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The Mystery of Merania: A New Solution to Old Problems (Holy Roman Empire and the Kingdom of Croatia-Dalmatia during the Investiture Controversy) (Part 1)

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The Mystery of Merania: A New Solution to Old Problems (Holy Roman Empire and the Kingdom of Croatia-Dalmatia during the Investiture Controversy)

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This paper deals with issues concerning the historical background that engendered the imperial (titular) Duchy of Merania and the modality by which this mysterious territory became part of the Holy Roman Empire. The author first demonstrates that *Meran(ia)* refers to a microregion situated between the Učka mountain range and the river Rječina at the very east of the Istrian peninsula that historically belonged to the Kingdom of Croatia and Dalmatia. Second, he outlines interpretations regarding how this patch of land became part of the Holy Roman Empire. The takeover of Merania is posited in the second half of the 1070s, in the period of Croatian king Zvonimir who fostered enmity with the Holy Roman emperor Henry IV by officially taking the side of the reform papacy and pope Gregory VII during the Investiture Controversy. It is in this context that the attacks against Zvonimir's kingdom ensued, led by a noble knight Wezelin whose identity is discussed in detail; this marks the beginning of the imperial takeover of Merania.

Keywords: Merania, Margraviate of Istria, Kingdom of Croatia, Patriarchate of Aquileia, Investiture Controversy, Gregory VII, Demetrius Zvonimir, Henry IV

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Skrivnost Meranije: Nove rešitve starih problemov (Sveto rimsko cesarstvo ter Kraljevina Hrvaška - Dalmacija v času investiturnega boja)

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Članek obravnava problematiko zgodovinskega ozadja, ki je ogrožalo (naslovno) cesarsko Vojvodino Meranijo in način, na katerega je to skrivnostno ozemlje postalo del Svetega rimskega cesarstva. Avtor najprej pokaže, da se *Meran(ia)* nanaša na mikroregijo med goro Učko in reko Rječino na skrajnem vzhodu istrskega polotoka, ki je bila del hrvaško-dalmatinskega kraljestva. Sledi oris razlag, kako je ta kos ozemlja postal del Svetega rimskega cesarstva. Prevzem Meranije je umeščen v drugo polovico sedemdesetih let 11. stoletja, v obdobje hrvaškega kralja Zvonimirja, ki je podprl reforme in se uradno postavil na stran papeža Gregorja VII. v investiturnem boju ter gojil sovražstvo do cesarja Henrika IV. V tem kontekstu so sledili napadi na Zvonimirjevo kraljestvo pod vodstvom viteza Vecelina, s čigar identiteto se podrobno ukvarja avtor članka. Napadi označujejo začetek cesarskega prevzema Meranije.

Ključne besede: Meranija, mejna grofija Istra, Kraljevina Hrvaška, oglejski patriarhat, investiturni boj, Gregor VII., Dimitrij Zvonimir, Henrik IV.

Introduction: The Mysterious Duchy

Rarely has there been a title as confusing as the one adorned by Conrad II, count of Dachau, in the middle of the 12th century: *Conradus dux Meranus* in 1152¹ and *Conradus de Dachauve, dux Croatiae Dalmatiquae* in 1154.² Furthermore, the same individual was called *Croatiae atque Dalmatiae dux* by his prolific contemporaries, Otto, the bishop of Freising, and Rahewin, the authors of the *Deeds of Frederick I*.³ The main points of confusion were that this was the very first mention of a duchy called *Meran* and that the Kingdom of Croatia and Dalmatia lay outside the Holy Roman Empire's jurisdictional sphere. How and why were these titles created, what did they designate, and how did they end up with Conrad II of Dachau?

