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APPRENTICES FROM THE ZETA LITTORAL IN LATE MEDIEVAL RAGUSA

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the arrival of apprentices from Zeta to Ragusa (today's Dubrovnik) between 1360 and 1421, a period that coincides with the rule of the Balšić dynasty in Zeta. The research is mostly based on the analysis of unpublished original material from the State Archives in Dubrovnik and relevant historical literature. The first part of the paper presents a general overview of data on crafts and the presence and activity of Zetans in Ragusa, lists the economic benefits of migration to the city, and sheds light on how young men started their apprenticeships. In the second part, archival material allows us to reconstruct the microhistory of the arrival of young men from the settlements and areas of Budva, Bar, Ratac, Spič, Pilot, Ulcinj, Shkodër, and the wider Zeta region to Ragusa. The details include the names of the young artisans, the frequency of their arrivals, and the duration of their apprenticeships. The paper also explores the status of these young men who migrated to the city and analyses their migratory movements by interpreting sources from the State Archives of Dubrovnik.

Keywords: apprentices, artisans, Zeta, Ragusa, late Middle Ages

APPRENDISTI DEL LITORALE DI ZETA NELLA RAGUSA TARDO MEDIEVALE

SINTESI

Questo articolo esamina l'arrivo degli apprendisti di Zeta a Ragusa (l'odierna Dubrovnik), con l'obiettivo di imparare un mestiere, nel periodo dal 1360 al 1421, che coincide con il regno della dinastia Balšić su Zeta. La ricerca si basa principalmente

sull'analisi del materiale inedito dell'Archivio di Stato di Dubrovnik e della letteratura storica rilevante. La prima parte del testo fornisce uno sguardo generale sui dati relativi ai mestieri e ai cittadini di Zeta a Ragusa, la cui presenza e opera nella città di S. Biagio è indice della sua attrattività economica e delle possibilità per i giovani di imparare un mestiere. Nella seconda parte, attraverso le fonti indicate, viene ricostruita la microstoria dell'arrivo a Zeta dei giovani provenienti dalle seguenti località: Budva, Bar, Ratac, Spič, Pilota, Ulcinj, Shkodër e da tutta la regione di Ragusa. Vengono elencati i nomi dei giovani artigiani, la frequenza dei loro arrivo e la durata dell'apprendistato. Sempre attraverso l'interpretazione delle fonti dell'archivio di Dubrovnik vengono seguiti i percorsi dei giovani che entravano in città, e vengono analizzati i movimenti migratori degli apprendisti.

Parole chiave: apprendisti, artigiani, Zeta, Ragusa, tardo Medioevo

INTRODUCTION¹

This study is based on the analysis of original material from the State Archives in Dubrovnik, one of the most important archives in the Mediterranean, renowned for the quantity, age, and value of its documents. Based on extensive documentation pertaining to the Zeta region and its population in the late Middle Ages, we can glean insights into the migratory movements of young men who became apprentices in the city of Ragusa. These records exist because all contracts, from the simplest agreements between young artisans and their employers to those involving trading companies investing thousands of ducats, were concluded before a notary and a chancellor in Ragusa. An abundance of sources on our subject can be found in the archival series 25, Miscellaneous Chancellery Records (*Diversa Cancellariae*), and 26, Miscellaneous Notary Records (*Diversa Notariae*). These series cannot be separated for research purposes, as both contain records of the same transactions. Data were most often recorded in notarial or chancellery books at the request of the employer, as these contracts were public documents outlining the boys' obligations. They were based on the principle of guarantees from the parents, relatives, or friends of the young men seeking to learn the craft.

1 This paper is the result of research carried out in the bilateral project BI-ME/21-22-026 *Similarities and Distinctions between Medieval Coastal and Continental Towns in the Nowadays Slovenia and Montenegro*, funded by the Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency (ARIS).

The documents we found in these two series enable us to examine and present the migrations of these young men, as well as their involvement in various crafts. The Fund of Notarial Debentures contains volumes VII–XII, covering the periods 1352–1358, 1362–1379, 1387–1391, 1402–1408, and 1413–1481. The following documents are recorded in *Diversa*: contracts with artisans, debentures, dowries, sales, notices and calls for confiscation of debtors' property, announcements of property seizure, etc. *Diversa Cancellariae* represents the most extensive series in the Dubrovnik archive. The research included the following chancellery volumes: from XIX to XLII, covering the periods 1362–1372, 1375–1376, 1381–1383, and 1385–1418. There is a brief discontinuation between volumes XVIII and XIX, as well as between XLI and XLII, for the years 1356–1362 and 1418–1422. The fund contains documents related to contracts for artisans and servants, debentures, notices for the sale of real estate, lawsuits, hearings, witness statements, judgments, and more. Zetan artisans are mentioned in archival series 36, Notarial Debentures (*Debita Notariae*), in relation to credit trade. The published collections of sources from the Dubrovnik Archives' archival series were invaluable in writing this article, as they contain relevant data for this issue (Thallóczy, Jireček & de Sufflay, 1918).

To date, this topic has not been adequately addressed by historiography. In the mid-twentieth century, Dragan Roller was the first historian to classify and research medieval crafts in Ragusa during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, organised by profession (Roller, 1951). This fragment of Zeta's medieval history is not covered in detail even in synthetic monographs related to the period of the Balšić reign in Zeta (Ćirković et al., 1970; Jelčić, 2010; Šekularac, 2011; Rudić, 2021). Young Zetan artisans from the Ragusan hinterland and Bosnia are mentioned in smaller-scale works (Stanojević, 1934; Samardžić, 1948; Hrabak, 1973; Pekić, 2019). The Roller monograph was later supplemented by Josip Lučić's book titled *Obrti i usluge u Dubrovniku do početka 14. stoljeća* (Crafts and Services in Ragusa until the Beginning of the Fourteenth Century) (Lučić, 1979). In the aforementioned works, artisans from Zeta are mentioned only incidentally in a few places. Dušanka Dinić-Knežević wrote the most significant monograph for our topic: *Migracije stanovništva iz južnoslovenskih zemalja u Dubrovnik tokom srednjeg veka* (Migration of Population from South Slavic Countries to Ragusa during the Middle Ages). The author examined the arrival of young men in Ragusa in a much broader context, highlighting both the unplanned and deliberate movements of the population from the hinterland, Zeta, Bosnia, Albania and certain Dalmatian towns towards Ragusa, which were motivated by diverse factors (Dinić-Knežević, 1995). Dinić-Knežević recorded the cumulative number of young artisans from Budva, Bar, Spič, Ratac, Ulcinj, and Zeta, presenting them as part of broader trends, and occasionally mentioning some of the young men by name.

The insights gained by Dušanka Dinić-Knežević served as an incentive to delve deeper into the documents of the Dubrovnik archive. We will use the sources from the reviewed period to analyse the arrival of young men seeking to learn a craft in Ragusa, their chosen crafts, their ages and names. The sources reveal periods of peak migration, the timing of arrivals of young men, the crafts they learned, their rights and obligations, duration of apprenticeships, and other conditions of service, among others. The paper will reach its conclusions through the inductive method, analysis, and comparison of the available data, with the aim of performing a final synthesis.

