

FOREIGN TEACHER AND HUMANIST: NASCIMBENE NASCIMBENI ON RHETORIC IN DUBROVNIK

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ABSTRACT: The humanist Nascimbene Nascimbeni from Ferrara was rector of the Dubrovnik public school in the 1560s. He prepared a new edition of Cicero's treatise *De inventione* and published it in Venice, thanks to the financial support from the Ragusan Senate. Obscure circumstances surrounding Nascimbene's abrupt departure have not overshadowed his contribution to the humanistic scholarship of Dubrovnik.

Key words: Nascimbene, Rhetoric, Republic of Dubrovnik, Humanism, school, Cicero, *De inventione*

An Italian humanist

The centennial contacts of Dubrovnik with other foreign communities may be traced through political, commercial and cultural activities. Long and stable development of the cultural relations, seldom exposed to crises so common in political and commercial issues, enabled the maturing of domestic artists and scholars capable not only of independently continuing the work of predominantly Italian models, but also of interpreting them critically. The relationship between teachers and students is best perceived in rhetoric, one of the

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fundamental disciplines in antique and medieval scholarship, receiving a new impetus in Renaissance. By replacing the seven classical liberal arts (Grammar, Rhetoric, Dialectic as *trivium* and Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy and Music as *quadrivium*) with five disciplines (Grammar, Rhetoric, Poetry, Moral Philosophy and History),¹ a humanist master tried to attract the audience with lectures more applicable to everyday life. It was important to discuss the theoretical assumptions with a large number of practical examples and also to point to a higher aim in the organizational shape of the political community. From this point on, rhetoric used both poetry and history, as they offer a treasure of various examples for the would-be orator educated at school. This was the path followed by Nascimbene Nascimbeni from Ferrara, rector of the Dubrovnik public school in the 1560s. His successful work in this field may be grasped from the contemporary and later sources. Among them are the reactions of the Ragusan government, his own assessment of the Ragusan pupils and his approach to Cicero's treatise *De inventione*, prepared for print thanks to the financial assistance of his employers, the patricians of Dubrovnik.

Ragusan orators

The culture of public speech traditionally enjoyed a lot of attention in ancient Dubrovnik. At the beginning of the seventeenth century historian Jacobus Luccari did not neglect to mention that the solicitors were appointed from among those who were taught by the teachers of oratory and had thus mastered the oratory skill, as it was their duty to affect the judge's opinion in favour of the party they represented.² Speech was an efficient device in political relations, when it was necessary to receive and entertain foreign dignitaries or to discuss important issues on the Senate, as well as in diplomatic missions abroad. Based on the research to date, it may be concluded that from the fifteenth century on the Ragusan emissaries were known as *oratores*, because

¹ Vladimir Rezar, *Latinitet Ludovika Crijevića Tuberoni*, in: Ludovik Crijević Tuberon, *Komentari o mojem vremenu*. Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2001: pp. VII-VIII.

² *Li sei avvocati del proprio si eleggono di coloro che sono stati sotto il maestro della rettorica ed hanno imparato la disciplina dell'orare. Perciocché l'uffizio loro è di tirare con l'affetto i giudici a favorire le cause che diffendono*. Giacomo di Pietro Luccari, *Copioso ristretto degli Annali di Ragusa*. Ragusa: presso Andrea Trevisan, ²1790: p. 278.

they had accomplished the skill of solemn speech, *oratio*.³ In addition to the patrician status, personal reputation and patriotism, knowledge of law and oratory were among the essential prerequisites for a successful diplomatic career, the merits of *oratores* often being glorified by the poets.⁴

Fifteenth-century Humanism gave birth to oratory as an indispensable quality of a diplomat. Thus the knowledge of solemn speech, *oratio*, was necessary for the chosen envoys. The contemporary rhetorical treatises provided patterns of diplomatic letters and speeches, while the Senate's instructions regularly included advice on adroit requests.⁵ Their practical success stemmed from the sound theoretical background.

The school as the fundament of rhetoric in Dubrovnik

It is clear that the rhetoric as a discipline must have also had a theoretical fundament. The main role in this belonged to the Ragusan school. Although the children of wealthier commoners were also educated here, they were relatively outnumbered by the patricians.⁶ The very fact that the Ragusan school became known as the grammar-rhetorical as early as the turn of the fourteenth century,⁷ no doubt followed the contemporary trends in education, where rhetoric was awarded the major role.⁸ Indeed, Ragusan teachers did not have a good opinion of their pupils' capacity, let alone their interest in learning. Thus Giovanni Conversini *alias* John of Ravenna in the second part of the fourteenth century mocked the Ragusans' ignorance of Italian and Latin, not

³ Zdenka Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode. Dubrovačka vlastela između srednjovjekovlja i humanizma*. Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti u Dubrovniku, 1999: p. 92.

⁴ Zdenka Janeković Römer, »O poslaničkoj službi i diplomatskom protokolu Dubrovačke Republike u 15. stoljeću«. *Zbornik Diplomatske akademije* 4 (1999): pp. 196-197.

⁵ Z. Janeković Römer, »O poslaničkoj službi«: p. 201.

⁶ Slavica Stojan, »Autentični stanovnici Držićeva Njarnjas-grada«. *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 43 (2005): p. 17.

⁷ Ivo Perić, »Dva reformna zahvata u školovanju dubrovačke omladine iz 15. i 16. stoljeća«. *Pedagoški rad* 5-6 (1967): p. 219.

⁸ As early as 1333 *magister* Nicholas de Verona is mentioned as a teacher who was supposed to teach young boys grammar and other subjects, as there was no other teacher in the city of Dubrovnik. It is almost certain that Nicholas de Verona was not the first professional teacher in Dubrovnik, as argued by Bariša Krekić, »The Attitude of Fifteenth Century Ragusans Towards Literacy«, in: Bariša Krekić, *Dubrovnik: a Mediterranean Urban Society, 1300-1600*. Aldershot (Great Britain) - Brookfield (USA): Variorum, 1997: VIII, p. 226 (reprinted from *Byzantine Studies in Honor of Milton V. Anastos*, ed. S. Vryonis, JR. Malibu: Undena Publications, 1985).

sparing the clergy either. Later, Filippo Diversi in the middle of the fifteenth century and Seraphinus Razzi, the general vicar of the Ragusan Dominican province in the late 1580s, remained puzzled by allegedly inadequate knowledge of Italian and by the youth's indifference to school.⁹ Teachers themselves may have been responsible for such a situation. Apparently they took advantage of the government's somewhat indulgent attitude towards the education of the young patricians with emphasis on elementary skills. Having mastered the basics of literacy, they qualified for the responsible duties of the state, whereas they were expected to gain true knowledge solely through the experience and advice of their senior colleagues.

An important formal change emerged with the new school law, proclaimed at the Senate meeting on 26 May 1557, during the rectorship of Giovanni Musonio from Cremona.¹⁰ The law provided the guidelines that were generally followed by all the State teachers until the arrival of the Jesuits in the middle of the seventeenth century, when the conditions changed. At an office term of three years, three patricians were appointed to supervise the work of the school and the implementation of the law. Formal division of the teaching staff was made on the same occasion. The position of the head master or the rector of the school was separated from that of the assistant teacher or repetitor. The latter enjoyed an annual salary of 60 *scudi* and it was upon the Senate to appoint another repetitor, should the necessity arise. It is very significant that the same law regulated the funding of especially gifted pupils to continue their education abroad. Upon the rector's proposal to the Senate, six patricians and two commoners may have been granted an annual bursary of 30 ducats over a period of five years, after which new scholars were elected under the same terms. The necessary amount was to be collected through the Ragusan tax on the trade in Alexandria and Syria. An estimated capital of three thousand ducats was to be used for buying stocks, later to be invested in an Italian bank, with an interest of 8%.¹¹

There were many students who regularly received this support in the second half of the sixteenth century, all of whom in Italy studied Theology, Canon

⁹ Natko Nodilo, »Prvi ljetopisci i davna historija dubrovačka.« *Rad JAZU* 65 (1883): pp. 115-116.

¹⁰ *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, series 3 (hereafter cited as: *Cons. Rog.*), vol. 54, ff. 16r-18r, State Archives of Dubrovnik (hereafter cited as: SAD).

¹¹ I. Perić, »Dva reformna zahvata«: pp. 222-224.

Law, Roman Law (*ius civile*), and Medicine.¹² The head master played a very important role, because the funding also depended on his recommendation.

The aforementioned legal decisions helped enhance the current schooling conditions, including the student funding. For example, Lujo Alegretti Đurašević was among those who received an annual bursary of 30 ducats during his five-year course of medicine at Bologna, commencing 8 February 1544.¹³ Apart from this, the assistant teachers were mentioned as early as the first half of the fifteenth century, while Filippo Diversi describes the Senate's inclination to help financially the Franciscan or Dominican friars who wished to study Liberal Arts or Theology in Italy.¹⁴ The case of Diversi himself, probably the best known teacher in the service of the ancient Republic, testifies to the contrasts through which the relations between the government and the foreign expert refracted. Initially attracted by the promises of regular income and flattering letters of the Ragusan clerks eager to employ a renowned expert and thus attach additional prestige to the city, Diversi soon became entangled in this small environment, which was ever suspicious about the requests of the Italian humanist and his frequent absence from school. Confronted by financial hardship which he was unable to resolve through additional commercial activities, Diversi left the city below Mount Srđ after less than seven years of service, from 1434 to the end of 1440.¹⁵

Two important documents that have been preserved, a letter and a book, together with some side archival notes introduce us to a scholar from Ferrara, Nascimbene Nascimbeni, who was among Diversi's successors in the sixteenth century. Nascimbene's career in Dubrovnik seemed to have attracted the researchers of the city's past as early as the eighteenth century, although, judging by fairly scanty evidence, his contemporaries showed little interest in

¹² The Canon Josephus Bucchia was granted 30 ducats a year on 31 October 1565 during the five years of his studying in Italy (*Cons. Rog.*, vol. 57, f. 224r), the Canon Franciscus Zamagna received the same on 7 February 1566 (*Cons. Rog.*, vol. 57, f. 262v), Leonardo Barbieri was awarded an equal bursary on 22 January 1568 (*Cons. Rog.*, vol. 58, f. 222r) and many others. They usually studied in Padua and Bologna.

¹³ Risto Jeremić and Jorjo Tadić, *Prilozi za istoriju zdravstvene kulture starog Dubrovnika*, vol. III. Beograd: Biblioteka Centralnog higijenskog zavoda, 1940: p. 53.

¹⁴ Filip de Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika*, ed. Zdenka Janeković-Römer. Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 2004: p. 99.

¹⁵ Zdenka Janeković-Römer offers a modern approach to Filippo Diversi in her introductory study in *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika*: pp. 9-11.

his activities. However, certain events marked by the upheavals in the Roman Church in the Post-Tridentine era give us reason to suspect that his work in the Republic was intentionally suppressed.

On the eve of Nascimbene's arrival

It was not until the end of the fifteenth century that the humanists of Ferrara and Dubrovnik made their first contacts. Some letters Tebaldo Tebaldi, the secretary of Duke Ercole I D'Este, wrote to Dubrovnik aroused admiration due to the beauty of their Latin style, as noted in Bartolomeo Lugari's response from Dubrovnik in the 1470s. More so, Lugari's son, Borso, was sent to Ferrara to study under the supervision of Marco Galeotto, the librarian of the Duke's private library. When Duke Federico I Gonzaga's wife passed away in 1479, the Ragusan poet Helias Cerva (Ilija Crijević) was among those who had sent epitaphs on that occasion.¹⁶ Thus, the humanists from Ferrara were not unknown to the Ragusan authorities and these early contacts were a formal base for the later engagement of one of them, to whom an important and prestigious function was entrusted: the head post at the Ragusan public school.

Despite the 1557 law that regulated the functioning of the school, by which the government was authorised to directly supervise all levels of tuition and the pupils' progress, the position of the head master was practically untouchable and it was only a matter of prestige to recruit a famous teacher from Italy. The Republic government was rather indulgent towards teachers since the time of Filippo Diversi in the middle of the fifteenth century, offering very tempting conditions prior to the signing of the contract. Thus in August 1490, they offered 500 perpers a year to a Greek, Demetrios Halcocondylas, who had fled from the Byzantine provinces conquered by the Ottomans and sought refuge in Florence, to come to Dubrovnik and teach Greek and Latin. The Senate minutes of 4 August 1490 mention a decision that the "famous teacher" should be engaged for two years, his salary commencing "the moment he embarks to Dubrovnik".¹⁷

¹⁶ Giulio Bertoni, »Relazioni letterarie fra umanisti a Ferrara e a Ragusa«, in: *Rešetarov zbornik iz dubrovačke prošlosti*, vol. II. Dubrovnik: knjižara »Jadran«, 1931: pp. 227-228.

¹⁷ *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 26, f. 113r.

A nice example of the government's benignant attitude towards the activity of their public teachers is provided in a letter written in Venice on 26 October 1560 by Giovanni Battista Amalteo, Ragusan secretary of the State, to the erudite writer from Ferrara, Nascimbene Nascimbeni, staying in Reggio Emilia at the time, asking him on behalf of the government to accept the post of the head master in Dubrovnik. The letter was quoted in full by Seraphinus Maria Cerva, one of the Ragusan ecclesiastical writers of the eighteenth century, who considered the letter a real monument of "everything worthwhile knowing about the time, customs, behaviour and duties of the Ragusans".¹⁸ By employing this source, Cerva has not only proved his meticulous and objective method, because the reader may verify his conclusions from the text of the letter itself, but also his profound understanding of historiographical issues, recognising the importance of the history of everyday life. He discovered this letter, as he mentions, in the treatise *L'idea del segretario* by writer and lawyer Bartolomeo Zucchi (1560-1631) from Monza, published in Venice in 1600.¹⁹ The fact that Zucchi's work saw several new editions speaks much of its popularity.