Of the two new ducal titles, the second one is easier to explicate. Namely, the best part of the old Roman province of Dalmatia had been practically divided by the 9th century between a Croatian, inland region ruled by the respective dukes/kings, and a coastal part nominally under Byzantine sovereignty.⁴ As Croatian monarchs gradually expanded their jurisdictions over the Dalmatian territories of the waning Byzantine Empire, the two jurisdictional regions were fused under the *potestas* of one king who began adorning the title *rex Dalmatiae et Croatiae*.⁵ According to a 13th-century chronicler of Split, Archdeacon Thomas, "all the successors of Držislav

¹ D. F. I, no. 14, ed. Appelt, pp. 26–27. This is the first and only mention of a *dux Meranus* before the 1180s. The charter is, however, not authentic and the *terminus post quem* of its composition must be dated to 1157, the year when Albert the Bear started being titled as *marchio Brandeburgensis*. Herkenrath, *Wibald von Stablo*, pp. 114–115. Notwithstanding its dubious authenticity and the fact that Conrad II appears with the title of a duke for the first time in 1154 (charter cited in n. 2), it is *communis opinio* that the count of Dachau was indeed given the ducal title in 1152 at roughly (or precisely) the same time as Welf VI was given the titular duchy of Spoleto. See Werle, *Titelherzogtum*, pp. 275–277; Arnold, *Princes and Territories*, pp. 98, 102–103; Freed, *Frederick Barbarossa*, pp. 79–80; Deutinger, *Von den Liutpoldingern*, p. 314; Dendorfer, *Von den Liutpoldingern*, pp. 345, 352.

² *Monumenta Parthenii Chiemeseensis*, pp. 447–449, no. 4.

³ Otto of Freising–Rahewin, *Gesta Friderici I. imperatoris*, lib. 1, c. 26, and lib. 4, c. 17, ed. Waitz–Simson, p. 43, l. 28–29, and p. 257, l. 1.

⁴ Fine, *Early Medieval Balkans*, pp. 254–255; Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier*, pp. 28–29; Budak, *Early Medieval Boundaries*, pp. 36–39; Basić, *Sjeverna i srednja*, pp. 427ss; Budak, *Hrvatska povijest*, pp. 51–52.

⁵ The expansion of Croatian regal authority over Byzantine Dalmatia was by no means a simple, unilinear process. For an up to date overview of this development see e.g. Gračanin, *Bizant na hrvatskom*, pp. 495–516; Budak, *Hrvatska povijest*, pp. 161–174, 222–234.

[c. 969–c. 997] were called kings of Dalmatia and Croatia. They received the insignia of kingship from the emperors in Constantinople and were styled their “eparchs” or “patricians.” They inherited the lordship of the kingdom of Dalmatia and Croatia by succession from their fathers and forefathers”.⁶ However, it was not until the reign of Peter Krešimir IV (1058–1075) that the Croatian kings began styling themselves as *reges Chroatorum et Dalmatarum*.⁷ This composite title passed on to Hungarian kings after Coloman I finished the conquest of the Kingdom of Croatia, begun by his predecessor Saint Ladislav in 1090/91.⁸ In that way, the wearers of the crown of St. Stephen were officially titled as kings of “Hungary, Dalmatia and Croatia”.⁹ However, the title of *dux Dalmatiae atque Croatiae* was also adorned by the Venetian doges, the heads of the polity that exerted considerable influence along the eastern Adriatic coast; the nucleus of the title – *dux Veneticorum et Dalmaticorum* – was triumphantly assumed by Peter II Orseolo following his successful Eastern Adriatic campaign in 1000, the year when numerous Dalmatian communities officially recognized Venetian authority.¹⁰ In the 1090s, the same period when the Croatian regal throne was contested by local nobles and Hungarian kings from the Arpad dynasty, the Venetians officially added *atque Chroacie* in their elaborate title:

⁶ *Ab isto Dirscisclovo ceteri successors eius reges Dalmatie et Chroatie appellati sunt. Recipiebant enim regie dignitatis insignia ab imperatoribus Constantinopolitanis et dicebantur eorum eparchi sive patricii. Habebant namque ex successione sue originis partem et proavorum dominium regni Dalmatie et Chroatie.* Archdeacon Thomas of Split, *Historia Salonitanorum*, c. 13, ed. Perić et al., pp. 60 (Latin original), 61 (English translation). King Stephen Držislav reigned in the second half of the 10th century (c. 969 – c. 997). Birin, *Pregled političke povijesti*, pp. 57–58.

