

HOMICIDES AMONG RELATIVES IN THE REPUBLIC OF DUBROVNIK (1667-1806)

NENAD VEKARIĆ

ABSTRACT: The article analyses 185 homicides committed among relatives in the Republic of Dubrovnik between the great earthquake of 1667 and the Republic's fall in 1806. Although each homicide involving relatives is a case in itself, the analysis has shown that the murders tend to breed on a number of socially determined factors which remain beyond the mental frame of the offenders themselves. Besides an uneven seasonal, monthly and gender distribution of crime, the impact of the underlying social trends is supported by a correlation between the number of homicides and the overall social climate, type of family structure, and the geographical distribution of crime with regard to the Republic border.

Key words: Dubrovnik, criminal history, homicide, infanticide, family, 17th century, 18th century

Although homicide is an act known to all societies and all periods, it bears the stamp of the time and space in which it occurs. Taking another man's life is a most serious criminal offence, a final act. An individual will resort to murder upon real or virtual threat of his vital interests. Being a reaction to a social

Nenad Vekarić, head of the Institute for Historical Sciences of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Dubrovnik. Address: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, Lapad-ska obala 6, 20000 Dubrovnik, Croatia. E-mail: nenad.vekaric@du.t-com.hr

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situation, murder is subject to continuous change.¹ The causes and motives of homicide provide insight into the fundamental values, mentality and features of a society at a given time period. A deed blasphemous in one civilisation may be deemed trivial in another. In one society it will easily lead to violence, yet in another to ridicule. One could say that murder rate is a fairly reliable indicator of the “society’s health”, and the trend in homicides a valuable pointer of the direction the society is heading.

Homicide among relatives is a topic exceptionally appealing to a family historian, because it reveals the most vulnerable aspects of family organisation. Domestic murders are in direct correlation with family structure, and homicides of this type bring to focus the weakest points, details which have an inhibiting effect upon the functioning of the social atom.

This study aims to highlight the social dimension behind the murders in the Dubrovnik Republic, leaving aside the questions pertaining to the criminal procedure and penal system.²

My analysis is based on the criminal proceedings recorded in the archival series *Lamenta del Criminale*,³ but also in the series *Lamenta de intus et de foris*,⁴ in which certain volumes of the *Lamenta del Criminale* had been placed by mistake. Since some murder proceedings were written down on separate leaves (*in foglio*), the majority of which have not been preserved (mostly those from the second half of the eighteenth century),⁵ data on a certain number of cases is available only from the verdict register.⁶

The number of 185 murder cases amongst relatives which are the object of my analysis, constitute 32.12% of the total number of homicides (576) recorded

¹ According to Pieter Spierenburg, »Faces of Violence: Homicide Trends and Cultural Meanings: Amsterdam 1431-1816.« *Journal of Social History* 27 (1994): p. 704, each violent crime exists between two axes, one of which determines the culprit at an individual level, and the other transmits the community’s cultural code.

² More details in: Nella Lonza, *Pod plaštem pravde*. Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 1997.

³ *Lamenta del Criminale* (hereafter cited as: *Lam. Crim.*), ser. 50.3. All the records are kept in the State Archives of Dubrovnik.

⁴ *Lamenta de Intus et Foris* (hereafter cited as: *Lam. Int. For.*), ser. 53.

⁵ These court proceedings are presented in the archival series *Acta et diplomata saec. XVIII*, ser. 76. Out of 287 criminal proceedings in this series, 97% belong to the first four decades. Others are lost or destroyed. N. Lonza, *Pod plaštem pravde*: p. 333.

⁶ *Libro delle Sentenze Criminali* (hereafter cited as: *LSC*), ser. 16, vol. 4-9.

in the mentioned archival material. It should be stressed that these sources document murders mainly among the citizens of Dubrovnik, and only exceptionally among foreigners (19), either as offenders or victims. The reason for their inclusion could be accounted by their residence in the Dubrovnik Republic, or, less often, by the Criminal Court's participation in the initial proceedings, probably only for investigation purposes.⁷ Taken together, the murders between the Ragusan subjects and foreign citizens which were mostly processed in the Senate (and there were about hundred such cases), it can be estimated that the share of murders among relatives in the overall number of murders was somewhat above 27%.

The research faced yet another limitation: the quality of the proceedings. The quality varied from one period to another, from one case to another. Some actions were characterised by an increasing engagement of the Criminal Court, with numerous witnesses and experts called to court in order to illuminate the event down to every detail. Some cases, however, are available in scanty accounts, providing, on occasion, no more than the mere technicalities. Given the inconsistency, the motives of the murders were difficult to articulate at times, while in some cases the doubt remained as to whether the crime had actually taken place. Thus I decided to include only the cases with convincing indications of murder despite the court's failure to prosecute as far as the final verdict, and omit the cases of death likely to have been caused by accident. Although the role of the "judge" viewed from the current perspective might be misleading, such a method proved necessary in order to compensate for the flawed data in the archival sources.

During the seventeenth century population began to decline throughout Europe,⁸ and in the Republic of Dubrovnik this process was so radical that the biological potentials of the state had dropped to the lowest level. There are a few reasons for this.⁹ Even though Dubrovnik was not directly involved in the Morean War (1684-1699), it had an important impact on the Republic's population through continuous ravages of the foreign troupes and bandits across

⁷ Vesna Miović-Perić, *Na razmeđu*. Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 1997: pp. 251-255.

⁸ Vladimir Stipetić, »Brojčani pokazatelj razvoja stanovništva na teritoriju negdašnje Dubrovačke Republike u minula tri stoljeća (1673-1981) - pokušaj valorizacije ostvarenog priraštaja u prvih 200 godina«. *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti JAZU u Dubrovniku* 27 (1989): pp. 99-107.

⁹ Nenad Vekarić, »Broj stanovnika Dubrovačke Republike u 15, 16. i 17. stoljeću«. *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 29 (1991): pp. 20-21.

the Ragusan territory, which was almost entirely a border region.¹⁰ Besides wars, a disastrous earthquake struck Dubrovnik in 1667, bringing the city down to its knees. According to the information from the oldest census extant, in 1673 the entire Republic of Dubrovnik had just above 25,000 inhabitants.¹¹

The year 1673 may not have been the bottom line, but the population continued to decline until the end of the first quarter of the eighteenth century. Indirect consequences of the Morean war and the Turko-Venetian war (1714-1718), famine,¹² as well as the epidemics at the end of the seventeenth and in the first decades of the eighteenth centuries (particularly the plague in 1691¹³) had probably reduced the number of inhabitants to less than 25,000.

In the 1720s, the demographic picture tended to change in favour of the rising trends, large-scale revival of shipbuilding and trade. This period marked the beginning of the demographic transition, characterised by mortality decline and population increase.

The analysis of homicides in the Dubrovnik Republic shows a direct correlation between crime and social environment, commonly described as the "general social climate". In periods of despair, the murder rate rises, while in periods of hope (positive expectations), it tends to decrease.¹⁴ Thus, in the second half of the seventeenth and in the first decades of the eighteenth century, in a period marked by overall insecurity caused by frequent raids, brigandage as well as the earlier mentioned adversities that had befallen the Republic, the number of homicides was markedly high (in the 1680s an annual average of 9 murders per 25,000 inhabitants, i.e. 35 murders per 100,000 inhabitants). Once the period of hope opened, and the population began to grow in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, the number of murders declined rapidly. The last three decades of the eighteenth century witnessed a fall in the murder ratio down to 5 murders per 100,000 inhabitants.

¹⁰ Radovan Samardžić, *Veliki vek Dubrovnika*. Beograd: Prosveta, 1983: pp. 154-155, 178, 180, 190, 196 et passim.

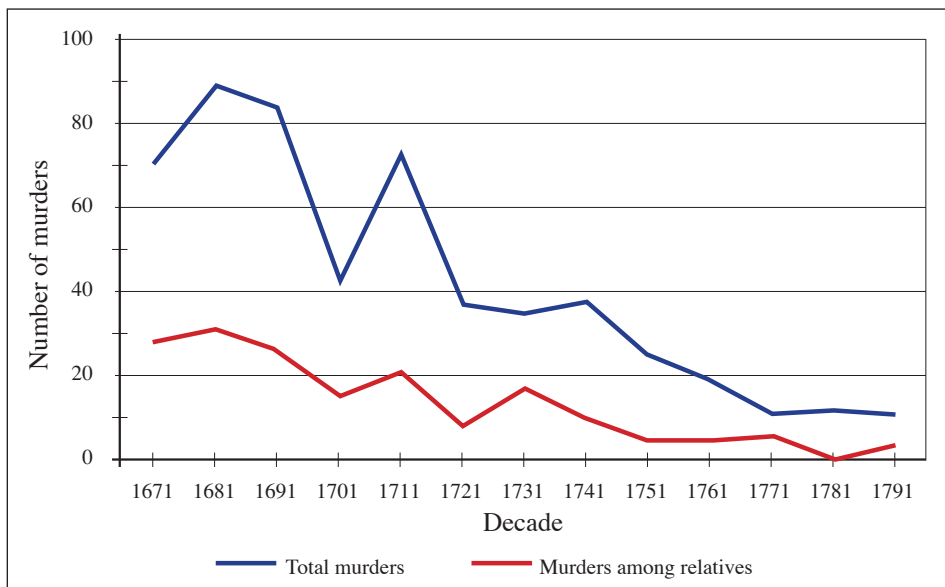
¹¹ N. Vekarić, »Broj stanovnika Dubrovačke Republike u 15, 16. i 17. stoljeću«: p. 19.

¹² V. Miović-Perić, *Na razmeđu*: p. 190, n. 498.

¹³ Risto Jeremić i Jorjo Tadić, *Prilozi za istoriju zdravstvene kulture starog Dubrovnika*, I. Beograd: Biblioteka Centralnog higijenskog zavoda, 1938: pp. 100-101; Vesna Miović-Perić, »Svakodnevnica dubrovačkih pograničnih sela u doba hajdučije (Morejski rat 1684-1699)«. *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 35 (1997): p. 27, n. 31.

¹⁴ During the crisis following the 1991 War in Croatia, Dubrovnik witnessed a significant rise in the number of homicides as compared to the pre-war period.

Graph 1. Murders among relatives and total murders by decades in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1671-1800)



Two smaller samples from fourteenth-century Florence indicate a very high ratio of murders—152 and 68 per 100,000 inhabitants.¹⁵ Thirteenth-century England had an annual murder rate of about 20 murders per 100,000 people,¹⁶ this ratio falling to around 15 by the end of the Middle Ages, around the year 1600 to 7, to 4 or 5 around 1700, only 2 at the turn of the seventeenth century, and only one homicide at the end of the twentieth century.¹⁷ Between 1630 and 1760, Sweden witnessed a marked drop of the homicide rate.¹⁸ The homicide ratio in Amsterdam in the first half of the sixteenth century amounted to about 28, dropping to between 21 and 24 in the second half of the century. By the end of the seventeenth century, it fell to about 9, and in the latter half of the eighteenth century, similar to Dubrovnik, was reduced to below 3 homicides

¹⁵ P. Spierenburg, »Faces of Violence«: p. 713, n. 12.

¹⁶ However, considerable annual oscillations between 4 and 110 cases per 100,000 inhabitants were at work (J. S. Cockburn, »Patterns of Violence in English Society: Homicide in Kent 1560-1985«. *Past and Present* 130 (1991): p. 72).

¹⁷ P. Spierenburg, »Faces of Violences«: p. 702. J. S. Cockburn, »Patterns of Violence in English Society«: p. 78, calculated the homicide rate in Kent over a long period between 1571 and 1981. After the last decade of the sixteenth century, the number never exceeded 6.

¹⁸ P. Spierenburg, »Faces of Violence«: p. 702.