Cerva published the aforementioned letter twice. First, it was in his work *Bibliotheca Ragusina*, in the biography of the poet Savin Bobali (1530-1585),²⁰ Ragusan nobleman and a member of the *Concordium academia*, whose members used to gather in the same hall of the Sponza Palace where the school was located. Cerva claims that Bobali was in friendly relations not only with Giovanni Battista Amalteo, the earlier mentioned secretary of the Republic²¹ and member of the Academy, but also with Nascimbene himself, with whom Bobali, according to Cerva, used to discuss his studies.²² The second occasion

¹⁸ *Integram Amalthaei epistolam ... quod multa eius aetatis scitu non indigna ususque Ragusinos, mores, officia contineat hic scribere placet.*

¹⁹ The text of this letter is brought also by Francesco Maria Appendini, *Notizie istorico-critiche sulle antichità, storia e letteratura de' Ragusei*, vol. I. Ragusa: dalle stampe di Antonio Martecchini, 1802: pp. 206-208. Appendini refers directly to Zucchi (part. 4, p. 21), without mentioning previous work by Seraphinus Maria Cerva. On Zucchi and his work Weiss, *Biografia universale antica e moderna*, vol. LXV. Venezia: presso Giovanni Batista Missiaglia, MDCCCXXXI: pp. 396-397.

²⁰ Seraphinus Maria Cerva, *Bibliotheca Ragusina in qua Ragusini scriptores eorumque gesta et scripta recensentur. Dubrovačka biblioteka u kojoj se prikazuju dubrovački pisci, njihova djela i spisi*, ed. Stjepan Krsić, vol. IV. Zagreb: JAZU, 1980: pp. 69-71.

²¹ Bobali even wrote a lament on the occasion of Amalteo's death, as Amalteo died in Rome on 13 February 1572.

²² *Huic amicitia iunctus fuit Bobalius, quo cum de studiis suis communicare solebat.* S. Cerva, *Bibliotheca Ragusina* IV: p. 71.

when Cerva brought the complete text of Amalteo's letter to Nascimbene was in his unpublished biography of Ludovico Beccadelli, archbishop of Dubrovnik from 1555 until 1564,²³ where Cerva laconically notes that "upon receiving this letter, Nascimbene came to Dubrovnik, where he taught rhetoric for several years".²⁴

Giovanni Battista Amalteo outlines Nascimbene's future pedagogical activity in this way: "You will be expected to read authors you like best and to propose a theme to your pupils. Two hours in the morning and two hours after the lunch break will suffice, and with some luck even less. Thus you will have plenty of time to devote yourself to the studies more appropriate to your spirit. You will not have to work excessively while preparing your lectures for fear lest your negligence should be rebuked, but, you will be able to go from bed to school without being afraid of incurring censure if sometimes you lecture carelessly."²⁵ As if the leisure prospects were not enough, Amalteo deemed it adequate to add other material benefits that the life in Dubrovnik offered to a foreign teacher. "The air is excellent, meat, wine, fish and fruit are very tasty and of the best quality and there is plenty of food, and I believe that you with a servant and a companion would make a living with 50 or 60 *scudi* a year. Here you will have the opportunity to engage in commercial activities and to invest some money in the Levant, Syria, Spain or England. This you could easily achieve with the help of your pupils' fathers, without any effort or concern on your behalf and no disruption to your studies. Apart from this, although the employment term is two years, after which your service is confirmed on annual basis, you may be confident of keeping for ever the position, because the learned and good men never get fired and they are not forbidden to leave the service whenever they wish. The service is honourable, because the teacher is the head master and when there are two years ahead of him, he is liked, respected and appreciated by all. We live in a free, glorious

²³ Seraphinus Maria Cerva, *Sacra metropolis Ragusina*, Ms. 215, vol. III: 2376-2446 (Library of the Franciscan Monastery in Dubrovnik). The text of the letter itself is on pp. 2405-2411.

²⁴ *Acceptis hisce litteris Ragusium venit Nascimbenius, ubi per aliquot annos rhetoricam docuit* (S. Cerva, *Bibliotheca Ragusina* IV: p. 71).

²⁵ *Voi sarete tenuto di legger gli autori che più vi piaceranno, et di proporre qualche tema agli scolari, et due ore la mattina et due dopo pranzo vi basteranno, et per avventura meno; onde haverete grand'ozio d'attendere agli studii che più saranno di vostro genio. Nè vi converrà studiare sforzatamente le lezioni, ch'havete a fare con dubio, che la vostra negligenza non sia rippresa, ma potrete dal letto andar alla schola senza sospicione di cadere in censura per legger talvolta negligentemente.*

and safe Republic, where all the virtues are esteemed and highly praised. Therefore we beseech you and ask you to take this duty, more so, this honour, much wanted and desired by many”.²⁶ At last, Amalteo embellished his letter with the memories of Dubrovnik’s beautiful surroundings: “In Dubrovnik you will enjoy many festivals which do not exist in Italy, many feasts and more than a month’s vacation during harvest. You will enjoy your summers in the villas but also nice spots for catching birds, hunting and fishing, if you ever desire to indulge yourself in these pleasures”.²⁷

What lay behind such an idyll? Who are the heroes of this story? Bearing in mind that both Nascimbene and Giovanni Battista Amalteo belonged to the prestigious Italian circles of their time, let me first shed some light on the man who invited Nascimbene to Dubrovnik.

Brothers Amalteo in the service of Dubrovnik

Born in 1529 in Oderzo, near Udine, Giovanni Battista Amalteo studied Greek, Philosophy and Theology at the University of Padua. Having spent several years in Venice, first as a private tutor and later as a companion of the Venetian envoy Giovanni Michiel to England, to the wedding of Queen Mary Tudor and the Spanish king Philip II in 1554, there is mention that in 1556 he was in the service of the Dubrovnik Republic as Secretary of the State.²⁸ However, the first reliable information about Amalteo’s salary dates from

²⁶ *L'aria è buonissima, le carni, i vini, et i pesci, et i frutti delicatissimi, et in somma perfezione, et il vivere in modo abbondante, che mi persuado, che voi con un servidore, e con fante campareste con 50, o 60 scudi l'anno. Evvi ancor bella occasione di fare trafficare, et mercare, et di tenere vivo qualche denaro per via di Levante, o di Soria, o di Spagna, o di Inghilterra, et voi lo potreste far benissimo col mezzo de padri de vostri scolari, et senza darvi affanno, o pensiero che turbasse i vostri studii. Et benchè la lettura si dia per due anni, poi d'anno in anno si raffermi, nondimeno sareste sicuro di tenerla per sempre, perchè alle persone letterate et da bene non si dá mai licenza, né è tuttavia interdetto di pigliarsela, quando vogliono. L'officio è honorevole, essendo il lettore il primo maestro, et havendone due anni sotto se, et amato e prezio et accarezzato da tutti, e vivendo in una Repubblica libera et illustre et sicura e piena di riposo et tranquillità, ove le virtù sono riconosciute, et s'hanno in gran pregio, et voi siete richiesto et pregato a torre questo carico, anzi questo honore, il quale molti ricercano et procurano instantemente.*

²⁷ *Haverete di molte feste, che in Italia non si trovano, et di molte ferie, et più d'un mese di vacanze al tempo delle vendemie. Quanto poi goderete di state alcune villette, et alcuni bei luoghi da uccellare, da cacciare e da pescare, se mai vi venisse voglia di prendervi da si fatti piaceri.*

²⁸ Josip Torbarina, *Italian influence on the poets of the Ragusan Republic*. London: Williams and Nordgate Ltd., 1931: p. 56.

March 1558, when it was precisely stated that “he received his first salary”.²⁹ At the beginning of January 1559, he received 93 perpers as salary for four months, during which his brother Aurelio was chancellor. The secretary Guglielmo Dondino received an equal sum for his service.³⁰ As notary and chancellor, Giovanni Battista Amalteo helped the commission which, between 1558 and 1560, was preparing the reform of the Ragusan legislation.³¹ He stayed in Dubrovnik until the mid-1560s, when he left for Rome because of his poor health. At the end of August 1564 the Senate engaged him together with Cardinal Sfondrati to submit a plea to the Pope on behalf of the Franciscan friar from Dubrovnik, Bonifacius Drkolica, former guardian of the Franciscan monastery of the Holy Grave in Jerusalem, to be installed as bishop of Ston.³² Only a few months later the Senate addressed the Pope with a new plea, demanding that the archbishop of Dubrovnik be conferred a pallium, at his own expense. The Senate would decide how to reimburse the archbishop in due course.³³ Five years later, in May 1569, the Senate asked the archbishop to award Amalteo “for his efforts for the archbishopric, since he did them on behalf of the Senate”.³⁴ Thus, Amalteo had left the Republic before Nascimbene.

Within the context of Amalteo’s letter to Nascimbene, the former’s diplomatic service and some missions he accomplished upon the orders of the Senate tend to draw our attention. Giovanni Battista Amalteo was often

²⁹ *Zibaldone*, vol. II, Ms. 434: p. 352 (Library of the Franciscan Monastery in Dubrovnik). The data on the teachers’ salaries in the collection *Zibaldone* are transcribed under the heading *Alcune partite estratte dai Libri delle Polizze dell’ufficio delle cinque ragioni*. In the original, in *Libri delle polizze*, series 78 in the State Archives, there are no entries before 1554, which means that the fund was more complete in Mattei’s time. In the second book of the original there are only some entries concerning the period 1564-1566, while the third book contains entries from 1567.

³⁰ *Zibaldone* II: p. 353.

³¹ Bernard Stulli, »*Ordines artis nauticae secundum consuetudinem civitatis Ragusii*. Jedna zbirka pomorskog zakonodavstva Dubrovačke Republike iz god. 1557.«. *Anali Historijskog instituta JAZU u Dubrovniku* 1 (1952): p. 111.

³² Benvenutus Rode, *Necrologium fratrum Minorum de Observantia Provinciae S. Francisci Ragusii*. Ad Claras Aquas [Quaracchi]: ex typographia Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1914: p. 33.

³³ *Die 28 Decembri 1564 a prandio. Prima pars est de scribendo Romam domino Ioanni Baptistae Amaltheo, ut procurare debeat obtinere a Sanctissimo Domino nostro papa palium pro Reverendissimo domino archiepiscopo novo ad expensas dicti Reverendissimi et postea dicetur quomodo ab eo pecunias, quae pro dicto palio expendentur, recuperare debeamus. Pro XXXVII, contra II (Cons. Rog., vol. 57, f. 120r).*

³⁴ *Die XX Maii 1569 Veneris. Prima pars est de requirendo atque rogando Reverendissimum Dominum Archiepiscopum nostrum ut remuneret Dominum Ioannem Baptistam Amaltheum pro eius laboribus quos habuit pro expeditione archiepiscopatus, attento quod ad nostram instantiam eos habuit. Per XXI, contra XVII (Cons. Rog., vol. 59, f. 120r).*

appointed envoy of the Ragusan government to Italy, especially when it was necessary to recruit foreign experts for service of the Republic. Thus on 19 August 1561 the Senate decided to send a confidential man to Italy to find a doctor and a surgeon to be employed in the State service. Since the proposals to appoint some of the Ragusan patricians or diplomatic representatives stationed in Italy for this mission had been rejected, the Senate members decided to leave the whole matter to “a person of another rank”. Under the assumption that the person appointed for the mission was among the state employees, he was given forty ducats from the Treasury for the travel costs and an approximated three-month stay. The envoy was to receive an extra ducat per day, in addition to his regular monthly salary. Finally, Giovanni Battista Amalteo was chosen for the mission.³⁵ Four days later, on 23 August, the *domini provisoires* were ordered to write special instructions for him and to inform the Senate about all the details.³⁶ On 26 August 1561 these instructions were approved on the Senate without change, since the proposal to allow him additional financial means was rejected.³⁷ Finally, on 11 September of the same year, the Senate ordered the *provisoires* to add an instruction about finding a new surgeon, under the usual terms and payment.³⁸

On 23 November 1561, Giovanni Battista Amalteo was entrusted with yet another confidential task.³⁹ The Senate asked him to find an additional physician, because the service of the current one, Cesare Buzzacarino, was met with general disapproval. They believed Giovanni Amalteo to be a most appropriate person for such a delicate mission, because he was familiar with experts from the northern Italy.⁴⁰ However, he had to take care that Buzzacarino did not find out anything, not even from his talks with the physician Antonio Maria Alberghin from Bologna.⁴¹ It is interesting that Amalteo nonetheless

³⁵ *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 55, f. 274rv.

³⁶ *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 55, f. 276v.

³⁷ *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 55, f. 277v.

³⁸ *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 55, f. 280v.

³⁹ *Secreta Rogatorum*, series 4, vol. 2, *tergo*, ff. 4r-5r, SAD.

⁴⁰ *S'habbiamo rissoluti di condurre il secondo medico phisico perchè vediamo l'opera di messer Cesare [Buzzacarino] non essere ad alcuno grata, e considerato come Voi havete nella mente tutti quelli personaggi quali potranno essere al proposito nostro, habbiamo voluto darvi questo carico...*

⁴¹ *Vogliamo ancora ricordare che la condotta di questo secondo phisico vogliate tenere occulta, e dove accadesse ragionarvi con l'Eccellente signor Anton Maria Alberghin, lo pregarete a tener tale cosa occulta, acciò messer Cesare davanti il tempo non habbi in questo caso prendere dispiacere, perchè ragionandosi di questo caso in Venetia, per avvertura, ne potrebbe essere avvisato, il che non voriamo succedesse.*

mentioned in his letter Buzzacarino's name among respectable Italians with whom Nascimbene may have socialized in Dubrovnik.

While the archival sources, drawn on by certain authors, mention only brothers Giovanni Battista and Aurelio Amalteo,⁴² a part of the literature, in the footsteps of S.M. Cerva, mentions erroneously Giovanni Battista, Girolamo and Cornelio.⁴³ Actually, Cerva confused Aurelio with his elder brother Girolamo Amalteo, a physician, who was also invited to come to Dubrovnik in the mid-1550s, but never turned up.

