napredak* 9–10 (1934): pp. 177–121.

monastery Kraljeva Sutjeska, where it was kept as memory and token for the resurrection of the Bosnian kingdom.

During that time, Petar also collected five forged privileges, issued allegedly to his ancestors, whose authenticity, together with the Ohmućević genealogy, was confirmed by a document issued by the Bosnian bishop, friar Antun Matković (Antonius Matthaeus), on 24 May 1584. In all likelihood, that document was also forged, because according to the available data bishop Matković was killed by the Turks in Požega in 1583.⁶⁸

Based on Petar's heraldic, genealogical and symbolic combinations in the *Rodoslovlje*, somewhat later, in 1595, the Korjenić-Neorić Armorial saw the light, in which the insignia of the alleged pre-Ottoman noble lineages were added to the state coats of arms. In that armorial, dynastic and magnate coats of arms are directly succeeded by the insignia of the Primorje–Slano noble circle, along with the coats of arms of the lineages of Franciscan friars originating in Bosnia and Hum.

Conflict between Petar and Donko Gradi, criminal charges and Petar's statement of defence from 1585

A document drafted by Petar in Genoa in 1585 casts much-needed light on an array of hitherto unknown details about him and his life. It is a letter addressed to the Senate of the Dubrovnik Republic containing his statement, that is, response to the criminal charges filed against him the previous year in Dubrovnik.

⁶⁸ The Holy See named friar Antun Matković, the provincial of Bosnia Argentina, as Bishop of Bosnia in 1573. The Bull authorised his pastoral care over all Catholics under the Turks, i.e., authority in all vacant bishoprics. It was a vast area which mainly overlapped with the territory of the Franciscan province of Bosnia Argentina. As a result, this province became the main stronghold of Catholicism under the Ottomans in Bosnia, Pannonia, Serbia and Bulgaria. In 1580/81, Matković accompanied the Ragusan friar Bonifacije Drkolica, apostolic visitor who inspected Bosnia and other parts under Ottoman rule. Drkolica died in Timișoara, and Matković returned to Rome in 1582, where he wrote an extensive report on the state of the Church in the Bosnian province. It is possible that Bishop Matković might have met Ohmućević in Italy and helped him to compile documentary evidence in order to substantiate his noble status. Matković left Rome for the monastery in Požega, and it is believed that he died there during the Turkish raid in 1583. See: Julije Jančula, *Franjevci u Cerniku*. Slavonska Požega: Franjevački samostan Cernik, 1980: p. 33; István György Tóth, »Franjevci Bosne Srebrene kao misionari u Turskoj Ugarskoj (1584–1716)«, *Scrinia Slavonica* 2 (2002): p. 182; Franjo Emanuel Hoško, *Slavonska franjevačka ishodišta*, Zagreb: Kršćanska sadašnjost, 2011: pp. 77, 88, 108.

The reason for the escalation of this long-drawn-out conflict between Petar and nobleman Đonko (Junije) Matov Gradi, also owner of the estates in Slano, might be sought in Petar's last legal act recorded in Dubrovnik, shortly before his departure for Genoa. Namely, on 17 May 1584, at the Dubrovnik chancellery brothers Petar and Ivan Iveljić notarised a contract signed with Ivan Đurojević, peasant from Slano, originally from Cicrina in Popovo.⁶⁹ Despite the fact that the Iveljić were not Ragusan noblemen, the contract with Đurojević contained, in the main, all the elements of a colonate contract signed between the members of Ragusan nobility and their serfs.

Half a year after Petar's departure from Dubrovnik, on 15 November 1584, the Senate publicly summoned Petar Iveljić from Slano to appear before the Rector and Minor Council and make a statement regarding the criminal charges for forging data in official registers, which had been filed against him in absence.⁷⁰

Petar formulated an exhaustive statement regarding the charges in a long letter to the Senate, which he completed on 15 April 1585 in Genoa.⁷¹ The exact content of the charges is not known to us, yet based on Petar's response we may, with a degree of certainty, reconstruct its main points and, first of all, the fact that the plaintiff was Đonko Gradi. The most serious accusation concerned the forging of records in official registers, which was a capital offence in Dubrovnik. In the chancellery register of sales for the year 1555, Petar was suspected, either personally or through another party, of having erased the surname of his father and instead of *Gargurich* entered *Ochmuchievich*. It was the earlier mentioned sales contract by which Petar's father, Ivelja Ivanov Grgurić, bought the Usječnik estate from Nikša Kastrati.⁷² Apart from accusing Petar of forgery, the charges raised against him also brought into question Petar's claim to the Ohmućević surname. In other

⁶⁹ *Diversa Cancellariae*, vol. 172, f. 2v–3r. Ragusan nobleman Ivan Šimunov Bona and citizen Jeronim Primi are recorded as contract witnesses.

⁷⁰ *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 68, f. 135v.