Table 1. Regional distribution of victims in the murders among relatives (infanticides not included) in the Republic of Dubrovnik by decades (1667-1806)

Period	The victim's place/region of origin							
	Total	Dubrovnik	Konavle	Župa dubrovačka	Dubrovačko primorje	Pelješac	Rijeka dubrovačka	Dubrovnik islands
Total	121	13	38	10	26	18	8	0
1667/70	6		2	1	1	1	1	
1671/80	18	1	3	1	2	7	3	1
1681/90	21	4	9	1	3	1		3
1691/1700	18	1	5	1	7	3		1
1701/10	9		3	1		2	2	1
1711/20	16	3	9	1	2			1
1721/30	7		1		3	1	1	1
1731/40	8	2	2	1	2	1		
1741/50	6	2			3		1	
1751/60	4		1	1	1	1		
1761/70	2		1	1				
1771/80	4		1		1	1		
1781/90	0							
1791/1800	2		1	1				
1801/06	0							

per 100,000 inhabitants.¹⁹ Short-term fluctuations caused by crisis aside, the data cited on certain European countries show that the number of homicides had dropped below the ratio of 5:100,000 inhabitants first in England in the second half of the sixteenth century, and then in continental Europe some 50-100 years later, i.e. in the course of the eighteenth century. In the Dubrovnik Republic this level was reached in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Contrary to certain European trends (England, Holland), where the overall

¹⁹ P. Spierenburg, »Faces of Violence«: pp. 706-707. According to *Uniform Crime Reports* for 1965, the cities in the USA with the population between 25,000 and 50,000 evidenced an average of two homicides per year. The largest number of homicides has been recorded in Miami (15). In the same period in Uganda, the average was 12 homicides, in Sri Lanka 7, and in Great Britain 0.5 (Barbara A. Hanawalt, »Violent Death in Fourteenth- and Early Fifteenth- Century England«. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 18 (1976): pp. 301-302).

Graph 2. Regional distribution of murders among relatives (infanticides not included) by decades (1671-1800)

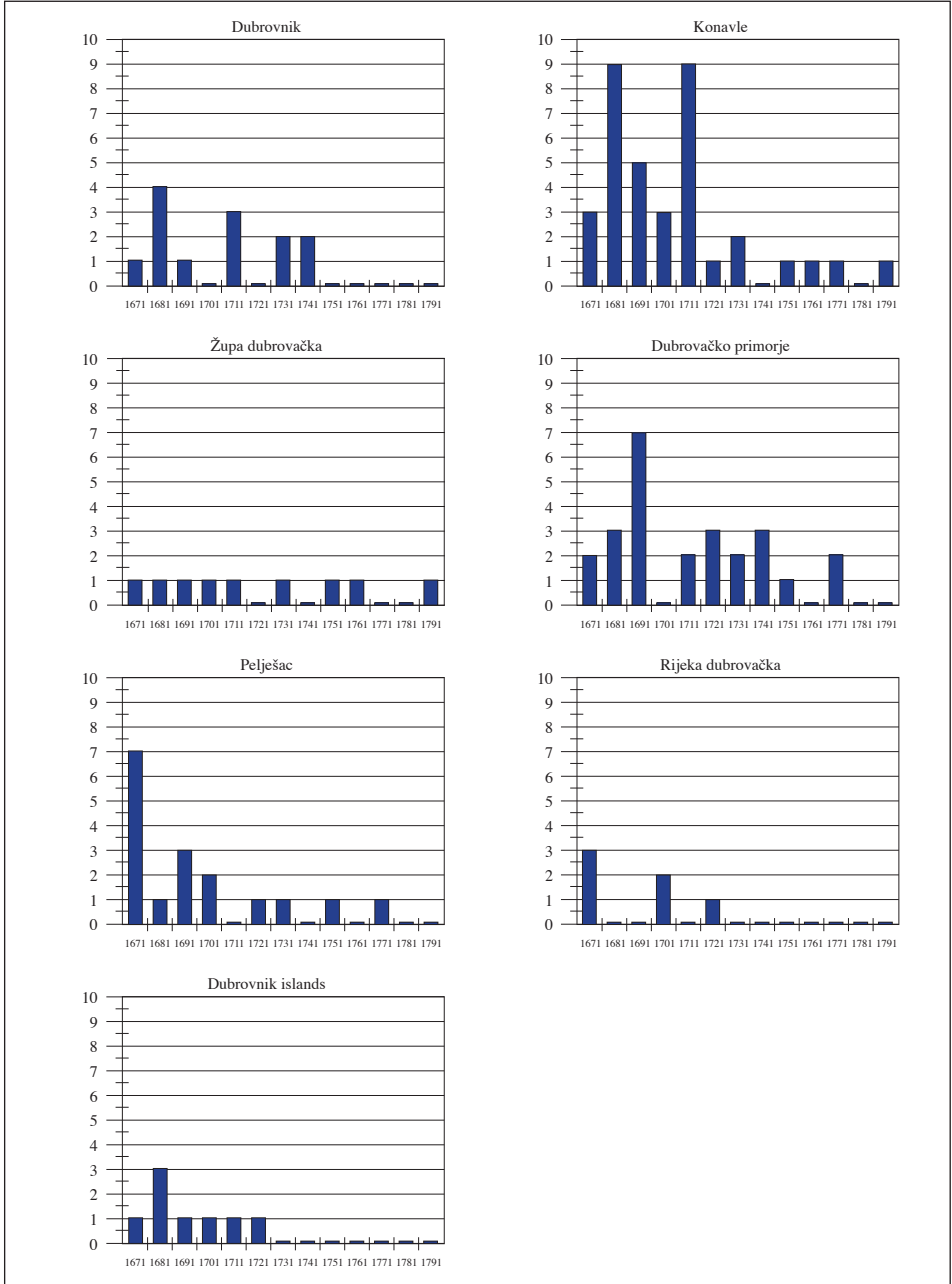


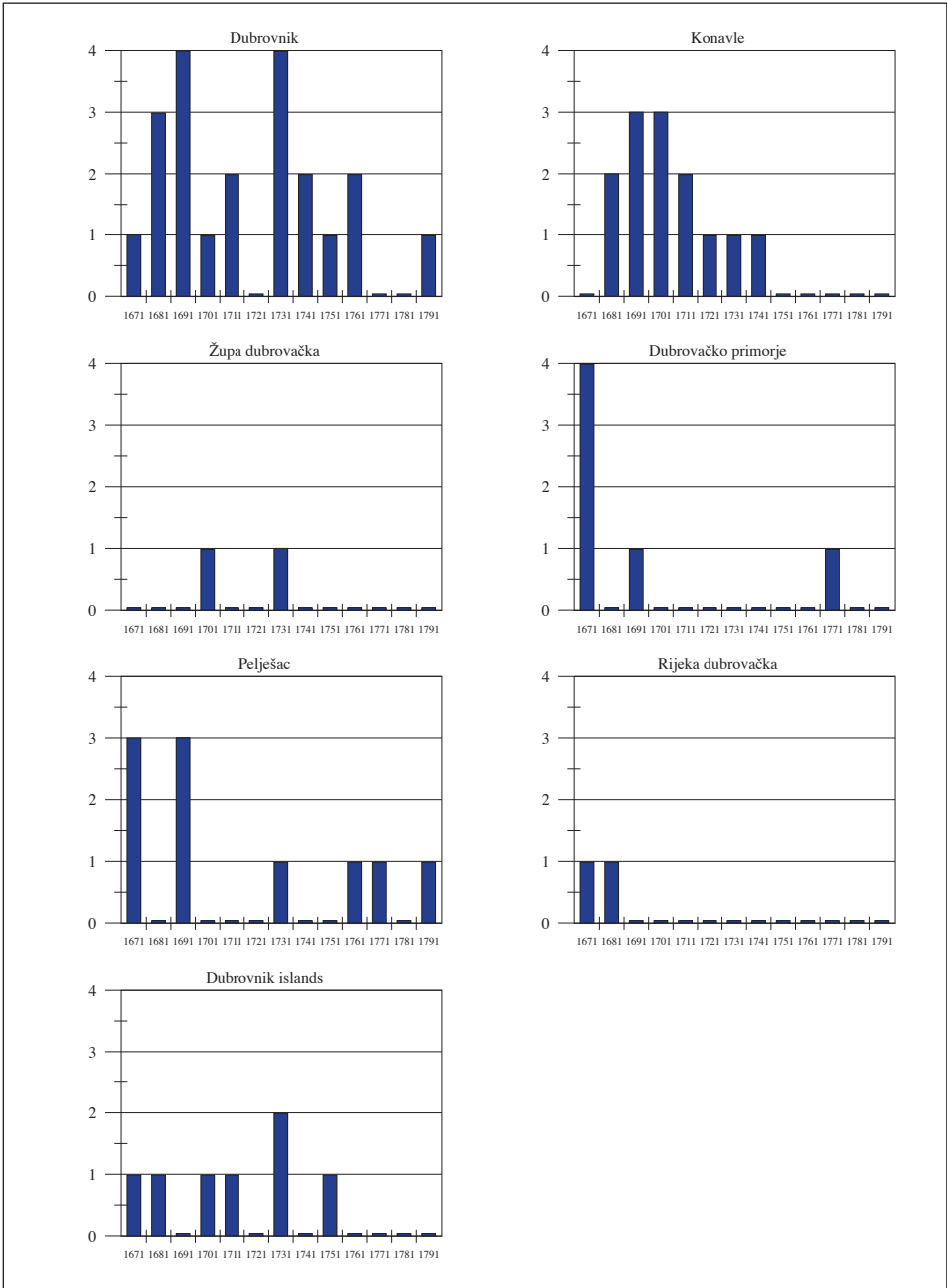
Table 2. Regional distribution of infanticides in the Republic of Dubrovnik by decades (1667-1806)

Period	The victim's place/region of origin							
	Total	Dubrovnik	Konavle	Župa dubrovačka	Dubrovačko primorje	Pelješac	Rijeka dubrovačka	Dubrovnik islands
Total	64	22	13	2	6	11	2	8
1667/70	2					1		1
1671/80	10	1			4	3	1	1
1681/90	10	3	2			3	1	1
1691/1700	8	4	3		1			
1701/10	6	1	3	1				1
1711/20	5	2	2					1
1721/30	1		1					
1731/40	9	4	1	1		1		2
1741/50	4	2	1					1
1751/60	1	1						
1761/70	3	2				1		
1771/80	2				1	1		
1781/90	0							
1791/1800	2	1				1		
1801/06	1	1						

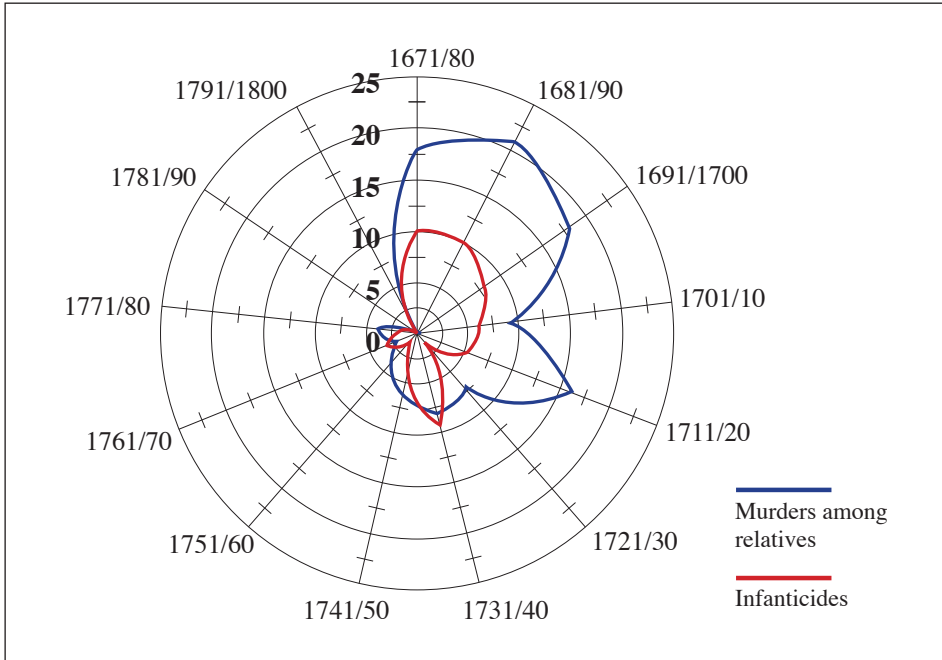
drop in homicide rate correlated with an increasing proportion of the murders among relatives²⁰ (likely accounted by the fact that the development of the society and “the process of civilization” first eliminated the causes outside the

²⁰ According to the research of B. A. Hanawalt, »Violent Death in Fourteenth- and Early Fifteenth- Century England«: p. 320, in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Northamptonshire (rural area), only 0.9% of homicides stemmed from domestic quarrels, and in London 3%. Her analysis shows that homicides among relatives represented only 2% of all murders, merely 8% of them have been recorded in the court registers (pp. 309-310). In modern England, however, 53% of the homicide victims are related to their killers. According to J. S. Cockburn, »Patterns of Violence in English Society«: pp. 94-96, in Kent the ratio of homicides among relatives in the period 1560-1959 was on average 30%. In Amsterdam, however, in the latter half of the seventeenth century 11.1% murders involved relatives (*intimi*), in the first half of the eighteenth century 13.6%, and in the second part of it 47.1% (P. Spierenburg, »Faces of Violence«: p. 710). Württemberg witnessed a ratio of 28% in the eighteenth century (Karl Wegert, *Popular Culture, Crime and Social Control in 18th- Century Württemberg*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1994: p. 124).