According to documents, Aurelio succeeded the notary Francesco Parisio on 12 August 1564,⁴⁴ when the Senate instructed the Rector and his Minor Council to recruit another notary from Italy under the usual terms and payment.⁴⁵ Prior to notary service, Aurelio Amalteo had worked as an assistant teacher at the Ragusan school for many years. By March 1546, he had received 100 perpers as his four-months' salary as *Maestro della scola del comun*,⁴⁶ leading us to conclude that he had been employed for some time, because the four-month salary for assistant teachers was known to increase from the initial 80 perpers to 100 perpers, as evidenced by his successor at school, Paolo Bosio. As early as September 1553 Aurelio Amalteo received his regular 100 perpers at the end of another four-month period, and in the spring of 1554 he was succeeded by Bosio. In March of the same year, Aurelio Amalteo and Anica, daughter of the late Dominicus Tristani, signed their betrothal agreement, according to which the dowry of no less than 500 ducats was to be paid by Anica's brothers, Josephus and Tristanus Tristani.⁴⁷

⁴² Sebastijan Slade, *Fasti Litterario-Ragusini. Dubrovačka književna kronika*, ed. and trans. Pavao Knezović. Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2001: p. 147; F. M. Appendini, *Notizie storico-critiche sulle antichità, storia e letteratura de' Ragusei*, vol. II. Dubrovnik: dalle stampe di Antonio Martecchini, 1803: p. 319, and *Zibaldone II* by G. M. Mattei.

⁴³ S. M. Cerva, *Bibliotheca Ragusina IV*: p. 68; *Biographie universelle, ancienne et moderne* II. Paris: Michaud frères, 1811: pp. 9-11; J. Torbarina, *Italian influence*, passim.

⁴⁴ *Die XII Augusti 1564. Prima pars est de assignando ser Aurelio Amaltheo notario nostro locum cum provisione in nostra notaria quem habebat quondam ser Franciscus Parisius tunc quando ei locus datus fuit quondam Vicinii Coffi olim notarii nostri* (Cons. Rog., vol. 57, f. 78r).

⁴⁵ *Die XII Augusti 1564. Prima pars est de dando libertatem Magnifico Domino Rectori et Consilio ut pro conducendo uno notario ex partibus Italiae cum salario solito et consueto possint scribere et ordinem dare ac caetera in huiusmodi materia necessaria et opportuna peragere, prout eis melius videbitur. Per omnes* (Cons. Rog., vol. 57, f. 78r).

⁴⁶ *Zibaldone II*: p. 346.

⁴⁷ *Pacta matrimonialia*, series 33, vol. 8, ff. 155v-156r, SAD.

In the spring of 1569 the Senate awarded Aurelio a garden at Pile with all the surrounding objects, to be enjoyed during his lifetime or until the completion of his service in Dubrovnik. Since the location actually consisted of dyeing facilities, the Senate's decision concerning Aurelio's accommodation specified that "he may not be sent away unless a dyer be brought from Italy, in compliance with the Yellow Book".⁴⁸ Aurelio undoubtedly remained in public service until his death, because on 28 April 1571 the Senate decided to grant subsistence to his widow Anica. With only five votes against, she was allowed 500 ducats from the Treasury as dowry if she remarried, and a support of 100 perpers a year if she remained single. If she remarried and had no children in the second marriage, the mentioned 500 ducats were to be returned to the State. It was emphasised that these steps were taken on account of the merits of her husband, Aurelio Amalteo, the Secretary of the State.⁴⁹ This decision was reached upon Anica's petition submitted to the Senate on 13 February 1571.⁵⁰ Aurelio wrote his last will on 7 January 1571, officially opened on 5 February of the same year. The universal heir was his wife Anica, while his brothers and nephews, whose names are not given, were not allowed to dispute the will. It seems that Aurelio and Anica did not have any children. Aurelio's devotion to duty also found place in his will, as he bequeathed 10 perpers to the commune, not failing to mention his spiritual father Ambrosius, a Franciscan friar, who was to hold a commemoration service.⁵¹ The last will of Aurelio's widow Anica was written on 15 September 1585 and officially opened in Dubrovnik on 19 February 1586. Since she did not have any children, she left her property to her sisters and nieces. The will contains a detailed list of furniture, but no books or works of art.⁵²

⁴⁸ *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 59, f. 106v. The Yellow Book is a collection of Ragusan laws.

⁴⁹ *Die XXVIII Aprilis 1571. Prima pars est de subveniendo Dominae Anizae uxori quondam Domini Aurelii Amalthei segretarii nostri in auxilium eius dotis, casu quo nuberet, cum ducatis auri quingentis; et quoad in viduitate permanebit de ei dando quolibet anno ipperperos centum in auxilium eius nutrimenti et pro solvendo affictu domus; et casu quo nuberet et non haberet filios, ut dicti ducati 500 reverti debeant comuni nostro; et hoc pro benemeritis dicti quondam Domini Aurelii eius viri. Per omnes, contra V (Cons. Rog., vol. 60, f. 144v).*

⁵⁰ *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 60, f. 113r.

⁵¹ *Testamenta Notariae* (hereafter cited as: *Test. Not.*), series 10.1, vol. 43, f. 90v, SAD.

⁵² *Test. Not.*, vol. 47, f. 24v-27v.

Formal qualifications for civil service

When the Senate approved of employing a new surgeon in 1564, they underlined “under the usual salary and other terms”. These “usual terms” were described in the instructions of the Rector and the Minor Council to the patricians Marinus Zamagna and Nicolaus Sorgo, diplomatic representatives to the imperial Habsburg Court, written as early as 7 November 1533 by Francesco Parisi, notary and chancellor.⁵³ Zamagna and Sorgo were ordered to recruit “a famous and competent physician surgeon, a chancellor for our State and a head master for our public school, at a term of two years”. It is clearly specified that “the mentioned newcomers are obliged, in turn, to swear an oath of allegiance and to pay the due respect and obedience to the Magnificent Lord Rector of this city appointed at the time, and to his Council and to the Government of this city, continuing their diligent and loyal work, overall and singular, that will pertain to the art and office of those to be hired”.⁵⁴ Their salary ran from the moment they embarked to Dubrovnik, and the two aforementioned patricians were authorized to negotiate and to present the conditions of employment. Under the terms offered, the would-be physician was obliged to visit and to treat patients, correctly administer medicine and counsel them both in the city and in its surroundings, and to treat the citizens and the subjects as well as the clerics free of charge.⁵⁵

Twenty years later, the Senate’s letter of 19 July 1553 to Lujo Đurašević in Bologna contained almost the same demands. The Rector and the councillors were looking for a new physician, their options being Cesare Buzzacarina and one of the Amalteos brothers. Although his name is not mentioned, the latter was Girolamo Amalteo, philosopher, physician and poet. The Rector and the councillors wrote to Đurašević: “You are familiar with the qualities we require

⁵³ *Acta Sanctae Mariae Maioris saec. XVI*, series 76, vol. 1, document n. 73, SAD.

⁵⁴ *...cum pacto expresse quod dicti conducenti et quilibet ipsorum sint obligati prestare iuramentum fidelitatis et debitam reverentiam et obedientiam exhibere Magnifico Domino Rectori dictae civitatis, qui pro tempore erit, et eius Consilio ac regimini dictae civitatis, se habendo continue ac diligenter et fideliter ad omnia et singula quae spectabunt et pertinebunt arti et officio dicatorum conducendorum...*

⁵⁵ *...quod dictus medicus chirurgicus teneatur visitare et curare infirmos et illis fideliter adhibere consilia et remedia opportuna, tam in civitate, quam eius districtu, et tam cives et subditos dictae civitatis quam salariatos omnesque beneficio civitatis gaudentes et religiosos gratis et libere, sine aliquo premio habendo, vel a quocumque ex praedictis petendo.*

of such a physician: he is to be Catholic, versed in literature and connoisseur of Greek, and, above all, a charitable person, who does his job devotedly, because even if he were the most learned physician in the world yet unwilling to do his job by visiting the rich and the poor alike...” he would not be a good physician.⁵⁶ According to another letter addressed to Lujo Đurašević in Bologna, in December 1553, the elder brother of Giovanni Amalteo was unable to come to Dubrovnik, the exact reasons not being specified.⁵⁷

Similar instructions governed the employment of the state teacher. Our information originates from the letter addressed to chancellor Johannes Sderi in Venice, in early July of 1550.⁵⁸ The person wanted “should not be young, but middle aged. He must have good habits and know both languages [Latin and Greek]. When such a person is found, we are content to offer up to 200 ducats a year and this salary must begin the day he embarks for Dubrovnik. In addition to the mentioned 200 ducats, 30 perpers will be disbursed for the annual house rent, as is our custom”. The final instruction reads: “We shall not neglect to remind you to pay special attention not to engage a person sullied with heresy, because at no cost are such people welcome to our city”. The letter ended with the usual offer of a two-year contract, stating that all other details depended on the mutual agreement of the two parties. Considering the modest salary offer, it was not easy to find an adequate candidate. The letter of 19 February 1551 to Marino Sfondrati in Rome illustrates these difficulties: “After seven or eight months [of negotiations], the teacher we wanted to hire still remained determined in his demand for 300 ducats, and since we do not wish to be put to such an expense, we are ordering you to find a person of good custom, a Catholic, who masters Greek and Latin”.⁵⁹ The long search finally bore fruit, as on 16 April 1551 Sfondrati was informed that *messer Giovanni Musonio Cremonese* had been accepted as the most serious candidate for the teacher’s post.⁶⁰ By setting out from Venice to Dubrovnik on 1 September 1551, Musonio

⁵⁶ *Voi sappiate le qualità quali desideriamo in tale medico, primo che sia catholico letterato e possendole che tale habbi lettere grece sia pratico e sopra tutto sia persona caritativa quale voluntieri faci l’officio suo perchè quando fusse la più sufficiente persona del mondo e non volessi con carità essercitar l’ufficio suo in visitar tanto il povero quanto il ricco... (Lettere di Levante, series 27.1, vol. 25, f. 136r, SAD).*

⁵⁷ *Lettere di Levante*, vol. 25, f. 170r.

⁵⁸ *Lettere di Levante*, vol. 24, f. 163rv.

⁵⁹ *Lettere di Levante*, vol. 24, f. 237r.

⁶⁰ *Lettere di Levante*, vol. 24, f. 258rv.

had begun his duty as rector of the Ragusan school, formally taking over the position in October of the same year at a salary of 66 ducats, 26 *grossi* and 20 *parvuli*. This amount he received every four months, or slightly more than 200 ducats a year.⁶¹ In the summer of 1560, after nine long years of service, Giovanni Musonio left Dubrovnik. His compatriots engaged in the service of the Republic of Dubrovnik in the same period managed to negotiate an even better employment status.

Italian clerks in Dubrovnik in the middle of the sixteenth century

Among the benefits with which Giovanni Amalteo tried to persuade Nascimbene to come to Dubrovnik worth mentioning was the circle of distinguished and learned Italians employed in the city at the time. He singled out “*messer Bernardo Paterno and Cesare Buzzacarino, physicians and respectable men. You will also meet messer Francesco Parisio, Marino Sfondrati, cousin of the late Cardinal, and Guglielmo Dondino, all secretaries and Italians, who will present you the manners, customs and true Italian courtesies*”.⁶² They all gathered in a small humanistic circle round Archbishop Ludovico Beccadelli, whom Nascimbene did not meet in Dubrovnik because the prelate had already returned to Italy in 1560, while his pontificate formally ended in 1564. Employed as physicians in the then Dubrovnik were Bernardo Paterno and Cesare Buzzacarino. Paterno later became Professor of Medicine at Pavia, Pisa and Padua, while Cesare Buzzacarino *de Pisauro* was mentioned as *medicus physicus* in Dubrovnik first in 1552 and later in 1558, when, in July, the Senate proposed to the Major Council to confirm his office for another year. Bearing in mind the Senate’s secret attempt to assign Giovanni Amalteo in November 1561 to find another physician instead of Buzzacarino in northern Italy, the councillors had obviously changed their mind and decided to keep

⁶¹ According to the official monetary units of Dubrovnik, 1 ducat equalled 40 *grossi*, and 1 perper 12 *grossi*. A thorough insight into Dubrovnik’s units of account and their exchange rate is provided by Seraphinus Maria Cerva, *Prolegomena in Sacram metropolim Ragusinam*, ed. Relja Seferović. Zagreb – Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2008: pp. 318-322, 325.

⁶² *Conoscerete messer Bernardin Paterno, et messer Cesare Buzzacarino, medici et huomini di portata. Conoscerete messer Francesco Parisio, messer Marino Sfondrati cugino del Cardinale di felice memoria, et messer Guglielmo Dondini tutti secretarii, e tutti Italiani, i quali vi rappresenterano maniere, costumi et cortesie vere d’Italia.*

him. His activity in Dubrovnik was still mentioned in 1566,⁶³ but by the middle of July 1569 he probably died, since the minutes of the Minor Council of the following month testify to his death and the fact that the executors of his will were paid 30 perpers for the rent of his house.⁶⁴ Both the clerks and the school rectors, received a rental subsidy of 30 perpers a year. Thus Giovanni Musonio, Nascimbene and later Francesco Serdonati⁶⁵ were provided with a 30-perper rental entitlement.

The fact that the Senate occasionally awarded bursaries to the clerks' sons to study in Italy testifies to the good position these Italians enjoyed in Dubrovnik. Thus after the death of the notary Pietro Parisio, a son of the above mentioned Francesco, his widow Lisa regularly received money for the study of her elder son Geronimo in Perugia, as well as for her younger son Florio's studies⁶⁶ at the University of Pavia.⁶⁷ In the Minor Council minutes from 1566 and 1567, we find information about these grants,⁶⁸ which were brought upon the Senate's decision of 28 April 1564. It was then that the Senate unanimously decided to help the brothers Geronimo and Florio Parisio to pursue their studies in Italy, at a regular annual bursary of 30 ducats each. This state support was to last five years.⁶⁹ Additionally, by a majority of 29 against 13 votes, it was decided that they would receive a gift of 40 ducats for their clothes and

⁶³ Risto Jeremić and Jorjo Tadić, *Prilozi za istoriju zdravstvene kulture starog Dubrovnika*, vol. II. Beograd: Biblioteka Centralnog higijenskog zavoda, 1939: pp. 52, 54.

⁶⁴ The meeting was held on 21 August 1569 (*Acta Minoris Consilii*, series 5, hereafter cited as: *Cons. Min.*, vol. 49, f. 120v; SAD)

⁶⁵ *Zibaldone II*: pp. 351, 353-354, 360-363.