We chose the period from 1360 to 1421 to illustrate the migration of young men from Budva, Bar, Ratac, Spič, Pilot, Ulcinj, Shkodër (Skadar), and the Zeta region to the Ragusa commune, following the city's change in political status after the signing of the Treaty of Zadar in 1358. That year, Venetian rule over Ragusa ended. The expulsion of the Venetians led to the expansion of the city's maritime trade and economic prosperity (Foretić, 1980, 132–136; Harris, 2006, 59–62; Janeković-Römer, 2008, 119–120). The Višegrad Charter of 1359 marks the beginning of Ragusa's transformation from a medieval commune into an organised city, and eventually into a Republic (Janeković-Römer, 2003, 10–48, 64–68). Meanwhile, from 1360 Zeta was ruled by the Balšić dynasty, becoming close neighbours of the city. The Balšićs became allies and citizens of Ragusa in 1361 (Šekularac, 2011, 33–37). During their reign, trade relations between Ragusa and Zeta were the central link in Ragusan-Zetan relations. The residents of the two entities were closely connected and maintained almost daily communication, primarily for economic reasons. Therefore, population migration was an ongoing process influenced by the economic rise of Ragusa, as well as other economic and political factors (Benyovsky Latin, 2017, 474, 490–491).

The lands of the Balšić dynasty (1360–1421) stretched from Ragusa to Himarë in Albania, though its territory was interrupted by regions like Kotor. At the beginning of their rule, their domain consisted of a narrow strip of land between Lake Skadar and the sea, including the towns of Bar and Shkodër. By June 1368, the Balšićs had taken control of Ulcinj. After the death of his brother Stracimir, probably in 1372, Đurađ I assumed leadership in the family. In 1372, Đurađ I seized Prizren, followed by Peja/Peć. In 1372, the Balšić family achieved a major success when Đurađ's youngest brother, Balša II, acquired Berat, Vlorë, and Himarë through his marriage to Komnina (1372). From 1373 to 1377, their domain expanded to include Trebinje, Konavle, and Dračevica. Đurađ I died in 1378 and was succeeded by his younger brother, Balša II (Ćirković et al., 1970; Šekularac, 2011). The Balšićs aspired to expand their territory in Albania. Balša II achieved his greatest success in early 1385, when he took the town of Durrës from the Albanian ruler Karl Thopia (1359–1388). Soon after Balša II's death, his successor, Đurađ II Balšić (1385–1403) lost Durrës to Thopia. He was unable to protect the territory of Zeta from the Ottoman assault. Consequently,

on 14 April 1396 he reached an agreement with Venice, ceding the towns of Shkodër and Shirgj, the fortress of Shati and customs in Danjë (Danj), along with the surrounding places that are in Albania today. Đurađ II was prince of the islands of Korčula and Hvar from 1397 to 1402, with an interruption in 1401 (Ćuk, 1986; Schmitt, 2001). His heir, Balša III (1403–1421), fought to expel the Venetians from the territories ceded by Đurađ II. He ruled over Bar, Budva, Ulcinj and Drisht, albeit with interruptions. Balša III died in 1421 (Jelčić, 2010; Rudić, 2021). For this reason, the period examined by this paper ends in 1421, when a political change occurred in Zeta with the end of the Balšić dynasty.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON CRAFTS AND THE PRESENCE OF ZETANS IN RAGUSA

Ragusa was the largest trade and craft hub in the southern Adriatic in the late Middle Ages (Voje, 2000). In addition to facilitating the exchange of goods, it was perceived by the population of medieval Zeta and neighbouring areas as the promised city. It also served as an important centre for training young artisans from the hinterland. Young people from Budva, Bar, Ratac, Spič, Pilot, Ulcinj, Shkodër and the Zeta region came to Ragusa to become apprentices, serving their employers and thereby securing their livelihoods. Ragusa maintained regular connections, business and otherwise, with all these and towns, particularly Bar and Ulcinj (Dinić-Knežević, 1974, 19–38; Foretić, 1980, 112). The presence of businessmen from Ragusa in these locations encouraged young people from Zeta to seek apprenticeships in Ragusa, and it is not surprising that a considerable number of young men did so.

The interest of the Ragusan authorities in young workers largely depended on the conditions within the city and the needs of the economy. After the great plague of 1348, which brought about changes in all areas of life, the city authorities granted privileges to new immigrants on 30 May 1348. In an effort to revive the economy, they invited artisans of all professions, promising a reward of 5 perperas per year and exemption from all duties except customs, provided they committed to working in Ragusa for at least five years. Artisans and merchants required apprentices, while noble and bourgeois families sought domestic servants (Božić, 1949, 30; Dinić-Knežević, 1974, 19, 26–27; Ćirković 1997, 53–54; Pešorda-Vardić 2012, 37). The difficult existential circumstances of the lower strata of society, particularly those on the brink of survival, compelled young men to search for work and a better life. Regarding the geographical origin of boys and young men coming to Ragusa for apprenticeships, alongside Zeta (coastal and inland regions), three additional areas can be identified: Albania, Herzegovina (the immediate hinterland and interior) and Bosnia. As a rule, Ragusa welcomed immigrants provided they did not threaten the safety of its citizens (Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 59–60; Janeković-Römer, 2005, 317–346).

In terms of social origin, young apprentices predominantly came from the lower strata of society. The contracts refer to them as *famula*, *garzonus*, and *servitor*, as well as *momak* and later *djetić* in Croatian (Samardžić, 1948, 66–70; Hrabak, 1973, 47). In the 1320s, three citizens of Bar and one resident of Spič became apprentices in Ragusa. There is no mention of young men until the mid-fourteenth century. From 1350 to 1370, only two young men are mentioned: one from Shkodër (1350) and the other from Bar (1352). From 1370 to 1380, the number of contracts concluded with young men from Zeta steadily increased, with nearly 40 contracts signed in Ragusa during this period. Young men specialised in specific crafts, reflecting the progressive trends of the Ragusan economy of the time (Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 92–93). Italian humanist and teacher Philippus de Diversis (Filippo Diversi) informs us of the need for artisans in his renowned work, *Situs aedificiorum, politiae et laudabilium consuetudinum inclitao civitatis Ragusii* (Description of the Famous City of Ragusa from 1440). In the ninth chapter, Diversis provides a vivid description of craftsmanship in Ragusa: “No one doubts that the city needs a large number of artisans and a large population, both for the sake of defence and to ensure the supply of the necessary food and clothing” (Janeković-Römer, 2004, 109–110).

