

# The World in a Village: Foreigners and Newcomers on Late Medieval Korčula<sup>1</sup>

Fabian Kümmeler

## I. Introduction

In early January 1461, a grip<sup>2</sup> from the Venetian town of Lepanto (Naúpaktos) had a brief stopover at the small harbor below the village of Smokvica, before it set sail again for the port of Korčula. At the same time, near the village's harbor, Matheus, son of Marinus of Smokviza, was pasturing a flock owned by the influential patrician Ser Matheus de Obradis.<sup>3</sup> A couple of days later, the herder accused the grip's patron of carrying away eight of his young goats without his consent. Although he managed to catch the patron and his seamen carrying away three goats, the herder complained that the patron urged him to accept a sum of 26 *Soldi Parvorum* as compensation instead of returning any of the eight unlawfully abducted animals.<sup>4</sup>

Taking this incident at the village harbor of Smokvica as our point of departure, the peculiarities of Korčula's political history and socio-economic dynamics until 1420 can be considered well known thanks to Vinko Foretić's and Serdo Dokoza's essential studies.<sup>5</sup> By contrast, the history of late medieval Korčula following the island's submission to Venice in 1420 has for a long time only been analyzed within the framework of smaller studies focusing mainly on the struggles between patricians and commoners.<sup>6</sup> Most recently, a comprehensive

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<sup>2</sup> The term grip (*grefaria*) denoted a "small [...] merchant [...] sailing ship, with oars and one mast", cf. Josip Luetić, "Grip – Najdjelotvorniji operativni tip broda pučkih ustanika matija Ivanića," *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest* 10,1 (1977): 178.

<sup>3</sup> On animal husbandry and herdsmen in late medieval Dalmatia, see Fabian Kümmeler, "Herdsmen as a Socio-Professional Community in Late Medieval Dalmatia," in *Comunità e società nel Commonwealth veneziano*, ed. Gherardo Ortalli, Oliver Jens Schmitt et alii (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, forthcoming).

<sup>4</sup> HR-DAZD-11: Državni Arhiv u Zadru, Općina Korčula (*Commune insulae et civitatis Curzolae*), box 16, fascicle 30.6 (hereafter HR-DAZD-11: 16/30.6), fol. 4 v.–5 v.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Vinko Foretić, *Otok Korčula u srednjem vijeku do godine 1420*. (Zagreb: Tisak Narodne Tiskare, 1940); Serdo Dokoza, *Dinamika otočnog prostora. Društvena i gospodarska povijest Korčule u razvijenom srednjem vijeku* (Split: Književni Krug, 2009).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Oliver Jens Schmitt, "Altre Venezie' nella Dalmazia tardo-medievale? Un approccio microstorico alle comunità socio-politiche sull'isola di Curzola/Korčula," in *Il Commonwealth veneziano tra 1204 e la fine della Repubblica. Identità e peculiarità*, ed. Gherardo Ortalli, Oliver Jens Schmitt and Ermanno Orlando (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 2015), 203–233; Oliver Jens Schmitt, "Storie d'amore, storie di potere. La tormentata integrazione dell'isola di Curzola nello Stato da mar in una prospettiva microstorica," in *Venezia e Dalmazia*, ed. Uwe Israel and Oliver Jens Schmitt (Rome: Viella, 2013), 89–109; Oliver Jens Schmitt, *Korčula sous la domination de Venise au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle. Pouvoir, économie et vie quotidienne dans une île dalmate au Moyen Âge tardif* (Paris: Collège de France, 2011), accessed January 13, 2018, DOI:10.4000/books.cdf.1501;

study on Korčula's rural communities between 1420 and 1499 complemented fresh insights into socio-cultural, judicial, administrative and economic practices of rural dwellers – villagers, peasants, winegrowers, and herders – in relation to both urban dwellers and Venetian governance.<sup>7</sup>

In the light of growing academic interest in the complex interplay between urban communities and newcomers in the Middle Ages,<sup>8</sup> this contribution explores the multifarious aspects of conflict and coexistence between locals, foreigners and newcomers in social and judicial practice on late medieval Korčula. Partially adopting a microhistorical perspective, this paper not only examines Korčula's communal statutes – a legal code first codified in the 13<sup>th</sup> century that, by the 15<sup>th</sup>, served as a prime guideline for organizing public and private life as well as individual legal claims –, but also delves into administrative and juridical records compiled under Venetian suzerainty in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and presently kept in the Croatian State Archive in Zadar.<sup>9</sup>

## II. Anything but Isolated: Transiting through Korčula

From both an Adriatic and a broader Southeast European perspective, Korčula was well connected within both the region's trade network and sphere of communication, within and beyond the Venetian realm.<sup>10</sup> Due to the agrarian character of the island's economy, Korčula maintained close regional trade relations with both shores of the Adriatic; to the East

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Ambroz Kapor, "Pučko predstavništvo grada i otoka Korčule. Universitas populi civitatis et insulae Curzulae," *Forum* 1–3 (1983): 434–470; Vinko Foretić, "Borbe između pučana i plemića na Korčuli u 15. i 16. stoljeću," *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest* 10,1 (1977): 249–274.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Fabian Kümmeler, "Ländliche Gemeinschaften im venezianischen Dalmatien im Spätmittelalter – Lebenswelten und Gemeinschaftsvorstellungen auf Korčula im Vergleich (1420-1499)" (PhD diss., University of Vienna, 2017). Publication as a monograph is currently in preparation for 2019.

<sup>8</sup> For a comprehensive overview of the scholarly research that has hitherto predominantly focused on the ambiguous legal situation of foreigners, see most recently Ante Birin, "The Foreigner and Ownership Rights in Eastern Adriatic Medieval Communes," in *Towns and Cities of the Croatian Middle Ages. Authority and Property*, ed. Irena Benyovsky Latin and Zrinka Pešorda Vardić, (Zagreb: Hrvatski institute za povijest, 2014), 455–460. For a generally indispensable account to this day, see also Tomislav Raukar, "Cives, habitatores, forenses u srednjovjekovnim dalmatinskim gradovima," *Historijski zbornik* 29–30 (1976–77): 139–149.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *Statuta et leges civitatis et insulae Curzulae (1214-1558)*, ed. Jaromir J. Hanel (Zagreb: Academia Scientiarum et Artium Slavorum Meridionalium 1877) (translation: *Korčulanski statut. Statut grada i otoka Korčule iz 1214. godine*, ed. and trans. Antun Cvitanić (Zagreb: Jugoslavenska Akademija Znanosti i Umjetnosti, 1987); Antun Cvitanić, "Korčulansko statutarno pravo," in *Iz dalmatinske pravne povijesti*, ed. Antun Cvitanić (Split: Književni Krug, 2002), 575–620; Ermanno Orlando, "Politica del diritto, amministrazione, giustizia. Venezia e la Dalmazia nel basso medioevo," in *Venezia e Dalmazia*, ed. Uwe Israel and Oliver Jens Schmitt (Rome: Viella, 2013), 9–61 (particularly 19–23); Gherardo Ortalli, "Il ruolo degli statuti tra autonomie e dipendenze. Curzola e il dominio veneziano," *Rivista storica italiana* 98 (1986): 195–220; *Zbornik radova Znanstvenog skupa Statut grada i otoka Korčule iz 1214. godine održanog 28. i 29. travnja 1988. u Korčuli, Blatu i Veloj Luci*, ed. Zvonimir Šeparović (Zagreb: Jugoslavenska Akademija Znanosti i Umjetnosti, 1989).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Oliver Jens Schmitt, "Das venezianische Südosteuropa als Kommunikationsraum (ca. 1400–ca. 1600)," in *Balceni occidentali, Adriatico e Venezia fra XIII e XVIII secolo / Der westliche Balkan, der Adriaarum und Venedig (13.–18. Jahrhundert)*, ed. Gherardo Ortalli and Oliver Jens Schmitt (Venice–Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009), 77–101.