⁶⁶ *...qui Paviae reperitur studendi causa ...pro sibi faciendis vestimentis et libris emendis* (*Cons. Min.*, vol. 48, f. 31v). The decision was reached on 14 March 1566. A similar decision was reached at the beginning of 1567 (*Cons. Min.*, vol. 48, f. 141v).

⁶⁷ The funding of the brothers Parisio and the same privilege the Ragusan government granted somewhat later to Bartolomeo Sfondrati were analysed by Bariša Krekić, »*Miscellanea* from the Cultural Life of Renaissance Dubrovnik«, in: Bariša Krekić, *Dubrovnik: a Mediterranean Urban Society, 1300-1600*. Aldershot (Great Britain) - Brookfield (USA): Variorum, 1997: IX, pp. 138-139; reprint from *Byzantinische Forschungen* 20 (1994).

⁶⁸ *Cons. Min.*, vol. 48, f. 17r, f. 129v.

⁶⁹ *Die XXVIII Aprilis 1564 Veneris. Prima pars est de succurrendo duobus filiis ser Petri Francisci Parisii notarii nostri videlicet Florio et Hieronymo, qui profecturi sunt ad studium in Italiam, et si prima capiatur postea dicetur de quantitate. Per omnes.*

Prima pars est de succurrendo eisdem duobus filiis cum ducatis auri triginta dandis eis in donum quotannis per quinquennium pro quolibet. Per XXXII, contra – (Cons. Rog., vol. 57, ff. 44v-45r).

books prior to departure for Italy.⁷⁰ Yet Ragusan authorities did not fail to mention that the patrician Benedictus Gondola already paid 80 ducats to Geronimo Parisio, in Ancona, as the grant he and his brother were entitled to.⁷¹

The Minor Council quoted a similar Senate's decision when granting an amount of 75 perpers to the daughters of the same notary in January 1567.⁷² At the beginning of July 1564, the Senate, with only four votes against, permitted the four daughters of the notary Francesco Parisio to enter, upon their own will and choice, one of the female convents without clausure. They would be completely endowed by the state in that each girl was to receive an allowance of 40 perpers a year until being admitted to convent. In taking vows, they were given priority over other candidates. It was finally decided that the Rector and the Minor Council should ask the treasurer to disburse 60 perpers a year for all the mentioned costs.⁷³

The Parisio family was not the only one among the Italians employed in the Ragusan bureaucratic apparatus that enjoyed such benefits. Chancellor Marino Sfondrati made a private arrangement for the cultivation of his vineyard on the near-by island of Šipan,⁷⁴ and his son Nicola, who succeeded him in public service,⁷⁵ stressed in his office application to the Senate that the Sfondrati

⁷⁰ *Prima pars est de dando in donum uni cuilibet dictorum filiorum pro vestimentis et libris quando proficiscuntur in Italiam ad studium ducatos auri quadraginta. Per XXIX, contra XIII (Cons. Rog., vol. 57, f. 45r).*

⁷¹ *Nota quod ducati 80 fuerunt soluti Anconae per ser Benedictum de Gondola Hieronymo Parisio, pro quibus idem Hieronymus factus fuit debitor ad librum capsae de 1565 et virtute contrascriptarum duarum partium factus fuit creditor (Cons. Rog., vol. 57, f. 45r).*

⁷² *Cons. Min., vol. 48, f. 130v.*

⁷³ *Die III Iulii 1564 Lunae. Prima pars est de faciendo gratiam quatuor filiabus quondam ser Francisci Parisii benemeriti notarii nostri, quod possint ad omnem earum voluntatem ingredi monasteria non clausa monialium civitatis nostrae, una, seu duae earum pro monasterio in earum electione, indutae omnibus vestimentis et aliis rebus opportunis ad expensas communis nostri, et de pluri quod ex nunc uni cuilibet dictarum quatuor filiarum assignari debeant ipperperi quadraginta pro quolibet anno, pro earum alimentis et nutrimentis, donec et quousque cuique earum vacabit locus pro se monacando in dictis monasteriis, quae quatuor filiae habere debeant prima loca vacationum, quae de earum gradu vacabunt, et cum declaratione quod Magnificus Dominus Rector et eius Consilium requirere debeant a Dominis Thesaurariis, ut pro promissis expensis contribuere debeant ipperperos sexaginta annuatim. Per omnes, contra IIII (Cons. Rog., vol. 57, f. 67v).*

⁷⁴ *Diversa Cancellariae* (hereafter cited as: *Div. Canc.*), series 25, vol. 152, f. 22r, SAD.

⁷⁵ Nicolaus Sfondrati began his career as a scribe's assistant on 23 August 1569 (*Cons. Rog.*, vol. 59, f. 153r) and the Senate appointed him chancellor on 18 August 1572, after his father's death, by 29 votes to 5 (*Cons. Rog.*, vol. 61, f. 127v-128r).

family had long served the Ragusan Republic as notaries and chancellors. Nicola drew attention to the Sfondratis—Bartolomeo, Geronimo and especially his father Marino—who, in recognition of the loyal service of his predecessors, became chancellor at a young age of 24, and served the Republic for more than 44 years. In his biography of Bartolomeo Sfondrati, the historian Seraphinus Maria Cerva has elucidated some of the members of this distinguished family who had arrived in Dubrovnik from Cremona. Apparently, from his two marriages Bartolomeo had 18 sons and 10 daughters.⁷⁶

Nascimbene's work at the Ragusan school

Before his arrival in Dubrovnik, Nascimbene had taught in Ferrara, the town of his birth, until 1557, and after that in Reggio Emilia.⁷⁷ He was reluctant to accept the offer of the Ragusan Republic mainly because of the modest salary, as had earlier been pointed out in Amalteo's letter. Unable to offer Nascimbene a higher salary, Amalteo tried to justify himself before the unsatisfied scholar: "I have just received your letter, from which I gather certain reluctance on your part to accept or reject this offer mainly because of the small salary. ... I am now writing to convince you that I am not authorized to offer you more than was promised in my name by Mr. Lamberti, nor have my Lords ever given more to anyone. The salary amounts to 200 large gold ducats plus ten *scudi* for the house rent, and, by my calculation, 230 *scudi* in all".⁷⁸

⁷⁶ *Uxorem duxit Ragusii Marussiam, Ioannis Cotrulii filiam, qua morte sublata iterum nuptias contraxit cum Magdalena, Paschalis a Pace filia, ex qua liberos suscepit mares X, faeminas VIII, cum ex priore suscepisset mares VIII et faeminas duas, ad summam XXVIII liberos, faeminas videlicet X, mares XVIII* (S. Cerva, *Bibliotheca Ragusina* I: p. 148).

⁷⁷ Carlo Ginzburg, »Due note sul profetismo cinquecentesco«. *Rivista storica Italiana* 78 (1966): pp. 186-187.

⁷⁸ *Hor che si sono ricevute vostre lettere, nelle quali del tutto non vi dimostrate risoluto d'acettare, nè di ricusare questa lettura, ma pare che ci mettiate difficoltà in sub salario... scrivo per rendervi capace, che più di quello, che ne feci promettere dal signor Lamberti, io non ho commissione di proferire, nè i miei Signori habber mai costume di dar ad alcuno. Il salario è di dugento ducati d'oro larghi, e di dieci scudi per pigione d'una casa ch'in tutto fanno (se io non erro nel conto) la somma di 230 scudi.* Concerning this part of the letter, we may add an explanation provided by Gian Maria Mattei that "the Venetian *zecchino* then in Dubrovnik had the value of 43 *grossetti*" (*In questo tempo il zecchino veneziano si valutava in Ragusa grossetti 43 in circa.* Zibaldone II: p. 360).

Shortly afterwards, with reference to Amalteo's report, the government decided to address the hesitating scholar itself. By sending an official invitation to Nascimbene on 7 December 1560,⁷⁹ the Rector and the Councillors of the Minor Council quoted that Amalteo had returned to Dubrovnik with the scholar's acceptance of the invitation and his initial appointment in March 1561. They confirmed Amalteo's promise about the annual salary of 209 ducats, making 232 *scudi* and 8 *grossi*,⁸⁰ but also prompted Nascimbene to set off for Dubrovnik as quickly as possible. They instructed him to contact the patrician Pasqualis Menze in Venice, who was then representing the interests of Ragusans in the city of St Mark, as he would organise Nascimbene's voyage to Dubrovnik by recommending him to the captain of a brigantine and by providing him with 50 ducats for travel expenses.⁸¹ At the end of their letter, they reconfirmed Amalteo's promise that the salary would commence immediately upon his departure from Reggio on his journey to Dubrovnik via Venice.⁸²

What were Nascimbene's grounds for demanding a better salary? His activities may be formally divided into literary theory and pedagogic practice. Nascimbene's literary activity had started in 1544, when he published the treatise entitled *Scipio the Younger or On the youth*, dedicated to the Duke of Mantua, Gianfrancesco II Gonzaga, as well as the *Odes*, dedicated to Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga. The treatise was published in Bologna by Bartolomeo Bonardo and Marco Antonio Groschi. Also in Bologna, the publisher Anselmo Giaccarello in 1555 printed Nascimbene's treatise on the elements of the letters entitled *Grammatilogia, or Nascimbeni Nascimbene erudita et oppido quam elegans super litteris elementorum dissertatio, quae grammatilogia inscribitur, in duos libros divisa, ... Autore Nascimbaeno Nascimbaenio Ferrariensi.*

⁷⁹ *Lettere di Levante*, vol. 28, f. 105rv.

⁸⁰ ...*confirmandoli il partito, offertoli in nome nostro dal ditto dottore messer Giovanni Battista Amaltheo di ducati d'oro ducento nove al anno, che fanno vero scudi 232 grossi 8...*

⁸¹ ...*venendo in Venetia ricorrerà da messer Pasquale di Menze, quale non mancherà ponere la Signoria Vostra a camino, con ricomandarla al padrone del brighentino, l'haverà condurre, e quando li fusse necessaria qualche decena di scudi tene ordine da noi, di numerarla sin a 50 ducati dato ad ogni sua richiesta.*

⁸² *Non vogliamo anchora trallassare de dirli, come confirmamo la promessa fatta dal ditto Amaltheo a Vostra Signoria, che lo stipendio suo commenci correrli dal giorno partivo da Rhegio, per venire a Venetia, et inde a Ragugia.*

Apart from the new edition of Cicero's treatise *De inventione*,⁸³ prepared during Nascimbene's stay in Dubrovnik and published in Venice in 1564, Nascimbene wrote commentaries on the first six parts of Virgil's *Eneid*, published in Basle in March of 1577.⁸⁴ Thus in the span of 33 years Nascimbene wrote his major works, and upon this fact we are inclined to believe that he had arrived in Dubrovnik as a mature and experienced scholar, whose appearance and reputation no doubt appealed to his hosts, as evidenced by Amalteo's letter.⁸⁵ Apparently, Nascimbene was also reconsidering the idea of writing a history of Dubrovnik, or at least a description of the city similar to that of his predecessor from the fifteenth century, Filippo Diversi. Our assumption is based on the final part of his dedication to the senators in the treatise *De inventione*, in which he listed the Ragusan patrician families: "Still active are many of those notable for their virtue and honour, and to quote their names here respectively would be long and somewhat odious. However, their most glorious virtue will be presented in written form in due time. For now, greatest Fathers, I present you with a tiny gift which, I hope, you will accept as a token of my esteem, for most piously and humbly I dedicate to you eternally. Greetings."⁸⁶ It is not known whether Nascimbene succeeded in his intention of presenting Dubrovnik of his time in some other text, as nothing more is said about that topic in the book before us, in his edition of *De inventione*.

As far as his pedagogical practice is concerned (the main reason of his arrival in Dubrovnik), it seems that he did not easily establish contact with the pupils. Although the letter of invitation stated that "only two hours in the morning and two hours after lunch" would suffice to complete all of his duties,

⁸³ *Nascimbaeni Nascimbaenii Ferrariensis in M. Tullii Ciceronis De Inventione Libros Commentarius, Ad Senatam Rhaccusinum*. One copy is kept in the library of the State Archives of Dubrovnik under the catalogue number R-378. Another is housed at the Scientific Library of Dubrovnik under the catalogue number R-2826.

⁸⁴ The data on Nascimbene's works are available on the Internet site http://www.ugrenoble3.fr/rare/rtf/CR_Rare_98-04.rtf. See also http://edit16.iccu.sbn.it/scripts/iccu_ext.dll?fn=40&i=10601&fz=1.

⁸⁵ Yet we should agree with Seraphinus Maria Cerva rejecting the idea that the poet Ilija Crijević had dedicated verses to Nascimbene in 1520, because it was too early (... *aetas enim vix constare videtur*). S. Cerva, *Bibliotheca Ragusina* I: p. 23.

⁸⁶ *...et hoc tempore florent multi gloria virtutis, et honoris insignes: quorum singula nomina in praesentia recensere longum, et fortasse etiam odiosum esset. Sed eorum praeclara virtus suo tempore scriptis illustrabitur. Interea hoc exiguum a me munus Amplissimi Patres, accipietis. Quod eo animi affectu a vobis probari tum opto, tum etiam spero, qua ipse observantia, et pietate illud vobis perpetuo dedico. Valet.*

yet in the preface of *De inventione* Nascimbene wrote unfavourably about his pupils. The Italian scholar thus expressed his teaching experience with the Ragusan youth: "... last year, when I publicly taught in this glorious and very famous city of yours on the books of Cicero's treatise *De inventione*, which I had chosen, guided primarily by the pupils who wanted me to teach them rhetoric, I noticed that many points in these books were unfathomable, which, seemingly, some of the pupils had difficulty in understanding, or showed little diligence in explaining them, or equally, for reason of obscurity, deliberately avoided them. That is why I myself tried to enlighten them more than the others before me. Thus, although engaged in various duties that had kept me away from this objective and in the extreme lack of time, I invested most willingly in these comments all the free time I managed to spare when not immersed in my hardest duties, in order to strengthen the pupils' spirits. I do not know what I have achieved. You, to whom I dedicate this book, will personally judge".⁸⁷

His claim for being confronted with "the extreme lack of time" is in direct collision with Giovanni Amalteo's promises that "only two hours in the morning and two hours after lunch" would suffice to complete all of his duties, more so because the assistant teachers were there to help him in the arduous school work.