Upon arriving in the city, young men signed contracts at the notary or chancellery, committing themselves to serve their employers, who would take them on as apprentices. Most of the youths were minors, requiring that a parent or close relative sign the contract on their behalf. The document stated the names of the master and apprentice, the duration of apprenticeship, and included the promise that the apprentice would faithfully and lawfully serve the master and obey his orders. After entering into service, the apprentice spent all his time with the master. He lived in the master’s house and performed household chores, and in return received lodging, food, clothing, and training in the craft. The primary obligations of the young apprentice were to learn the craft, develop a strong work ethic, and remain loyal to his master. Additionally, mutual care was expected in both good times and bad, in health and in sickness. In case the master was hired outside the city, the apprentice would typically accompany him. The young man could not leave without the master’s permission until the end of the designated period. If he ran away before that time, he was obliged to return and honour the contract. One of the basic clauses present in most contracts stipulates that the master will provide his apprentice with a *capita feramentorum artis* at the end of the apprenticeship. When concluding the contract, the notary prepared two copies – one for each party. After that, the young man-apprentice became a *discipulus*, and the master his *magister* (Samardžić, 1948, 66–71; Hrabak, 1973, 25–28, 41–47; Lučić, 1979, 222–227; Epstein, 2009, 117).

Contracts usually specify the origin of the young men. However, some documents omit this information, stating only “de Genta” (from Zeta) as the place

of origin. Additionally, some documents cite the age of the apprentices, while others do not. It is assumed that Ragusan merchants in Zeta hired local young men as their servants; however, there is little information available on this matter, as the Ragusan chancellery and notary do not provide any relevant data.

APPRENTICES FROM BUDVA

Crafts in Budva were poorly developed in the late Middle Ages, as indicated by the fact that only a few provisions of the Statute of Budva refer to crafts, specifically oil making, baking and butchery. However, it is difficult to assume that no other crafts existed (Bujuklić, 1988, 37). Due to the challenging existential conditions and a lack of development of crafts related to everyday life, young men from Budva travelled to Ragusa to become apprentices.

In the late 1350s, the craftsman Stjepan Dobrosravić from Budva was mentioned in Ragusa. Stjepan practiced carpentry, and the city authorities granted him citizenship on 31 January 1359 (Rački, 1882, 263; Manken, 1960, 92). In the first half of March 1376, the notary recorded that Ivan Ratković from Budva began a masonry apprenticeship in Ragusa (DAD, Div. Not., sv. 9 (1370–1379), f. 150r). A young man named Pavle Ožinić from Budva apprenticed in the shoemaking trade in Ragusa. In September 1379, he pledged before the notary, with the presence and consent of his father, to serve and learn the craft under shoemaker Bratoslav Miltinić for a period of five years. During this time, the shoemaker Bratoslav would provide Pavle with sustenance, and would give him tools of the trade upon the completion of his apprenticeship (DAD, Div. Not., sv. 9 (1370–1379), f. 218r).

Contracts often contained a special clause prohibiting young men from stealing from their masters. However, in practice, instances of apprentices occasionally robbing their masters did occur. On one such occasion, on 5 April 1373, a blacksmith by the name of Pripko filed a lawsuit against Medoj from Budva for stealing his master's belongings (DAD, Lam. de For., sv. 1 (1370–1373), f. 107v). It is possible that Medoj had been mistreated and committed the theft in response. The Ragusan Statute of 1272 prescribed that the master, in this instance Pripko, should report the apprentice's escape to the city authorities (Šoljić, Šundrica & Veselić, 2002, 505). After the apprentice was apprehended, the authorities would return him to the master to continue his work until the contract expired. The runaway was obliged to work double the number of days for each day he had been absent (Lučić, 1979, 224). There is no information on whether Medoj was caught and returned to Pripko, the blacksmith.

The poor people of Budva entered into serfdom arrangements with the rulers of Ragusa. For example, on 25 January 1382, Milec Obradović from Budva and his two sons became serfs of Živko Vlahov Menčetić. As a result, the Obradovići could not leave Živko without his permission, with Dabec Obradović (likely their relative) serving as their guarantor (Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 121). At the

end of November 1387, Radić Ivanović from Budva became a servant of Blaž Mont for a period of five years. According to the contract, he was obliged to serve his lord faithfully and diligently during this time, while Blaž was required to provide clothing and sustenance. Upon completing five years of service, he would receive a reward of 25 perperas (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 27 (1387–1389), f. 62r; Borozan, 2020, 259).

Young people from Budva particularly gravitated towards weapon-making crafts. On 17 May 1404, Bogoje Mirojević from Budva began his apprenticeship with Radić Dobričević, a master swordsmith in Ragusa (DAD, Div. Not., sv. 11 (1402–1408), f. 31r). During the period covered by this study, more than ten people from Budva were recorded in the Ragusan notary and chancellery in relation to weapon-making crafts: Dragoš Bogojević (21 September 1369), Radoslav (24 September 1369), Mihai Radošević (6 March 1371), Ratko Ljepčinović (25 May 1371), Bratič Pripčić (18 May 1376), Milatko Stanerović (21 May 1376), Jurko Petročević (19 November 1376), Jurko Dobriković (17 May 1386), Butko Dobrić (3 August 1387), Petar (2 March 1389), Juras Janković (26 May 1398), Kaladušić (3 February 1410), etc. (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 22 (1369–1370), f. 4r–v; DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 23 (1371–1372), f. 16r, 35v; DAD, Div. Not., sv. 9 (1370–1379), f. 150r, 155v–156r, 217r; DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 24 (1375–1376), f. 190v; DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 26 (1385–1387), f. 80r; DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 27 (1387–1389), f. 20r, 200v; DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 32 (1396–1399), f. 145r; DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 38 (1408–1413), f. 116r).

APPRENTICES FROM BAR

Many inhabitants of Bar were present in Ragusa, and among them, many young people became apprentices. From 1360 to 1421, more than 20 contracts were recorded. The greatest interest was in shoemaking, followed by goldsmithing, tailoring, leatherworking, and other crafts. We learn about this from sources in the Dubrovnik archive, as the medieval notary and other archival materials, along with the statute of the city of Bar, have not been preserved, to the best of our knowledge (Marković, 2010, 833–834).

Johannes de Antibaro is mentioned as a shoemaker in the 1360s. On 15 July 1365, he guaranteed that Kranče, son of Ivan, and Luka, son of Nikola from Bar, would not run away from Klima Držić, to whom they pledged to serve for one year (Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 89, 166). In early October 1370, Mihoje Stijepović from Sozina in Bar travelled to Ragusa to become a shoemaking apprentice (Thallóczy, Jireček & de Sufflay, 1918, 80). Between the 1360s and the 1370s, Jovan the cobbler worked in Ragusa, while Dapčo the cobbler was active between the 1370s and the 1390s, both men hailing from Bar (Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 89).

The young men from Bar also showed a noticeable interest in tailoring. In the autumn of 1388, Jurko Vukotić began his tailoring apprenticeship under Maroje Radogostić. Jurko was bound to serve for eight years, during which he

would receive accommodation and food. At the end of his service, he would also be provided with tools of the trade (DAD, Div. Not., sv. 10 (1387–1391), f. 31r). In the summer of 1394, Radič, son of Hranko Tomić from Bar, was registered before the notary as an apprentice tailor (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 31 (1391–1399), f. 111r). On 19 September 1395, a document was recorded in the chancellery stating that don Dimitrije from Bar was sending his 10-year-old son Miho to become a tailoring apprentice (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 32 (1396–1399), f. 84r). In the chancellery, a cloth cutter named Simo from Bar was mentioned on 6 December 1412 (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 39 (1411–1414), f. 188v).