mainly with Ragusa, Albania, the Neretva Delta and the Kvarner Gulf, to the West mainly with Southern and Central Italy, especially with Apulia, the Marches and the Kingdom of Naples. At the same time, due to its geostrategic position as a maritime gateway to the Adriatic Sea, the port of Korčula served not only as a peripheral local trade hub, but also attracted foreign merchants transiting along the Dalmatian coast on their way to Venice, the Levant, the Black Sea and the Iberian Peninsula.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, following its re-integration into the Venetian commercial sphere, Korčula's sailors – both patricians and commoners – were also to be found sailing to Corfu, Morea, Crete and Cyprus, and further into the Levant and up to Alexandria. In order to safeguard and defend the waters around Korčula, the islanders also maintained a communal galley that gloriously fought for the defense of Venetian Albania in 1470.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, many pilgrim galleys on their way to or from the Holy Land had a stopover in the port of Korčula to stock up on supplies; probably one of the best known of these pilgrims today was Konrad Grünemberg, whose diary contains a magnificent depiction of the town and port of Korčula from June 16, 1486.<sup>13</sup>

Located at the crossroads of two flourishing routes of maritime trade in the Adriatic, the urban port of Korčula nevertheless served as the island's main economic center during the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, just like in preceding centuries, many foreign ships constantly poured into the port, whose crews and passengers “also transformed the ethno-cultural structures of Korčula”.<sup>14</sup> Among these maritime transit passengers one can identify sailors, pilgrims and merchants coming from important ports of trade such as Venice, Ragusa and Genoa, and many other port towns on both shores of the Adriatic (particularly from Dalmatia, Albania, Apulia and the Marches) as well as from the wider Mediterranean (Sardinia, Sicily, and the Iberian peninsula). Moreover, the increasing number of people and ships coming from the Greek realm and other parts of the Venetian *Stato da Mar* during the 15<sup>th</sup> century (for instance

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. Dokoza, *Dinamika otočnog prostora*, 127–144; Schmitt, *Korčula sous la domination de Venise*, p. II 3, p. III 3–45.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Schmitt, *Korčula sous la domination de Venise*, p. III 13–15; Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 83; Dokoza, *Dinamika otočnog prostora*, 149–151, 156; Frederic Chapin Lane, *Venetian Ships and Shipbuilders of the Renaissance* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 26 ff.; Eliyahu Ashtor, *Levant Trade in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 141, 160.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Sante Graciotti, *La Dalmazia e l'Adriatico dei pellegrini «veneziani» in Terrasanta (secoli XIV-XVI). Studio e testi* (Venice: La Musa Talia Editrice, 2014), 141 ff., 397–410, and figure 33 (inserted on a page without page number, between pp. 640–641); Andrea Denke, *Konrad Grünembergs Pilgerreise ins Heilige Land 1486. Untersuchung, Edition und Kommentar* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2011), 240, 326 f., 511 ff.; Krešimir Kužić, *Hrvatska obala u putopisima njemačkih hodočasnika XIV.-XVII. st. Opora – vinorodna – kršćanska* (Split: Književni Krug, 2013), 138 ff., 362 ff.

<sup>14</sup> Schmitt, *Korčula sous la domination de Venise*, p. III 20: “transformèrent aussi les structures ethno-culturelles de Korčula”.

from Crete, Morea, Lepanto and Corfu) also reflected Korčula's rapid integration into the economic network of the *Commonwealth veneziano*.<sup>15</sup>

The frequent presence of foreign merchants, sailors and pilgrims from the Mediterranean world further lead to a continuous flow of news and rumors on the latest political, economic or social developments, and ship and troop movements, thus turning Korčula into a relay station for information from the Adriatic realm, the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean. Venetian governors generally reported relevant news to Venice as part of their usual correspondence. Between 1448 and 1449, for instance, governor Francesco Lombardo gave an account of local struggles between Korčula's patricians and commoners as well as smuggling from both Ragusa and Apulia, but on the other hand also reported on Šibenik, where social unrest reigned, on Albania, where Skanderbeg's League of Lezhë successfully repelled the Ottomans, and on Bosnia, where the Ottomans had just raided the fortress of Duvno. In the wake of the war between Naples and Venice, Lombardo also reported on secret Aragonese plans to arm a dozen galleys in Naples and on Đurađ Branković's attacks on Zeta and Bar as an ally of Aragon. Furthermore, he informed Venice about Ragusan crisis diplomacy and about potential problems providing sufficient ammunition to defend Korčula, if necessary, against Catalan ships that were already threateningly cruising below Mljet. However, the horizon of news flooding into Korčula extended much wider, as Lombardo also reported an outbreak of the plague in Cairo and Alexandria.<sup>16</sup>

Against the background of people vividly transiting through the island's port, it is hardly surprising that Korčula's statutes contained distinct regulations on the legal situation of both foreigners and newcomers.<sup>17</sup> By the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Korčula's statutes legally contrasted native islanders and permanent residents ("*alicuius Curçulensis, seu habitatoris insule*"; the former being born on Korčula, the latter originating from beyond the island) with "foreigners residing outside the island", either just in transit or staying for a rather short period of time

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. Schmitt, *Korčula sous la domination de Venise*, p. III 20–21; Dokoza, *Dinamika otočnog prostora*, 127–132, 156. For the concept of the *Commonwealth veneziano*, cf. Gherardo Ortalli, "The Genesis of a Unique Form of Statehood, between the Middle Ages and the Modern Age," in *Il Commonwealth veneziano tra 1204 e la fine della Repubblica. Identità e peculiarità*, ed. Gherardo Ortalli, Oliver Jens Schmitt and Ermanno Orlando (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 2015), 3–11.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. HR-DAZD-11: 12/19.1, fol. 3 r.–4 v., 8 r., 14 v., 15 v., 18 v., 19 v., 24 v.–25 v., 28 r.–29 v.; Kümmeler, "Ländliche Gemeinschaften," 113–115; Schmitt, *Korčula sous la domination de Venise*, p. III 22–23.

<sup>17</sup> On the legal situation of foreigners on medieval Korčula, cf. Antun Cvitanić, "Pravni položaj stranaca u srednjovjekovnoj korčulanskoj komuni," in *Iz dalmatinske pravne povijesti*, ed. Antun Cvitanić (Split: Književni Krug, 2013), 643–660 (originally published in *Zbornik Pravnog fakulteta u Zagrebu* 36, 5–6 (1986): 591–605); Gustav Wenzel, "Beiträge zur Quellenkunde der dalmatinischen Rechtsgeschichte im Mittelalter," *Archiv für Kunde österreichischer Geschichtsquellen (AÖG)* 4 (1850): 575–581.