The assistant teachers in Nascimbene's time

With the arrival of the repetitor, Antonius de Peregrinis from Lucca, a colleague of Paolo Bosio, in the late 1560s, Nascimbene's work at the Dubrovnik public school became somewhat less stressful. Indeed, this issue had been on the Senate's agenda months before his arrival. On their meeting of 9 November

⁸⁷ ...superiore anno cum in hac vestra nobilissima ac praeclarissima urbe M. Tullii Ciceronis de inventione libros publice profiterer, quos praecipue delegeram adductus scholasticorum studio qui ex me rhetoricam cognoscere cupiebant multaque in illis loca cognitu difficilia animadvertissem, quae alii tum male (ut mihi quidem visum est) intellexerant, vel parum diligenter interpretando explanarant, tum etiam, ut nimis fortasse obscura, consulto praeterierant; ipse experiri volui, numquid maiorem illis, quam alii hactenus fecerint, lucem, et splendorem afferre possem. Itaque etsi variis negociis distinebar, quae me ab hoc consilio revocarent, tamen in maxima temporis angustia quidquid ex molestissimis occupationibus meis ocii eripere potui, illud totum in hos commentarios, gratia iuvandi studiosorum ingenia, quam libentissime contuli. Quid profecerim, ignoro: ipsi iudicabitis, in quorum nomine velim hic liber appareat.

1566, with one vote against, the senators decided to engage “one repetitor,⁸⁸ a colleague of Paolo Bosio, who was to teach the pupils grammar and literature, under equal salary terms as the aforementioned teacher Paolo”.⁸⁹ According to the law on education from 1557, the Senate was authorised to appoint another assistant teacher or repetitor with a salary of 60 *scudi* a year.⁹⁰ Thus Bosio and Peregrinis were senior assistant teachers and Simoni a junior coadjutor.

Paolo Bosio spent some time in Dubrovnik, from 1554 to 1571.⁹¹ The earliest record of Bosio, dated 19 April 1554, describes him as *maestro della scola del comun*, having succeeded Aurelio Amalteo on that position. At the time, he received a salary of 80 perpers. He was promised a salary of 240 perpers a year, effective from the moment of his embarkment in Venice to Dubrovnik. In other words, Bosio started his teaching career in Dubrovnik as assistant when the head master was Giovanni Musonio from Cremona, Nascimbene’s predecessor. In April 1558 and August 1559 Bosio’s salary was increased so that eventually he received 100 perpers every four months. He continued to collect the same amount even after Nascimbene had left Dubrovnik. The last payment to Bosio is mentioned on 6 April 1571. The fact that both Bosio and Nascimbene had some connection with Reggio Emilia—it was the former’s place of birth while the latter was working there when Giovanni Battista Amalteo invited him to take the post in Dubrovnik—may have contributed to their mutual understanding.

By the spring of 1567 *magister* Antonius de Peregrinis from Lucca had already assumed the position of new assistant teacher. The minutes of the Minor Council testify to a decision of 8 April 1567, by which he was to receive 100 perpers on the account of his four-month salary, beginning 15 February of the same year. Also emphasised was the fact that he had begun his journey from Lucca to Dubrovnik that very day, and that this decision was reached

⁸⁸ In the index of the same archival book, written by the notary public himself, stands *repetitore seu hipodidascalo*. So, *repetitor* was a teacher of the lower rank, responsible for the teaching of the beginners and repetition.

⁸⁹ *Die IX Novembris 1566 Sabbati. Prima pars est de providendo unum repetitorem qui esse debeat collega Magistri Pauli Bosii, qui docere debeat pueros civitatis grammaticam et literas humanas, deinde dicitur cum qua provisione. Per omnes, contra I.*

Prima pars est de assignando praedicto Repetitori pro eius provisione idem salarium quod habet dictus Magister Paulus. Per omnes (Cons. Rog., vol. 58, f. 91r).

⁹⁰ I. Perić, »Dva reformna zahvata«: p. 223.

⁹¹ The data are provided by Gian Maria Mattei in *Zibaldone II*: pp. 351-365.

following the contract made in Lucca on 8 February of the same year.⁹² In June 1567 the proposal to set aside the school building by the Franciscan church for Antonius de Peregrinis to teach children was rejected and given to priest Iohannes instead.⁹³ On 7 June of the same year it was decided to allow priest Iohannes Simoni to use “the school, or the building with the purpose of a school, where the poor lived by St Francis’s church, where he is to teach children the fundamentals and hold the duty of repetitor, as he has been doing until now in the Customs House”.⁹⁴ Apparently, the mentioned school by the Franciscan monastery had already existed in the mid-fifteenth century.⁹⁵

By June 1569, Antonius de Peregrinis still received his four-month salary of 100 perpers as the repetitor,⁹⁶ while at the beginning of February 1571 he was appointed State notary instead of Ascanio Ciuffarini, who had become chancellor after Aurelio Amalteo had passed away.⁹⁷ The salary of priest Iohannes Simoni as assistant teacher saw an increment of 40 perpers, the proposed 50 perpers being rejected at the Senate.⁹⁸ At the beginning of October

⁹² *Die VIII Aprilis 1567. Captum fuit de faciendis apolitiam ipperperorum centum Magistro Antonio de Peregrinis Lucensi, conducto repetitori nostri publici Gymnasii, pro eius provisione mensium quatuor, qui inceperunt die XV Februarii proxime praeteriti, quo die ipse discessit Luca pro veniendo Rhagusium, iuxta formam contractus Lucae celebrati sub die octavo eiusdem mensis Februarii ad quem relatio habeatur* (Cons. Min., vol. 48, f. 151v).

⁹³ *Die XII Iunii 1567 a prandio. Prima pars est de concedendo Magistro Antonio de Peregrinis Lucensi scholam penes ecclesiam Sancti Francisci, in qua edocere debeat iuvenes et pueros grammaticam et humanas literas.*

Secunda pars est de concedendo dictum locum presbytero Ioanni repetitori pro fungendo in eo eius officio. Per XXIII, contra XII (Cons. Rog., vol. 58, f. 165v).

⁹⁴ *Die VII Iunii 1567. Captum fuit de concedendo praesbytero Ioanni Simoni repetitori scholam, seu domum pro usu scholae in qua pauperes penes Ecclesiam sancti Francisci commorabantur, ubi edocere debeat pueros prima elementa et fungi officio repetitoris, prout hactenus super Dohana communis functus est* (Cons. Min., vol. 48, f. 170v).

⁹⁵ I. Perić, »Dva reformna zahvata«: p. 223.

⁹⁶ Zibaldone II: p. 363.

⁹⁷ *Die VIII Februarii 1571. Prima pars est de providendo unum notarium nostrum loco Ascanii Ciuffarini creati in locum quondam ser Aurelii Amalthei. Per omnes, contra VI. Prima pars est de providendo dictum notarium hic in civitate ex civibus nostris vel ex foresteriis. Per omnes, contra V.*

Electio dicti notarii: Dominus Antonius Peregrinus Lucensis. Per XXIII, contra XVI (Cons. Rog., vol. 60, ff. 111v-112r).

⁹⁸ *Die XXVIII Iulii 1571. Prima pars est de addendo aliquid salario praesbyteri Ioannis magistri scholae publicae et deinde dicitur quantum sit addendum. Per omnes, contra I.*

Prima pars est de addendo dicto salario ipperperos quinquaginta.

Secunda pars est de ei addendo ipperperos quadraginta tantum. Per omnes, contra XV (Cons. Rog., vol. 60, f. 175v).

1574, Iohannes Simoni as coadjutor received a bonus of 30 ducats.⁹⁹ At the request of the Minor Council, on 14 February 1569, chancellor Valerio Giganti compiled a list of all public clerks, including also three teachers (*maestri della scuola*), whose names were not cited.¹⁰⁰ According to our chronology, they are likely to be Paolo Bosio, Antonius de Peregrinis and Iohannes Simoni. Nascimbene, however, had the title of head master or rector of the school.

In the light of the above examples, one may rightly conclude that the teachers of the Ragusan public school fell into three categories. The most important and best paid was the position of head master. He was assisted by the repetitor or *maestro della scuola*, while coadjutor was the lowest in rank. The teachers of lower ranks were known to remain on their posts over a longer period of time, for 10 years or even longer, earning less than their senior colleagues. Thus, in compensation, the government often offered them a position in the chancellery or notary service. This was not only a matter of prestige, but also of higher income.

Financial matters

In order to understand Nascimbene's dissatisfaction with the amount the Senate offered him, it is necessary to draw a parallel between him and Filippo Diversi, rector of the school in the previous century. Attracted to Dubrovnik by the promises of a pleasant life and good salary, Diversi, at first, enjoyed a decent salary which ranged between 450 and 540 perpers, with the covered rental expenses. However, his frequent absence from Dubrovnik, especially his long stays in Venice, triggered the government to reduce his salary in 1440. A year later, Diversi offered his resignation to the Minor Council, justifying his action with too many obligations in his own country.¹⁰¹ Further, there is evidence that in 1490 Demetryios Halcocondilas was offered a salary of 500 perpers a year, an amount equalling Diversi's average salary, while some 50 years later the renowned scholar of Greek, Nikola Petrović from Korčula, was receiving 66 ducats, 26 *grossi* and 20 *parvuli* every four months.¹⁰² Nikola

⁹⁹ *Zibaldone* II: p. 367.

¹⁰⁰ *Cons. Min.*, vol. 49, f. 65v.

¹⁰¹ F. de Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika*: p. 10.

¹⁰² *Zibaldone* II: p. 346. The payment is noted on 6 May 1546, and it was paid regularly every four months until 1551, when in October Giovanni Musonio became rector of the school.

Petrović was a humanist who spent many years in Italy and retained friendship with French humanists, sending them Greek manuscripts from the East. In 1538 he became rector of the Ragusan public school.¹⁰³ The same amount was later earned by Petrović's successors, Giovanni Musonio, Nascimbene Nascimbene and Francesco Serdonati. So, in relation to the fifteenth century their salaries increased, but so did the life expenses, which might account for the teachers' discontent.¹⁰⁴

In Nascimbene's case, however, the Ragusan government decided to make an exception, contrary to the claims made in Amalteo's letter. On its meeting of 29 March 1561, the Minor Council accepted by majority of votes the proposal to "pay 74 golden ducats, 2 *grossi* and 20 *parvuli* for a four-month salary to *messer* Nascimbene Nascimbene, head master of our public school, commencing on 19 February. This amount is to be paid in addition to the house rent promised".¹⁰⁵ Thanks to this detail, we know that Nascimbene assumed his post in the middle of February 1561, less than three months after Giovanni Battista Amalteo had written to him from Venice.

Financial issues were also on the Senate's agenda of 22 January 1562, when it was decided to increase the annual salary of the assistant teacher of the public school, priest Iohannes Simoni (*repetitoris scholarum communis don Ioannis Simonis*), by 10 perpers.¹⁰⁶ Although the sources mention Simoni both as "repetitor" and "coadjutor", later developments and the arrival of Antonius de Peregrinis show that, in the teachers' hierarchy, Simoni belonged to the lowest rank and that the government occasionally raised his salary in recognition of his long and reliable service, this considerate act being yet another proof of how esteemed teachers were in Dubrovnik.

Although doubtful at first, Nascimbene was pleased with the reception in Dubrovnik and with the conditions he found there. For instance, on 13 March 1566 the Minor Council decided to make an advance payment of his four-month salary and that he would be entitled "rector of the public school". The patrician Johannes Gondola was accepted by the Minor Council as warrantor

¹⁰³ Vinko Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika do 1808.*, vol. II. Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske, 1980: p. 308.

¹⁰⁴ Halcocondilas was promised 500 perpers or 6,000 *grossi* a year, 1 perper equalling 12 *grossi*. On the other hand, in the sixteenth century the teachers regularly earned 66 ducats and 26 *grossi* every four months, or approximately 8,000 *grossi* a year, since 1 ducat equals 40 *grossi*.

¹⁰⁵ *Cons. Min.*, vol. 46, f. 90r.

¹⁰⁶ *Cons. Rog.*, vol. 56, f. 49r.

for this payment.¹⁰⁷ Since at the beginning of June 1565 Nascimbene was allowed three months of absence for a stay in Italy, it is obvious that the government was determined to indulge him as much as possible. More so, they even pointed out that he would receive regular salary during half of his leave as well as during the school holidays, from the middle of August until the end of September. In sum, only half of his leave would remain unpaid. Nascimbene took his leave on 30 July 1565.¹⁰⁸ The Senate also granted him an unpaid three-month leave to Italy, commencing 20 May 1568, when his service in Dubrovnik was coming to an end. The official explanation was brief and it mentioned only private reasons.¹⁰⁹ Whether Nascimbene had a hand in the intensified connections between Dubrovnik and Ferrara remains obscure, yet on 25 May 1568 the government disbursed four golden *scudi* to an unnamed “brother of the cannon maker” (*fratri fusoris bombardarum*) as a one-month salary. He was supposed to come to Dubrovnik from Ferrara.¹¹⁰

Nascimbene’s thoughts written in the preface to Cicero’s treatise, dedicated to the Senate, also testify to his satisfaction with the work in Dubrovnik: “I keep a very dear memory of you and of your affections for me, greatest Fathers, and I never think of anything that I fail to remember your incredible humanity and your unique love for me. I truly remember the time you brought me to Dubrovnik at a most honourable salary as I ever remained in your grace. I was always equally dear to you and accepted by you, as if I were born amongst you”.¹¹¹ The

¹⁰⁷ *Die XIII Martii 1566. Captum fuit de faciendis apolitiam ordinariam ante tempus, pro mensibus quatuor finituris die ... Domino Nascimbenio Rectori Gymnasii publici ex fideiussione ser Ioannis Marini de Gondola qui secundum ordinem fuit pro pleggio acceptus in Magnifico Minori Consilio (Cons. Min., vol. 48, f. 31r).* For the sake of clarity, it is necessary to say that the warrantor was the patrician Iohannes Gondola (ca. 1507-1585), and not his younger relative by the same name, the annalist Iohannes Gondola (ca. 1590-1650).