⁷¹ AMB, vol. 548, f. 3r–36v. The copy is dated 31 February 1638, and it was executed by the Ragusan Franciscan Martin Rusić (Martinus Rosa) (†1660) born in Ston, who spent a number of years in Madrid, where in the same year, 1638, he composed and published a hexameter epic *Breve compendium nationis gloriosae totius linguae Illyricae*. The author dedicated many verses to Ragusan maritime glory, and especially to Petar Ohmućević, his Dolisti nephews, as well as to Petar's "successor" in Spanish service, captain and Knight of the Order of St. James, Jeronim Mažibradić and his lineage. The author was particularly fascinated by King Philip IV, to whom he assigned the role of the restorer of medieval empires and kingdoms of the "Illyrian nation". For a more extensive account of Rusić and his work, see: Z. Blažević, *Ilirizam prije ilirizma*: pp. 204–214.

⁷² *Venditiones Cancellariae*, vol. 69, f. 238v.

words, the plaintiff deemed the very use of that surname incriminating. Gradi claimed that the Iveljić, Petar in particular, despite material independence, were his serfs (*villani*), and that Petar's claim to the ancient Ohmućević surname, that is, descent from the nobility of the Bosnian kingdom, was illegal.

Given the incoherent content, frequent repetition of arguments in his favour and the stated counter-accusations, Petar's document was composed *ex abrupto*, as a reaction of an unjustly accused and humiliated but, as he recurrently emphasises, an ever-loyal subject of the Republic who honours its laws. Moreover, apart from containing elements of polemic counter-accusation, the text tends to assume a historiographic tone, even that of a philosophical treatise, elaborating and thematising the broader context of the rise of the Ohmućević aimed at reaffirmation of the ancient noble lines. Therefore, in its own way Petar's statement attests to the phenomenon of the birth of individual spirit and self-consciousness in pre-modern society. The case of Petar Ohmućević, as founder of "peripheral elite", we may also view as an anticipation of a process of gradual dissolution of the ancient, strict principles governing the property and the class relations, which the Dubrovnik Republic was to witness in the centuries to come. Yet prior to all, his self-justification, at the same time also the justification of his lineage,⁷³ is one of the rare Ragusan narrative sources from the end of the sixteenth century written in first person. The text confirms the author's relatively high level of education and knowledge of the subject matter ranging from legal norms, general and local history, commonplaces of older and contemporary literature and culture, all the way to the current social and political developments in Europe.⁷⁴ Moreover, Petar was well acquainted with Ragusan historiographic tradition, Ragusan code of law and other official books which he explicitly mentions on several occasions in his text (*Statute*, *Liber viridis*, *Liber croceus*, chancellery and customs registers, documents pertaining to land division in Primorje etc.), and he also employed historical examples, quotations and paraphrases (he mentions Romans, Jews, Huns, Emperor Theodosius, Pope Leo, king of Portugal, etc.). He often grounds his argumentation on anecdotes from the lives of historic figures or literary protagonists (Alexander the Great, Agesilaus, Dionysius Siculus, Rodomonte),

⁷³ Petar's text was referred to as such by J. Sopta, »Franjevci u Slanom i kapetan Petar Ohmućević«, pp. 79–80.

⁷⁴ The Ohmućević were strongly connected with the Franciscans of Slano, and it appears likely that Petar owed his early education to the many learned members of this Franciscan monastery who were of similar descent. There is no doubt that Petar was well-versed in the Latin, Italian and Spanish language.

and also refers to the works of Aristotle, Plutarch, Ragusan annalists and historian Ludovik Tuberon Cerva. In places, Petar boldly criticises the current class framework and political practice in his home Republic, comparing it to other cities and states. At the same time, he pledges wholehearted loyalty to the nobility and emphasises his devotion to Dubrovnik homeland.

Petar justifies the excessive length of his statement addressed to the Senate by the multitude of accusations. It appears far more likely that the whole case was without precedent in the legal practice of Dubrovnik, and between Petar's lines one may anticipate that he was also guided by broader implications which greatly exceeded personal rivalry between him and Đonko Gradi. Petar claims that Đonko is but only one of his persecutors, and that behind him is a group of (unnamed) nobles who manipulate Đonko into their diabolic "operations". The opposite party evidently held that Petar violated the existing legal order, that is, he undermined its stability. Petar, however, repeatedly emphasises that he has always acted with due respect towards the entire Ragusan nobility, including his persecutors. In his opinion, the charges that defamed him were maliciously filed after his departure from Dubrovnik, so that he could not state his case in person. He claims that his ancestors had always been in good relations with the Gradi nobility, while the animosity that had been going on for a couple of years was initiated by Đonko himself and his allies, yet despite all their efforts over the years they failed in bringing Petar to court.

Referring to previous disputes, Petar lists all charges that Đonko had formerly raised against him. Clearly irritated by the aforementioned building projects on Petar's behalf in Slano in 1580, Đonko reported him for having commissioned altars and marble gravestone in the chapel of St. Roch in Grgurići and in the Franciscan church of St. Jerome with an inscription that did not befit a man of his status, for avoiding to show due respect to the counts of Slano, for inciting the local peasants to rebellion, etc. In Petar's words, the Senate then appointed Josip Giorgi and Frano Gozze to hear his testimony, after which he was granted "absolution", i.e., he was allowed to leave Dubrovnik.