Graph 3. Regional distribution of infanticides in the Republic of Dubrovnik by decades (1671-1800)



Graph 4. Murders among relatives and infanticides in the Republic of Dubrovnik by decades (1671-1800)



family structure),²¹ in contemporary Dubrovnik, however, the murder rate involving relatives was proportional to the overall murder rate (Graph 1). This implies that homicides among relatives were not only the product of imbalanced family structure, but that they also directly depended on the developments within the society. General insecurity, poverty, popular discontent inevitably led towards diminishing tolerance and a climate of violence, in which it took fairly little to turn to crime (Table 1, Graph 2). The struggle for economic survival generated feuds between brothers and relatives. Devoid of hope, unmarried pregnant women often resorted to the extreme acts (Table 2, Graph 3). The infanticide rate followed the overall homicide pattern, confirming the connection between social climate and crime. (Graph 4).

²¹ With some reservations, pointed to in J. S. Cockburn, »Patterns of Violence in English Society«: p. 95, considering that the ratio of homicides among relatives may be seemingly smaller due to the nature of the family ties in the earlier periods which are not always discernible from the sources, and partly because the analyses of domestic violence in the early modern period generally do not include infanticides.

Basic features of the family structure and the types of kinship

In view of the type of kinship, homicides among relatives have been divided into several distinctive groups: homicides involving blood relations (68 cases); infanticides (64); homicides between spouses and affines (48); homicides within a broader kinship circle (2), and, homicides between adoptive parents and adopted children (3). Although infanticide belongs to homicide among blood relations, these cases are nonetheless given as a separate group because by all parameters this is a specific type of crime.

The type of family structure is also among the variables found to have some relation to the cause of domestic crime. Although small in size, the Republic of Dubrovnik witnessed several types of family structure, determined mainly by the diversity of its territory and economic patterns. The basic types of family structure were: 1) *urban type* (Dubrovnik), characterised by nuclear family pattern, smaller household, greater mobility, and craftsmanship, trade, ship-building as basic occupations; 2) *rural type* (Konavle, Župa dubrovačka, Dubrovačko primorje, Pelješac) inclined towards the extended family pattern, in

Table 3. Murders among relatives by type of kinship between offender and victim in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1667-1806)

Murders per type of kinship	The victim's place/region of origin							
	Total	Dubrovnik	Konavle	Župa dubrovačka	Dubrovačko primorje	Pelješac	Rijeka dubrovačka	Dubrovnik islands
Total	185+8	35-2	51+3	12+1	32	29+1	10	16+1
Murders of blood relatives	68+4	3	24+3	8	18	10+1	4	3
Infanticide	64	22	13	2	6	11	2	8
Murders between spouses	33	10	7	2	5	4	2	3
Murders between affines	15+2	0+1	6		2	4	1	2+1
Murders within a broader kinship circle	2			1	1			
Murders between adoptive parents and children	3+2	0+1	1	1+1				

Table 4. Murders among relatives by type of kinship between offender and victim in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1667-1806)

Type of kinship	The victim's place/region of origin							
	Total	Dubrovnik	Konavle	Župa dubrovačka	Dubrovačko primorje	Pelješac	Rijeka dubrovačka	Dubrovnik islands
Total	185+8	35+2	51+3	12+1	32	29+1	10	16+1
Murders between blood relations								
Father - son	4	1	2				1	
Son - father	3		1		1		1	
Father - daughter	4	2				2		
Son - mother	2			1				1
Brother - brother	31		12	2	11	3	2	1
Brother - sister	5+1		1+1	1		3		
Uncle (father's brother) - nephew (brother's son)	2		1	1				
Nephew (brother's son) - uncle (father's brother)	4+2		2+1		1	1+1		
Nephew - uncle (mother's brother)	2		1		1			
Nephew (sister's son) - aunt (mother's sister)	3		2		1			
Niece (sister's daughter) - aunt (mother's sister)	1				1			
Cousins	7+1		2+1	1	2	1		1
Infanticide								
Mother - child	64	22	13	2	6	11	2	8
Murders between spouses								
Husband - wife	29	8	7	2	4	4	2	2
Wife - husband	4	2			1			1
Murders among in - laws								
Son-in-law - father-in-law	4		1		1			2
Mother-in-law - son-in-law	0+1	0+1						
Mother-in-law - daughter-in-law	1		1					
Brother-in-law - daughter-in-law	1+1				1			0+1

Type of kinship	The victim's place/region of origin							
	Total	Dubrovnik	Konavle	Župa dubrovačka	Dubrovačko primorje	Pelješac	Rijeka dubrovačka	Dubrovnik islands
Daughter-in-law - brother-in-law	3		1			2		
Wife's brother - sister's husband (vice versa)	1					1		
Husband's sister - brother's wife	2		1				1	
Sister's husband - wife's sister	1		1					
Brother of daughter-in-law - sister's mother-in-law	1		1					
Murders among more distant relatives								
Between the sisters' husbands	1				1			
Aunt's brother - sister's husband's nephew	1			1				
Murders between adoptive/step parents and adopted/step children								
Stepson - stepmother	1		1					
Stepmother - stepdaughter	0+1	0+1						
Adoptive father - adopted daughter	1			1				
Adoptive mother - adopted daughter	0+1			0+1				
Adoptive grandfather - adopted grandson	1						1	

which several generations shared the same household, higher birth rate, agriculture as the basic activity, and 3) *island type*, in which nuclear families prevailed, but with a higher birth rate and a larger number of household members, limited mobility, and agriculture, fishing and shipbuilding as the main economic activities. In addition, some of the regions developed specific subtypes, or combinations of the mentioned types (Rijeka dubrovačka, rural zones in the coastal areas, smaller towns).

The rural type of extended family reacted traumatically to any attempt at the household's disintegration, and its sizeable membership tended to increase the risk of conflict among the kin. The urban type of nuclear family was less exposed to such type of conflict. Here a more equilibrated distribution of

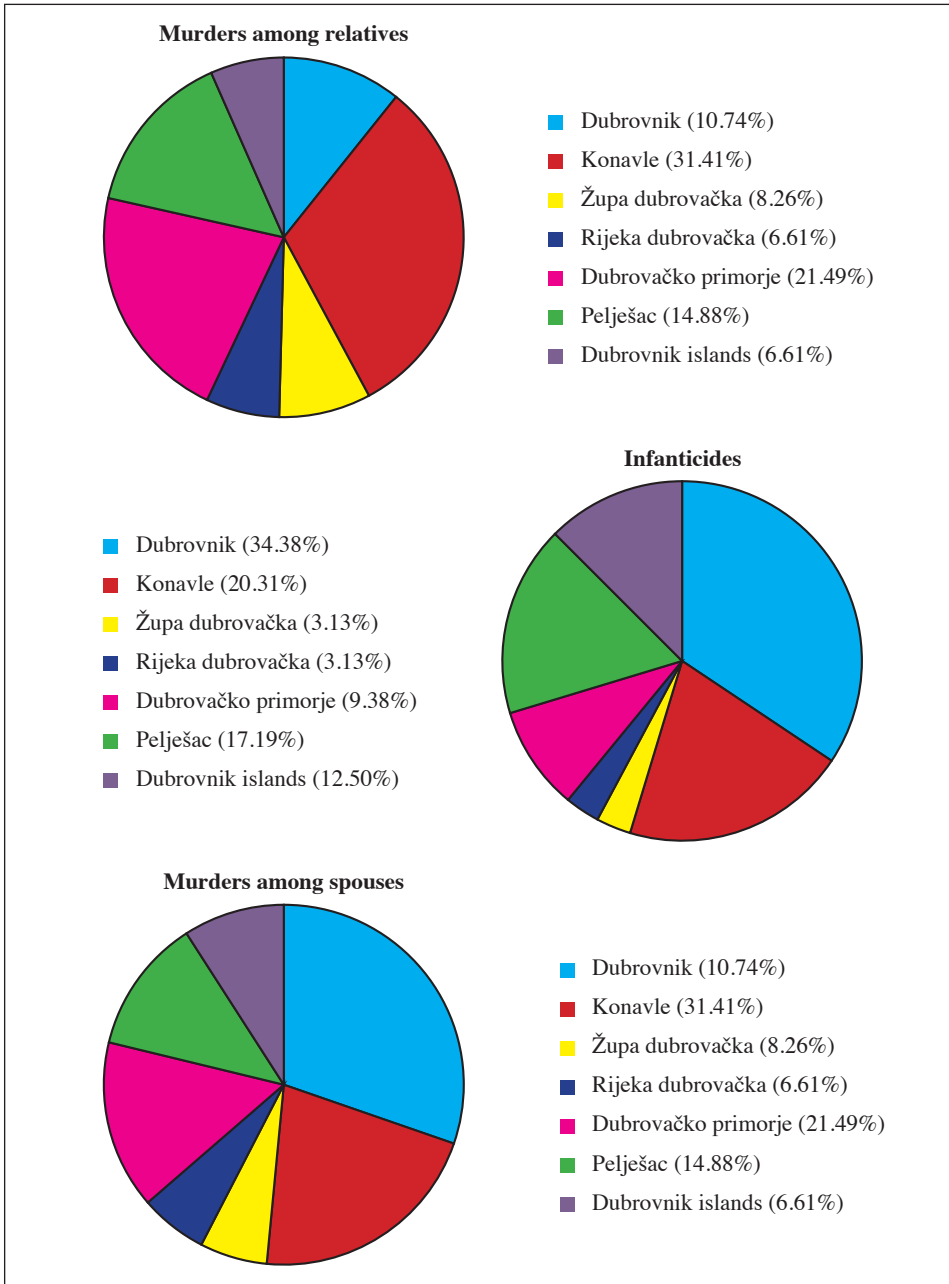
authority within the family influenced a greater number of homicides between husband and wife, infanticide remaining the biggest problem. The island type resembled the urban rather than the rural type of family (Tables 3 and 4, Graph 5).

Considerable discrepancy between rural areas with regard to the ratio of the number of murders to the number of inhabitants can probably be explained by their geographical position. The border and the hostile hinterland must have contributed to the tensions and violence, giving rise not only to a large number of trans-border murders, but had stirred a lot of families. Thus, the share of Konavle in the population of the Dubrovnik Republic was only 16.91%, its regional ratio of the homicide among relatives being 31.41%, i.e. almost every third murder involving relatives occurred in Konavle. Other border regions (Župa dubrovačka and Rijeka dubrovačka, Dubrovačko primorje) also had a bigger share in the number of murders among relatives than was their share in the population, whilst the regions less close to the border (Pelješac, Dubrovnik islands, the City of Dubrovnik) underwent an inverse trend (Table 5).