¹⁰⁸ *Die VII Iunii 1565 Iovis. Prima pars est de demittendo Dominum Nascimbenum de Nascimbenis Rethorem et Praeceptorem Gymnasii publici, ut se conferre possit in Italiam pro mensibus tribus, ita quod ei currere salarium non debeat, nisi pro mense uno cum dimidio tempore vacantiarum, videlicet dimidio Augusti et toto mense Septembri, quo mense uno cum dimidio durante si fuerit absens a civitate et Dominio nostro utique salarium suum sibi currere debeat, non obstante quis alia parte in contrarium disponente. Per XXXVI.*

Die 30 Iulii 1565 Dominus Nascimbenus recessit (Cons. Rog., vol. 57, f. 187v).

¹⁰⁹ *Cons. Rog., vol. 59, f. 13v.*

¹¹⁰ *Cons. Rog., vol. 59, f. 15v.*

¹¹¹ *Pergrata mihi est memoria vestri studiorumque vestrorum erga me, patres amplissimi, nec quidquam cogito, quin mihi in mentem veniat incredibilis humanitas amorque vester erga me singularis. Equidem ex eo tempore, quo me Rhaccusium honestissimo stipendio conductum adhibuistis, memoria teneo studia vestra nullo unquam tempore mihi defuisse meque vobis aequae semper carum acceptumque fuisse, ac si singulis vestrum essem e visceribus natus.*

city fathers properly rewarded Nascimbene's scholarly efforts by giving him 20 ducats for the publication of the treatise *De inventione*, according to the Senate's decision of 21 February 1564.¹¹² Nascimbene's successor in Dubrovnik, the Florentine Francesco Serdonati, received the standard amount of 66 ducats, 26 *grossi* and 20 *parvuli* as a four-month salary for the period from 30 August 1569 to 30 December 1569.¹¹³ The receipt was entered in the Book of Expenditures on 10 October of the same year.¹¹⁴ Giovanni Musoni used to receive the same amount, but the comparison with the payment of 74 ducats, 2 *grossi* and 20 *parvuli*, the amount granted by the Minor Council to Nascimbene on 29 March 1561, indicates that the scholar from Ferrara, at that moment at least, exceeded his colleague from Florence by about 7.5 ducats.

The physicians, on the other hand, enjoyed better status and better salaries. Giovanni Battista Rosi, the successor of Cesare Buzzacarino, mentioned in Amalteo's letter to Nascimbene, received as much as 133 ducats and 13 *grossi* for a four-month period, commencing 30 July 1569, when he set off for Dubrovnik from Padua, and finishing on 29 November of the same year.¹¹⁵ His colleague Giostrino de Giostrinis earned 50 ducats for three months, from 29 July until 28 September 1569,¹¹⁶ and his contract was prolonged on 1 October for another three months, under the same conditions.¹¹⁷ In the light of these circumstances, it is understandable why the Ragusan government demanded that the physicians treat patients for free. However, the rectors of the public schools had other opportunities for extra income.

¹¹² *Die XXI Februarii 1564 Lunae. Prima pars est de donando Dominum Nascimbenum de Nascimbenis publicum lectorem nostrum qui nobis dedicavit librum ab eo compositum super libro Ciceronis de inventione. Per omnes, contra III. Prima pars est de sibi dando in donum ... ducatos auri viginti. Omnes, contra IX (Cons. Rog., vol. 57, f. 23r).*

¹¹³ *Die VIII Octobris 1569. Captum fuit de faciendo apolitiam ducatorum auri sexaginta sex grossorum 26 et paolis 20 domino Francisco Serdonati Florentino Rectori scholarum Rhagusii pro eius provisione mensium quatuor inceptorum die XXX Augusti proxime praeteriti et finiturorum die 30 Decembris proxime futuri (Cons. Min., vol. 49, f. 138v).*

¹¹⁴ *Libri delle polizze*, vol. 4, f. 167.

¹¹⁵ *Cons. Min.*, vol. 49, f. 120v. There is evidence that by 1575 Rosi had still been employed in Dubrovnik. On this point see R. Jeremić-J. Tadić, *Prilozi za istoriju zdravstvene kulture starog Dubrovnika III*: p. 152

¹¹⁶ *Cons. Min.*, vol. 49, f. 112r.

¹¹⁷ *Cons. Min.*, vol. 49, f. 135v.

Various understandings of the value of public speech

An important item of the teachers' earnings was the custom to deliver a public speech on special occasions, for which they were rewarded. In his letter, Amalteo also brought this fact to Nascimbene's attention: "It is true that extra income, apart from daily earnings, may be high and may add up to 300 *scudi* with the regular salary and perhaps even more, because it is customary in the city, when a patrician or a commoner passes away, to ask a master to give a eulogy, for which he receives at least one ducat and a few candles, or, at times, four, five or ten *scudi*, even more, depending on the position and wealth of the deceased. I do not mention personal gifts, favours and public awards that are valuable too, either to you or to others, so that a person who accepts this position will actually get more than I have promised".¹¹⁸ So, it was possible for a head master of the public school to earn as much as the State chancellor. This rhetorical practice is in the focus of our interest and it may undoubtedly be connected with the speeches given by Filippo Diversi in the glory of the Hungarian-Croatian kings, sovereign rulers of Dubrovnik in his time.¹¹⁹

The speeches of this kind always met with the general approval and as Giovanni Battista Amalteo wrote, the orators were well rewarded, especially for funeral orations. Such practice apparently stood in contrast to rhetorical theory, which, from as early as the ancient times, considered posthumous praise as a less valuable kind of oratory. The Roman rhetoric despised the ancient Roman funeral praise and it hardly mentions *laudatio* or *vituperatio*, praise or condemnation. Cicero himself, whose inspired interpreter Nascimbene was, speaks about it with contempt, because he did not find it in the Greek sources. Namely, ancient Athens did not witness great funeral orations in the glory of the deceased, so as to avoid any threat to democracy. The only speeches delivered were those in praise of the heroes fallen on battlefield, and on a

¹¹⁸ *Vero è che il guadagno straordinario, che porta la giornata può essere molto, et ascender coll'ordinario a 300 scudi, et forse più oltre, perocchè è usanza della città, qual hor more persona nobile, o del popolo di ricercar per lo più dal lettore qualche sermone funebre, per lo quale gli si dà almeno un ducatto, et alquante cande, ma hor quatro, hor cinque, hor dieci scudi, et hora più secondo la condizione, e l'havere delle persone. Taccio i presenti de privati, et certi privilegii, et doni publici che pur vagliono ancor essi, acciochè o da voi, o da altri, che haverà questo luogho più si trovi in effetto, ch'io non havevo promesso.*

¹¹⁹ Cf. Filip de Diversis, *Dubrovački govori u slavu ugarskih kraljeva Sigismunda i Alberta*, ed. Zdenka Janeković-Römer. Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2001.

modest scale too, aimed to prevent their families from becoming conceited and from attempting to overthrow the government.¹²⁰ Nevertheless, in the treatise *De inventione* these forms are also analyzed in order to give a complete picture of oratory,¹²¹ Nascimbene thus gaining a theoretical insight into them as well. Apart from this, in time of the imperial Rome the praise of rulers took precedence over judicial and political speech, and it became customary for the distinguished Romans gathered at the Forum to listen to a public speech in honour of the deceased at the patrician funerals. That is why Humanism adopted this form, although less valued from the point of view of the classical rhetoric.¹²²

Some of eighteenth-century Ragusan historians, such as Seraphinus Maria Cerva and Sebastianus Slade Dolci,¹²³ extolled Nascimbene as a man of letters, as one among the learned foreigners who contributed greatly to the intellectual climate of this city, but hardly did either of them mention his edition of *De inventione*. They considered it important only because of the author's preface, mainly as a valuable source of the city's history. This inadequate view should be corrected through a more thorough analysis of Nascimbene's achievement.

Nascimbene's views on rhetoric through the edition of De inventione

De inventione was printed in Venice in 1564 by Bolognino Zalterio, Nascimbene explicitly stating that he had taught Cicero's texts in Dubrovnik the previous year. Determining the exact nature of Nascimbene's book is certainly a challenge and equally so whether it falls into the category of textbooks, as initially conceived by the author. The book has 128 numbered pages. The author brings Cicero's chapters one by one and writes his own commentary after each of them, with quotations from the original texts in square brackets. Cicero's text is written in roman type, while the commentaries are in italics. This is not a classical textbook of rhetoric like the ancient

¹²⁰ Cf. Darinka Nevenić-Grabovac, »Ovenčani pesnik Ilija Crijević drži posmrtno slovo Dubrovkinji Pauli Džamanjić«, *Živa antika* 30/1-2 (1980): pp. 205-216.

¹²¹ *De inventione* II: 117-118, and also in pseudo-Cicero's treatise *Rhetorica ad Herennium* III: 10-15.

¹²² Zdenka Janeković Römer, »Dubrovački govori Filipa de Diversis: kratka pouka o humanizmu.«, in: F. de Diversis, *Dubrovački govori*: p. 25.

¹²³ Sebastijan Slade, *Fasti Litterario-Ragusini. Dubrovačka književna kronika*, ed. and trans. Pavao Knezović. Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2001: pp. 79, 147

Donatus's *Ars minor*.¹²⁴ Though originally conceived as a critical edition of the well-known Cicero's treatise, it would be unjust to interpret it from one aspect only. Namely, in the preface the author states his main aim for undertaking the work, that being to teach his pupils and to explain more difficult passages of Cicero's treatise to them. By doing so, he also took the opportunity to draw attention to some of Cicero's presumed errors and to confirm his own conclusions by quoting Aristotle, whose treatise on rhetoric was always at Nascimbene's hand. This is simply an edition of a Latin text, void of any critical apparatus so valuable and so indispensable in modern critical editions of the kind, yet accompanied by the editor's most exhaustive commentaries.

The back of the title page contains the author's epigraph:

Auctoris in Momum.

*Est facile, inquis, commentaria scribere, Mome.
 Esto. Sed, docte scribere, non facile est.
 Hoc si forte neges; illud fateare necesse est:
 Ni tibi iudicium livide livor edat.*

On the basis of these introductory lines—(Of the Author against Mom: You claim, Mom, that it is easy to write commentaries./ Let it be. But it is not easy to write them in scholarly fashion./ If you by case deny the first, you must admit the other:/ So that your bitter judgement is not swallowed by bitterness.)—we cannot assume whether he had been criticized as a mere compiler and writer of commentaries or author of a genuine work. Addressing the reader in the long exposition, Nascimbene explains the procedure he adopted in this work. By leaning on the commentaries of Marius Victorinus, antique commentator of Cicero, his aim was to elucidate certain points of difficulty and less understandable passages.¹²⁵ He often reached for Aristotle's *Rhetoric* to clarify Cicero's words with additional examples, claiming that, in his opinion, Aristotle's interpretations shed more light on Cicero's work. He points out that

¹²⁴ Even during early Humanism, one century before Nascimbene, they realised that Donatus's *Eight parts of oratory* no longer suited the needs (Z. Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode*: p. 188).

¹²⁵ *Scito igitur primum nos diligenter curasse, ut omnia loca in iis de inventione libris cognitu difficilia, quae a Victorino, docto alioqui homine, et antiquo interprete, vel nimis difficultate non intellecta, vel oscitanter praetermissa fuerant, ipsi perspicua interpretatione illustraremus.*

he was trying to reconcile Aristotle and Cicero as much as it was possible, whenever they deviated from each other. He modestly adds that he dared criticize Cicero on some points where he considered the Roman author to write erroneously.¹²⁶ For example, Nascimbene refutes Cicero's opinion that nobody likes wisdom more than money. In the same place he mentions Socrates and Crates as philosophers who rejected gold in order to philosophise better and adds: "But, apart from philosophers, there are countless others who prefer wisdom to money".¹²⁷ The sincerity of this statement is arguable if we remember Nascimbene's serious complaints concerning the financial aspect of the Ragusan offer to the position of the public teacher in the city.

Concerning the perception of Nascimbene's edition in Dubrovnik, it is difficult to say to what extent his comments actually corresponded to his school lectures, but presumably the form was considerably simplified, while the content in principle remained the same. Although the school benches were mostly occupied by young and idle patricians with guaranteed future prospects and generally uninterested in the study of any kind, there was at least one important exception at that time: the future philosopher and humanist Nicolaus Gozze, son of Vitus (1549-1610). His age shows that he was about 15 during Nascimbene's stay in Dubrovnik and that he must have attended Nascimbene's lectures.¹²⁸ A letter to young Gozze written by the Humanist Paolo Manuzio (1512-1574) in 1561 bears witness to the boy's learning and eloquence. Gozze's erudition and gift for learning was also praised by Paolo Bosio, mentioned earlier as an assistant teacher at the Ragusan school. Manuzio wrote to Gozze: "...you should be very happy, my Nicholas, because of your erudition and your eloquence. Of the latter I have learnt from the letters of Paolo Bosio, a great

¹²⁶ *Multa quoque Aristotelis loca cum Ciceronis locis contulimus: quae iis libris (ut mihi quidem videtur) non parum lucis attulerunt. Ad haec operam dedimus, ut in quibus ab Aristotele Cicero dissentire videbatur, hos duos gravissimos auctores una, quoad eius fieri posset, conciliaremus.*

¹²⁷ *Nemo est qui non pecuniam, quam sapientiam malit. Hoc perspicue falsum est, vel si unus dumtaxat reperitur, qui sapientiam quam pecuniam malit. Sed Crates, Socrates aliique philosophorum non pauci quo liberius philosopharentur aurum abiecerunt. Sed praeter philosophos infiniti prope sunt quibus carior est sapientia, quam pecunia (Nascimbaeni Nascimbaeni: f. 50r).*

¹²⁸ Cf. Marinko Šišak, »Nikola Gučetić i njegova teorija države«, in: Nikola Vitov Gučetić, *O ustroju država*, trans. Snježana Husić and Natka Badurina, ed. Marinko Šišak. Zagreb: Golden marketing and Narodne novine, 2000: p. 22.

friend of mine, whose judgement I trust...".¹²⁹ However, a later interpretation raised doubts about the addressee's identity, mainly because of his tender age. It was suggested that Paolo Manuzio actually wrote to Nicolaus's elder cousin with the same name, Nicolaus Gozze, son of Marinus.¹³⁰ Another argument to support this thesis was that the treatise *Governo della famiglia* was dedicated by the author to this very man, but this is an evident error, as Nicolaus Gozze, son of Vitus, dedicated this text to Nicolaus Gozze, son of Alvise,¹³¹ who was many times elected Rector of the Republic. Besides, while Nicolaus Gozze, son of Marinus, was a merchant venturer in Hamburg and London,¹³² where he died at the end of the sixteenth or the beginning of the seventeenth century,¹³³ Nicolaus, son of Vitus, proved his inclination to letters at an early age by joining various amateur theatre companies in Dubrovnik,¹³⁴ and later by writing treatises on philosophy. He developed a particular interest in rhetoric and was an admirer of Aristotle.¹³⁵

Gozze's commentaries on the first book of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, that is *Commentaria in primum librum Artis Rhetoricae Aristotelis*, probably written around 1600, have connections with Nascimbene's comments on Cicero's treatise *De inventione*. Not only does Nascimbene continuously compare Cicero's conclusions with Aristotle's thoughts from the *Rhetoric*, but the emphasis of Gozze's comments is on parts of *inventio* and *elocutio*, representing the invention of thoughts and figures of ideas.¹³⁶ Since Nascimbene deemed the treatise *De inventione* particularly suitable to be taught to his pupils, Gozze

¹²⁹ ...*valde te laetari necesse est, mi Nicolae, tum doctrina, tum etiam eloquentia tua, quarum alteram ex hominis mihi amicissimi, cuius testimonio plurimum tribuo, Pauli Bosii litteris iam pridem habeo cognitam...* (S. M. Cerva, *Bibliotheca Ragusina*, vol. II/III. Zagreb: JAZU, 1977: p. 535). This praise of a 12-year-old boy is also referred to by F. M. Appendini, *Notizie storico-critiche* II: p. 67.