The main count of the accusation—the crime of forgery—was related to a long-drawn-out dispute over land borders in Slano, caused by Đonko's usurpation of a part of the estate that had been bought by Ivelja, Petar's father, in 1555. A commission was appointed to perform a land survey, and in order to prove the legal grounds of land acquisition, Petar commissioned the copies of all relevant documents certifying to a flawless chain of title. Apparently, the case was concluded with an attempt—albeit unsuccessful as it eventually turned out—at settlement

between the two parties. Petar also evokes the fact that Đonko managed on one occasion to have the court summon him to Dubrovnik by reporting him for the neglect of his vassal obligations towards him, such as rendering a certain quantity of manure etc. Petar saw this as an injury to his honour and public defamation, because the summons was publicly announced in the Ragusan consulate in Naples. In his statement, Petar implicitly disapproves of the Senate's decision to send such a document in the first place, considering that defamation of the rival was the main purpose of the charges, an act which, for example, the authorities of Naples would never have accepted or tolerated.

From Petar's document we also learn that it was Đonko himself who undermined his admission to the Order of St. Stephen Pope in Pisa. During the procedure, Đonko sent a letter to the chancellors of the Order, claiming that Petar was not only his serf (*vilan*), but so were his ancestors back in four generations on both sides. His, in Petar's terms, defamatory libel (*libello difamatorio*), Đonko on that occasion supported with the testimonies of his underlings and tenant farmers.

Finally, from the turbulent history of their bad relations, Petar describes yet another moment. The mentioned Capaccio's book, printed under Petar's patronage in Naples in 1582—which Petar himself either exhibited or presented in person to Đonko as proof of his status and affirmation in Italy—the latter scribbled all over and destroyed in a fit of fury.

Đonko's accusation that he had forged a part of the record in the chancellery Book of Sales, Petar qualified as absurd. He emphasised that the official registers in Dubrovnik were most carefully protected against unauthorised use, and that the correction for which he was accused might have been made only by "old Sfondrati", who entered the contract into the register. He, of course, referred to the long-term chancellor, Marin Sfondrati (†1572). Petar claims that the Ohmućević surname is the true surname (*vero cognome*) of his lineage, which he has decided to use following the example of his father Ivelja, who "revived" it. To the accusation Đonko also enclosed the testimonies of some witnesses who claimed that they had no knowledge about Petar's descent from the Grgurić Ohmućević lineage. By concluding that if a person had no knowledge of something it did not necessarily mean that it did not exist, Petar discredited the witnesses with a statement about their poverty and malice, warning that they were people who depended on Đonko's mercy. The following counts of the charges concerned the graves, altars and the sacristy in the Franciscan church in Slano, and Đonko also deemed utterly inappropriate, and at the same time incriminating, the extravagant commemorations which Petar organised there in memory of one of his brothers. Determined to

prove that Petar's ancestors, from as early as the establishment of Ragusan rule in Primorje, had been serfs of the Gradi family, Đonko enclosed a copy from a "book of his ancestors" (*libro di suoi antenati*), in which entered under 25 October 1400 were the names of the brothers Brajan and Grgur Grgurić, brothers Pribil and Brajko Grgurić, along with Brajan's sons, Radivoj and Radić Brajenović.

In order to refute Đonko's allegations regarding fabricated descent, Petar embarks on a discussion about patronymics, that is, about the process of the shaping of surnames and their stabilisation. In his argumentation, he first warns that (permanent) surnames tend to stabilise somewhat faster in the cities, whereas patronymics or nicknames prevail in the rural areas. In that context Petar writes about the customs among the Illyrian and/or Slavic people (*la nostra natione Illyrica, uso illyrico, uso slavonico*), where it is common for the members of the same lineage to use several surname forms. He draws special attention to the process of forming and stabilisation of the lineage names of the Ragusan nobility. His first example is the Gradi family. Their progenitor was Vuk Gređić, who as a commander of a modest "Bosnian" tower of St. Nicholas at Prijeko joined the Ragusan side and became a nobleman whose surname first appeared in the variants Gradić and Grede, later stabilised in the form of Gradi. He further cites a series of examples of the change of surname among Ragusan noble and citizen lineages. Gozze were originally known as Peccorario, Palmotta as Vladimir, and many noble lineages also had branches which in everyday speech were identified by other bynames, for example, Menze–Matušić, Gondola–Cigljanović, Bobali–Goić, Luccari–Mandaljenić, Cerva–Šaletić, Bona–Pjerutić. Sargo, the largest lineage in terms of size, had a most developed network of branches known as Tilikalović, Klisović, Jeruzalemović, Krivošić, Čeoniković etc. A similar pattern, as Petar expounds, was adopted by distinguished non-noble lineages. Dolisti captains traced their descent from the Tasovčić, and the Letiela from Miljenović. The branches of the seafarers' lineage of Sagrojević (Sagri) bear the surnames Skočibuha, Vardabašić, Krivonosović, Radmirović, Stjepović and others. Additionally, he mentions the names of magnates and rulers with alternating surnames and patronymics, and provides examples of different surname forms of the Tvrtković, Nemanjić, Kosača, Frankopan and others.