(“*forenses habitantes extra insulam*”).<sup>18</sup> Apart from this, in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, members of Korčula’s neighboring communities (“*uicini nostri*”) on the islands of Hvar, Brač, and Vis and between Šibenik and Ragusa on the Dalmatian mainland had already been granted the statutory privilege of special legal treatment (“*de simili iusticia cum uicinis*”) as long as this would contradict neither other statutory regulations nor any bilateral agreements.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, Korčula’s Great Council unanimously decided (apparently in 1429) that “every citizen and resident of Venice was to be treated on Korčula as if he were a local native islander” and thus no longer considered a foreigner (“*omnes Veneti et Venetijs habitantes tractentur in Curzula pro Curzulense in omnibus, sicut Curzulani tractantur Venetijs*”).<sup>20</sup>

Based on the principle of reciprocity towards the local population, all other foreigners transiting through Korčula were mostly met with statutory regulations that guaranteed protection of both the foreigners’ property and their personal safety.<sup>21</sup> This reciprocity encompassed both basic notarial services provided by the communal chancellor, who had to charge equal fees for files (“*pro qualibet scriptura, quam facit forensibus, debeat tantum accipere a forensibus, quantum illi a nostratibus*”<sup>22</sup>), and judicial support provided by communal attorneys, who had to “*aduocare propria iura hominum tam insularum, quam forensium et defendere*” in court.<sup>23</sup> At the same time, trials involving both locals and foreigners (“*tam ciuium Curzulae, quam forensium*”) had to follow an abridged juridical procedure (*ius summarium*) – a legal procedure contemporarily adopted from Italian cities in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century in order to respond to the flexible needs caused by the short duration of stay of transiting foreigners.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 50, 127. Foreigners on medieval Korčula have been scarcely also referred to as *homo extraneus*, see *ibid.* 39; Cvitanić, "Pravni položaj stranaca," 648; Raukar, "Cives, habitatores, forenses," 141.

<sup>19</sup> Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 42: “*Item statuimus, quod talem rationem, qualem nostri uicini faciunt, talem eisdem facere teneamur, saluis semper statutis superius denotatis omnibus alijs gentibus. Et intellige, quod uicini nostri sint a Sibenico vsque ad Curčulam et a Curčula vsque Ragusium et per totam terram firmam; saluis semper pactis, factis inter nos et alios et illos de Fara, de Brača et Issa insula*”. Cf. *ibid.*, 23–24; Cvitanić, "Pravni položaj stranaca," 647–649, 655–656.

<sup>20</sup> Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 126. Cf. Oliver Jens Schmitt, "Addressing Community in Late Medieval Dalmatia," in *Meanings of Community across Medieval Eurasia. Comparative Approaches*, ed. Eirik Hovden, Christina Lutter and Walter Pohl (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 142–143; Cvitanić, "Pravni položaj stranaca," 656.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Ante Birin, "Pravni položaj stranaca u statutima dalmatinskih komuna," in *Zbornik – Odsjeka za povijesne znanosti Zavoda za povijesne i društvene znanosti Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* 20 (2003): 70–80; Birin, "The Foreigner and Ownership Rights," 460–468; Cvitanić, "Pravni položaj stranaca," 655–657.

<sup>22</sup> Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 56. Cf. *ibid.*, 8, 13, 15, 30, 43, 50–51, 53, 56, 99, 105, 111, 114, 122–123.

<sup>23</sup> Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 13. Cf. *ibid.*, 34; Dokoza, *Dinamika otočnog prostora*, 177; Cvitanić, "Pravni položaj stranaca," 655–657.

<sup>24</sup> Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 116. Adopting the summary procedure can thus be interpreted as a late medieval refinement of previous statutory regulations that demanded the immediate response of both locals and foreigners to trials involving “*uiatores, qui sunt in procinctu itineris forenses*” as early as the 13<sup>th</sup> century (Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 15, 35). Cf. Kümmeler, "Ländliche Gemeinschaften," 296–297; Cvitanić, "Pravni položaj stranaca," 656. On the summary procedure, see Sven Ufe Tjarks, *Das „venezianische“ Stadtrecht Paduas von 1420. Zugleich eine Untersuchung zum statuarischen Zivilprozess im 15. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2013), 264–279; Sarah Rubin Blanshei, *Politics and Justice in Late Medieval Bologna* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 408–498. On

Nevertheless, some statutory regulations also reflected a “spirit of distrust and cautiousness towards [...] foreigners”, underlining that foreigners were neither accepted as witness in court nor allowed to select any Korčulan – except for the island’s communal attorneys – to procure and advocate for them in trials.<sup>25</sup> By the 15<sup>th</sup> century, however, the former statutory regulation had already ceased to be in force, since foreigners often appeared as witnesses in Korčula’s judicial records. In early May 1463, for example, a trial listed, amongst others, foreigners from Vicenza and Toulouse as witnesses.<sup>26</sup> Besides ordinary crime likewise committed by both islanders and foreigners,<sup>27</sup> the main motivation for such general cautiousness towards foreigners was mostly rooted in economic, but also increasingly in political issues.

In order to protect the island’s economy against commercial losses and unlawful exploitation, foreigners had to observe certain commercial and business restrictions, in particular with regard to Korčula’s main economic branches – agriculture, animal husbandry and forestry. Hence, while Korčula profited economically from transiting foreign ships, the statutes not only prohibited foreigners from importing foreign wine to Korčula and exporting stone without a license, but also imposed restrictions on fishing and buying grain for personal consumption, whereas they were always welcome to import grain due to Korčula’s constant shortage of cereals.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, animal husbandry was a crucial branch of the economy on late medieval Korčula, interlinking the economic interests of both the island’s rural population and its patrician élites. Consequently, the statutes provided a comprehensive legal framework for the practice of animal husbandry, entirely banning foreigners from pasturing cattle on the island and fiercely sanctioning abduction and theft of animals.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, the extensive, yet mostly illegal cutting of cedars and pines constituted a perennial bone of

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mobility within the Venetian realm, see Ermanno Orlando, "Mobilità, migrazioni, intrecci," in *Il Commonwealth veneziano tra 1204 e la fine della Repubblica. Identità e peculiarità*, ed. Gherardo Ortalli, Oliver Jens Schmitt and Ermanno Orlando (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 2015), 405–429.

<sup>25</sup> Cvitanić, "Pravni položaj stranaca," 646–647: “*duh nepovjerenja i opreza prema [...] strancima*”. Cf. Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 13, 15, 34, 58, 165–166.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. HR-DAZD-11: 16/30.7, fol. 16 v.

<sup>27</sup> Criminal or illegal activities committed by transiting foreigners further encompassed illegal fishing and timber extraction, robbery, smuggling, raids, looting and piracy, cf. Schmitt, "Addressing Community," 141–143; Oliver Jens Schmitt, "'Contrabannum' – der adriatisch-balkanische Schmuggel im ausgehenden Mittelalter," *Südost-Forschungen* 67 (2008): 9–24; Schmitt, *Korčula sous la domination de Venise*, p. III 22; Cvitanić, "Pravni položaj stranaca," 650–652.