¹³⁰ J. Torbarina, *Italian influence*: p. 55; M. Šišak, »Nikola Gučetić i njegova teorija države«: pp. 20-21.

¹³¹ Nikola Gučetić, *Upravljanje obitelji*, trans. Maja Zaninović, ed. Marinko Šišak. Zagreb: Hrvatski studiji – Studia Croatica, 1998: pp. 31-35.

¹³² V. Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika* II: pp. 44-46.

¹³³ *Test. Not.*, vol. 51, ff. 106v-108r; Veselin Kostić, *Kulturne veze između jugoslavenskih zemalja i Engleske do 1700. godine*. Beograd: SANU, 1972: pp. 49-50.

¹³⁴ S. Stojan, »Autentični stanovnici Držićeva Njarnjas-grada«: p. 11.

¹³⁵ Nikola Vitov Gučetić, *O ustroju država*: p. 410.

¹³⁶ Wilfried Potthoff, »Iz povijesti starije hrvatske retorike«, in: *Dani hvarskog kazališta. Hrvatsko barokno pjesništvo. Dubrovnik i dalmatinske komune*, ed. Nikola Batušić et al. Split: Književni krug, 1994: p. 15.

may easily have developed the same interest as his teacher. More so, it is “almost completely probable that Gozze attended his lectures and thus got acquainted with Cicero and especially with this treatise”.¹³⁷ By approaching the oratory from an essentially philosophical point of view and by comparing rhetoric with dialectic, with his ideas he “anticipates the Baroque poetic”, thus adding to oratory “a special meaning and role in public life”.¹³⁸ This opinion on the role of rhetoric in everyday life, with special emphasis on political community and on judicial disputes, reflects Nascimbene’s starting points in commentaries on Cicero’s treatise *De inventione*.

In search of the philosophical school followed by Cicero, Nascimbene first recognizes him as a stoic and then as a peripatetic. While analysing Cicero’s writings on virtue, Nascimbene observes his allusion on stoic opinion that virtue alone suffices for good and prosperous life,¹³⁹ but later claims that Cicero from a stoic became a peripatetic, as the latter believed that there were three kinds of goods: goods of the spirit, goods of the body and outer goods, and they denied that man could be happy due to the virtue alone.¹⁴⁰ Nascimbene concludes the discussion on virtue by stating that although the praises are also born from fortune, yet the real praise is the one born from virtue, as fortune derives from fortunate destiny and virtue from man alone.¹⁴¹

The fact that Nascimbene makes no mention of the critique of Aristotle suggests that the Greek philosopher was his unquestionable authority. Besides, by using the edition prepared by Caius Marius Victorinus in the middle of the fourth century, he probably did not like the editor’s predominantly Neo-Platonic orientation. This teacher of rhetoric in Rome, an opponent of Christianity who decided to convert on his deathbed, remained known in literature for his original work *Ars grammatica*, especially dedicated to the

¹³⁷ M. Šišak in: Nikola Vitov Gučetić, *O ustroju država*: p. 421.

¹³⁸ Ljerka Schiffler, »Nikola Vitov Gučetić/ Niccolò Vito di Gozze, život i djelo«, in: Nikola Vitov Gučetić, *Dijalog o ljepoti /Dialogo della bellezza. Dijalog o ljubavi /Dialogo d'amore*. Zagreb: Most/The Bridge, 1995: pp. 345-346. Gozze’s activity paved the way for some Ragusan scholars who became distinguished in rhetoric at *Collegium Romanum* in the seventeenth century.

¹³⁹ Qui virtutem habeat: *ad stoicorum opinionem alludit: qui ad bene beateque vivendum solam virtutem satis esse putabant (Nascimbaeni Nascimbaenii: f. 55v)*.

¹⁴⁰ Neget postea sine bona valetudine: *quasi ex stoico factus peripateticus. Nam peripatetici tria bonorum genera posuerunt, animi, corporis et externa negaruntque sola virtute hominem beatum fieri posse (Nascimbaeni Nascimbaenii: f. 55v)*.

¹⁴¹ *Nam etsi laudes ex felicitate quoque promuntur, tamen vera laus est quae ex virtute nascitur: nam felicitas ex fortuna, virtus ex homine ipso proficiscitur (Nascimbaeni Nascimbaenii: f. 56r)*.

problems of poetic metre and orthography. However, he is much better remembered as an interpreter of Neo-Platonic ideas defended by Plotinus as early as the third century,¹⁴² and this approach must have seemed inadequate to an Aristotelian follower like Nascimbene.

By then, Nascimbene was well versed in classical poets, especially in Virgil's works, whose verse often helped him illustrate Cicero's conclusions presented in prose. It is interesting that as early as in 1546, his predecessor in Dubrovnik, Giovanni Musonio, had published in Brescia his own edition of Virgil's texts with his own commentary. We see that the two teachers shared a similar taste in literature.¹⁴³ This leads us to the problem of representation of rhetoric in poetry, more often encountered in Ovid's *Metamorphoseon libri* than with Virgil. A good example is the famous dispute between Ajax and Ulysses over Achilles's weapons seized after the hero's death.¹⁴⁴ *Heroides* and *Metamorphoseon libri* by Ovid had a significant influence upon Ragusan literature.¹⁴⁵ Nascimbene's achievement undoubtedly deserves credit as a significant contribution to the humanistic culture of his contemporary Dubrovnik.

Under the shadow of heresy

In spite of Nascimbene's obvious intellectual qualities, we cannot confirm the old remark that "he was a lecturer at the University of Padua few years after he had left Dubrovnik",¹⁴⁶ and this not only because of lack of evidence, but also due to his problems with the ecclesiastical authorities that emerged immediately after his departure from the city of St Blasius. No doubt, the intellectual climate of Padua and the closeness of his native Ferrara may have contributed to the peak of his career as a lecturer at that prestigious university. It is well known that since the Renaissance Padua remained the stronghold of

¹⁴² Vladimir Vratović, »Rimska književnost«, in: *Povijest svjetske književnosti*, vol. II, ed. Vladimir Vratović. Zagreb: Mladost, 1977: p. 305.

¹⁴³ J. Torbarina, *Italian influence*: p. 49.

¹⁴⁴ *Metamorphoseon liber XIII*: 5-381.

¹⁴⁵ Željko Puratić, »Ovidije u dubrovačkoj i dalmatinskoj književnosti. Temeljni podaci i kratak prikaz«. *Živa antika* 20/1 (1970): p. 208.

¹⁴⁶ According to J. Torbarina, who claimed that in 1570 Nascimbene taught at the University of Padua (J. Torbarina, *Italian influence*: p. 61).

Aristotelian tradition,¹⁴⁷ and it was the thinker from Stagira whom Nascimbene often cited in the comments on *De inventione* and with whom he regularly compared Cicero's thoughts. However, a debt from the past hindered Nascimbene from developing his scholarly career: he had to face the Inquisition and experience an unpleasant process.

Even before his arrival in Dubrovnik, Nascimbene was suspected of being a follower of the heretical teachings of a Benedictine monk Giorgio Siculo, alias Giorgio Rioli (1517-1551), an uneducated, yet a charismatic priest from Sicily, born in the surroundings of Catania.¹⁴⁸ Rioli's ideas were not original and they were connected with various teachings previously condemned by the Roman Church. He claimed that Christ appeared before him and revealed that all the sacraments, including baptism, were completely useless and that absolution could be attained only through the faith in Lord. Apart from this, Rioli denied papal authority, ecclesiastical hierarchy, the cult of the Virgin and the saints, the charitable value of the acts, masses, indulgencies and the real Christ's presence in Eucharist. Rioli extolled the reason and dignity of the human nature. The fact that Rioli's religious ideas and practice were marked by cautiousness provoked Jean Calvin to term his efforts as "Nicodemism", a contemptuous allusion to the principle of secret adherence to the teachings which were banned by the Church. Naturally, Calvin's target was the secrecy (of the practice) and not the teaching itself.¹⁴⁹ Since Rioli equally attacked the Protestants and the Roman Church, he was allowed to preach for some time, though in September 1550, while preaching against the Lutherans, he was arrested in Ferrara. The Duke of Ferrara, Ercole II d'Este (1534-1559), did not want to hand him over to the Roman Inquisition. In captivity Rioli was ready to renounce his heretical teachings, but when later brought before Duke Ercole II and the Inquisitor Michele Gisleri (the future Pope Pius V, 1566-1572), he refused to renounce any of his teachings. He was sent back to prison, where he was strangled two months later, on 23 May 1551.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ Marko Josipović, *Il pensiero filosofico di Giorgio Raguseo (†1622) nell'ambito del tardo aristotelismo padovano*. Studia Universitatis S. Thomae in Urbe, 26. Massimo – Milano, 1985: p. 56).

¹⁴⁸ The information about Giorgio Rioli has been obtained from www.eresie.it/Rioli (January 2010). Nascimbene is mentioned among the people who adhered to his teachings, but merely as a potential follower.

¹⁴⁹ Dermot Fenlon, *Heresy and Obedience in Tridentine Italy. Cardinal Pole and the Counter Reformation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972: p. 20.

¹⁵⁰ D. Fenlon, *Heresy and Obedience*: p. 265.

The fact that these fatal events took place in Ferrara may lead us to speculate on Rioli's influence on Nascimbene. In any case, it is most certain that he was well informed about Rioli's suffering. A document testifies to Nascimbene's statement that he had heard the rumours about Giorgio Siculo's condemnation and death from the very successor of Ludovico Beccadelli, the Ragusan archbishop Crisostomo Calvino, with whom Nascimbene was on friendly terms.¹⁵¹ Having learnt that the trials against the followers of Giorgio Rioli were re-initiated in Ferrara twenty years after his death, Nascimbene willingly appeared before the Inquisitors at the beginning of 1570. In this way, the former Ragusan teacher was determined to present himself as a good son of the Church, corroborating his loyalty with a text against the heretics from Brescia.¹⁵² Nascimbene's statement given to the Inquisitors on 11 February 1570 is particularly interesting, as he points to the menacing persecution he experienced in Dubrovnik: "Having sent my family to Italy, I fled from there myself for fear of weapons. It is true that in the end I left in haste, and this because of a nephew of mine who returned to Dubrovnik from which he had been previously banished. Since he arrived from Italy by night, his cousins in Dubrovnik accused him of attempting to kill a Ragusan patrician, and he ended up in prison. On friends' advice, I fled in fear of my life, for otherwise I would have stayed in Dubrovnik for another fortnight".¹⁵³ Accused of heresy, Nascimbene was sent to prison in 1570. He spent eight years in the prison of San Giovanni in Bragora, in Venice, until he was released on account of ill health. Having recuperated at the home of Girolamo Donzellino, a physician also sentenced to prison for heresy, Nascimbene went to Padua, where he most probably died that same year, 1578.¹⁵⁴

Historical accounts generally agree that Nascimbene remained in Dubrovnik until 1570, but it is clear that he must have left the city earlier. Seraphinus Maria Cerva fails to specify the exact moment of Nascimbene's departure from Dubrovnik, writing laconically that "he ran the public school in Dubrovnik for several years".¹⁵⁵ Most solid proof of his earlier leave is the mentioned

¹⁵¹ C. Ginzburg, »Due note«: p. 191.

¹⁵² John Martin, *Venice's Hidden Enemies. Italian Heretics in a Renaissance City*. Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 1993: p. 204.

¹⁵³ C. Ginzburg, »Due note«: pp. 190-191.

¹⁵⁴ C. Ginzburg, »Due note«: pp. 203-204.

¹⁵⁵ *Nascimbenius aliquot annos litterarum ludum habuit Ragusii* (S. Cerva, *Sacra metropolis Ragusina* III: p. 2443).

judicial process held before the Inquisition that same year, 1570. The time that passed following the punishment of Giorgio Rioli may have helped erase the memory of his errors, more so because a man as respectable as Nascimbene was in question. It is possible that he decided to accept the Ragusan offer because he considered it prudent to get away from Ferrara for some time, while the memories of Rioli were still very vivid. Furthermore, if we examine the way Nascimbene addresses the Ragusan Senate in his preface to *De inventione*, to which the edition is dedicated, it implies that his stay in the city of St Blasius was relatively short. Apparently, by the summer of 1569 Nascimbene had abandoned his service in Dubrovnik, since in August he was succeeded by Francesco Serdonati from Florence. At the end of June 1569 Marcus Ragnina wrote from Padua about his efforts to bring to Dubrovnik “two physicians, a surgeon and a teacher”, from which it is evident that his student’s status proved no hindrance to this public mission. To his letter of 28 June 1569, on 17 July there followed an official reply from the Rector, the Minor Council and the Senate, instructing Ragnina to return home. The candidates he suggested for the city physicians were considered unreliable and too expensive, while the teacher was not mentioned on that occasion.¹⁵⁶ Yet according to the decision of the Minor Council of 8 October 1569,¹⁵⁷ Serdonati entered service a month later.