A similar case, Petar emphasises, may be observed with the Grgurić of Slano; although generations of this lineage used mainly patronymics, they were aware of their old, common origin and kin name. Therefore, both Petar and his brothers, alongside the Iveljić patronymic, also bore the Grgurić surname, yet following their father, they resurrected their true surname (*vero cognome*) Ohmućević. Petar admits that his ancestors, although of noble birth, with the establishment of Ragusan

rule were deprived of their estates in Primorje, but he refers to them as peasants (*contadini*), and not serfs (*villani*). The statement that for a man of noble birth deprivation of power or estate does not mean loss of noble title Petar illustrates with proverbial examples from the lives of various rulers. According to his interpretation, in Dubrovnik there is no such law that would prevent a farmer from changing his lord, and neither did Đonko's ancestors—with whom, as he stresses, his forefathers had good relations—ever call Petar's ancestors serfs, but simply peasants. Secondly, he adds that the Gradi tacitly left their old houses to them and allowed the construction of new ones, which can be testified by more prominent inhabitants of Slano. By refuting Đonko's statements on the serf status of his ancestors, Petar comes forward with data from the family genealogy, referring to a book which, during Ragusan acquisition of Primorje (1400), was compiled by Đonko's ancestor, Junije Gradi, that is, to the same source that Đonko also cited in his charges as "a book of his ancestors". In it, Petar quotes, his direct ancestors, notably Brajan Hranisavov Grgurić, are recorded as *zentilotti* (petty nobility).

In his defence, Petar provides a detailed genealogical survey of his lineage which he had compiled based on tradition and testimonies of respectable people "from Slano, Primorje, Bosnia, Krajina and Herzegovina". Apart from the Ohmućević, who under different patronymics live in Grgurići and in Slano, the branches of that lineage have expanded throughout Hum and in Bosnia (Soli, Smucka, Blažuj, Gacko, Duvno, Makarska krajina). Providing data on a generation of the *zentilotti* of Primorje from the period when it was incorporated into the territory of the Dubrovnik Republic, he referred among others, to an unknown historiographic work written by the Ragusan chronicler Petar Luccari, known as *Sarvaz*, who on these developments—judging by the references in Petar's text—wrote differently and more extensively than his famous namesake, Jakov Luccari. The conflict over the acquisition of Primorje that started in 1403 between King Ostoja and Bosnian magnates (Duke Pavao Radenović, Sandalj Hranić, Radić Sanković and *župan* Dobroslav of Primorje) on the one, and the Ragusans on the other side, Petar Luccari described as an intensive war that lasted as long as three years.⁷⁵ Speaking of the status enjoyed by his ancestors, Petar also leans on Ragusan official records

⁷⁵ Given that in the Luccari genealogy we do not find the name Petar, it is more likely that the author of that chronicle was in fact Marin Marinov Luccari (1507–1564), who owes his link to historiography to the fact that he was a nephew, by maternal side, of the famous chronicler Nikola Ragnina. He held military offices in the Republic, and is also known for his Latin verse, see: Nenad Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika, vol. 5 – Odabrane biografije (E–Pe)*, Zagreb – Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2014: p. 197.

concerning the division of newly-acquired land in Primorje (*Terre Nove*), and it seemed essential to him to prove the kinship tie with the famous Sanković lineage of Hum, lords of Popovo; by the end of the fourteenth century, Radič Sanković was admitted to Ragusan nobility. He also presents a thorough review of his descent by the female line, which also included members of most distinguished Hum lineages, such as the Tasovčić (Kutlović), Čihorić, Ljubibratić, Bosnić (Marojević) and Bogašinović, warning that in the Ragusan documents they were all recorded as “dukes and *katunari*”. Petar proudly emphasises his Bosnian descent and the fact that his family had always celebrated the Feast of Sts. Cosmas and Damian, their family’s patron saints, according to Bosnian custom (*al uso Bosnese*).

Evidently, Đonko Gradi was well acquainted with Petar’s genealogy of the Ohmućević, for he resorted to all means in order to deny its authenticity. In his denunciation, he expressed doubt about the fact that Petar’s ancestor Grgur, having committed murder, fled from Bosnia to Slano, which at the time was also under Bosnian rule. Petar responds that Grgur first arrived at Pelješac, which at the time had already been incorporated into Dubrovnik territory, more accurately, to Dubrave (Hodilje), where he commissioned a grave that can still be seen today near the church of St. Vitus (Sv. Vid).