Table 5. Regional distribution of murders among relatives in correlation with the population size

Victim's place of origin	Number of inhabitants in 1807 by percentage (%)	Murders among relatives (%)	Proportion of the murders among relatives to the number of inhabitants	Infanticides (%)	Proportion of infanticides to the number of inhabitants	All murders among relatives (%)	Proportion of all murders among relatives to the number of inhabitants
Dubrovnik Republic	100	100	0	100	0	100	0
Dubrovnik	20,38	10,74	9,64	34,38	-13,99	18,92	1,46
Konavle	16,93	31,41	-14,48	20,31	-3,38	27,57	-10,64
Župa dubrovačka	5,93	8,26	-2,30	3,13	2,84	6,49	-0,52
Rijeka dubrovačka	5,06	6,61	-1,55	3,13	1,94	5,41	-0,34
Dubrovačko primorje	17,98	21,49	-3,51	9,38	8,60	17,30	0,68
Pelješac	22,91	14,88	8,04	17,19	5,72	15,68	7,24
Dubrovnik islands	10,77	6,61	4,16	12,50	-1,73	8,65	2,12

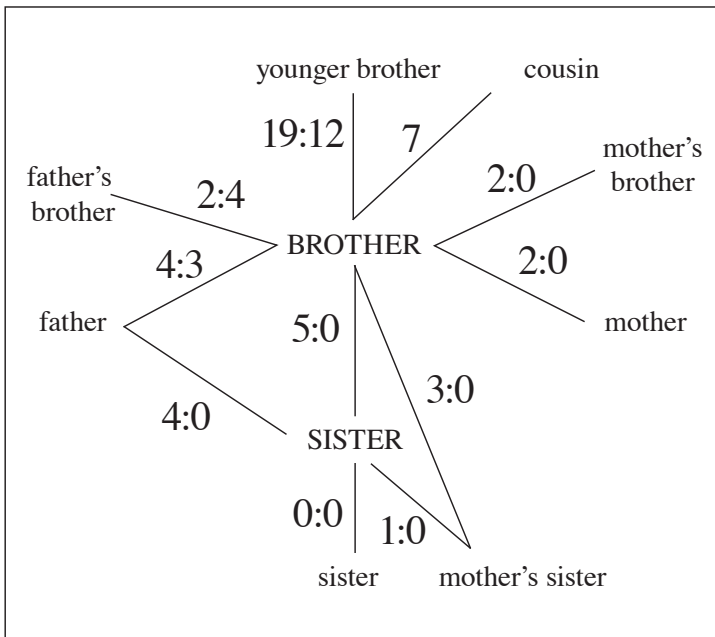
Graph 5. Regional distribution of murders among relatives by type of kinship between offender and victim in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1667-1806)



Murders among blood relatives

Infanticide aside (64), the majority of homicides committed among blood relatives involved brothers (36). Murders between parents and children were less frequent (13), and when they did occur, it was mostly due to negligence. Distant kinship between the murderer and the victim was present in the remaining 19 murders (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Murders among blood relatives in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1667-1806)



In the period 1667-1806, on the territory of the Republic of Dubrovnik thirty-six murders among siblings were recorded. Thirty-one cases of murder between brothers have been reported (86,1%), and in 5 cases (13,9%) sisters fell victim to their brothers. There is no record of a sister killing her siblings.

Indeed, the ratio 36:0 might lead to the conclusion that these homicides reflect the dominance of the stronger. Yet, figures may be misleading. The homicides are not merely the product of male physical superiority, but are also in direct relationship with the family's management of its property. As the head of the household, man was more exposed to conflict than woman. The

majority of fratricides occurred over unsettled property issues, most frequently after the death of the father as the main cohesive element. Family's disintegration upon the remains of the old household, and formation of the new family nuclei seems to have given most cause for violence. Hence, murders occurred either from conflicts over distribution of property (8 out of 31 cases), or within undivided family household (1), because, upon the father's death, none of the male successors managed to impose themselves as undisputed authority (17), while their wives continued to add fuel to the family tensions (5). Disproportion between the murders of the elder and younger brother also indicates the struggle for domination within the household. The 19:12 ratio in favour of the younger brother is indicative of his resistance to accept the authority of the elder sibling, who, by the very nature of things, tended to impose himself as the new head of household.

The interaction between family structure and fratricide is most directly supported by the fact that in the regions where nuclear families prevailed the cases of fratricide were extremely rare (the City of Dubrovnik 0, Dubrovnik islands 1). All fratricides occurred in rural regions which inclined towards the extended family, the splitting of which had a traumatic effect. The majority occurred in Konavle (12), where the extended households composed of numerous members were the most prominent.

Sisters, however, were not exposed to conflict to the same extent as brothers. In principle, they did not participate in the inheritance and could not claim it, having thus no reason to come into property conflict with either brothers or sisters.

Although a certain portion of fratricides fall within manslaughter, their roots should be sought in property disputes. The murder of a sister, however, rarely had property as the cause. Only one out of the five murders of a sister in the Republic of Dubrovnik in the period under review was motivated by property issues (dowry claims). In all these murders, the relationship of power is evident. A brother killed his sister because she had "dishonoured the family", while the opposite was beyond any consideration. A brother killed his sister because he refused to provide her with the dowry, and it was not the sister who resorted to violence because she did not get it. Not a single sister was killed in the city of Dubrovnik, but exclusively in the rural areas (Pelješac 3, Konavle 1, Župa dubrovačka 1). The reason for this should be sought in the more liberal attitudes of the urban areas. Conservative rural household had difficulty in

coping with the female “reproachable behaviour” as opposed to urban families, in which the woman’s status was somewhat stronger and moral habits looser.

All murders of sisters occurred in the *period of despair*, following the overall curve of criminality. Four murders were committed at the peak of the crisis (end of the seventeenth century), and one at the very end of the crisis, in 1727. Shortly afterwards began the *period of rise*, and until the fall of the Republic no mention of a murder upon sister has been traced. A similar trend may be observed with the fratricide. In the first 70 years under study (1667-1736), there were 24 murders (77.42%), and in the remaining 70 years (1737-1806) only seven (22.58%).

Infanticide aside, murders between parents and children were rare, children more often being victims (son 4, daughter 4) than father (3) or mother (2). The offender was always male (father 8, son 5). However, the majority of the murders were accompanied by extenuating circumstances: mental derangement of the father (double murder of two sons, double murder of the son and daughter) and negligence (3 cases). Other cases could be accounted by child abuse (2), a conflict stemming from suiting the son for larceny (1), a conflict between mother- and daughter-in-law (1), and a conflict with the stepmother (2).

Homicides among relatives more distant than siblings were less frequent. The relation between uncle and nephew in the extended household was often burdened with unresolved issues regarding division of property. All the four cases in which the nephew murdered his uncle had property tensions in the background. However, uncle murdered his nephew in two cases, once because his son was attacked by the latter, whilst the motive in the second case is not known. In a patriarchally established household, the relationship with mother’s family was not burdened with demands concerning property, so that murder cases between nephew and uncle on the mother’s side were not as frequent as those on the father’s side. Both cases mentioned in the archives in which nephews killed their uncles from their mother’s side were the result of quick temper and not of a long-term conflict. Aunts seemed to have shared a similar fate, most frequently falling victim due to their “sharp tongue”. In three cases the offender was the nephew, and once the niece.

The archives mention seven more cases of homicide among more distant relatives. All these murders were committed in a fit of passion, usually provoked by trivial altercations.

Infanticide

By conceiving a child out of wedlock, the mother had committed a sin for which she was rejected by her own family, stigmatised and expelled from the community. “Rarely can such a girl for contempt or mockery remain at home or in the village, as she commonly goes to the city and works as a household maid.”²² An illegitimate child, however, will be confronted with his status in everyday social and official contacts, particularly when it comes to inheritance rights. In sum, this was the social attitude towards the consequences of illegitimate relationship prevailing in Dubrovnik until the most recent times.²³

Social attitude towards illegitimate children, accompanied by ineffective contraception, undoubtedly contributed to an increasing number of foundlings, giving way to a crime-prone climate and irresponsible attitude towards this social group. Sixty-four infanticides recorded in 140 years is only the tip of the iceberg of illegitimate births, because infant murder was an exception—an ultimate means of concealing the consequences of illicit relationship and the transgression of a moral norm. And the mother, still in a specific psychological state after delivery, was ready to believe in the possibility of getting away with the crime. The negative social attitude regarding illegitimate children affected in different ways all those involved. The consequences ranged from the loss of family support and vanished prospects of “good marriage” in case of the mother, to the disapproval of the conduct of the presumed father who might possibly be condemned in his community, and to the precarious fate of numerous children born out of wedlock, who differed from other people only because their parents did not have the strength to stand behind their act, but surrendered to the disputable norms imposed by the society instead to the natural instinct to protect their own offspring.

In the rural areas of the Republic, mothers of illegitimate children met a worse fate. “Sinners” were punished by permanent expulsion from the parental home. Therefore, village girls tended to be more cautious in entering illegitimate relationships, while the urban young females seem to have been the main “producers” of unwanted children. More than a third of all infanticides are

²² Baltazar Bogišić, *Zbornik sadašnjih pravnih običaja u Južnih Slavena*, vol. I. Zagreb: JAZU, 1874: p. 632.

²³ See: Nella Lonza, »“Two Souls Lost”: Infanticide in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1667-1808)«, *Dubrovnik Annals* 6 (2002): 67-107.

registered in the city of Dubrovnik. In the more dynamic urban setting it was probably easier to conceal pregnancy and post-partum symptoms. Out of 22 murdered new-borns in the city of Dubrovnik, in only 5 cases the mother was eventually identified. Out of 19 unidentified mothers, in as much as 17 cases the murder occurred in Dubrovnik, and only two infanticides were discovered in the rural areas. However, one should allow for the possibility that some of the 17 undetected infanticide cases in the city of Dubrovnik may have been committed outside the city, and that the infant's corpse was brought to Dubrovnik in order to cover up the trail.

Hence, wretched urban women were generally successful in covering up their crime. Among the identified mothers the most numerous group consisted of young unmarried girls from the surroundings of Dubrovnik, who became pregnant because they gave in to natural instincts (13 cases), by entering incestuous relations (1) or a relation with a married man (1), sometimes lured by false marriage promises (3). They committed infanticide for fear of the family (3) or social sanctions (1). Among unmarried girls servants prevailed (12), and there is also mention of a woman affiliated to the Third Order.

Infanticide was also motivated by adultery of an engaged girl (2 cases), or married woman (2). Atypical and equally curious motive had a woman from Pelješac, for even after three years of marriage she had not been admitted to the household of her in-laws, her social status being brought into question.

Also recorded are two cases of infanticide due to negligence, the infants being suffocated during breastfeeding.

All infanticides committed by widows occurred in the outlying rural areas (4 cases). Since in the villages a widow customarily remained in the numerous dwelling of her late husband, her transgression carried more weight than in the nuclear urban families, as an illegitimate child would surely lead to her expulsion from the household. In one case the widow gave in to marriage promises, and in another she was submitted to the advances of her own inmates.

Besides the city itself, Dubrovnik islands as well as Konavle, exception among the rural regions, had a greater share of infanticide in proportion to the population size (Table 5, Graph 5).

Murders involving husband and wife and murders among in-laws

A considerable number of homicides between spouses and their in-laws indicate adjustment difficulties resulting from the merging of the two families. The relationship between husband and wife was put to the hardest test. This is vividly illustrated by the number of mutual murders. More than a quarter of all murders involving relatives occurred between spouses. The ratio of the murders committed by the husband and by the wife is 29:4, clearly showing the relation of power, although one should not forget that, because of her duties in the household, the wife was in a better position to perpetrate and conceal her criminal intent (the possibility of undetected poisoning).²⁴ Besides, the role of the woman was not always passive: she was known to stand behind the crime by inciting it, although there was no conclusive evidence of her being an accessory. The best known case of this type, described also in the folk lyrics,²⁵ occurred in 1692, when the Ragusan noblemen Frano de Bona and Ivan-Toma de Bassegli murdered Ivo Čelović, a man from Risan (Boka kotorska, today Montenegro) living in Dubrovnik, the husband of their mistress Paula.²⁶

The murder of the wife was rarely motivated by property issues. We have identified this motive in merely three cases of theft, in one of which the husband being victim of theft, while in the other two cases he acted to prevent the further dishonouring of the family's good name by the wife's kleptomania. However, the most frequent motive for murder was the husband's jealousy (7 cases), sometimes his own adulterous habits (2). Other murders were the result of deteriorated interpersonal relations, which at first glance could be attributed to the husband's temper (6), to wife's verbal outings (1), to wife's disobedience (1) and escape (2), although jealousy could not be ruled out as the true motive behind them all. These murders probably have two main elements in common: defense of honour and imposition of authority. In one particular case an ill wife

²⁴ J. A. Sharpe, »Domestic Homicide in Early Modern England«. *The Historical Journal* 24/1 (1981): p. 31, calculated that in Essex between 1620 and 1680 there were 9 murders between spouses out of the total of 579 homicides. Despite the fact, the author argues that this number may be the result of "under-reporting rather than of unusual conjugal felicity". J. S. Cockburn, »Patterns of Violence in English Society«: p. 98, underlines that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries women represented more than two-thirds of the victims of conjugal homicide.