<sup>28</sup> Foreigners purchasing goods on Korčula were not exempt from taxation, while it was prohibited for them to be sold large amounts of cheese, to accept pledges and act as pawnbroker and to become the guardian and tutor of any person or property on Korčula; see Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 43, 51, 53, 61, 82, 90, 96, 101–104, 114, 116, 122–123, 176–177; Cvitanić, "Pravni položaj stranaca," 652–655; Birin, "Pravni položaj stranaca," 70–75; Birin, "The Foreigner and Ownership Rights," 465–466. On the import of grain, see also Dokoza, *Dinamika otočnog prostora*, 87–100; Kümmeler, "Ländliche Gemeinschaften," 105–107, 157, 162, 327–328; Schmitt, *Korčula sous la domination de Venise*, p. II 9–14.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Kümmeler, "Herdsman as a Socio-Professional Community," (*forthcoming*); Kümmeler, "Ländliche Gemeinschaften," 263–345; Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 24, 43, 92, 101.

contention between locals and foreigners, since growing demands for timber, charcoal and pitch triggered its importance both for local shipbuilders and carpenters and for export to Venice.<sup>30</sup>

In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, a set of statutory regulations repeatedly restricted the extraction, processing and export of timber to individuals licensed by the Great Council, determining that no foreigner had the right to extract and export timber unless he obtained a special license from the Great Council (“*vllus forensis non habitans Curzulam modo aliquo non valeat, nec possit incidere, nec exportare lignanima [...] de insula Curzulae absque expressa licentia generalis consilij Curzulae*”).<sup>31</sup> Despite severe penalties and confirmation by Doge Francesco Foscari (1448), the number of complaints and trials for illegal timber extraction and pitch production increased throughout the 15<sup>th</sup> century, characterizing the community’s regulatory attempts – in this regard – as weakened by rather futile law enforcement in everyday practice. Against this backdrop, a communal delegation lodged a complaint to count Simon Capello in April 1493, stating that both “newcomers and foreigners extract cedar and export it from the island, which is [not only] specifically prohibited” (“*aduenae et forenses incidunt ipsam thedam et ipsam extra insulam exportant, quod est expresse prohibitum*”), but also inflicted “major damage and harm on both the city and the whole island of Korčula” (“*maximum damnum et detrimentum ciuitatis et totius insulae Curzulae*”).<sup>32</sup>

On the verge of Venice’s declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire on July 28, 1463, increasing cautiousness, even suspiciousness, towards foreigners with respect to political matters spread throughout the Adriatic realm. While news about the Ottoman threat to Bosnia were pouring in about a month after the Ottomans had conquered the town of Argos in Morea from Venice by treason (on April 3, 1463), the social atmosphere tensed dramatically on Korčula too.<sup>33</sup> On May 12, 1463, for example, Ser Johannes of Bergamo and Ser Franciscus of Tribano, both passengers on a ship sailing from Venice to Lepanto, accused Andreas, a

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. Kümmeler, "Ländliche Gemeinschaften," 234–241; Schmitt, *Korčula sous la domination de Venise*, p. II 17–21; Dokoza, *Dinamika otočnog prostora*, 122–124, 158; Foretić, *Otok Korčula u srednjem vijeku*, 283–289.

<sup>31</sup> Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 130. For Francesco Foscari’s ducal confirmation, see *ibid.*, 177–178, and for further statutory regulations on timber extractions, see *ibid.*, 54–55, 86–87, 92, 129–131, 213–215, 237, 252.

<sup>32</sup> Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 213. Cf. *ibid.*, 55, 235; Kümmeler, "Ländliche Gemeinschaften," 236.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Ermanno Orlando, "Tra Venezia e Impero ottomano: paci e confine nei Balcani occidentali (secc. XV–XVI)," in *Balcani occidentali, Adriatico e Venezia fra XIII e XVIII secolo / Der westliche Balkan, der Adria-raum und Venedig (13.–18. Jahrhundert)*, ed. Gherardo Ortalli and Oliver Jens Schmitt (Venice–Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009), 103–178 (particularly 105–106, 152, 172–175); Ovidiu Christea, "Venice Confronting the Ottoman Empire: A Struggle for Survival (Fourteenth–Sixteenth Centuries)," in *The Ottoman Conquest of the Balkans. Interpretations and Research Debates*, ed. Oliver Jens Schmitt (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2016), 265–279; John Van Antwerp Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans. A Critical Survey from the Late Twelfth Century to the Ottoman Conquest* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 561–604; Kümmeler, "Ländliche Gemeinschaften," 119–121.

fellow passenger born in Ragusa, of “certainly being an explorer and spy of the Turks” (“*esse exploratorem verum Turchi et inquisitorem*”).<sup>34</sup> When their ship had moored at the port of Hvar, several people from Hvar recognized him as somebody who had betrayed and left his community.<sup>35</sup> He drew further suspicion by persuading his fellow passengers into political conversations about how Venice would be unable to defend Lepanto against the Ottomans, that Venice had already surrendered Nauplion to the Ottomans and how the king of Hungary would be destroyed.<sup>36</sup> Moreover – basically shortly before the fall of the Bosnian kingdom in June 1463 – he then added, before many witnesses: “If I were afraid, [...] and maybe someone wanted to follow me, I would go to the king of Bosnia, who is a man that gives good company to everyone”.<sup>37</sup>

A few weeks later, on Sunday, June 19, 1463, the Korčulan patrician Ser Johaninus Grupsich was accused of delivering a disturbing and inflammatory speech “*in lingua schiava*” on the Ottoman threat both to Dubrovnik and Korčula in the presence of “*molte persone cussi citadini chomo forestieri*”.<sup>38</sup> According to several witnesses, Grupsich argued that “it would be good to go and help our neighbours” (“*el starave ben ad andar ad aiudar li nostri vixini*”), because if Ragusa fell to the Ottomans, then “half the world” would have been taken (“*la mita del mundo sera prexo*”), while its three ports (Gruž, Ombla and Zaton) provided the Ottomans with direct access to the Adriatic sea.<sup>39</sup> Idly watching the Ottomans conquering Constantinople and Morea, Ser Johaninus continued, Venice was merely sending a few galleys while paying its galley crews so badly that even “before the galleys were armed, the places were lost” (“*avanti chel sia armade le galie, el se perde i luogi*”).<sup>40</sup> Thus, in case the Ottomans arrived on Korčula, Grupsich concluded that he, as a rich patrician, would be better off escaping to his inherited properties in Apulia.<sup>41</sup> While a priest responded that he

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<sup>34</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 16/30.7, fol. 16 v.

<sup>35</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 16/30.7, fol. 16 v.: “*ut gentem suam deviareet [...] et proditione committeret*”.

<sup>36</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 16/30.7, fol. 16 v.: “*dicens non esse possibile [...] Neapolis de Romania erat amissa [...] ruperat regem Ungarie*”.