One of the counts in Đonko’s accusation referred to Petar’s alteration of the inscription on the gravestone of his ancestor Brajan Hranisaljić with the purpose of presenting himself as Ohmućević. To this allegation Petar responds that the mentioned gravestone was in the ground, in the churchyard of St. Jerome in Slano, and that he had it hauled because the letters were worn out. In doing so, he commissioned the copying of the inscription that was still readable—*Sepultura di Brayan Hranisaglich detto Gargurich cum omnibus heredibus suis 1432*—of which an authentic document was drafted in the presence of Andrija Palmotta, count of Slano, by his chancellor Ivan Kastrati.⁷⁶ It is impossible to say whether the inscription had later been altered, because the whereabouts of that gravestone are not known today, while according to some of Petar’s other accounts we may assume that Đonko destroyed it or had it relocated elsewhere. Yet, preserved in the church of St. Jerome is a gravestone of Brajan’s grandson Vukoslav Radivojević from 1472, which reads: S(epvltvra) · DE · VOCHOSLAV · / RADIVOIEVICH ·

⁷⁶ This had probably taken place by the end of 1582 or in the beginning of 1583, because Andrija Džorin Palmota (1536–1592) was elected count of Slano on 27 October 1582 for a six-month office term. In 1592 he was re-elected to the same office, during which he died.

DITO · GERGVRICH · FAMIL/IE · OHMVCHIEVICH · /M·CCCC·LXXII. Even today, a close examination of the inscription will show that a section of the inscription is a “palimpsest”, because underneath the words *FAMILIE OHMVCHIEVICH* the word *HEREDIBVS* is still visible, which speaks in support of Đonko’s allegation that the inscriptions on the gravestones were, in fact, recarved.

Arguing in his defence, Petar comes forward with a series of counter-accusations against Đonko. He writes about his assaults on the Ohmućević, their graves and items of the churches of St. Roch and St. Jerome, where he attacked and insulted the Franciscan friars. The church of St. Roch in Grgurići was erected by Petar’s ancestors in 1528, as a votive offering for the deliverance from plague that raged in the previous two years, and they gradually furnished it with valuable items. In the church there stood an inscription whose erection was probably initiated by Petar. In his text he quotes it in full, first in the original, Cyrillic form, followed by Latin transliteration: “Here the lineage Grgurići / of the kindred Ohmućević / of Hrelja *ban* of Kostur / of Bosnian descent / together gave glory to God / built this church / dedicated it to Roch and the Holy wonderworkers [i.e., Sts. Cosmas and Damianus] / because they were liberated from the plague in 1528”. According to Petar, the plaque with the inscription Đonko and his men tore down, and he took it to his garden in Gruž, all this being done “by order” (!) of his brother-in-law, count of Slano.⁷⁷

Indeed, the inscriptions on the gravestones of Brajan Hranisaljić (1432) and Vukoslav Radivojević (1472) could not contain the Ohmućević surname. However, besides the altar and the gravestone from 1580, which had already been mentioned, the Ohmućević surname appears on yet another, older, far more modest gravestone from 1569, also in the church of St. Jerome. It was most likely installed by Petar’s uncles, and carved in stone is the name of Petar’s grandfather: EREDIBVS · IOAN(n)I MILATOVICH / FAMILIE · OHMVCHIEVICH / DICTI · GARGUREVIC/H · CVM · SVCESORIBVS / M · D · L · XIX.

Further, in his defence Petar accuses Đonko of having destroyed the boundary stones in Slano which, after the previous dispute, were laid in his presence and with his consent, as well as the presence of Andrija Pozza, count of Slano. For

⁷⁷ Although his name is not mentioned in the text, it was doubtless Andrija Antojev Pozza (1549–1614), elected count of Slano on 27 February 1584. For more details on him, see: Zdenka Janeković Römer, »Obiteljska knjiga Andrije Antojeva de Pozza (1569–1603).« in: *Med srednjo Evropo in Sredozemljem. Vojetov zbornik*, ed. Sašo Jerše, Peter Štih and Darja Mihelič. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU, 2006: pp. 485–497.

that lawsuit Petar commissioned the copies of all documents related to his estate, including the purchase contract of Usječnik from 1555, which Đonko studied for days with his “colleague” Frano Luccari. Petar poses a question as to why, back then, they had not accused him of using the Ohmućević surname.

Given the moral implications of Đonko’s violent actions—demolition of gravestones, destruction of church items, contempt of the Slano Franciscans—which, by no means, befit a Christian, let alone a nobleman, Petar also draws attention to his opponent’s action which was of no direct relevance to the case, yet could have served as a testimony to his vile nature and disrespect of the dead. While restoring his city house in the immediate vicinity of the church of St. Stephen, Đonko destroyed ancient graves and excavated the bones of King Stjepan and Queen Mara, and had them buried at an inappropriate location. Đonko claimed to have been granted papal dispensation for this, about which Petar harboured serious doubts.⁷⁸

Lastly, Petar accuses Đonko that he, together with Count Andrija Pozza and chancellor Ivan Kastrati, after Petar’s departure from Slano, harassed his mother, an elderly woman, forbade her domestics to buy goods at the Slano market with a sneering remark that “there is no grain for their house and that they should seek supplies in Bosnia or at the Spanish court”. Petar stresses that Đonko acts unlawfully because no other but the Republic authorities have the power to deprive a person of the noble title. He arbitrarily punishes Petar’s family, destroys his property, denies his right by which, together with other *zentilotti* (petty nobility), he is entitled to use his ancient surname and honour the memories of his ancestors, and perform God-pleasing deeds. However, nobility, Petar reminds, rests on goodness and virtue, and of that one cannot be deprived by decree.