In addition to the above, residents of Bar learned trades related to the production, processing, and treatment of leather in Ragusa. During the Middle Ages, alongside cloth and linen, furs and skins from various domestic and wild animals were commonly used for clothing and footwear (Lučić, 1979, 85–87). A tannery apprenticeship contract was concluded by Juro, son of Srdo Maljurović from Bar, on 7 October 1394 (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 31 (1391–1399), f. 119r). In the first half of May 1395, Martin Bizatović from Bar began his tannery apprenticeship in Ragusa (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 31 (1391–1399), f. 159r). Brajko Andrejić Ćurčin from Bar also pursued the tannery trade, starting his apprenticeship on 22 March 1402, with the permission of his parents (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 34 (1401–1403), f. 96r).

Residents of Bar were also interested in goldsmithing. In mid-May 1370, Radoslav, son of Đurđe Tepešić, went to Ragusa to apprentice as a goldsmith. In the presence of his parents, Radoslav signed a contract which bound him to serve and learn under the goldsmith Dživo Radišević for a duration of seven years. The master agreed, as part of the contract, to send the apprentice to acquire literacy skills in the first year (DAD, Div. Not., sv. 9 (1370–1379), f. 10v). In the second half of the fourteenth century, this encompassed the basics of reading and writing, as well as Latin per the grammarian Donatus. The young man was likely sent to live with a priest for a year, who would provide him with food, accommodation, and education, which was the customary method of gaining literacy in that period. The master provided clothing as well, and the teacher's reward usually ranged from 10 perperas per year (in 1333) to 125 ducats per year at the end of the fourteenth century (Lučić, 1979, 133; Janeković Romer, 1994, 109). After acquiring basic literacy during the first year, Radoslav would spend the remaining six years learning the goldsmith's craft under the guidance of his master. After the specified period, he would receive the tools of the trade (DAD, Div. Not., sv. 9 (1370–1379), f. 10v). In the first half of November 1394, Đorđe Mamollo from Bar sent his 12-year-old son Marino to apprentice under the Ragusan goldsmith master Nikola Brundusio for a period of eight years (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 31 (1391–1399), f. 132r).

In the fourteenth century, Ragusa provided ample work for masons as it transitioned from a wooden to a stone city. Bar was the location of many quarries with rich deposits of stone famous for its distinctive red colour, which

was widely exported to neighbouring towns. This stone was used in Ragusa for paving, and for the construction of one-story houses, streets, and squares. The cutting and preparation of this stone was a major source of income for the population of Bar and its surroundings for centuries. This led to the development of stonemasonry and the arrival of Bar stonemasons to Ragusa. During the 1350s and the 1360s, stonemasons Đorđe and Buda from Bar worked in Ragusa, participating in numerous construction projects (Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 87–89).

Men from Bar also came to Ragusa to work as servants. This line of work provided them with appropriate food, clothing, shoes and accommodation. At the end of their service, they typically received a nominal monetary compensation (Lučić, 1979, 151). The largest influx was recorded in 1365, when eight new servants from Bar were registered, and in 1367, when three were registered. In other years, usually only one servant arrived per year. They commonly committed to working for a period of one to six years, for a salary of 15 *perperas* per year, although nine individuals worked solely for food and clothing (Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 50). In one case, the salary was paid monthly and amounted to 18 *grossi*, while in another case, it was paid every four months. The contracts signifying this are from 1365, a time when the demand for labour was high due to the plague that had struck Ragusa in 1363, leading to the abandonment of the usual practice of giving wages at the end of service. In the 1360s, the price of labour increased significantly as well (Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 50–51). On 3 July 1365, Marko from Bar pledged to Tripo Budačić to do everything he could; in return, Tripo promised to provide him with food, clothing, and shoes, as well as 20 *perperas* and 10 *grossi*, which he would pay in instalments every four months. Both parties had the right to terminate the contract if they were dissatisfied (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 20 (1365–1366), f. 32v). On 14 October 1365, Mihajlo Menčetić from Bar pledged to Bokša, the father of Žora Bokšić, to serve him for one year in exchange for a reward of 18 *grossi* per month (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 20 (1365–1366), f. 63r; Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 50, 58). The chancellery recorded a statement of Andrija Trimović from Bar dated 10 November 1382, in which he agreed to stay on the estate of Andrija Volzio for one year (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 25 (1381–1383), f. 153r). On 7 November 1389, Bogoslav and Petar Jonović, brothers from Bar, entered the service of Andrija Volzio in Trstenica on the Pelješac peninsula, where they were to cultivate their employer's estate in an appropriate manner (DAD, Div. Not., sv. 10 (1387–1391), f. 76v). On 23 March 1415, Radivoje Brajković was hired as a servant in the house of Andrija, the chancellor of Bar, who would take him to serve Johannes Pitko (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 40 (1414–1416), f. 141v).

As artisans, Bar natives were highly active and successful in Ragusa. In July 1359, the trading activity of the blacksmith Brat, a citizen of Ragusa originally from Bar, was documented (Malaj, 2020, 16). At the end of January 1360, Budoje, a mason from Bar and a citizen of Ragusa, bought a house

from Radiša Menić for 90 perperas. The house was located on the land of the archdiocese (DAD, Deb. Not., sv. 6 (1356–1363), f. 47r; Borozan, 2021, 38). During the 1360s, documents mention two coopers from Bar, Petar Milošević and Jovan Muščevt, whose contracts indicated that they were residents of Ragusa (Thallóczy, Jireček & de Sufflay, 1918, 51, n. 3; Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 89). A record in the *Debita Notariae* series dated 10 March 1368 notes that Ivan Musojević, a cooper from Bar, borrowed 28 gold ducats from Miloš Hranislavić (DAD, Deb. Not., sv. 7 (1365–1370), f. 135v).

Records from the notary and chancellery mention a considerable number of workers from Bar in Ragusa. The following were registered as servants and artisans: Bogdan Milaković (10 January 1369), Juroje Radoslavić (27 May 1370), Matko, son of Cvjetan Miloslavić (2 July 1372), Pribil Velojević (17 June 1375), Stojko Dimković (17 April 1376), Radoslav Stojković (15 September 1379), Miho Nalesov Jure de Camarda (26 June 1383), Staniša Radosaljić (10–14 January 1387), Martinče Martinčević (27 July 1390), Martol Budojević (18 March 1393), Lačar of the late Đorđe Penetar (12 October 1394), Dabiživ Bolković (28 October 1394), Miloš Bogoslavov (28 September 1395), Nikša of the late Gruban Porub (9 May 1403), Đorđe Benkov Dugla (20 September 1407), Gojšin Radošinić (4 April 1415), and others (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 22 (1369–1370), f. 96r, 56v; DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 23 (1371–1372), f. 115r; DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 24 (1375–1376), f. 45v; DAD, Div. Not., sv. 9 (1370–1379), f. 152v, 216v; DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 25 (1381–1383), f. 223r; DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 26 (1385–1387), f. 149v; DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 29 (1389–1391), f. 121r; DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 30 (1392–1394), f. 4v; DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 31 (1391–1399), f. 121r, 126v, 170v; DAD, Div. Not., sv. 11 (1402–1408), f. 47v; DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 36 (1405–1408), f. 253r; DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 40 (1414–1416), f. 143r).