This change corresponds chronologically to the aforementioned letter of the Canon Marcus Ragnina from Padua, written in late June 1569.¹⁵⁸ Prior to his travel to Italy, the Senate instructed the same Canon to recruit two physicians and a surgeon for the public service, with the annual salary of 150 ducats and additional 10 ducats for the house rent. He was also instructed to find “a teacher of literature, who is to become the head master of our public school”, with the salary of 200 ducats a year and additional 10 ducats for the rental fee.¹⁵⁹ On 1 March 1569, the Minor Council approved the amount of 150 ducats for Ragnina’s travel expenses—90 ducats to cover the three-month expenses and 60 ducats for his salary—all of which he received the following day.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶ *Lettere di Ponente*, vol. 1, f. 114rv.

¹⁵⁷ *Cons. Min.*, vol. 49, f. 138v.

¹⁵⁸ Marcus Ragnina later became archdeacon of the Dubrovnik church and passed away in 1595 (S. M. Cerva, *Bibliotheca Ragusina*, vol. II/III: pp. 370-373; S. Slade, *Fasti*: p. 121).

¹⁵⁹ *Secreta Rogatorium*, vol. 2, f. 182r.

¹⁶⁰ *A dì 2 Marzo 1569. A messer Marco di Ragnina che va in Italia per la condotta de due medici fisici ducati cento cinquanta cioè ducati 90 per le sue spese de mesi tre e ducati 60 per la sua provisione secondo la parte del Minor Consiglio a dì primo di Marzo 1569 (Libri delle polizze, vol. 4, f. 33).*

According to the Book of Expenditures, the last payment made to Nascimbene was entered on 3 May 1569, the amount being somewhat reduced due to his absence from work. He received 104 perpers and 5 *grossi* for one month and 23 days, including also 6.3 perpers rental subsidy for a period of two months and fifteen days.¹⁶¹ Mattei claims that Nascimbene left Dubrovnik suddenly and out of the regular season, failing even to remember his own promise given in the preface of *De inventione* that one day he would write a history of Dubrovnik and its glorious citizens. It was not until 1596 when Didachus Pyrrhus embarked upon a similar project by writing an elegy *On the famous families who lived in Dubrovnik in 1595*, published in Venice the following year by Felice Valgrisi.¹⁶² Although writing from eighteenth-century perspective, Mattei did little to unravel the mystery of Nascimbene's unexpected actions, merely mentioning "the unpleasant encounters Nascimbene probably had that forced him to depart from Dubrovnik suddenly and out of season".¹⁶³ The search for the real reasons underlying Nascimbene's sudden departure will lead us to some of his personal problems, which haunted him in Dubrovnik too.

Pietro Nascimbene - the scholar's cousin

The role of Nascimbene's cousin Pietro casts more light on the scholar's private life during his career in Dubrovnik. The betrothal agreement between Pietro Nascimbeni from Ferrara and Maria de Tanis was signed in Dubrovnik on 22 November 1567,¹⁶⁴ Nascimbene acting as proxy on Pietro's behalf.¹⁶⁵ Maria's dowry included lands in Vrbica, but also in Ulcinj, today in Montenegro,

¹⁶¹ *Libri delle polizze*, vol. 4, f. 71.

¹⁶² *De illustribus familiis, quae anno 1595 Ragusii extabant, e poi fece stampare dopo il suo Cato minor l'anno seguente 1596 in Venezia appresso Felice Valgrisi in 8° alla p. 234.*

¹⁶³ *I dispiacevoli incontri che probabilmente ebbe, come lo fecero quasi improvvisamente e fuor di stagione partire da Ragusa...* (Zibaldone II: p. 359).

¹⁶⁴ *Pacta matrimonialia*, vol. 9, f. 116rv.

¹⁶⁵ *Excellentissimus dominus Nascimbenus Ferrariensis tanquam procurator et procuratorio nomine domini Petri Nascimbeni itidem Ferrariensis habens ad infrascripta speciale mandatum, prout de eo constat, in Procurationibus Cancellariae 1567 fol. 13, ad quod habeatur relatio ex una parte, et domina Maria filia quondam Hieronymi de Tanis parte ex altera, sponte cum Dei nomine simul praedictis nominibus matrimonium contraxerunt per verba de praesenti...* The mentioned book from the archival series *Procurationes Cancellariae*, series 29 in the State Archives of Dubrovnik, is lost.

as guaranteed by her tutors, the Ragusan patricians Jacobus Benessa and Stephanus Gradi, and decided by the Minor Council two days before. These estates were formally taken by Nascimbene on Pietro's behalf.¹⁶⁶ If marriage was dissolved before being consumed due to the death of a spouse, Pietro was to return the estates within a period of six months or to pay compensation.

Few months later, on 20 March 1568, a special contract was signed between the patrician Iunius Bona, the inheritor of the late priest Augustinus de Tanis, and Maria, daughter of the priest's cousin Hieronymus de Tanis (also deceased) and wife of Pietro Nascimbeni from Ferrara.¹⁶⁷ The contract concerned the inheritance of the estates near Ulcinj, ancient roots of the de Tanis family, consisting of arable land, olive groves and vineyards to which Maria was entitled by right of inheritance. However, some land units also belonged to Iunius Bona, the inheritor of Hieronymus's cousin Augustinus. Maria's brother, Vincencius de Tanis, also appeared as joint owner of one-third of the land. To the owners' benefit, Hieronymus Bona agreed that Maria and her husband and legal representative Pietro Nascimbeni have every right concerning their two-thirds of the property and that they may put it on mortgage, sell or alienate in any other way, even in Iunius's absence.¹⁶⁸ Maria agreed to this division, probably under the husband's influence, who, from Ferrara, saw little benefit from the estates in such a remote country.

The Tanis family, from which Pietro's wife descended, had many problems with the Ragusan authorities in the mid-1520s. It was then that Iohannes Chimi de Tanis died under torture, accused of conspiring to cede the city and

¹⁶⁶ ... *pro cuius quidem dominae Mariae dote, vestibis et ornamentis ipsa Maria, et ser Iacobus Antonii de Benessa et ser Stephanus Hieronymi de Gradis tutores, seu maior pars tutorum eiusdem dominae Mariae, virtute libertatis sibi praestitae atque concessae in magnifico Minore Consilio sub die XX mensis currentis sponte promiserunt dare et consignare praedicto domino Nascimbeni procuratori praesenti et acceptanti... totam partem possessionis Verbizae, eidem Mariae perventam... item omnia bona quae ipsa domina Maria habet Dulchinii.*

¹⁶⁷ The contract is entered in *Div. Canc.*, vol. 153, f. 113rv.

¹⁶⁸ ... *ideo ipse ser Iunius ut facilius dicta Domina Maria, seu pro ea dictus ser Petrus eius procurator consequi possit quod suum est, videlicet dictos duos tertios, medietatis omnium praedictorum bonorum, et alia facere expediri, quae sibi incumbunt sine aliqua oppositione, sponte, et omni meliori modo, voluit, et vult, ac contentatur ipse ser Iunius, quod sine praeiudicio suae medietatis dictorum bonorum, et iurium suorum, possit, et valeat dictus Dominus Petrus maritus, et procurator dictae Dominae Mariae dictam suam portionem seu portiones dictorum bonorum recuperare; et sibi dari, consignari, ac dividi facere, easque vendere, et alienare, ac alia omnia facere, quae in dicta procura praetendit ipsa Domina Maria, non obstante absentia ipsius ser Iunii, ad libitum voluntatis eiusdem Dominae Mariae, seu dicti sui procuratoris.*

fortress of Ston to the people of Krajina, the region stretching from the Pelješac peninsula towards the littoral of Makarska, under Ottoman control at the time. Following Iohannes's death, the Senate permanently banned from Ston and Pelješac his brother Rusco and Hieronymus, Iohannes's son born out of wedlock.¹⁶⁹ In the light of these unfortunate events, the return of de Tanis family to their ancestral roots in the Montenegrin littoral seems logical,¹⁷⁰ and so does Maria's inheritance and the rights of the patrician Iunius Bona. Maria and Vincentius de Tanis were children of Hieronymus Tanis, thus grandchildren of Iohannes Chimi de Tanis, the conspirator from Ston.

Despite lack of firm evidence, it is likely that Nascimbene fled from Dubrovnik because his cousin was accused of planning to murder a Ragusan patrician, whose name was not specified. Before the Venetian Inquisitors Nascimbene stated that he had fled from Dubrovnik due to a murder threat, and because his relative had violated the exile by returning to Dubrovnik before the given date, as result of which his friends advised him to leave the city. According to the sources, on 31 July 1567 Pietro Nascimbene was really sentenced to five years of exile from the city of Dubrovnik and the area under its political control, under threat of long imprisonment in chains if he returned before the given time.¹⁷¹ However, one year later he not only intervened in the betrothal agreement between Pietro and Maria Tanis, but also settled the dowry issue of Pietro's fiancée. On Nascimbene's request, on 24 April 1568 Archbishop Crisostomo Calvino assigned 120 perpers in Maria's favour, undisposed from the last will of Rusco de Tanis, written as early as 1527.¹⁷² Since the proclamation on the allotment of 20 perpers to Rusco's servant Cvijeta and 100 perpers to Anica, "who lived in his house", remained displayed

¹⁶⁹ *Annales Ragusini anonymi item Nicolai de Ragnina*, ed. Natko Nodilo. Zagrabiae: JAZU, 1883: pp. 99-102; 278-280; *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii (ab origine urbis usque ad annum 1451) item Joannis Gundulae (1451-1484)*, ed. Natko Nodilo. Zagrabiae: JAZU, 1893: pp. 437-439; Zdravko Šundrica, »Poisons and Poisoning in the Republic of Dubrovnik«. *Dubrovnik Annals* 4 (2000): pp. 23-26.

¹⁷⁰ According to the genealogical research of Nenad Vekarić, the patrician Mako (Mato), son of Tano, from Ulcinj moved to Dubrovnik in 1395. Although his noble status was not recognised in Dubrovnik, yet the members of this family intermarried with the Ragusan patriciate for one century and a half. The founder of the family in Dubrovnik had become a member of the prestigious *Antunini* confraternity.

¹⁷¹ *Criminalia*, series 16, vol. 2, f. 43v, SAD.

¹⁷² *Test. Not.*, vol. 34, f. 73rv. The will was drafted on 6 March 1527, and made public on 17 March the same year. It seems that Rusco was among the victims of the plague that struck Dubrovnik at the time.

on the doors of the city cathedral for fifteen days without anyone laying claim to the money, these means were given to Maria as a contribution to her dowry.¹⁷³

The long-drawn-out conflict over the division of the legacy with her brother Vincentius¹⁷⁴ spurred Maria to find a permanent protector of her interests through marriage. In any case, Nascimbene was also caught in the whirlpool of unsettled family issues and was thus forced to leave Dubrovnik. Unfortunately, instead of finding shelter in northern Italy, where he was born, he met with the same problem from which he had once tried to escape by coming to Dubrovnik.

Conclusion

The reasons why the Ragusan government recruited foreigners to run the public school in Dubrovnik practically from its opening well into the sixteenth century are manifold. The modest level of education among the Ragusans continued to be frowned upon by the learned newcomers. In addition, employment of renowned foreign masters in the small community was certainly a matter of prestige. Also, by engaging a foreigner to run the school instead of a local person the government ruled out the possible political influence of certain patrician families. Equally, by hiring expert tutors and scholars from Italy the government was playing safe, and to avoid any misunderstanding, the prudent city fathers worked out a standard employment procedure in this particular case: they first offered a two-year contract with the possibility of renewal.

Nascimbene had no problems with the Ragusan authorities throughout his rectorship. His return home, however, was marked by the confrontation with the Venetian Inquisition and accusation of a never forgotten heresy. Nascimbene was sentenced to prison, from where, by the grace of the Inquisitors, he was released only a few months before his death in 1578. He must have spent the captivity reminiscing about his days in Dubrovnik, abruptly and surprisingly for both sides. True, Nascimbene was more than a foreigner who decided to settle in Dubrovnik for some time and his work as school rector

¹⁷³ *Div. Canc.*, vol. 153, *tergo*, ff. 59v-60r. It contains the entire document signed by Archbishop Calvino on 12 April 1568.

¹⁷⁴ In February 1566 Maria applied to the Senate for legal protection against her brother Vincentius, whose intention was to disinherit her (*Cons. Rog.*, vol. 57, f. 265r-266r).

cannot be viewed solely from the entries on the salaries he had received. There are at least three reasons why he deserves more attention. First is the insightful letter of invitation written skilfully by the Secretary of the Republic, Giovanni Battista Amalteo, which provides a host of information about the city life in the middle of the sixteenth century. The fact that Amalteo's letter was published in Italy as an exemplar of epistolography speaks of its considerable literary value.

Furthermore, although the pupils' lack of knowledge and motivation might have led Nascimbene to doubt his teaching methods, he most certainly influenced the genius of young Nicolaus Gozze. Gozze's fruitful work is more than enough to prove that Nascimbene was an expert and dedicated teacher, even if there were no other similar examples, especially among some successful students and professors of rhetoric from Dubrovnik who distinguished themselves later at *Collegium Romanum*. Their success, which may also be undirectly attributed to Nascimbene's commitment to a better understanding of rhetoric, represents the third reason why the role of this head master of the Ragusan public school should not be forgotten. By dedicating his time also to theoretical work, by preparing the new edition of Cicero's treatise *De inventione*, the scholar from Ferrara offered his pupils a new and more complete insight into one of the key texts of the most famous orator of ancient Rome, adapting it to suit his own time.

Nascimbene Nascimbeni has all the makings of a typical humanist—as testified by his work, learning and career. The few years he spent in Dubrovnik proved successful and creative, his place in the city's history being earned by his pedagogical and scholarly work.