⁷⁸ Judging by his interests, Junije (Đonko) Matov Gradi (1549–1594) was probably one of the first Ragusan antiquarians. Relocation of the remains from the grave in front of the church of St. Stephen, believed to be the bones of King Stjepan and Queen Mara, he recorded with a stone inscription in Latin built into the church wall, while on the grandfather’s palace in the immediate vicinity, which he “decorated, refurbished and expanded”, he installed another inscription commemorating his actions. Also, in 1592 he bought and renovated the villa of Pasko Franov Sorgo (“Mleci”) at Lapad. For more details on him, see: Nenad Vekarić, *Vlastela grada Dubrovnika, vol. 2 – Vlasteoski rodovi (A–L)*. Zagreb – Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2012: pp. 281–282. Illustrative of Đonko’s impetuous nature is also a case from March of 1583, when he attacked and seriously injured a certain Margarita Petrova. The Criminal Court sentenced him to a huge fine of 200 ducats, which he paid without delay. *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 67, f. 97r–v.

In his defence Petar often invokes loyalty to the Republic and proven patriotism of his lineage. To substantiate this statement, he writes that in Naples it took him a year to gather various privileges that the kings of Naples and Spain granted to Dubrovnik. He had them copied into a book illuminated with gilded miniatures, after which the copies of these documents ambassador Marin Bincola took to the Spanish court. He is particularly embittered by Đonko's many insults to his family, calling them villeins (*villani*) and pig keepers (*guardiani di porci*). Listing the building endeavours of his Grgurić ancestors, after which the whole settlement was named, valorous actions of his kin at sea, notably of his father and the five brothers who, with their ships, supplied the Republic over the years, whereupon in the service of the Spanish Crown four of them lost their lives defending Catholic faith from the Turks, Petar asks the senators whether all these deeds are the doing of pig keepers.

Finally, Ohmućević lists by name some forty prominent old men, dukes, counts, *katunari* and friars from Primorje, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Neretva and Krajina who can testify to the authenticity of his genealogy.⁷⁹

Rejecting all allegations, Petar concludes his response with three statements. Firstly, his persecutor charges him with irrelevant matters in which he enjoys support of powerful allies, and “buys” new followers every day. Since hatred is their sole motivation, Petar believes that on account of the contributions that he and his family have made to the Republic, justice will be on his side. Secondly, he humbly pleads the senators to forgive the excessive length and tone of his letter, especially if his caustic words may have offended someone. He argues that it was the multitude of allegations that obliged him to state in his defence everything that his mind commanded, and if he had erred in some way, he pleads that it be ascribed to his ignorance because with his entire soul he remains a loyal servant of the Republic and Ragusan nobility. Thirdly, he himself has not committed any crime, as opposed to his rival who violated the laws and officials of the Republic, a blasphemer who desecrated holy places, attacked priests, destroyed graves and disturbed the dead. For the sake of virtue, justice and love of God that preserves and maintains the glory and honour of the Republic, Petar petitions to be protected from unreasonable persecution and be found innocent so as to be able to restore the honour of his family name, and in well-being continue to serve the illustrious lords, grateful for their goodness and honesty. His statement ends in a humble

⁷⁹ It is noteworthy that the majority of the surnames of the proposed witnesses soon found their way into the Korjenić-Neorić Armorial, an ostensible heraldic compendium of the pre-Ottoman elite.

tone: “I pray incessantly for the Lord to bestow all the happiness and glory upon the Republic, and to bring upon each of your most eminent and most excellent lords all the happiness and pleasure”, signed as “humble and loyal subject and servant Petar Iveljić Ohmućević”.⁸⁰

Epilogue

We do not know as to how Petar’s statement of defence from 1585 was received in Dubrovnik, since the Senate minutes from that period make no mention of it. It was not until 29 January 1586 that his petition for a twelve-month extension to appear before the Rector was accepted. It was submitted on his behalf by an unnamed power of attorney.⁸¹ Petar repeats his statements on the absurdity of the accusations and on his innocence, hoping for a just decision of the court. He states that he would have already made his appearance in the city had he not had some previous engagements at the Spanish court, where he is negotiating a reimbursement of 8,000 ducats for his service to the Catholic king. He deems that his affairs could take some time, but as a son of his father who in the service of the Republic lost his life, he reconfirms his loyalty and allegiance to the Ragusan authorities. Although the Senate responded to the petition affirmatively, whether because of his obligations, pride or simply because he sensed an unfavourable development of the events, Petar did not turn up in Dubrovnik by the stated date.