A smaller number of people from Ragusa were employed as artisans in Bar. On 7 November 1412, stonemasons Radoslav Gigović and Radoslav Radovčić agreed in the Ragusan chancellery to process stone materials for Gabriel Bazun from Bar in November (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 39 (1411–1414), f. 162r). On 26 May 1404, Brajko Ivanović from Majkovo near Ragusa was hired to work in Bar for the brother of the Abbess Katarina (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 35 (1403–1405), f. 71v). In early April 1399, the stonemason Pripko Obradović committed himself to Živko to carry out construction works in Bar (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 32 (1396–1399), f. 238v).

APPRENTICES FROM RATAČ

Ragusan documents indicate that young men from Ratač near Bar came to Ragusa to learn various crafts. The Benedictine abbey of St Mary of Ratač was located in the settlement. Documents frequently emphasized that Ratač was *partium Gente inferioris*. Between 1391 and 1407, six young men from Ratač served as apprentices in shoemaking, clippering, painting, and other crafts.

Young men typically apprenticed with their Ragusan masters for several years (Spremić, 1964, 206). The following apprenticeship contracts are recorded in the chancellery: Martin Murikijević (5 and 12 March 1392), Jurko Stojković (29 August 1394), Martin Dimitrović (29 December 1394), and others (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 31 (1391–1399), f. 7v, 116r, 138r). At the beginning of 1407, Goiša Ivanović *de Rotecio* was an apprentice in an unspecified craft at the Ragusan workshop of Nalješko Jurišić. In addition to apprenticeships with Ragusan artisans, there is information on the arrival of Ragusan artisans in Ratac. Experienced masters generally came to restore the monastery of St Mary. For instance, Vitko Bogšić, Radič Bratoradović with a servant, and Novak Pribisaljić repaired the Ratac church in the summer of 1415. They received the following payments: 8 grossi for Vitko, 1 perpera for Radič and his servant, and 6 grossi for Novak (Spremić, 1964).

APPRENTICES FROM SPIČ

Ragusan documents noted a significantly higher number of young men from the Ratac village of Spič (*districtus Antibari*). Twenty-one contracts were recorded between 1329 and 1449. As in Ratac, the greatest interest was in shoemaking, followed by blacksmithing, goldsmithing, stonemasonry, and other crafts (Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 87).

From the 1370s, there have been mentions of young men from Spič in Ragusan archival documents. In the first half of August 1376, Jurko Stjepojević from Spič became a goldsmithing apprentice in Ragusa (DAD, Div. Not., sv. 9 (1370–1379), f. 160r). Notably, goldsmithing was one of the oldest trades in Ragusa. Among other things, goldsmiths created jewellery, tableware, silverware, and minted money (Roller, 1951, 113). In November 1376, Maroje Nikolić from Spič began his apprenticeship in stonemasonry (DAD, Div. Not., sv. 9 (1370–1379), f. 169r). In a contract dated 20 June 1378, Ivan Bradić from Spič committed to learning blacksmithing (DAD, Div. Not., sv. 9 (1370–1379), f. 201r). In Ragusa, blacksmiths produced all the ironwork for houses and ships, and manufactured knives, swords, armour, locks and keys (Roller, 1951, 93). Brothers Đorđe and Radun Milinović from Spič were registered in the notary as stonemasons on 6 August 1378, and are mentioned in connection with the division of their parents' property (Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 87). Stonemasons produced stone building materials and made ornaments, decorations for fountains, house façades, staircases, churches, and more (Roller, 1951, 120–121). On 14 April 1404, Radoslav Jonzević became a blacksmith's apprentice in the workshop of Radič Grupšić. In the contract, he agreed to a five-year apprenticeship, at the end of which he would receive a suit, tools, and a monetary reward (DAD, Div. Not., sv. 11 (1402–1408), f. 75v). By way of comparison, in the late Middle Ages, young men who learned blacksmithing in Genoa received a similar reward at the end of their service, although the training period for a

blacksmith lasted ten years (Epstein, 2009, 116). In the first half of November 1379, Jurko Miloslavić began a seven-year apprenticeship as a shoemaker. During this period, he lived with his master and learned the trade, paying for his education and sustenance with his daily work. After seven years of service, the young man was to receive tools and a shoemaker's diploma (DAD, Div. Not., sv. 9 (1370–1379), f. 219v). Another blacksmith from Spič was Krajislav, who died in Ragusa during the plague of 1391 (Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 87).

The young men from Spič registered as artisans and servants in the notary and chancellery were: Nikola Ratmanović (4 March 1370), Pavle Džinov (23 July 1372), Gojša Budojević (7 November 1376), Radič Stojković (28 July 1377 and 6 August 1377), Dimitar Prelojević (10 October 1378) and Andrija Radoslavljev Paliparo (10 April 1416) (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 22 (1369–1370), f. 36r; sv. 23, f. 120v; DAD, Div. Not., sv. 9 (1370–1379), f. 168r, 183r, 204r; DAD, Div. Not., sv. 12 (1413–1419), f. 134v).

APPRENTICES FROM PILOT

The medieval district of Pilot was located in the area between Lake Skadar and Mount Koritnik, encompassing the basin of the Drim River (Škrivanić, 1957, 323–332). Documents reference several young men from this area in Ragusa. Besides apprenticeships, young men went there to acquire an education for commercial activities. In the second half of October 1367, Magister Johannes, a grammar teacher, confirmed that he had promised the presbyter *Andrea de Sancto Paulo de Polato* to teach his nephew Nikola to read and write in the 'merchant's way'. He would also teach him how to interpret *Donatum et Catonem*. As a reward, Magister Johannes would receive 20 perperas (Thallóczy, Jireček & de Sufflay, 1918, 53). As a merchant-to-be, Nikola was to learn grammar, rhetoric, writing, arithmetic, and good governance, which would shape his trading skills. The profession of trade favoured agile, resourceful and literate individuals capable of making calculations and keeping business books by themselves. The famous Ragusan merchant, diplomat and economist Benedikt Kotruljević provides information about this in his famous work *Libro del arte dela mercatura* from 1458. In it, Kotruljević underlines that a successful merchant should be educated, familiar with Arabic numerals, double-entry bookkeeping, insurance and promissory notes, capable of drafting documents, corresponding with merchants, and managing trading companies, as well as speaking foreign languages and being knowledgeable about various countries and customs, etc. (Kotrulj, 2009, 89). Another noteworthy example is dated to 13 February 1382, when Đurađ, son of Duka from Donji Pilot, entered into a three-year contract with the presbyter Aleksa from Drisht, who was to induct him into priestly service (Thallóczy, Jireček & de Sufflay, 1918, 90). At the end of June 1404, Tomo, son of the late Pavle Demenković from Pilot, began his apprenticeship in the goldsmith's craft in Ragusa (DAD, Div. Not., sv. 11 (1402–1408), f. 81r).