⁷ It cannot be ascertained who exactly was the first Croatian ruler to begin using the title “Croatian and Dalmatian king”. The oldest charter record of this compound title, *Dei gratia Croathorum atque Dalmatinorum rex* is dated to 950 and the reign of king Michael Krešimir II, but the document is a later forgery, most probably based on the sources from the era of Peter Krešimir IV. CD 1, no. 28, ed. Kostrenčić et al., pp. 39–43; Karbić, *Razvoj političkih ustanova*, p. 95. The compound title first started to be used, it would seem, by Peter Krešimir IV (1058–1075) who was titled *rex Chroatorum et Dalmatarum* already in 1060, however even this document is not authentic. CD 1, no. 64/I, ed. Kostrenčić et al., pp. 87–89; Karbić, *Razvoj političkih ustanova*, p. 95. The only source in whose authenticity there is no reasons to doubt that mentions Peter Krešimir IV as king in Byzantine Dalmatia is the Evangelary of Osor (*Evangelarium Apsarense*) from 1070/71 (also dated to 1081/82) that clearly states the obedience due to both the emperor (Byzantine) and the king (Croatian) in *Exsultet*. Badurina, *Osorski evanđelistar*, pp. 201–205; Petrak, *The Byzantine Emperor*, pp. 54–56; Karbić, *Razvoj političkih ustanova*, pp. 96, 103. On the dating of the evangelary to 1070/71 see Margetić, *O nekim vrelima*, pp. 132–134. The compound title was definitely used by Demetrius Zvonimir (1076–1089) who is titled *Dei gratia Chroatie Dalmatieque dux* ruling over *Chroatorum Dalmatinorumque regnum* and, following his official crowning, *Chroatorum atque Dalmatinorum rex*. CD 1, nos. 109 and 110, ed. Kostrenčić et al., pp. 139–141 and 141–142. I will return to this crowning later in the paper.

⁸ Bárány, *The Expansion*, pp. 344–347; Birin, *Pregled političke povijesti*, pp. 65–66; Nikolić Jakus, *Ugarska*, pp. 621–625; Budak, *Hrvatska povijest*, pp. 284–294.

⁹ E.g. *Ego Collomannus Dei gratia rex Ungarie, Croatiae atque Dalmatie*. CD 2, no. 6, ed. Smičiklas, pp. 9–10.

¹⁰ *Anno quidem incarnationis Redemptoris nostri millesimo quarto, ducatus vero domni Petri Veneticorum ac Dalmaticorum ducis decimo.* John the Deacon, *Istoria Veneticorum*, lib. 4, c. 65, ed. Berto, p. 202. On this campaign see Ortalli, *Pietro II Orseolo*, pp. 13–27.

gloriosus dux Venetię atque Dalmatię sive Chroatię et imperialis prothosevator.¹¹ Hence, by the time of Conrad II of Dachau the title of a *Dalmatie Croatiaque* ruler was contested by at least two powerful polities, the Kingdom of Hungary and the Commune of Venice, the latter in the guise of Byzantine representatives.

Dalmatia remained a disputed territory in the first half of the 12th century as Venetian doges and Hungarian kings vied for supremacy in the maritime region. Although the Holy Roman Empire did not interfere in these affairs at first, the relation between the emperor and the Hungarian throne deteriorated during the reign of Géza II (1141–1162). Officially backing up the pretender to the Hungarian throne, Boris Kalamanos, Conrad III (1138–1152), king of the Romans, was indirectly drawn in open military conflict against the ruling monarch in Hungary.¹² At the same time, Géza II was also on inimical terms with the Byzantine emperor Manuel I Komnenos, a monarch in league with king Conrad III.¹³ Encroached by enemies on three sides – the Holy Roman Empire to the West, Venice to the south and Byzantium to the east – Géza II was forced to fight from a difficult position; Dalmatia was, consequently, left more exposed to outside interference. It was in