<sup>37</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 16/30.7, fol. 16 v.: “*Se io havesse pur, [...] et fosse alchun che me volesse seguir, io andarrò al re de Bosnia chel è un homo che fa bona compagnia a zaschadun (=ciascuno)*”. Cf. Stjepan Tomašević (1461.-1463.) – *sлом srednjovjekovnoga Bosanskog Kraljevstva. Zbornik radova sa Znanstvenog skupa održanog 11. i 12. studenog 2011. godine u Jajcu*, ed. Ante Birin, (Zagreb: Hrvatski institute za povijest, 2013); Dubravko Lovrenović, “The Ottoman Conquest of Bosnia in 1463 as Interpreted by Bosnian Franciscan Chroniclers and Historiographers (A Historic(Al) Event With Political and Psychological Ramifications That Are Still Present Today),” in *The Ottoman Conquest of the Balkans. Interpretations and Research Debates*, ed. Oliver Jens Schmitt (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2016), 243–263.

<sup>38</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 16/30.5, fol. 15 v. On the notion of “*ydimate sclabonico*”, cf. *ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 16/30.5, fol. 15 r. Cf. *ibid.*, fol. 15 v.

<sup>40</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 16/30.5, fol. 15 r. Cf. *ibid.*, fol. 16 v.

<sup>41</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 16/30.5, fol. 15 r.: “*ma se li vignera qua, io ho tanto de patrimonio in Puglia, io andarò là e starò là*”.

should rather “stay and take care of your business here and your honor and goods”,<sup>42</sup> another witness, “in pain of the aforementioned words”, told Grupsich to “not intervene in the Signoria’s matters”.<sup>43</sup>

### III. Newcomers to and Emigrants from Korčula

Although the numerous transiting foreigners doubtlessly affected Korčula’s social life both in the town and the villages, they still constituted a rather unstable group due to their short periods of stay. By contrast, only very few newcomers who intended to reside on Korčula permanently are to be found in the island’s late medieval source material.<sup>44</sup> From a legal perspective, Korčula’s statutes – unlike those of Split, for example – appear to have lacked formal regulation granting citizenship to newcomers.<sup>45</sup> In everyday life, however, Korčula’s population showed the same candor towards integrating newcomers into their community as all medieval Dalmatian communes. Hence, according to Tomislav Raukar, the statutory distinctions between foreigners and natives “not only aimed to protect the rights of the local population, but also to attract foreigners to the town and integrate them into the sphere of the commune”.<sup>46</sup>

In 1265, the “*vniuersitas Curzole*” had already unanimously granted its count Marsilio Zorzi the right to dedicate property to those “foreign men who wanted to become a citizen, who would [then] be bound to do everything like any native citizen” (“*hominibus forensibus, qui uoluerint esse ciues, qui teneantur omnia facere sicut ciuis quilibet vrbigena*”).<sup>47</sup> Facing increasing depopulation during the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Korčula’s Great Council granted citizenship to several newcomers intending to reside and conducting business on the island after assessing the candidates’ situation and intentions.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, in 1454, the Great Council established a regulation according to which the communal judges and the Venetian count were entitled to dedicate ownerless houses in need of refurbishment to both islanders and newcomers in order to adapt such a house and permanently live in it, as long as the authorities

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<sup>42</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 16/30.5, fol. 16 r.: “*Vuy seti meglio star e guardar vostre cosse de qua e vostro honor e beni*”.

<sup>43</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 16/30.5, fol. 16 v.: “*dolens de predictis verbis dixit circumstantibus el farave ben, Zuhanin, de non impazarse (=impacciarsi) de le cosse de la Signoria*”.

<sup>44</sup> Schmitt, *Korčula sous la domination de Venise*, p. III 22.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. the five regulations “*De forensibus uolentibus facere se ciues*”, in *Statut grada Splita. Splitsko srednjovjekovno pravo = Statuta civitatis Spalati. Ius spalatense medii aevi*, ed. Antun Cvitanić (Split: Književni Krug, 1998), 748–754; Cvitanić, “Pravni položaj stranaca,” 649.

<sup>46</sup> Raukar, “Cives, habitatores, forenses,” 141: “*nemaju za cilj samo da zaštite prava domaćeg pučanstva, nego i da stranca privuku u grad i integriraju u sferu komune*”.

<sup>47</sup> Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 3. Cf. Cvitanić, “Pravni položaj stranaca,” 649; Foretić, *Otok Korčula u srednjem vijeku*, 316–317.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Dokoza, *Dinamika otočnog prostora*, 37, 172–173, 257.

would “always defend the community against troublesome persons”.<sup>49</sup> According to a statutory tax regulation, owning property thus facilitated a newcomer’s integration, as “anyone residing and owning property on Korčula was to be considered Korčulan and treated accordingly” (“*quilibet habitans Curzulam et ibi possidens bona quaevis stabilia reputetur Curzulensis et pro Curzulense in huiusmodi casibus pertractetur*”).<sup>50</sup>

In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Tomislav Raukar’s above-cited statement holds particularly true for Korčula, as the *Communitas Corzulæ* actively invited certain privileged foreigners to settle on the island as newcomers for the social, economic or administrative benefit of the community.<sup>51</sup> In 1431, for example, the community concluded a contract with master Johannes Luithech, a barber and surgeon, inter alia granting him some land in Račišće in exchange for his commitment “to stay and live in Korčula for the rest of his life, practicing his art of surgery” for the benefit of all people in need (“*toto tempore eius uitae stare, commorari et habitare in Curzula, ibique eius artem cirusiae et barberiae continue exercere*”).<sup>52</sup> As opposed to the surgeon, however, communal teachers usually left the island soon after taking up their position, often resulting in month-long teaching vacancies. Hence Korčula’s Great Council repeatedly searched for teachers who would “educate the boys of this town and island” as *magister scollarum*, for example offering an annual salary of 80 *Ducats* and free residence in the schoolhouse in 1456 (“*pro eruditione puerorum huius civitatis et insule*”).<sup>53</sup> In 1463, after extensively discussing an educational treatise written by the Italian humanist

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<sup>49</sup> Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 74: “*habeant plenum et liberum arbitrium dandi, et confirmandi casamenta [...], quae sunt discooperta et disordinata, omnibus et singulis hominibus, tam ciuibus, quam forensibus, volentibus ea reapere [...] volens et promittens dictum commune defendere [...] semper ab omni molestante persona*”. Cf. Kümmeler, “Ländliche Gemeinschaften,” 95–96; Schmitt, *Korčula sous la domination de Venise*, p. II 8; Dokoza, *Dinamika otočnog prostora*, 37, 172, 257; Foretić, *Otok Korčula u srednjem vijeku*, 311.