²⁵ Slavica Stojan, »Tri pjesme iz rukopisne zbirke "Narodne pjesme" Ivana Augusta Kaznačića«. *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 29 (1991): pp. 270-273, 275.

²⁶ *Lam. Crim.* vol. 30, ff. 176v-194, 195v-198, 199v-202v, 203v-204v, 211, 215v-221v, 226v-235v, 237-237v, 241v-242v, 245v-250v, 252v-253v, 255-255v, 261v.

was murdered in fear of contagion, and in two cases the murders were committed on the verge of mental derangement. In four cases it was not possible to establish the motive.

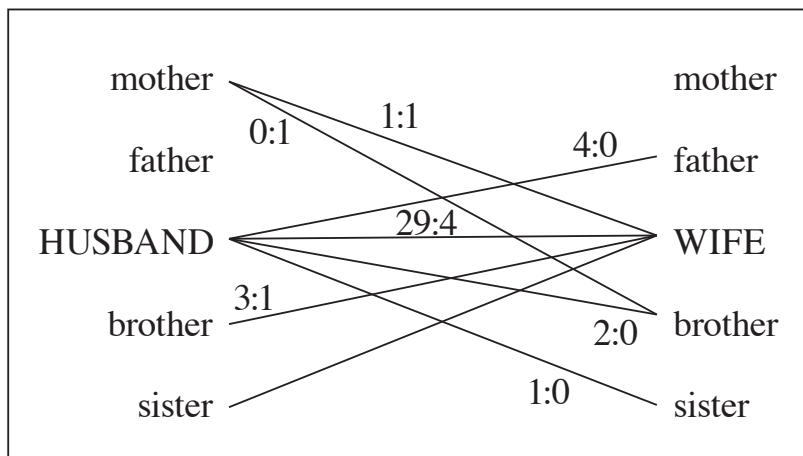
In a fairly modest number of cases involving wives as perpetrators, only two offer some indications of the motive: adultery and self-defense. In other two cases it was not possible to establish the real motive. In one case only was the wife a direct executor of the crime, although it was never actually proved. In other cases, similar to the murder of the mentioned Čelović where the court did not establish the wife's direct involvement in the murder, the wife was either an accessory to crime, incited or even ordered the murder.

Marriage of a man and a woman did not only create a nucleus of the new family, the future of which depended on the ability of its members to adapt to the new roles, but simultaneously started a web of relations between a newly married couple and the members of their respective families. This process of adaptation differed with regard to the environment where the new couple settled. In urban areas, where the nuclear family prevailed, the newly married couple would set up a new household either rented or owned. Therefore, in Dubrovnik there were no cases of murder involving in-laws (apart from the one in which the wife's mother was an accomplice). On the other hand, in the rural communities the young couples were rarely in a position to start a new household *of their own*. Thus all murders between in-laws occurred in the rural areas of the Dubrovnik Republic (Konavle 5, Peļješac 4, Dubrovačko primorje 2, Rijeka dubrovačka 1, Dubrovnik islands 2). Most frequently it was the bride who joined her husband's household, and rarely—in case the bride's house had no male issues—the husband joined his wife's household. The advantage of the “domestic terrain” is illustrated not only by the disproportion of murders between husband and wife (29:4), which can partly be attributed to the internal power relations within the couple, but also by a high disproportion between the murders of the husband's and wife's kin. The ratio between the perpetrators from the husband's and the wife's side (12:3) clearly indicates increasing aggressiveness of the inmates against the inmarrying spouses who were to meet their death “by asking too much”, or daring to change the hierarchical structure of the family.

The arrival of a new member in the family did not always proceed without problems. Judging by the number of murders, apparently the most critical relationships were between father- and son-in-law (4 cases), regularly with fatal consequences for the elder, and between brother-in-law and the bride

(3:1). Seeking a violent solution to the conflict was the husband against his wife’s brother (2) and wife’s sister (1). Besides having difficulty in her relationship with the brother- and sister-in-law (2), the wife resorted to violence against her mother-in-law and vice versa (1:1). Lack of tensions and greater tolerance in communication has been observed between the opposite sexes, i.e. between father- and daughter-in-law, mother- and son-in-law (not a single case of murder). Their adaptability to each other proved much higher than among the in-laws of the same sex (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Murders among in-laws in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1667-1806)



Motives for murdering one’s in-laws originated, as a rule, from the tensions caused by adaptation and problems in communication. Except for a very brutal property-motivated murder committed by a son-in-law upon his father-in-law, conflicts did not usually stem from material interests, but rather from intolerable slander (2 cases), behaviour threatening to dishonour the house (1), refusal to testify in one’s favour (1), a slap behind the ear (1), drunkenness (1) and other motives stemming from intolerance between the female (3) and male (3) members sharing the same household.

Each of the described murders among in-laws involved at least one of the spouses. Only one murder occurred among the members of the husband’s and wife’s families: wife’s brother killed her mother-in-law because the latter had initiated court proceedings against his family.

Murders between adoptive parents and adopted children

In the period 1667-1806 there were only a few murders involving adoptive parents and children.

However, having in mind that not many children were adopted, this number is not as modest as it may appear. Furthermore, murders of this kind can easier be presented as accidental death, which is indirectly suggested by a significantly higher mortality rate of the foundlings than the rest of the children's population. We do not have reliable mortality rates for the period under review, but the data from nineteenth-century sources can be illuminative: about 40% of the foundlings died in their first year of life (in the rest of the population less than 10%); 71% failed to reach the age of five (in the rest of the population 27%).²⁷

Apart from the high-risk relationship between the adoptive parent and the adopted foundlings, the relationship between step-parents and stepchildren followed a similar crime pattern.

Murders among distant relatives

The records testify to two cases of homicide between more distant relatives. One murder was committed between the husbands of two sisters, which originated from a quarrel over a piglet. In the second case the family ties were even less close: during a fight over movable property, aunt's brother murdered the nephew of his sister's husband.

The rhythm of crime

Seasonal variations in the number of homicides among relatives have been established, particularly with infanticide. The majority of the murdered infants were conceived between April and August (65,62%), which corresponds with the overall conception rate for the spring months. Conversely, illegitimate conceptions do not follow the general trend marked by the second, December peak, and, as it seems, cold winters and holiday family atmosphere worked against extramarital affairs (Graph 6).

²⁷ Niko Kapetanić and Nenad Vekarić, *Stanovništvo Konavala*, vol. I. Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 1998: pp. 365-366.

Graph 6. Monthly distribution of the conception of children, victims of infanticide, in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1667-1806) and the conception of children born in Konavle (1696-1918)

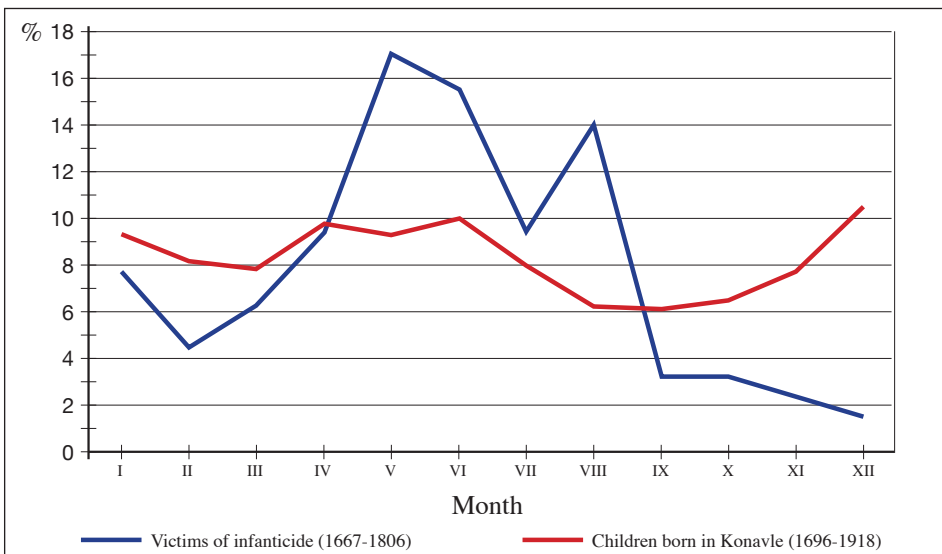


Table 6. Monthly distribution of murders by type of kinship

Month	Total	Type of kinship									
		Husband-wife	Wife-husband	Mother-child (infanticide)	Father-son	Father-daughter	Son-father	Son-mother	Brother-brother	Brother-sister	Other
Total	185+7	29	4	64	4	4	3	2	31	5+1	39+6
January	16+2	2		6		1		2	1		4+2
February	24	6		11	2				2		3
March	21	1	1	10					4		5
April	10			6							
May	18+2	4	1	9					3	1+1	0+1
June	11	2		3	1	1	1		1		2
July	13+1	3		3					3	1	3+1
August	12	3								1	5
September	10	2		1					2	1	4
October	13	2		5	1				4		1
November	15+1	2		3					3		6+1
December	22+1	2	2	4		2	2		7	1	3+1

Graph 7. Monthly distribution of murders among relatives and infanticides in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1667-1806)

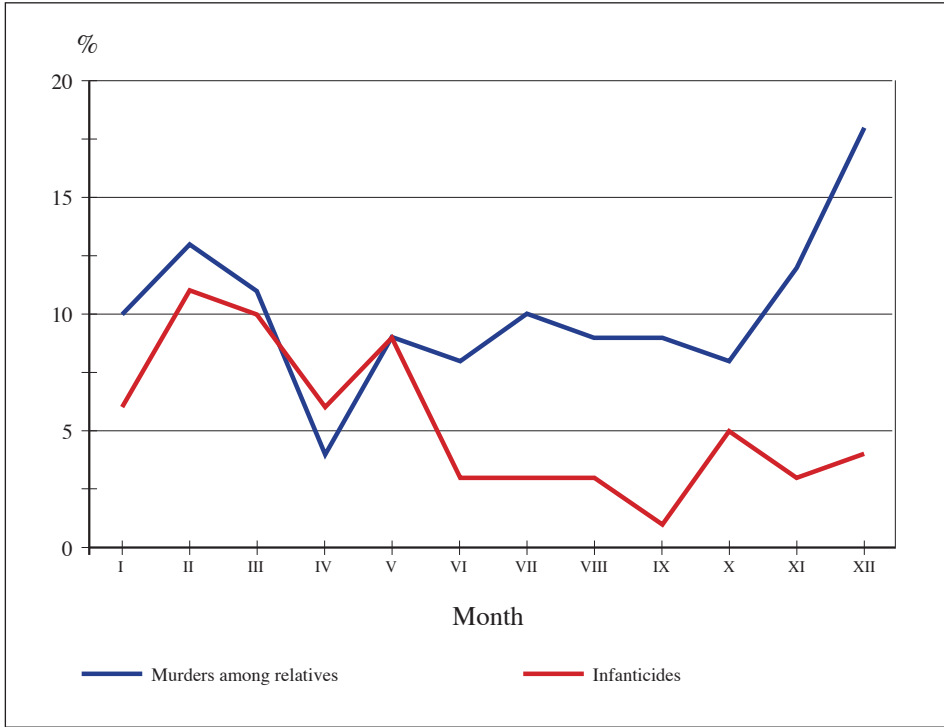
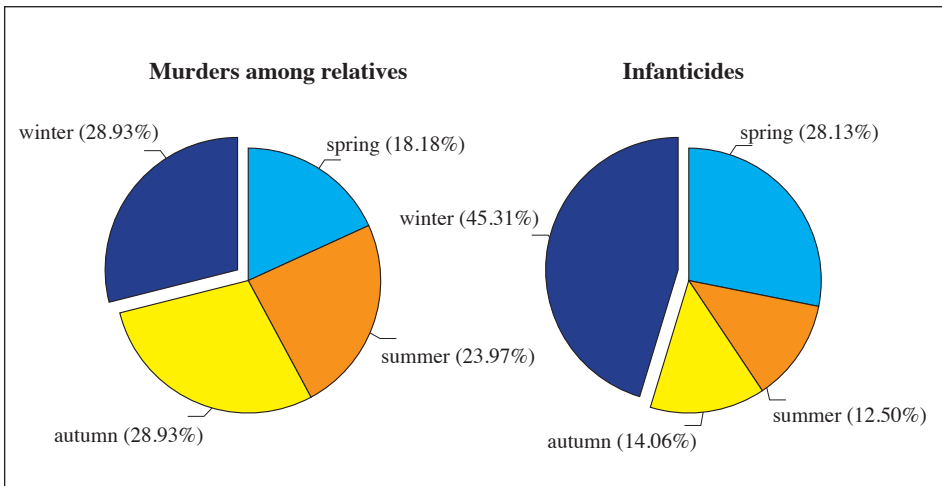