¹¹ There is considerable confusion in historiography regarding the beginnings of this specific title in Venice. It has often been thought that it began with the famous Byzantine chrysobull of 1082 (dated to 1092 by some) by which the Byzantine emperor, among other things, bequeathed to the Venetian doges the title of imperial *protosebastos*. However, the famous chrysobull – although not preserved in either original or in an *in extenso* copy, its contents are recorded in later bulls – never mentions the title of Croatian duke. The best edition is in *I trattati con Bisanzio*, no. 2, ed. Pozza–Ravegnani, pp. 35–45. The first ever Venetian doge to adorn the title of a Croatian duke was either Vitale Faliero in 1094 (the document is only preserved in a twelfth century copy, so the title might be a later addition) or Vitale Michiel in 1097. The 1094 document where the doge is titled *divine gratie largitate Venetiarum, Dalmatiae atque Croatiae dux et imperialis protosevaston* is edited in Romanin, *Storia documentata* 1, pp. 392–395, no. 19. The 1097 document, where the doge is titled *gloriosus dux Venetię atque Dalmatię sive Chroatię et imperialis prothosevator*, is edited in several publications, see e.g. CD 1, no. 168, ed. Kostrenčić et al., pp. 208–209. See also Lazzarini, *I titoli*, pp. 271–313, esp. pp. 286–287. Responsible for the above-mentioned confusion is the doge-chronicler Andrea Dandolo who wrote of Venetian legates who journeyed to Constantinople and who received from emperor Alexius a *chrysobull for Dalmatia and Croatia* (highlighted by the author) and the office of a *protosebastos*. From that point on, continued Dandolo, the doges added to their title: *atque Chroacie et imperialis prothosevastos*. *Euntes autem legati, ab Alexio alacriter vissi, crusobolium Dalmacie et Chroacie et sedis prothosevastos optinuerunt, quibus postea reversis, dux suo adidit titulo: atque Chroacie et imperialis prothosevastos*. Andrea Dandolo, *Chronica per extensum descripta*, c. 39, ed. Pastorello, p. 217, l. 10–13. In this passage, convincingly argues Madden, Dandolo simply enumerated all the titles the doge held from Byzantium, “both old and new”, old being that of Dalmatian dukes and imperial *protosebastos*, the new being that of Croatian dukes. This voyage to Alexius and the conferment of the title of Croatian dukes described by Dandolo must have taken place between July 1090 and before 1096 (or 1094 if Falier’s documents is taken to be completely free of later interpolations). Madden, *The Chrysobull*, pp. 23–41, esp. pp. 35–36. For the alternative dating of Alexius’s chrysobull see Frankopan, *Byzantine Trade Privileges*, pp. 135–160, esp. p. 155.

¹² Makk, *The Árpáds*, pp. 36–41; Freed, *Frederick Barbarossa*, pp. 56–57. Géza II waged war against the margrave of Austria, Henry Jasomirgott, on September 11, 1146 and was victorious at the Battle by the river Leitha. Otto of Freising–Rahewin, *Gesta Friderici I. imperatoris*, lib. 1, c. 31–32, ed. Waitz–Simson, pp. 48–51.

¹³ Stephenson, *Byzantium’s Balkan Frontier*, pp. 229–238. Cf. Makk, *The Árpáds*, pp. 42–62.

this chaotic vying for supremacy that the ambitious Holy Roman emperor Frederick I Barbarossa decided to enter the battle for dominion over Dalmatia, or at least openly challenge Hungarian sovereignty in the region. The ambitious monarch even planned a full-scale military invasion of the Kingdom of Hungary, but the plan was not supported by the imperial princes and thus it never came to fruition.¹⁴ Barbarossa could, however, symbolically proclaim his own pretensions to the disputed province by creating *ex novo* the title of the duke of Croatia-Dalmatia and freely bestowing it upon his distinguished subject. The title was bequeathed to Conrad II of Dachau who, it is commonly argued, had helped Barbarossa climb the regal throne and was hence appropriately rewarded for his support.¹⁵