Instead, on 20 March 1586 he wrote yet another letter to the Rector and the Republic Senate, which he sent via the Ragusan vice-consul in Genoa.⁸² He again apologises for his nonappearance due to his engagements at the Spanish court, and in order to substantiate his previous statement, he details his genealogy in 38 articles which, also in the form of a family tree chart, along with the relevant coats of arms and gathered documents were enclosed with the letter. Petar again appeals to the senators to have the proposed witnesses heard, who can confirm his statements on the origin and the ancestors of the Ohmućević. He particularly appeals that a Ragusan subject Stjepan Radov Fauković (Hvaokovich), known as Alegretti or Čistelj from Mrčevo near Slano, an old man aged around 105 who was staying in Genoa at the time, be summoned and heard at the consulate in

⁸⁰ AMB, vol. 548, f. 36v.

⁸¹ *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, vol. 68, f. 281v–282r.

⁸² AMB, vol. 548, f. 42r–56v.

Genoa.⁸³ The document, as well as Petar's first response to the charges, has been preserved only in the volume containing the copies of family documents, so we do not know whether the Senate actually received his letter and reconsidered the whole case. Time would show that the departure from Slano in 1584 was Petar's last farewell to the Ragusan homeland.

Namely, from Petar's letter sent to the Republic from the port of Cádiz in 1590,⁸⁴ we learn that his case was not concluded and that his plaintiff and the judges were still after him. The letter must have been written a few months after 28 February 1590, when Petar signed the *asiento* with King Philip II concerning the building of the Illyrian squadron. Petar had previously informed the senators about his great success, emphasising now that as a naval commander he would just as loyally have served the Republic if he had been offered an opportunity to return home as its native subject. Instead, he experienced a new disappointment as the news from Dubrovnik reached him in Naples: two senators, accompanied by a squad of soldiers, arrived at his house in Slano to search the premises hoping to find and apprehend him, while a reward was issued on his head.

His final address to the Republic Petar concludes as follows: "Therefore I petition your Lordships to stop and think what you are doing because you are not gods on earth, nor do you govern all, and you are susceptible to the misfortune of this world like many other countries had been before (...) it is appropriate that with the utmost of attention you dwell on this case which is neither insignificant nor does it require brief consideration (...) as I have said, I cannot stop being who I am, and believe me, as long as I live I shall protect all subjects of the Republic, from which you too, as has been the case until now, will truly benefit".⁸⁵ Eventually, no proceedings were launched against Petar probably because of his decision not to return to Dubrovnik. He spent the rest of his life in the service of the Spanish Crown. Petar confirmed his definite separation from his Dubrovnik homeland by deciding to divide joint owned property with his elder brother Ivan. At the beginning of 1592 the brothers

⁸³ Starting from the already established narrative on the history of his lineage, in this statement Petar systematised and amended some genealogical data pertaining to the male and female line of his ancestry. He described in detail the status of the Grgurić after Dubrovnik's acquisition of Primorje. He confirmed that despite loss of the estates, thanks to the good relationship with the Gradi nobility they preserved their houses and the status of free men, and that they lived off the revenues from their "old estates" in Popovo and Orahovo, and after Turkish occupation they gradually turned to maritime commerce, which helped them rise again.

⁸⁴ AMB, vol. 548, f. 38r–41r.

⁸⁵ AMB, vol. 548, f. 41r–v.

met in Naples and entrusted the division to two arbiters—compatriots Jakov Ivanov *de Pollo* and Jeronim Klandari. Division was concluded in Naples on 28 February 1592.⁸⁶ Of the cross-border estates Ivan became the owner of all *starine* (hereditates) in Orahovo (Crno, Brajanov Tor, Duboki Do), while the lands in Popovo, as well as those between Čvaljina and Zavala became Petar's, under condition that the brothers shared the amount of annual tribute to the Turks. The estates on Dubrovnik territory, in Usječenik, Osmine and Slano, were distributed to Ivan and his heirs, while the family house in Naples with all movable property was distributed to Petar. As regarding the former Bogašinović estates that were brought into the family as dowry of Ivan's and Petar's mother Jelena, which brothers would inherit after her death, i.e., lands along the western and eastern Republic border, possessions in Jošica in *Rissano* and Prijevor in *Castelnuovo* were distributed to Ivan, while those of Brijestica in *Slivno di Narenta*, Klek, Duba, Čista Luka, and Mioča Luka, were to be inherited by Petar. The estates of distant forefathers in Bosnia and Macedonia, under the Ottomans for an already long period, were not distributed but were left to Ivan's and Petar's successors once these lands came under Christian rule. With respect to the joint ownership of ships, Petar became the owner of galleon *Santo Spirito*, and Ivan of a smaller galleon *San Bonaventura*. Moreover, it was decided that the galleon *Santa Maria de Loreto et San Antonio*, built in Salerno for Philip II's squadron, was to remain in joint ownership for the brothers to use interchangeably over a three-year period each.