Table 7. Seasonal distribution of murders by type of kinship

Season	Total	Type of kinship									
		Husband-wife	Wife-husband	Mother-child (infanticide)	Father-son	Father-daughter	Son-father	Son-mother	Brother-brother	Brother-sister	Other
Total	185+7	29	4	64	4	4	3	2	31	5+1	39+6
Spring	40+2	5	2	18	1	1			6	1+1	6+1
Summer	37+2	8		8			1		6	2	12+1
Autumn	44+2	6	2	9	1	1	1		12	1	11+2
Winter	64+2	10		29	2	2	1	2	7	1	10+2

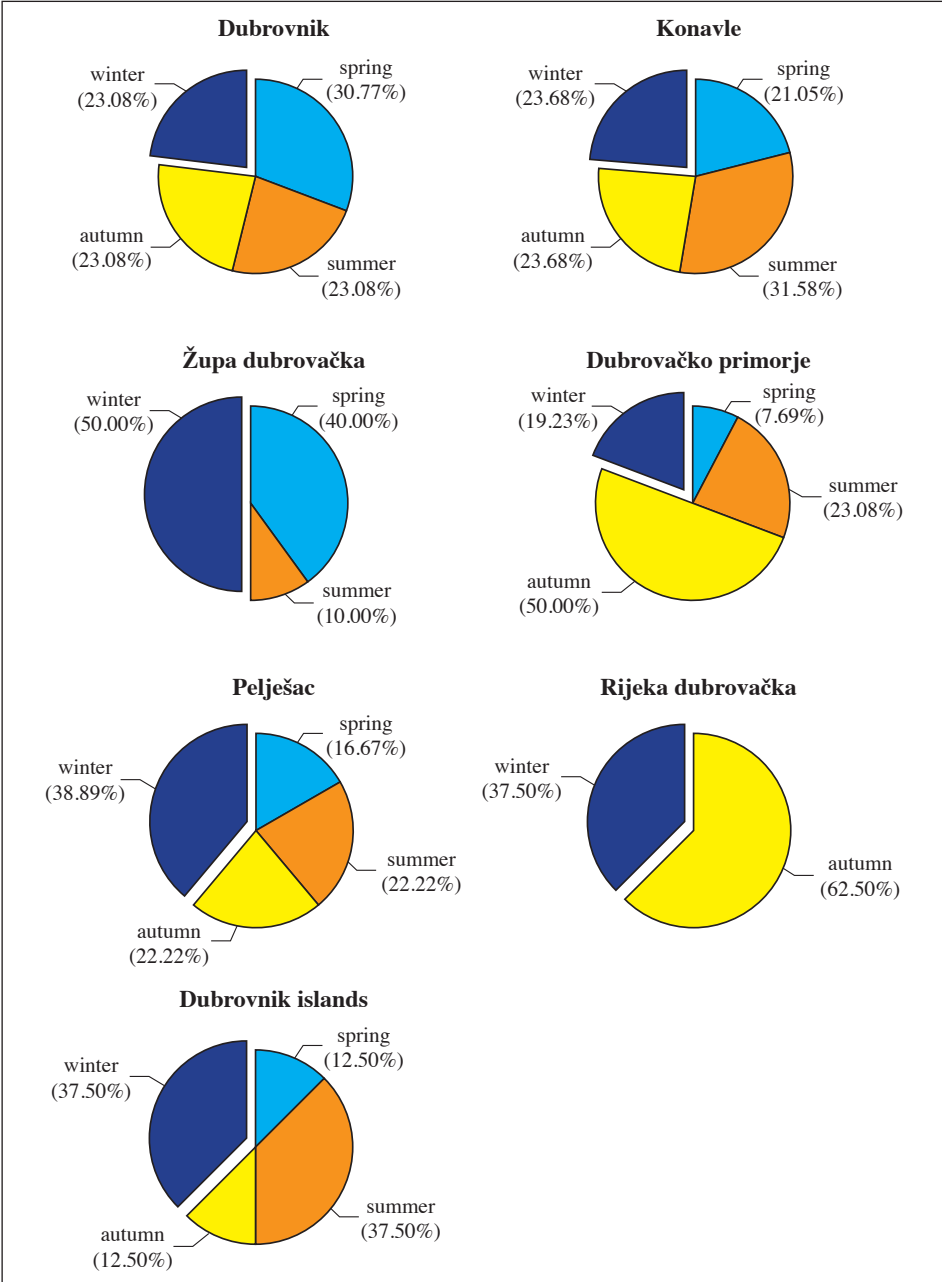
Graph 8. Seasonal distribution of murders among relatives and infanticides in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1667-1806)



In the homicides less influenced by biological factors, monthly and seasonal distribution was more balanced. However, some trends have been identified: winter proved fatal for women, February in particular, the coldest month in Dubrovnik. The fact that a couple was confined to the small space of their household tended to increase the risk of conflict. A most brutal murder of all the cases analysed in this period in the Dubrovnik Republic was committed in this very month when, in a fit of madness, a man killed his wife and two minor sons. Conflicts between brothers occurred most often in late autumn (December), following the harvest (Table 6, Graph 7). The number of murders rose significantly during the gloomy autumn and winter days (57,85%), as opposed to the “optimistic” spring and summer months (42,15%) (Table 7, Graph 8).

Given the small sample, seasonal and monthly variation of homicides by regions is understandable. In Rijeka dubrovačka all murders occurred in autumn and winter, i.e. from October to March (8). None occurred in spring or summer. Winter also proved the most critical period on the peninsula of Pelješac and Župa dubrovačka. In Župa dubrovačka all homicides (10) occurred within the first six months of the year. In the region of Dubrovačko primorje the majority of the homicides occurred in autumn (13), equalling the total committed during the rest of the year. The city of Dubrovnik had a most even annual distribution of crime (Tables 8 and 9, Graph 9 and 10).

Graph 9. Seasonal distribution of murders among relatives (infanticides not included) by regions in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1667-1806)



Graph 10. Monthly distribution of murders among relatives (infanticides not included) by regions in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1667-1806)

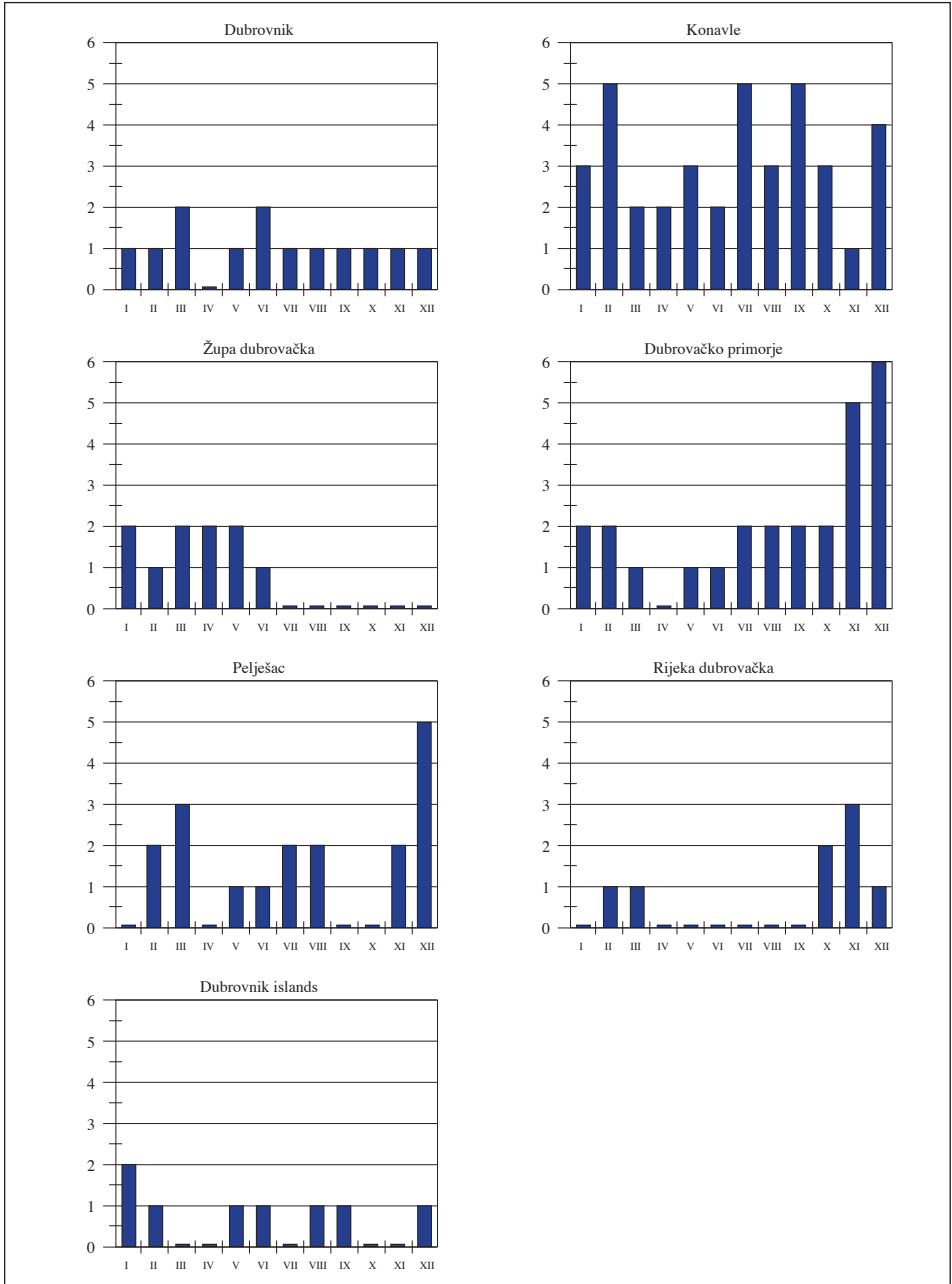


Table 8. Seasonal distribution of murders among relatives by victim's place/region of origin

Season	The victim's place/region of origin							
	Total	Dubrovnik	Konavle	Župa dubrovačka	Dubrovačko primorje	Pelješac	Rijeka dubrovačka	Dubrovnik islands
Total	121	13	38	10	26	18	8	8
Spring	22	4	8	4	2	3		1
Summer	29	3	12	1	6	4		3
Autumn	35	3	9		13	4	5	1
Winter	35	3	9	5	5	7	3	3

Table 9. Monthly distribution of murders among relatives (infanticides not included) by victim's place of origin

Season	The victim's place/region of origin							
	Total	Dubrovnik	Konavle	Župa dubrovačka	Dubrovačko primorje	Pelješac	Rijeka dubrovačka	Dubrovnik islands
Total	121	13	38	10	26	18	8	8
January	10	1	3	2	2			2
February	13	1	5	1	2	2	1	1
March	11	2	2	2	1	5	1	
April	4		2	2				
May	9	1	3	2	1	1		1
June	8	2	2	1	1	1		1
July	10	1	5		2	2		
August	9	1	3		2	2		1
September	9	1	5		2			1
October	8	1	3		2		2	
November	12	1	1		5	2	3	
December	18	1	4		6	5	1	1

The method of homicide

The method of homicide depended mainly upon the nature of the crime itself.²⁸ In the cases of manslaughter, the offender would grab the first object that happened to be at hand at the time, stones, diverse garden or household tools, or he would kill the victim with bare hands by strangling, beating or pushing down a steep slope. The variety of weapons used in the cases of manslaughter was much wider than in situations which escalated from a latent conflict, keeping the potential assailant (or both parties) on the alert, with a knife stuck in the belt, or a rifle on the shoulder.