APPRENTICES FROM ULCINJ

From the late 1350s, natives of Ulcinj appeared as artisans in Ragusa. Records indicate that several goldsmiths from Ulcinj worked in the city. Master goldsmith Bernard from Ulcinj was active there in the 1380s (Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 90). The notarial debentures of the 1390s also mention the credit activity of Brajko Milošević, a goldsmith from Ulcinj, in four entries (Premović, 2019, 205). Milča Stanija from Ulcinj owned a goldsmithing workshop in Ragusa in the early fifteenth century. In early January 1407, Nikša Bogojev was learning the goldsmith's trade under Milča, who was only required to provide him sustenance (DAD, Div. Not., sv. 11 (1402–1408), f. 189r).

In the early fifteenth century, Marinče Bratosalić, a tailor from Ulcinj, worked in Ragusa, and later became its citizen. In August 1400, he married Juliana, daughter of Kabel from Barleta, receiving a dowry of 50 perperas along with 20 perperas in bedding and household goods (Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 90). Archival records mention Nikša Milmanović, a weaponsmith from Ulcinj, who became a Ragusan citizen on 4 May 1383. It is unknown what happened to Nikša before that year. Perhaps, having learned the craft in Ragusa, he continued working there, or he may have moved to Ragusa as a trained craftsman, after which he was granted citizenship (Thallóczy, Jireček & de Sufflay, 1918, 176).

People from Ulcinj learned crafts for the manufacturing, processing, and treatment of leather in Ragusa. Leather was mostly used for footwear, including boots, slippers, sandals, and other items (Lučić, 1979, 91). In the second half of October 1387, tanner Vincenzo hired Bogdan, son of Dimitrije from Ulcinj, who would apprentice as a furrier for five years. During this time, Vincenzo would sustain and teach Bogdan, and would provide him with tools of the trade and a diploma at the end of his service (DAD, Div. Not., sv. 10 (1387–1391), f. 1r). In the notarial debentures, cooper Gojak Odrančić (3 June 1419) and blacksmith Marin Petrov Bistar (19 January 1420) are mentioned as artisans from Ulcinj (DAD, Deb. Not., sv. 13 (1417–1422), f. 133r, 160v).

Wood was one of the main commodities exported from Ulcinj to Ragusa, so people from Ulcinj were often hired as woodcutters. In the first half of October 1387, Bogić and Radoš were hired by Laurence in Ulcinj, on a site by a river (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 30 (1392–1394), f. 66r). Ragusan artisans rarely came to Ulcinj. At the invitation of Đurađ II Stracimirović Balšić in 1397, stonemasons from Ragusa visited Ulcinj to work on the city walls (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 32 (1396–1399), f. 23v).

APPRENTICES FROM SHKODËR

Documents mention artisans from Shkodër where the Balšićs and the Venetian Republic alternated in power during the observed period. The shoemaker Nikola, son of Vitan from Shkodër, was granted Ragusan citizenship in 1350.

At that time, Ragusan authorities sought to attract as many artisans as possible to revive the economy, which had been hamstrung by the great plague of 1348 (Thallóczy, Jireček & de Sufflay, 1918, 23). Records note a young man named Petar from Shkodër who came to learn the shoemaking craft in the autumn of 1350 (Thallóczy, Jireček & de Sufflay, 1918, 20, 24; Malaj, 2020, 26–27). Another shoemaker from Shkodër, named Utješin, was mentioned in a will from 1384, which stated that he often stayed in Shkodër (Malaj, 2020, 27). The people of Ragusa often visited and sometimes resided in Shirgj (St Sergius, Sveti Srdj), a market town for the salt trade situated around 10 kilometres downstream from Shkodër on the right side of the Bojana River, where a famous Benedictine abbey was located. Understandably, young men from this town also sometimes came to Ragusa to learn a trade or acquire some other knowledge or skills. In November 1391, Nikola Lazarević from Shirgj swore to his father Lazar that he would stay with Medoj Gradojević in Ragusa for seven years to learn the shoemaking trade (Thallóczy, Jireček & de Sufflay, 1918, 105; Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 91–92). In July 1398, Radoslav Kotković from the vicinity of Shkodër concluded a contract with the shoemaker Živko Lazarević, committing himself to study the shoemaking craft for eight years under the usual conditions (Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 91).

In the 1380s and 1390s, Ragusan documents mention *Albertin Chamurata de Padua* as the city doctor. In early January 1389, Çari from Shkodër sent his son Laçarum to Albertin, who agreed to provide him with clothing and sustenance in exchange for his service (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 27 (1387–1389), f. 186r). In 1389 and 1391, the silversmith Đorđe, son of Pavle from Shirgj near Shkodër, was referenced. He was married to Dobruša Juroe Ybroycich, a woman from Ragusa (Drançolli, 1987, 128; Malaj, 2020, 23–24). However, the available material contains no information about his activities.

Records also mention blacksmiths from Shkodër, who were skilled artisans engaged in manufacturing a wide range of items, from agricultural tools to weapons (Lučić, 1979, 52–54). In the 1380s, the blacksmith Stojan, son of Stanko from Shkodër, worked in Ragusa (Malaj, 2020, 18). Nikola Stefanov, another blacksmith from Shkodër, was employed by the Ragusan commune. In late February 1385, the Small Council decreed that if Nikola relocated his family to the city and stayed permanently, he would receive an annual allowance of ten perperas to cover housing costs. Soon after, on 18 April 1385, Nikola arrived in Ragusa with his family (Dinić, 1964, 158). However, on 12 March the following year, for unspecified reasons, it was decided that this allowance would no longer be paid to *Nicola Stephani de Scutaro* after the agreed term ended (Dinić, 1964, 158). It was likely that the Ragusan commune no longer had a need for his services. Nevertheless, Nikola remained in the city. On 27 March 1386, he acted as a guarantor in an apprenticeship contract (Malaj, 2020, 18). Nikola established a solid reputation as a blacksmith, evidenced by Vlatko Bonisović's arrival in Ragusa in January 1387 to apprentice under him. Vlatko

committed himself to learning the blacksmith's trade for eight years (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 26 (1385–1387), f. 149v). On 6 February 1387, Nikola's services as a blacksmith were noted in the chancellery documents (DAD, Div. Canc. sv. 26 (1385–1387), f. 157r; Thallóczy, Jireček & de Sufflay, 1918, 95).

In March 1386, Lazar Rausa agreed to serve under the Ragusan notary Ivan of Ravenna for ten years in exchange for food and clothing. This arrangement was necessary as Ivan was engaged in trade and other business affairs (Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 91). Nikola, son of the late Nikola (a judge from Skadar), began his six-year apprenticeship to become a merchant in Ragusa on 28 April 1406. The contract he signed with the Ragusan merchant Nikša Petrović reveals that Nikša was to provide him with accommodation, food, and clothes, and to teach him to read and write. These skills were essential for engaging in trade. Additionally, Nikša was obligated to give him a portion of the goods from his shop (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 36 (1405–1408), f. 48v; Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 91). In the 1420s, the cooper Mihajlo Progonović from Shkodër was mentioned in Ragusa (Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 91).