<sup>50</sup> Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 114. Against this background, Korčula’s other statutory regulations on immovable property seem somewhat contradictory at first: On the one hand, Cap. 102 determined that no foreigner not residing on the island could either own or benefit from any property on Korčula (“*forensis non habitans in Curzula non possit nec valeat aliquo modo possidere, nec vsufructare aliquam possessionem in Curzula*”, *ibid.*, 94). On the other hand, Cap. 194 apparently revised the former regulation by redefining the financial duties of foreigners without residence on Korčula but legally owning (immovable) property on the island (“*quod omnes et singuli forenses habitantes extra insulam possidentes super dicta insula quaevis bona stabilia*”, *ibid.* 127). Cf. Birin, “The Foreigner and Ownership Rights,” 460–468 (particularly 463); Cvitanić, “Pravni položaj stranaca,” 648–650; Schmitt, *Korčula sous la domination de Venise*, p. II 39.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Tomislav Raukar, “Komunalna društva u Dalmaciji u XIV. stoljeću,” in *Studije o Dalmaciji u srednjem vijeku. Odabrane studije*, ed. Tomislav Raukar (Split: Književni Krug, 2007), 124 (originally published in *Historijski zbornik* 33–34 (1980–1981): 139–209).

<sup>52</sup> Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 150–151. Cf. Kümmeler, “Ländliche Gemeinschaften,” 163–164.

<sup>53</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 14/26.1, fol. 1v.–2 r. Cf. Kümmeler, “Ländliche Gemeinschaften,” 165–166; Antun Cvitanić, “Korčulansko statutarno pravo,” in *Iz dalmatinske pravne povijesti*, ed. Antun Cvitanić (Split: Književni Krug, 2002), 594; Dokoza, *Dinamika otočnog prostora*, 140, 173; Foretić, *Otok Korčula u srednjem vijeku*, 255.

Petrus Paulus Vergerius (ca. 1368–1444), the Great Council significantly augmented the position's remuneration in order to better attract teachers to Korčula.<sup>54</sup>

Furthermore, foreign officials constituted a particularly special group of newcomers to Korčula, residing on the island over a longer period of time, yet mostly only temporarily, while enjoying an exceptional – both good and bad – reputation among the local population. During the 15<sup>th</sup> century, this group basically consisted of three officials: the Venetian count (*comes*) as the only representative of the Venetian state on Korčula, the communal chancellor at the center of communal administration and the Bishop at the top of the island's ecclesiastical hierarchy. As for the first, Venetian patricians were elected as *comes* for a two-year term of office and sent to the island in order to administer local affairs, mediate local conflicts and assert Venetian interest by implementing justice as the island's supreme judge. Despite their political and judicial power, Venetian governors usually arrived on Korčula as strangers to the island's social dynamics and thus were subject to reciprocal negotiations with the community while depending on the cooperation of local administrative officials.<sup>55</sup> As for the second, Korčula's Great Council usually appointed foreign patricians who were trained as notaries to serve as the island's communal chancellor (*cancellarius communis*) for periods of up to eight years. While native Korčulans can only rarely be identified holding this position, the island's communal chancellors originated from the wider Adriatic realm, from Venice, Lombardy (Cremona), Friuli (Spilimbergo), Istria (Pula), as well as from the neighboring Dalmatian island of Hvar and other Italian cities.<sup>56</sup> Conversely, all other communal offices – ranging from, amongst others, the community's senior judges (*iudices maiores*) and treasurer (*camerarius communis*) to both urban and rural auxiliary policemen (*gastaldiones*) and vineyard guards (*pudarii*) – were exclusively assigned to the island's local population.<sup>57</sup> As for the third, shortly after the Venetian patrician Luca Leon assumed his position as bishop on the island, Korčula witnessed increasing economic threats to the local community by the means of tax increases and centralization of Church property, causing not only increasing

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<sup>54</sup> Cf. HR-DAZD-11: 16/31.5, fol. 60; Kümmeler, "Ländliche Gemeinschaften," 165–166. On Vergerius' humanist educational treatise, see David Robey, "Humanism and Education in the Early Quattrocento. The *De ingenuis moribus* of P. P. Vergerio," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 42,1 (1980): 27–58.

<sup>55</sup> For a comprehensive study of communal and Venetian administration on Korčula, especially in its rural area, see Kümmeler, "Ländliche Gemeinschaften," 134–178. See also Orlando, "Politica del diritto," 28–45; Schmitt, "Addressing Community," 142–143; Schmitt, *Korčula sous la domination de Venise*, p. 19–13; Dokoza, *Dinamika otočnog prostora*, 175–178; Foretić, *Otok Korčula u srednjem vijeku*, 245–262. For further context, see Monique O'Connell, *Men of Empire. Power and Negotiation in Venice's Maritime State* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 17–118.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. HR-DAZD-11: 7/8.1, fol. 1 r.; HR-DAZD-11: 6/6.3, fol. 5 r.–v.; HR-DAZD-11: 12/19.4, fol. 4 v., 7 r.–v.; HR-DAZD-11: 19/35.1, fol. 7 v.; HR-DAZD-11: 25/48.3.1, fol. 1 r.; HR-DAZD-11: 25/48.3.2, fol. 6 r.–v.; HR-DAZD-11: 27/50.13, fol. 8 r.; Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 140, 171–172; Kümmeler, "Ländliche Gemeinschaften," 138–139.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Kümmeler, "Ländliche Gemeinschaften," 134–166.

resentment towards Luca Leon, but also culminating in a riot against the bishop in October 1458.<sup>58</sup>

Apart from those chosen and invited for their skills and expertise, 15<sup>th</sup>-century sources reveal a considerable number of newcomers living on Korčula as permanent residents (*habitatores*) but originating from the nearby Neretva Delta, the Krajina and other parts of the Dalmatian mainland, the Adriatic and the wider Venetian realm. This largely corresponds to Oliver Schmitt's observation that newcomers who took up permanent residence on Korčula mostly immigrated from the same "linguistic space".<sup>59</sup> In everyday practice, since neither religious nor linguistic minorities existed on the island, Korčula's inhabitants would consequently use situational "patterns of othering" that would predominantly "refer to 'strangers' or 'outsiders' [...] from the Adriatic world and the Balkan hinterland".<sup>60</sup> Upon their arrival, however, newcomers to Korčula did not face a single homogenous community, as it might appear at first sight from the statutory notion of the "*communita[s] ac universita[s] populi et insulae Curzulae*".<sup>61</sup> In everyday social practice, instead newcomers encountered an insular society that was composed of multiple complementary layers of communitarian belonging, while nevertheless being legally united by the statutory notion of a *communitas Curzule*.<sup>62</sup>

As *habitatores* of either the town or one of Korčula's villages, newcomers usually lived a socially and legally well-integrated life on the island, working as farmers, herdsman, craftsmen and sailors. In July 1456, for example, both the patron of a barque from Korčula, Nicolaus Chivchovich de Corzula, and his sailor, Christoforus of Calabria, *habitor Corzule*, received a fine less for importing timber, rather than for bringing "foreign persons" from Senj, "where plague and mortal epidemic reign", to the port of Korčula ("*veniens de Segna cum [...] alijs personis forensibus [...] ubi pestis et epidemie morbus vigeat*").<sup>63</sup> A few days later, the blacksmith Petrus, son of the blacksmith Ratko of Budva, and the cobbler Vucatus Prochiricich of Krajina, both of them *habitatores in Corzula*, got sued for illegally carrying weapons inside the town.<sup>64</sup> Hence newcomers who took up permanent residence either in the town of Korčula or in any of the island's villages were legally considered "*personam de*

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<sup>58</sup> Cf. Schmitt, "Addressing Community," 143–145.