The power balance between the genders reflected in the method of homicide. Almost every third woman was killed by the husband's bare hands (30.77%), a method never used on the brothers. As a rule, the brothers killed each other with a knife (80%). Apart from being physically weaker, the women most often fell victim to sudden and violent outbursts, leaving the murderer no time to

Table 10. The method of murder by type of kinship (infanticides not included)

Murder weapon	Total	Type of kinship								
		Husband - wife	Wife - husband	Father - son	Father - daughter	Son - father	Son - mother	Brother - brother	Brother - sister	Other
Total	121+7	29	4	4	4	3	2	31	5+1	39+6
Firearms	12	2				1	1	4	1	3
Knife or other pointed object (sword)	60+4	9	3	1	2	1		24	2+1	18+3
Tools (axe, mallet, hoe, sickle, etc.)	6+1	2						1		3+1
Rock	6	1				1		1	1	2
Wooden weapons (bat, flog, stick, stool, vine stick)	8	4		2	1					1
Other weapons (oxen whip, rope)	2+1				1					1+1
Poison	3		1							2
Force (assault, strangulation, pushing down the stairs or cliff, drowning, abandoning, pouring hot water)	15+1	8		1			1			5+1
Unknown	9	3						1	1	4

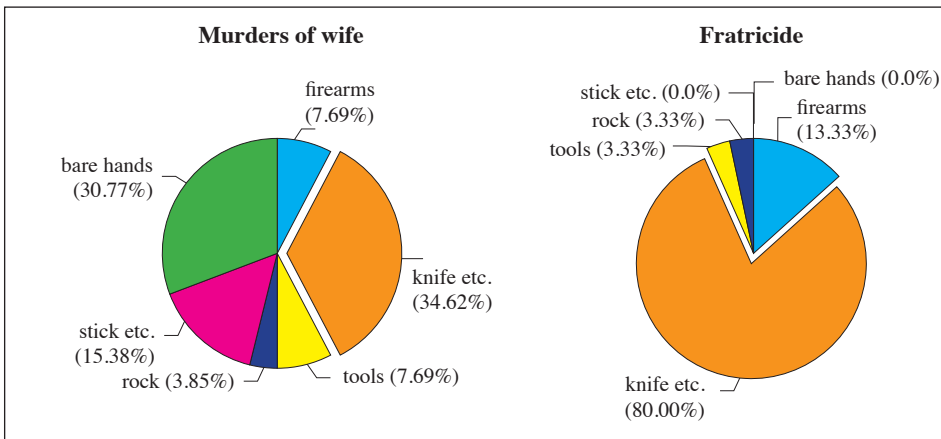
²⁸ For the methods and deadly weapons in Kent see: J. S. Cockburn, »Patterns of Violence in English Society«: pp. 80-81.

Table 11. The method of murder by type of kinship between offender and victim

Method of murder	Total	Type of kinship									
		Husband - wife	Wife - husband	Mother-child (infanticide)	Father - son	Father - daughter	Son - father	Son - mother	Brother - brother	Brother - sister	Other
Total	185+7	29	4	64	4	4	3	2	31	5+1	39+6
Firearms	12	2					1	1	4	1	3
Sword	7	3				1					3
Knife	55+4	6	3	2	1	1	1		24	2+1	15+3
Razor	1			1							
Axe	3	1									2
(Sledge) hammer	1	1									
Hoe	1+1										1+1
Sickle	1								1		
Stone (rock)	6	1							1	1	2
Cudgel	2	1				1					
Wooden stick	3	1			2						
Stick	1										1
Stool	1	1									
Vine stick	1	1									
Willow loop	1			1							
Whip	1+1					1					0+1
Rope	1										1
Bare hands (assault, strangulation)	24+1	2		18	1			1			2+1
Suffocation during breastfeeding	2			2							
Pushing down the stairs	1	1									
Pushing down the cliff	1										
Drowning	22	5		17							
Throwing into fire	1			1							
Pouring hot water	1										1
Abandoning	19			18							1
Poisoning	3		1								2
Unknown	14	3		4					1	1	4

choose the weapon. Thus only one third of the women were stabbed to death (33.33%), and almost a half were killed with objects that happened to be at the scene of the crime (stone, axe, hammer, bat, stool, vine stick, whip) or with the

Graph 11. Weapon used in the murders of wife and brother in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1667-1806)



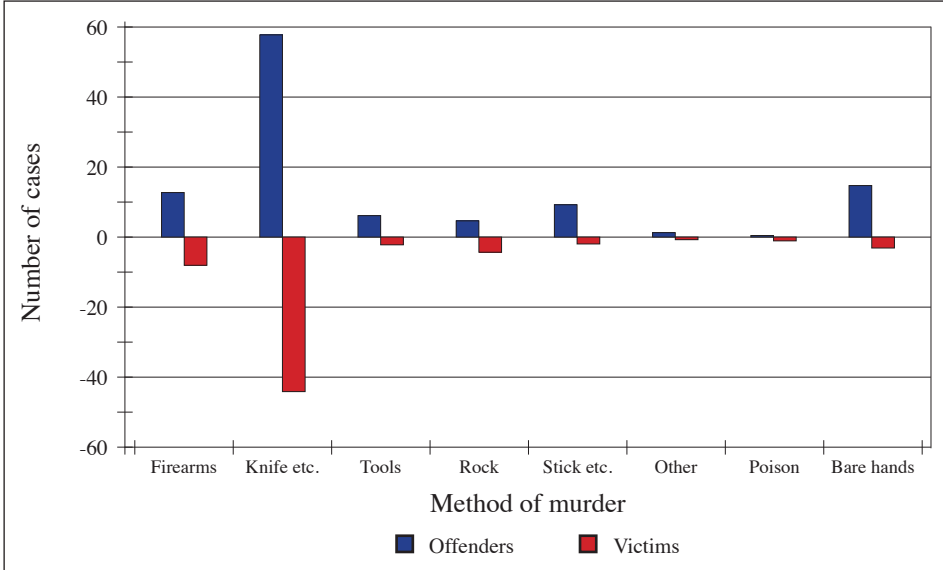
bare hands (strangling, drowning, beating, pushing down the stairs). Contrary to women, more than two thirds of the male victims (67.5%) were stabbed to death (Table 10, Graph 11, Table 11).

The method of homicide also varied with regard to the perpetrator’s gender. All homicides by poisoning were committed by women. Female offenders rarely resorted to knives, stones, ropes or boiling water, and never to gunning (Table 12, Graphs 12 and 13).

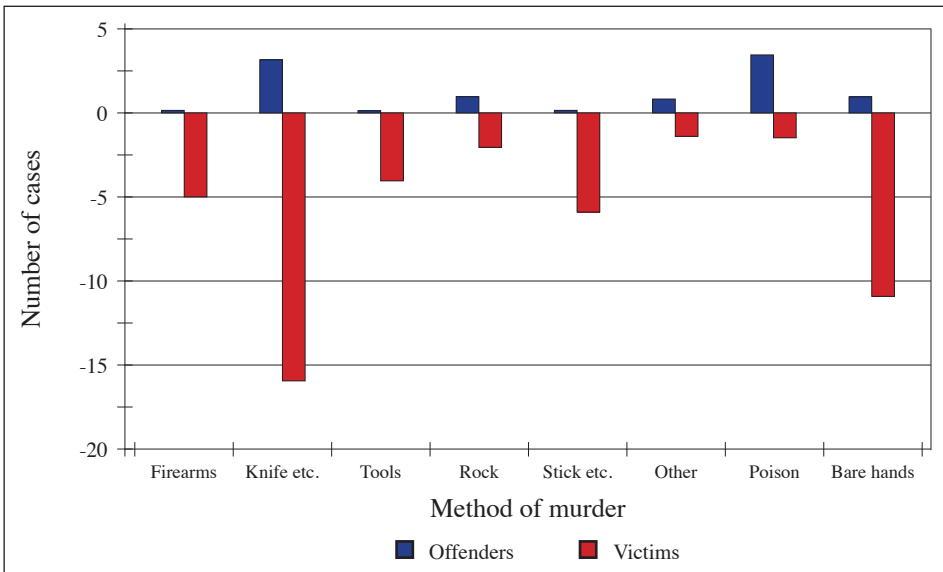
Table 12. Weapons used in the murders among relatives by the gender of the offender and victim (infanticides not included) in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1667-1806)

Method of murder	Total	Offender		Victim	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
Total	121	112	9	67	54
Fire weapon (gun)	12	12		7	5
Pointed weapon (knife, sword)	60	57	3	44	16
Tools (axe, hammer, hoe, sickle)	6	6		2	4
Rock	6	5	4	1	2
Wooden weapons (cudgel, bat, stick, stool, vine stick)	8	8		2	6
Other weapons (whip, rope)	2	1	1		2
Poison	3		3	1	2
Bare hands (assault, strangulation, pushing down the stairs, drowning, abandoning, pouring hot water)	15	14	1	3	12
Unknown	9	9		4	5

Graph 12. Method used in the murders among relatives (infanticides not included) in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1667-1806) involving male offender or victim



Graph 13. Method used in the murders among relatives (infanticides not included) in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1667-1806) involving female offender or victim

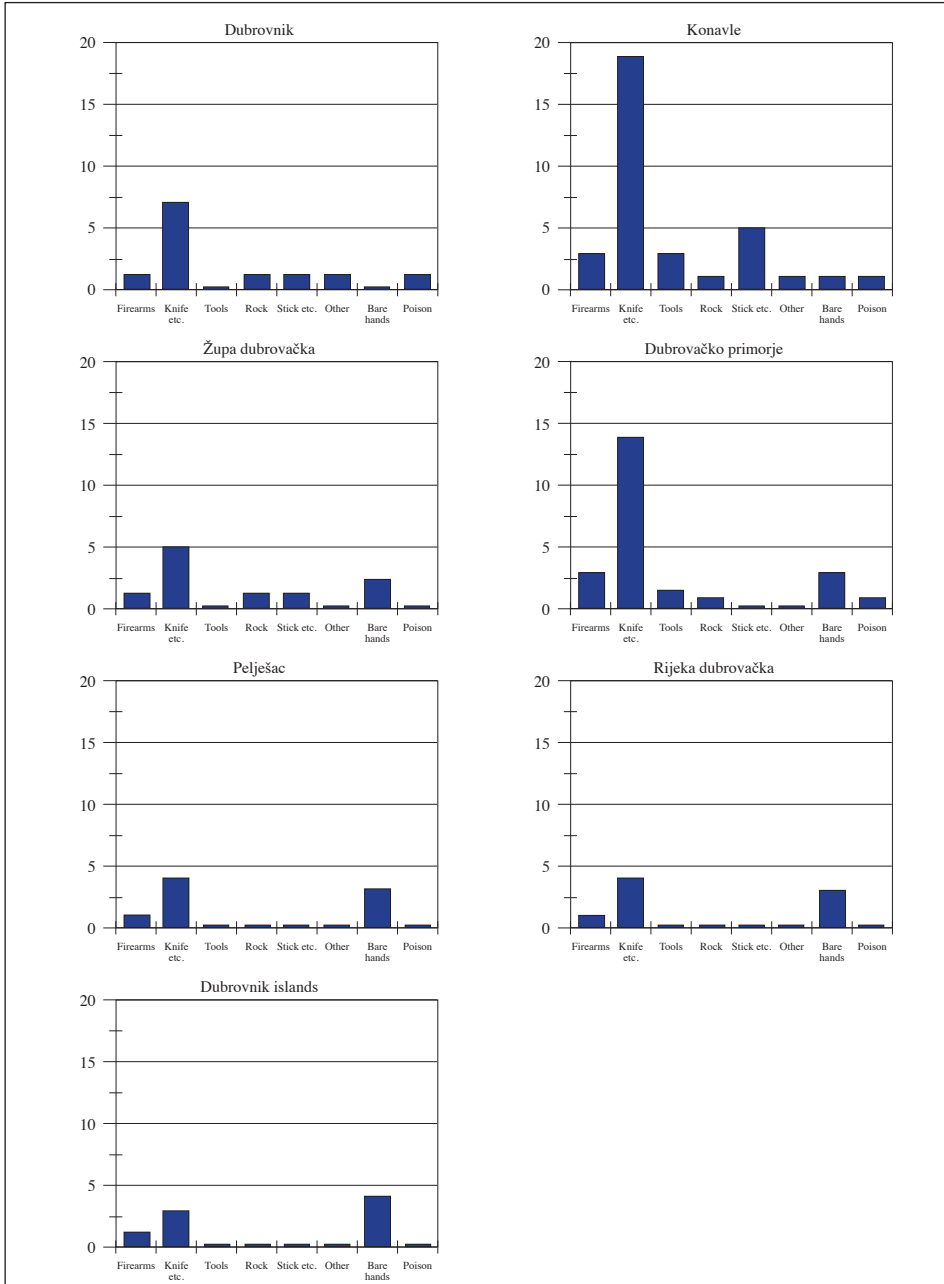


Apart from the islands, knives and sharp objects dominated as the murder weapon in all the Dubrovnik areas. Exceptionally, half of the island murders were committed without the use of any weapon (Table 13, Graph 14).