APPRENTICES FROM ZETA

For most of the young men from Zeta who came for apprenticeship, their place of origin is stated in the Ragusan archival material. However, some contracts only note that they are *de Genta* or *de Gente* (from Zeta). Between 1374 and 1401, nine such contracts were recorded. Of these, four young men were shoemaker apprentices, three were tanner apprentices, and one each was an apprentice for goldsmithing and blacksmithing. They were all of a notably young age. However, only the age of Vrajko, the son of Dobrospav Prodanović from Upper Zeta, who lived in Ragusa, was explicitly stated: he was around twelve years old. Records refer to Ivan Musković, a cooper from Zeta, who on 26 October 1366, together with Peter Milosavić, a cooper from Bar, committed himself to the procurators of the Church of St Mary to prepare a large quantity of timber by Christmas. In 1401, Antonije, a tanner from Zeta, is mentioned as a resident of Ragusa (Dinić-Knežević, 1995, 80). There was considerable work for stonemasons in Ragusa. Two contracts of the stonemason Ptik, brother of the late Todor from Zeta, were recorded in the chancellery in 1381 and 1382, both pertaining to construction work in Ragusa (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 25 (1381–1383), f. 33v, 44v). On 1 July 1392, Jurek Stjepanović from Zetska Krajina began his apprenticeship as a tanner (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 31 (1391–1399), f. 22r). On 5 April 1378, a young man named Andrija Milovčić was registered in the notary as a goldsmith's apprentice in Ragusa, with a six-year term for mastering the craft (DAD, Div. Not., sv. 9 (1370–1379), f. 197v).

The available archival material contains numerous names of residents of Zeta who apprenticed in various crafts and served in Ragusa: Brajko Grubanović (7 April 1392), Jon, son of the late Nikola (18 September 1393), Vrajko, son of

Dobroslav Prodanović (17 October 1394), Radosav, son of the late Nikola (17 January 1396), Stipan Ilić (21 October 1401), Andrija Dragaljević (20 August 1404) and Radonja Cvetković (26 September 1404) (DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 31 (1391–1399), f. 10r, 123v, 183v; DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 30 (1392–1394), f. 61r; DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 34 (1401–1403), f. 30v; DAD, Div. Canc., sv. 35 (1403–1405), f. 90v; Div. Not., sv. 11 (1402–1408), f. 131v).

AGES OF ARTISANS AND THEIR OBLIGATIONS

Age was a relative concept in the political culture of medieval Europe; for example, in England, an heir as young as 12 to 14 was deemed capable of ruling (McDonald & Ormrod, 2004, 53–56). For German nobles in the twelfth century, the typical age of adulthood was 12 (Lyon, 2008, 299). In Venice, the transition to adulthood was formally regulated by an act from 1414, which separated young men from the youth society at age 18 (Chojnacki, 1986, 801, 804). In Ragusa, men were considered adults at the age of 14, when they could already take some responsibilities. For instance, they began scribal service as adult men at the age of 14 (Janeković-Romer, 1994, 48–49). According to the Statute of Šibenik, males were considered minors until the age of 16, whereas the Statute of Pag regarded males under 15 as minors (Andrić, 2011, 131, n. 19). In the commune of Rijeka, in the first half of the fifteenth century, men reached adulthood between the ages of 14 and 16 (Kosanović, 2014, 52). Research shows that the norm for boys' adulthood on the eastern coast of the Adriatic was set at 14 years of age, but they were not granted full rights at this time (Ladić, 2011, 74).

Children are seldom mentioned in Ragusan archival material, and when they are, it is typically in the wills of their parents, which do not always state their names. As mentioned above, young men from Zeta left their homes during childhood to come to Ragusa, where they worked under artisans in exchange for food and shelter or found employment as servants. Unable to support them, their parents were forced to send them away. These were the offspring of impoverished families, who could only experience the feeling of parental love in their earliest years (Janeković-Römer, 1994, 111–112). The boys who began apprenticeships spent their childhood and early youth in the master's household, effectively being raised by him (Danilović, 1961, 724–734). In Western Europe, parents sometimes had to pay a master to take on an apprentice and teach him a craft (Epstein, 2009, 119). In Western European cities, the number of apprentices a master could accept was usually limited to two, or at most three (Pounds, 1994, 299).

Young men were expected to learn to work independently, while their master was responsible for equipping them with the essential tools needed to start their own business. The exact age of apprentices was not always specified in notary and chancellery contracts, and there was no set age requirement linked to

specific professions for beginning a trade. For example, Marin from Bar started his goldsmithing apprenticeship at age 12, while Miho, also from Bar, was 10 years old when he began learning tailoring. The most common age stated in the documents ranges between 10 and 14, suggesting that this was the typical age for boys to begin apprenticeships. By comparison, in Western European communes, the age for starting an apprenticeship typically ranged from 7 to 10, as well as from 10 to 14, encompassing the period from early childhood until boys reached adulthood (Ladić, 2011, 78).

The duration of a boy's apprenticeship was specified in the contract, typically lasting between five and eight years, although some crafts could be learned in a shorter period of time. Apprenticeship in goldsmithing usually lasted seven years, in blacksmithing five to eight years, in shoemaking seven to eight years, and in tanning five years. Conversely, apprenticeships in Western Europe were generally longer; for instance, in Paris, a young man would learn goldsmithing for ten years (Epstein, 2009, 116). In this case it probably took so long, because goldsmithing likely takes longer to learn than tanning.

Artisans undoubtedly had an interest in keeping apprentices for as long as possible, as apprentices received no salary during that time; however, many apprentices could fully master the craft within just four years. These young men had significant responsibilities in both the workshop and the master's household. Their working hours were unlimited, extending from morning until night, including Sundays and religious holidays. Many sought additional employment elsewhere, since they could keep the earnings for themselves. However, to compensate for this time away, they were required to work for the master at night (Lučić, 1979, 224–226).

In some Western cities, there are instances of paternal relationships between master and apprentice, and even examples of apprentices marrying their master's daughter, thus forging a lifelong bond between them (Epstein, 2009, 116). There is no data on whether this was the case for the young men from Zeta mentioned here, except for the previously noted Đorđe the silversmith, son of Pavle from Shirgj near Skadar, who was married to Dobruša Juroe Ybroycich from Ragusa (Drançolli, 1987, 128; Malaj, 2020, 23–24).

STAYING IN RAGUSA OR RETURNING HOME?

The question remains as to what happened with the young men after completing the agreed term. Did they return to their places of origin, or did they remain in Ragusa? If they stayed, did they continue serving the same master, look for work with someone else, or start a business on their own? Their subsequent careers are generally difficult to trace. Upon the end of the apprenticeship, the master would give the young man the necessary tools and grant him his freedom. As accomplished artisans, young men became independent and could earn a decent living from their work, and potentially even reach the rank of a prosperous

guild master. For this reason, we believe that the majority permanently settled in Ragusa, given that they could expect little from their hometowns, from which extreme poverty had driven them to leave and look for work elsewhere. This is supported by archival documents regarding artisans from Zeta who migrated to Ragusa, which they always found attractive due to its greater prospects for craftsmanship. Ragusa offered opportunities to join with other artisans, establish independent workshops, or engage in trade.