<sup>59</sup> Schmitt, *Korčula sous la domination de Venise*, p. III 22: "*espace linguistique*".

<sup>60</sup> Schmitt, "Addressing Community," 140. Cf. *ibid.*, 140–145.

<sup>61</sup> Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 138.

<sup>62</sup> On Korčula's heterogeneous fabric of communities framed by statutory and customary law and covered by the notion of its statutory community, cf. Kümmeler, "Herdsman as a Socio-Professional Community," (*forthcoming*); Schmitt, "Addressing Community," 145–146.

<sup>63</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 14/26.7, fol. 9 r.

<sup>64</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 14/26.7, fol. 18 v.–20 r.: "*Petrum filium Rathci Fabri de Budua habitorem Corzule et Vucatum Prochiricich quondam Alegreti de Craina Calegarium et solitum in Corzula habitator*".

Curzula”, notwithstanding their place of origin, gender and whether they were referred to as an inhabitant or not (“*siue sit masculus, siue sit faemina et siue fuerit habitator, siue non*”).<sup>65</sup>

Besides acquiring citizenship, however, marrying and thus establishing family ties at the chosen place of residence was among the very primary “factors of integration and rooting of newcomers into their host society”.<sup>66</sup> Against this backdrop, in August 1459, Radovanus de Craina set out to strengthen his integration into Korčula’s insular society, having already lived as a *habitor* in Blato for a couple of years. On August 12, 1459, he married Marussiza, a local woman from Korčula’s *burgus*, who served as a maid in the household of the influential patrician Ser Simonetus quondam Vidosii in the center of the town. After initial irritations among the island’s patrician élite, apparently based on malicious rumors invalidated in the course of various trials, the married couple disappeared from the files until their daughter Miliza was fined for beating and biting a girl called Jacobina in the mid-1470s.<sup>67</sup>

Focusing exclusively on newcomers to Korčula, however, bears the risk of missing the bi-directional dynamic of late medieval migration. Especially from the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards, Korčula experienced a partially increasing emigration towards Venice, Zadar and other Adriatic destinations; many stonemasons tended to temporarily leave to work in Apulia, while sailors in particular emigrated to Venice.<sup>68</sup> Occasionally, even boys were sent away from Korčula for their education: On May 25, 1431, Johann Gherbaxich de Corzula concluded an apprenticeship contract for his son with the famous painter Blaž Jurjev Trogirinan (“*magistro Blaxio Georgij de Tragurio, pictori*”), who virtually completed a polyptych for Korčula’s cathedral that he had been working on since 1429, supported by his journeyman Martin Pethcovich of Jajce.<sup>69</sup> Accordingly, the contract obliged Gherbaxich’s ten-year-old son Antonius to stay with the painter in Trogir for seven years, assisting him as his *famulus*,

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<sup>65</sup> Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 95.

<sup>66</sup> Orlando, "Mobilità, migrazioni, intrecci," 424: “*fattori di integrazione e radicamento dei nuovi arrivati nella società ospite*”.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. HR-DAZD-11: 15/29.4, fol. 28 v.–32 r.; HR-DAZD-11: 25/48.19, fol. 26 v.; Kümmeler, "Ländliche Gemeinschaften," 210–223.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Cvito Fisković, "Korčulanski majstori XVI stoljeća u Apuliji," *Anali Historijskog Odjela Centra za Znanstveni Rad Jugoslavenske Akademije Znanosti i Umjetnosti u Dubrovniku* 13–41 (1976): 19–30; Lovorka Čoralić, "Korčulani u Mlecima (XV.-XVIII. st.). II. dio," *Godišnjak grada Korčule* 2 (1997): 48–63; Lovorka Čoralić, "Korčulani u Mlecima (XV.-XVIII. st.). I. dio," *Godišnjak grada Korčule* 1 (1996): 56–71. For a broader study on 'Croatian Sailors in Venice', cf. Lovorka Čoralić, "Hrvatski mornari u Mlecima (XV.-XVIII. st.)," *Radovi Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Zadru* 43 (2001): 275–310.

<sup>69</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 6/6.23, fol. 13 v. Cf. HR-DAZD-11: 6/6.23, fol. 7 v.; Kümmeler, "Ländliche Gemeinschaften," 179–181. Many thanks to Ana Plosnić Škarić for calling my attention to further literature about Blaž Jurjev Trogirinan – one of Dalmatia’s most important late Gothic artists – and his Korčulan polyptychs: Damir Tulić and Nina Kudiš, *Opatska riznica, katedrala i crkve grada Korčule. Povodom 60. obljetnice otvorenja Opatske riznice svetog Marka u Korčuli 1954. – 2014.* (Korčula: Župa sv. Marka, 2014), 37–42, 189; Ante Sorić, *Biagio di Giorgio da Traù, 1375 c.-1450. Venezia, Chiesa di San Bartolomeo, 31 marzo-4 giugno 1989* (Zagreb: MGC, 1989), 81–86; Kruno Prijatelj, "Blaž Jurjev Trogirinan," in *Hrvatski biografski leksikon, vol. 2: Bj-C*, ed. Aleksandar Stipčević (Zagreb: Jugoslavenski Leksikografski Zavod, 1989), 22–24; Kruno Prijatelj, *Slikar Blaž Jurjev* (Zagreb: Zadružna Stampa 1965), 59.

learning his art and performing “useful and honest work” (“*opera utilia et honesta*”).<sup>70</sup> In return, the painter agreed to cover all the boy’s living expenses and to teach him the art of painting (“*artem suam pictorare instruere*”), under penalty of 25 ducats.<sup>71</sup> Such agreements intensified mutual contacts between and contributed to the benefit of both Korčulans and people living beyond the island: Soon after, the village community of Blato engaged the very same painter for a salary of 44 gold ducats in order to “manufacture an icon for Blato’s All Saints’ Church in the same style, shape and quality as the new icon of the main altar in Korčula’s Saint Mark’s Cathedral”, above which he had to add additional figurative representations.<sup>72</sup>

#### IV. The World in a Village: Rural Korčula and Beyond

The vast majority of both foreign transients and newcomers planning to permanently settle on Korčula, integrate themselves as residents and maybe even acquire citizenship, predominantly entered the island legally through the town’s main port. However, Korčula’s rural and urban population also used a number of natural harbors, mostly small coves or protected landing points, in order to transport goods and people by boat to and fro between the town and the villages along the coastal strip. In 1553, Giovanni Battista Giustiniano, the Venetian syndic to Dalmatia and Albania, reported that the eastern half of Korčula’s southern coast offered many beaches and bays that were navigable in good weather, while the bay of Brna, southwest of Smokvica, offered a safe natural harbor for approximately 200 smaller ships, except in the case of a westerly wind. From Brna to the western tip of the island, Giustiniano counted up to 30 natural harbors of different sizes, underlining the particular importance of Grščica as a loading point for charcoal and pitch produced in the nearby forests, whereas the bay of Vela Luka was used by local hermits and fishermen at best. Korčula’s northern coast, however, offered only up to eight navigable natural harbors due to threats from the mainland, occasional heavy swell and the strong Bora winds. During the 15<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 6/6.23, fol. 13 v.