Table 13. Method used in the murders among relatives (infanticides not included) by regions

Method of murder	The victim's place/region of origin							
	Total	Dubrovnik	Konavle	Župa dubrovačka	Dubrovačko primorje	Pelješac	Rijeka dubrovačka	Dubrovnik islands
Total	121	13	38	10	26	10	8	8
Fire weapon (gun)	12	1	3	1	3	2	1	1
Pointed weapon (knife, sword)	60	7	19	5	14	8	4	3
Tools (axe, hammer, hoe, sickle)	6		3		2	1		
Rock	6	1	1	1	1	2		
Wooden weapons (cudgel, bat, stick, stool, vine stick)	8	1	5	1		1		
Other weapons (whip, rope)	2	1	1					
Poison	3	1	1		1			
Bare hands (assault, strangulation, pushing down the stairs, drowning, abandoning, pouring hot water)	15		1	2	3	2	3	4
Unknown	9	1	4		2	2		

Graph 14. Method used in the murders among relatives (infanticides not included) in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1667-1806) by regional origin of the victim



Gender

Most homicides (112 out of 121, infanticide not being taken into consideration) were committed by men (92.56%), and only 9 by women (7.44%).

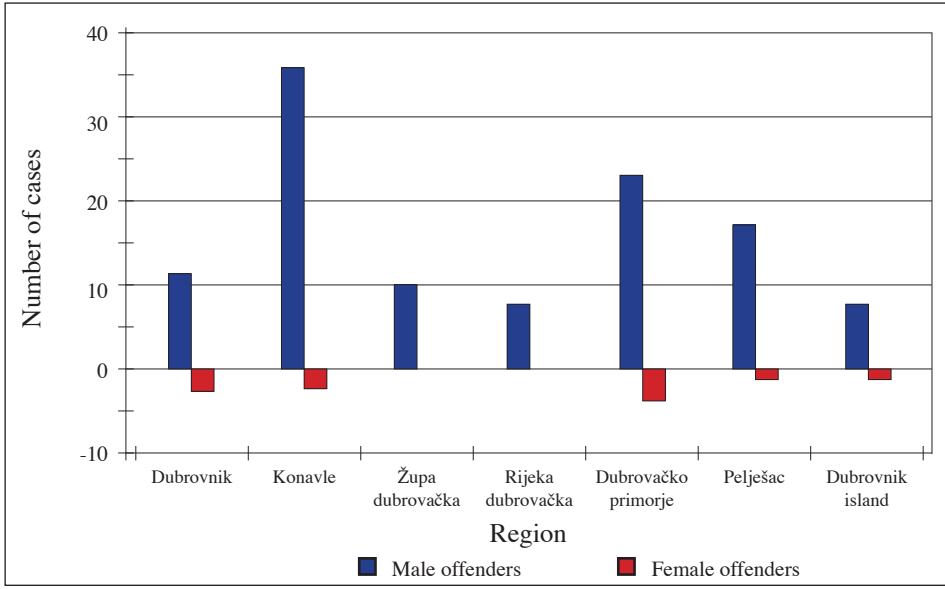
Men also tended to dominate among the victims, the ratio, however, being significantly smaller (67:54). Female victims dominated in the city of Dubrovnik (3:10) and on the peninsula of Pelješac (6:12). If we set aside the murders rooted in the conflicting property interests (fratricide and murders involving the uncle-nephew relation), and if we take into account only the murders committed in a fit of passion as the result of trivial quarrels and intolerance, we can conclude that in the majority of the cases (30:54) the balance of power (and physical strength) proved decisive.

An even distribution of murdered infants shows that gender of the newborn was of no significance in the criminal intention to commit infanticide (Table 14, Graphs 15 and 16).

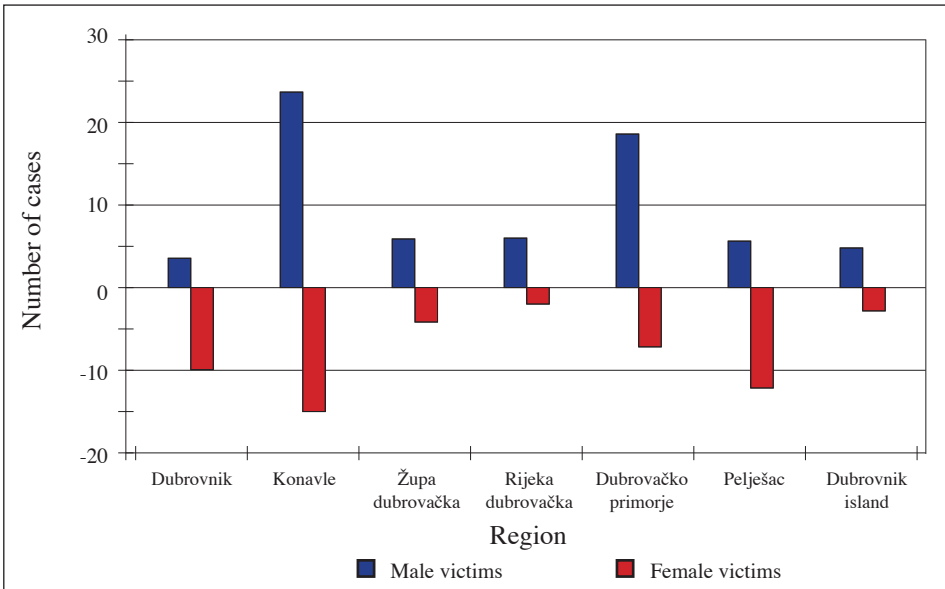
Table 14. Gender of offender and victim in the murders among relatives by regions

Domicile	Murders among relatives				Infanticides			
	Offender		Victim		Offender	Victim		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Female	Male	Female	Unknown
Dubrovnik Republic	112	9	67	54	64	22	24	18
Dubrovnik	11	2	3	10	22	6	9	7
Konavle	36	2	23	15	13	4	5	4
Župa dubrovačka	10	-	5	5	2	2	-	-
Rijeka dubrovačka	8	-	6	2	2	-	2	-
Dubrovačko primorje	23	3	19	7	6	5	-	1
Pelješac	17	1	6	12	11	2	7	2
Dubrovnik islands	7	1	5	3	8	3	1	4

Graph 15. The gender of the offender in the murders among relatives (infanticides not included) in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1667-1806) by regions



Graph 16. The gender of the victim in the murders among relatives (infanticides not included) in the Republic of Dubrovnik (1667-1806) by regions



Conclusion

Each homicide among relatives is a case in itself, an individual act governed by a specific cause and motive. However, a direct correlation between the number of murders with, respectively, general social climate, type of family structure, geographical position with regard to the border, as well as uneven seasonal distribution of homicides and a notable disproportion in terms of gender, points to the fact that, apart from the most direct causes, crime was influenced by a number of factors which reflected the broader social reality.

1) Homicides among relatives follow the overall homicide rate. There is no essential disproportion of these particular crimes with regard to different time periods.

2) There is a clear-cut correlation between the number of murders among relatives and the general climate in the society. In *periods of despair* the number of these crimes increases, and contrarily, in *periods of hope* it decreases.

3) Since the size of population increases in *periods of hope*, and falls in *periods of despair*, it may be assumed that the rate of homicides among relatives (and homicides in general) is inversely proportional to the population size. With a rise in population, the number of homicides per 100,000 inhabitants drops; with a decline in population, the number of homicides per 100,000 inhabitants increases. Although this thesis would require confirmation on a larger data sample and, most likely, could not be applied to all circumstances governed by short-term population fluctuations, it would probably be valid in the majority of the cases. Yet to a certain extent, this assumption explains a marked decrease of homicides observed in Dubrovnik in the second half of the eighteenth century, and in some other parts of Europe even earlier. Apparently, inverse proportion tends to have an enhancing effect upon the overall trend.²⁹

4) The frequency of murders among relatives correlates with the type of family structure. In the communities where the nuclear families prevail (the city, islands), the number of homicides among relatives is smaller than in those marked by the extended family households (rural areas).

5) The type of family relationship between the murderer and the victim also correlates with the type of family structure. Where nuclear families prevail,

²⁹ See: Lawrence Stone, »Interpersonal Violence in English Society 1300-1980«. *Past and Present* 101 (1983): pp. 22, 26.

the participants in homicide focus on their household members: husband and wife, parent and child. In the areas in which the extended family prevails, the circle of relatives involved in the cases of murder is significantly broader.

6) Motives for murder are also in direct correlation with the type of family structure. In the areas in which the nuclear family is dominant, murders are most often motivated by personal intolerance between relatives, contrary to the regions dominated by the extended family form where the homicides are most frequently motivated by unsettled property issues.

7) The border position and hostile hinterland represent a factor which increases the risk of murder among relatives. Tensions along the border, hostilities between the Ragusan subjects and the citizens of the neighboring states as well as banditism reflected also on the purely domestic level, tending to affect the family organisation itself. This is vividly illustrated by the Dubrovnik example: all border regions (Konavle, Župa and Rijeka dubrovačka, Dubrovačko primorje) showed a greater share in the number of murders among relatives than was their share in the population. The regions less close to the border (Pelješac, the Dubrovnik islands, the city of Dubrovnik) showed a reverse trend.

8) The number of homicides among relatives is not distributed evenly throughout the year, but tends to vary, especially in the rural areas. Infanticides exhibits strong seasonal variations, as most of them occurred in winter, because the bulk of the murdered illegitimate children were conceived during springtime ("love child"). With other murders involving relatives, the interaction is somewhat weaker, yet a slight rise during the dull autumn and winter months as opposed to spring and summer has been established. December is recorded as having five times as many murders as April.

9) Infanticide was more frequent in towns and on the islands than in the rural areas. In nuclear families it was easier to hide pregnancy and post-delivery symptoms than in the rural households with many inmates. Thus the majority of unsolved infanticide cases stemmed from the urban area of Dubrovnik. Village girls were probably more cautious about starting an illicit relationship, because they had no life prospects outside the family, which exercised a direct and strong patriarchal authority upon them.

10) The method of homicide depended upon the character of the crime and gender. Weapons were most commonly used in the cases of premeditated murders, while blunt objects at hand and force in the cases of murders

committed in a fit of passion. Knife as a murder weapon was most popular among men, and poison among women.

11) The fact that men made up the majority of perpetrators and women the majority of victims in the homicides among relatives motivated by issues other than property (the latter being reserved for men as the household heads and protectors of the family interests) proves that women were an inferior sex in the families existing in the Republic of Dubrovnik, regardless of their structure.