CONCLUSION

The archival series Miscellaneous Chancellery Records (*Diversa Cancellariae*) and Miscellaneous Notary Records (*Diversa Notariae*), housed in the State Archives in Dubrovnik, were used to collect numerous scattered pieces of information about the microhistory of boys and young men from Budva, Bar, Ratac, Spič, Pilot, Ulcinj, Skadar, and the Zeta region. These individuals came to Ragusa with the intention of becoming apprentices and securing their livelihoods by serving their employers. This paper examined boys and young men, primarily from the lower strata of society, who were on the brink of existence and struggled to survive upon their arrival in Ragusa. On the other hand, this new workforce was necessary for the maintenance and progress of the Ragusan economy, particularly in the aftermath of outbreaks of major epidemics.

As apprentices from Zeta were predominantly minors, contracts with their employers were signed by their parents or close relatives. These documents stated the names of the apprentice and the master, the duration of the apprenticeship, and the apprentice's pledge to serve faithfully and lawfully, and obey the master's orders. After entering service, the apprentice would spend all his time with his master, and his main responsibility was to learn the craft and develop a strong work ethic. Upon completion of his service, the apprentice would generally be provided with tools of the trade, although in some cases, he received clothing and a monetary award. Young men specialized in specific trades, reflecting the progressive trends of the Ragusan economy at the time. The most sought-after crafts included shoemaking, goldsmithing, blacksmithing, tailoring, leatherworking, carpentry, stonemasonry, masonry, cooperage and weaponsmithing. Some young men were sent to Ragusa to study trade and medicine, among other fields. In addition to apprenticeships, many also came to Ragusa to work as servants. Servants received necessary provisions such as food, clothing, shoes, and accommodation. At the end of their service, they typically received a nominal monetary compensation.

The age an apprentice needed to reach in order to start learning a craft is not tied to any specific profession. The most frequently noted age in the documents is between 10 and 14. The apprenticeships commonly lasted between five and eight years, although some individuals managed to learn the craft within a

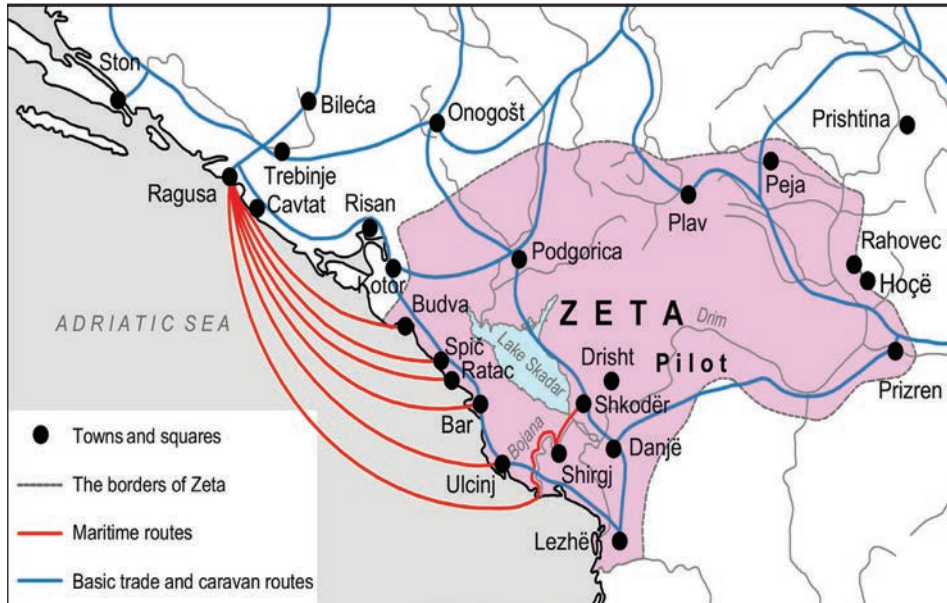


Fig. 1: Zeta in the Balšić period – places of origin of apprentices.

shorter period of time (four years). However, artisans had an interest in keeping apprentices for as long as possible, as they did not receive any salary during that time. Many boys and young men who completed their apprenticeships chose to remain in Ragusa due to better living conditions and greater opportunities for advancement. Their arrival revitalised the city's population while simultaneously decreasing the number of inhabitants in their native region, which was unable to sustain all its residents.

VAJENCI IZ ZETSKEGA PRIMORJA V POZNOSREDNJEVEŠKEM DUBROVNIKU

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POVZETEK

V Državnem arhivu v Dubrovniku smo iz arhivskih zbirk Diversa Cancellariae in Diversa Notariae zbrali številne razpršene manjše ali večje podatke o mikrozgodbini mladeničev iz Budve, Bara, Rata, Spića, Pilota, Ulcinja, Skadra in »območja« Zete, ki so prišli v Dubrovnik z namenom, da bi se naučili obrti, služili svojim delodajalcem in si tako zagotovili lasten obstoj. Poudarek tega prispevka je na fantih in mladeničih, ki so večinoma prihajali iz nižjih družbenih slojev in bili na robu preživetja, zato so se ob prihodu v mesto sv. Blaža borili za preživetje. Vajenci so bili najpogosteje nedoletni, zato so pogodbo z delodajalcem sklenili starši ali najbližji sorodniki. V dokumentih je navedeno ime vajenca za obrtništvo, oseba, s katero se bo učil in delal, čas, v katerem bo delal, in obljuba, da bo zvesto in zakonito služil ter spoštoval ukaze tistega, s katerim bo delal. Ob koncu službe je vajenec najpogosteje dobil orodje za opravljanje določene obrtne dejavnosti, čeprav obstajajo primeri, ko so mu bila dodeljena oblačila in denar. Mladeniči so se specializirali za določene obrti in sledili naprednemu trendu dubrovniškega gospodarstva v tistem času. Največ zanimanja je bilo za čevljarstvo, zlatarstvo, kovaštvo, krojaštvo, usnjarstvo, mizarstvo, kamnoseštvo, zidarstvo, sodarstvo in orožarstvo, v Dubrovnik pa so mladeniče pošiljali tudi zato, da bi se priučili trgovini, zdravstvu itd. Poleg tega, da so se učili obrti, so mladeniči prišli v Dubrovnik, da bi delali kot služabniki. Služabnikom so bili zagotovljeni ustrezna hrana, oblačila, čevlji in nastanitev. Ob koncu službe so običajno prejeli simbolično denarno nadomestilo. Starosti, ki bi jo moral vajenec doseči, da bi se začel učiti obrti, ni mogoče povezati z določenim poklicem, najpogostejša starost v dokumentih je od 10 do 14 let. Čas učenja obrti je običajno trajal od 5 do 8 let, čeprav se je vajenec obrti lahko naučil tudi v krajšem času. Zaradi boljših življenjskih pogojev in možnosti za napredovanje so številni mladi moški, ki so končali poklicno izobraževanje, ostali v Dubrovniku in postali dubrovniški državljani.

Ključne besede: vajenci, obrtniki, Zeta, Dubrovnik, pozni srednji vek

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