<sup>71</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 6/6.23, fol. 13 v.

<sup>72</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 6/6.23, fol. 22 v.: “*perficere unam anconam constituendam in Ecclesia omnium Sanctorum de Blate, de simili laborerio et forma qualitatis et quantitatis, cuiusmodi est ancona maioris altaris Sancti Marci de Corsula nova, super qua figuras facere debet quas sibi ordinabitur*”. This order description made by the village community of Blato unveils striking similarities to Blaž Jurjev’s polyptych from the town’s All Saints’ Church (*Oplakivanje Krista sa svecima*); not only do its five central plates resemble the cathedral’s polyptych, but it is also decorated with 13 miniatures below and seven figurative representations above. Considering these similarities, and that no order of a polyptych for the town’s All Saints Church was preserved, the question might be raised whether Jurjev’s *Oplakivanje Krista sa svecima* was perhaps initially produced for the All Saints’ Church of Blato and only transferred to the town at a later time, cf. Kümmeler, “Ländliche Gemeinschaften,” 231–232; Tulić and Kudiš, *Opatska riznica*, 37–42, 189, 224–226; Vinko Foretić, “Poliptih Blaža Jurjeva u Korčulanskoj crkvi Svih Svetih,” *Prilozi povijesti umjetnosti u Dalmaciji* 14 (1963): 106–110, 113.

century, Korčula's rural communities used at least one natural harbor close to each village for fishing and local transportation: Prigradica in the case of Blato, both Zavalatica and Brna in the case of both Smokvica and Čara, and Žrnovska Banja in the case of Žrnovo.<sup>73</sup>

Despite the central role of the town's port, however, the aforementioned case of the Venetian grip from Lepanto in 1461 showed that these rural harbors also served as places of encounter between rural dwellers and foreign sailors. Taking advantage of the absence of communal and Venetian port authorities, the crews of both local and foreign ships particularly used the many natural harbors in Korčula's rural hinterland for smuggling and other less legal activities.<sup>74</sup>

After carrying away cattle below Smokvica, the patron from Lepanto had moored his ship in Korčula's harbor when the herder entered the town to file his complaint. Thus, the conflict gained momentum, shifting from Smokvica's port to the town's new *loggia maritima* at the port – erected approximately around 1459 –, where “there were a great number of people and persons from Korčula and many born in foreign lands” (“*ibi aderat multitudo populi et personarum tam terrigenarum quam alienigenarum*”).<sup>75</sup> Amongst them, Ser Boninus de Obradis, a brother of the cattle owner and a famous smuggler himself, quarreled with Ser Zacharias Gilbe, the grip's patron, and his sailors over the unlawfully abducted goats, disgracefully disparaging each other as scoundrels and scum (*poltron*). Nicolaus Gabrieli, a Venetian patrician, who was among the grip's passengers, got drawn into the argument, on the one hand telling a sailor from Corfu that he was “neither of a good home in Corfu nor from a good place” (“*non erat de bona domo corphei et de bono loco*”) and on the other hand arguing with Ser Boninus over who was the better patrician (“*qui erat melior nobilis*”).<sup>76</sup> Consequently, Domenico Morosini, the Venetian governor on Korčula, immediately tried to summon the patron for theft and insult, only to learn that his grip had already left, having seemingly smelled a rat. Then, the governor suspected that Ser Boninus had insulted the Venetian patrician, but dropped the suspicion after interrogating another Venetian patrician (Franciscus quondam Petri de Venetiis), who had arrived earlier with

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<sup>73</sup> Cf. "Itinerario di Giovanni Battista Giustiniano sindaco in Dalmazia ed Albania (1553)," in *Commissiones et relationes Venetae, vol. 2: Annorum 1525-1553*, ed. Šime Ljubić (Zagreb, 1877), 252–253; Kümmeler, "Ländliche Gemeinschaften," 133; Dokoza, *Dinamika otočnog prostora*, 30, 147–148; Foretić, *Otok Korčula u srednjem vijeku*, 313–315.

<sup>74</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 16/30.6, fol. 4 v. Cf. Schmitt, "'Contrabannum'," 11–25; Schmitt, "Addressing Community," 140–141.

<sup>75</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 16/30.6, fol. 5 v.

<sup>76</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 16/30.6, fol. 5 r.–v. Cf. Kümmeler, "Herdsmen as a Socio-Professional Community," (*forthcoming*); Hanel, *Statuta et leges*, 24, 43, 92.

another ship from Kotor and thus witnessed the dispute.<sup>77</sup> Finally, assuming that the patron from Lepanto, as a maritime merchant, was likely to set sail for Korčula again, the governor sentenced him to pay a compensation of 16 *Soldi Parvorum* for each abducted goat and not just 26 *Soldi Parvorum* for all of them.<sup>78</sup>

Even on the island's rural periphery, Korčula's villagers lived neither a remote nor an isolated life, profiting from exchange with newcomers and foreigners either in legal business or in less legal activities. The latter can be illustrated by the case of Ser Andreas Alemani, a patron of a Venetian ship that suffered shipwreck and broke asunder on the shore below Blato in May 1453. Unfortunately, Alemani never managed to collect the remains from the ship, as some locals were much quicker to take advantage of his wreck. The ensuing judicial proceedings against the village community of Blato petered out, as the villagers rejected the accusation on June 10, 1453, and accused a distinct group of fellow islanders ("*aliae speciales personae*") of collecting nails, timber planks and iron tools from the wreck.<sup>79</sup>

## V. Conclusion: Korčula's Villages and the World

In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Korčula was no isolated microcosm: The town's port, but also the island's rural harbors, attracted merchant ships and pilgrim galleys on their way to Venice, the Levant, and other Adriatic and Mediterranean destinations. Both the many people from Korčula and those from foreign places turned the town's port into a perhaps small, but vibrant nodal point of communication, enabling Korčula's urban dwellers to establish connections within and beyond the Venetian Commonwealth. Moreover, even Korčula's villagers profited from direct fruitful exchange with foreigners, entangling the island's rural periphery within and beyond Southeast Europe and the Adriatic world. Thus, Korčula enticed newcomers from the Adriatic and the wider Mediterranean realm to permanently settle both in the island's town and its four villages. As *habitatores*, these newcomers experienced extensive social, legal and economic integration, while natives benefited from their work as craftsmen, merchants, surgeons and teachers as well as from their personal and financial contributions to local communal life.

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<sup>77</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 16/30.6, fol. 5 v. For Domenico Morosini, who was governor overseas and thus had an almost seamless political career before being elected to the Council of Ten in 1472, cf. Gaetano Cozzi, "Domenico Morosini e il De bene instituta re publice," *Studi Veneziani* 12 (1970): 405–458; Claudio Finzi, "Morosini, Domenico," in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani, Vol. 77: Morlini – Natolini*, ed. Mario Caravale (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 2012), 112–114; Edward Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 34.

<sup>78</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 16/30.6, fol. 4 v.

<sup>79</sup> HR-DAZD-11: 13/22.1, fol. 191 r.