Lastly, in March 1594 Captain Petar Ivelja Ohmućević Grgurić *Illyrico* submitted to the Royal Council in Naples and to the viceroy, Count de Miranda, an extensive diplomatic and genealogical material and thus officially launched the procedure for the recognition of the noble title. The most important documents that he produced were the so-called originals of the five privileges granted to their noble ancestors in Bosnia and Macedonia, which Petar assembled in the early 1580s.⁸⁷ Sacred Royal Council (*Sacro Regio Consiglio*) of Naples registered and confirmed all the Ohmućević documents as authentic, while their copies *ad*

⁸⁶ AMB, vol. 146, f. 79r–87v.

⁸⁷ These documents included the following: charter granted to Radivoj and his son Grgur on 28 December 1268 by *Ban Stjepan Kotromanić*; charter granted to Hrelja Ohmućević on 10 April 1349 by Tsar Stefan Dušan; charter granted to Hranisav Ohmućević Grgurić, his brothers and sons on 4 June 1395 by King Tvrtko; charter granted by King Ostoja on 15 May 1406 to Brajan Ohmućević Grgurić, as well as a charter granted by King Matthias Corvinus on Sunday after All Saints Day in 1465 to Radivoj Ohmućević Grgurić and his son Milat. Given that the first four charters were written in Croatian in Cyrillic script, Petar had them translated into Italian.

futuram rei memoriam were housed in the local convent of St. Claire. By doing so, Petar, in his third homeland, the Kingdom of Spain and the Vice-kingdom of Naples, finally succeeded in obtaining confirmation of the nobility of his ancestry, which was an essential step towards the honour of becoming a knight of the Order of St. James in 1596, shortly before his death in Lisbon.⁸⁸

In the meantime, Dubrovnik Republic decided to “renounce” Petar. As soon as the news that the Turks near Messina seized three ships with Ragusan crews from the fleet of his Illyrian squadron reached Dubrovnik by the end of 1594, Ragusan authorities sent detailed instructions to their ambassadors in Constantinople as to how to react to the imminent accusations regarding this event.⁸⁹ The envoys were required to state that Petar Iveljić, although born in Slano, displeased with his status of a Ragusan subject and a person of low rank changed his name into Petar Ohmućević and proclaimed himself descendant of the Bosnian nobility, and having exiled himself together with his kin from Dubrovnik, he decided to join the service of the Spanish king, and thenceforth for his ships he paid neither the *arboraticum* nor any other usual levies to the Dubrovnik state.

Until his death in 1594, Đonko Gradi, Petar’s plaintiff, no longer had an opponent in Slano. When it became crystal clear that Petar would never return to his native place, Đonko marked his triumph by installing a new plaque with an inscription in the church of St. Roch in Grgurići, from where, as has already been mentioned, he had removed the plaque with the Cyrillic inscription which testified that the church, as a votive offering for the cessation of the plague, dedicated to St. Roch and Sts. Cosmas and Damian was erected in 1528 by the *Gargurić* lineage of the Ohmućević clan.

In the text of the stone inscription carved in monumental Roman capital letters—one among the few epigraphic monuments in Latin script of the time written in Croatian—Đonko, son of Matko Gradić, refers to himself as the lord

⁸⁸ As year of Petar’s death, Croatian literature usually cited 1599, yet according to Spanish archival sources he died in Lisbon on 10 September 1596. J. L. Casabán, »Santiago de Galicia and the Illyrian squadron«: p. 259.

⁸⁹ *Litterae et commissiones Levantis*, vol. 38, f. 234v–235r, State Archives in Dubrovnik; J. Tadić, *Španija i Dubrovnik u XVI. v.*: p. 121; V. Foretić, »Udio naših ljudi u stranim mornaricama i općim pomorskim zbivanjima kroz stoljeća.«: p. 299.



Donko Gradi's inscription in the church of St. Roch in Grgurići

“by will of God of this land and of this village”, while the Grgurić, Petar’s ancestors, are mentioned only as serfs who, by permission of Donko’s ancestors, built the church. The text of the inscription runs as follows: “In order to remember the mercy which my ancestors granted to all their serfs Grgurići, I, Donko, son of Matko Gradi and by the will of God lord of this land and of this village, wished to erect this inscription here in this church, dedicated to Saint Roch and Holy wonderworkers, so that it testifies that the said serfs with the permission of their said lords in the time of the great plague which was spreading here among them, erected this church for the glory of the Lord God”.⁹⁰

The erection of Donko’s inscription, today mounted above the choir on the inner facade wall of the church of St. Roch in Grgurići, thus symbolically concluded “the case” of Petar Iveljić Grgurić, self-proclaimed Ohmućević, strongly believing that he alone and his ancestors were the legitimate descendants and worthy successors of the ancient nobility of the Kingdom of Bosnia.

⁹⁰ The inscription is published in: [Vlaho] Fortunić – [Matej] Milas, *Slano – istoričke crtice*. Zagreb: Tipografija d. d., 1935: p. 34, note 9; J. Sopta, »Franjevci u Slanom i kapetan Petar Ohmućević«: pp. 83–84.