Out of all the contestants to the jurisdictions over Dalmatia, the Holy Roman Empire had the least *de iure* and *de facto* authority; the only thing Conrad II of Dachau could do with his opulent ducal title was to pompously flaunt it. Therefore, it was already Edmund Freiherr von Oefele in the late nineteenth century who famously concluded that the ducal titles of both Conrad II and his son were nothing more than merely symbolic denominations that – besides clearly revealing the emperor’s ambition to include Dalmatia and Croatia in the Holy Roman Empire – carried no real jurisdictions over the designated territories.¹⁶ Indeed, there is absolutely no trace of any activity whatsoever of either Conrad II or his son related to Dalmatia and Croatia. Conrad III would exclusively be called “duke of Dachau”, never mentioning Dalmatia or Croatia in his title.¹⁷

Notwithstanding its honorary character, Conrad’s title was subsequently bequeathed to Berthold IV of the counts of Andechs in 1180.¹⁸ However, from 1183 the title of the

¹⁴ Otto of Freising–Rahewin, *Gesta Friderici I. imperatoris*, lib. 2, c. 6, ed. Waitz–Simson, p. 107, l. 10–18; Freed, *Frederick Barbarossa*, pp. 67–68.

¹⁵ Freed, *Frederick Barbarossa*, p. 80. The argument is based on the fact that Conrad II of Dachau was present in Bamberg when king Conrad III issued his final charter, in February 1152. Thus, it is believed that Conrad II was present when the king died and, consequently, influenced the election of a new monarch. D. C. III, no. 270, ed. Hausmann, pp. 467–470. Moreover, both Conrad II of Dachau and Frederick I Barbarossa supported Welf VI against Henry Jasomirgott during the 1143 skirmishes for the Bavarian duchy. *Chronica regia Coloniensis*, a. 1143, ed. Waitz, p. 79 (the only source clearly stating Frederick’s involvement in Welf’s campaigns); Otto of Freising, *Chronica sive Historia de duabus civitatibus*, lib. 7, c. 26, ed. Hofmeister, p. 352, l. 12–15; *Historia Welforum Weingartensis*, c. 25, ed. Weiland–Pertz, p. 34; Freed, *Frederick Barbarossa*, pp. 40–41. In addition, Conrad II had even been taken prisoner by the future emperor during Frederick’s attack on Henry of Wolfratshausen in 1146, but “out of his [Frederick’s] innate nobility” the count of Dachau was released unconditionally. Otto of Freising–Rahewin, *Gesta Friderici I. imperatoris*, lib. 1, c. 26, ed. Waitz–Simson, pp. 43–44. Finally, it is also argued that Conrad II is among the *quidam de Baioaria nobiles* that joined Barbarossa on his military expeditions against duke Conrad of Zähringen in 1146. *Ibid.*, lib. 1, c. 27, ed. Waitz–Simson, p. 44, l. 11–15; Freed, *Frederick Barbarossa*, p. 42.

¹⁶ Oefele, *Geschichte*, p. 71.

¹⁷ “Auf den Dachauer war jedenfalls um so weniger Rücksicht zu nehmen, als derselbe seinen Herzogstitel nie an jene Ländernamen knüpfte, sich immer nur Herzog von Dachau nannte.” Oefele, *Geschichte*, pp. 71–72.

¹⁸ The first time the members of the comital house of Andechs appear with a ducal title is in a donation charter dated January 1181 where the duke is styled as *Ego Perchtoldus dux Dalmatie*. *Monumenta Formbacensia*, pp. 139–140, no. 10. Another often cited charter that mentions Ber-

duke of Dalmatia and Croatia started giving way to that of duke of Meran(ia), the one Conrad II used only once in public documents.¹⁹ From 1196 onwards the Dalmatian-Croatian part was completely dropped and the sole ducal title used by the heirs of the comital house of Andechs was that of Meran(ia).²⁰ What is the story behind this mysterious ducal title, what are its connections, if any, to Dalmatia-Croatia, and was this an actual imperial territory in which the title holders exerted real jurisdictional powers?

Traditionally it was believed that the Duchy of Meran stemmed from the eponymous city in the County of Tirol, indeed a territory of the Holy Roman Empire.²¹ However, already in 1803 Joseph Hormayr Freiherr zu Hortenburg, an Innsbruck-born lawyer and historian, expounded persuasive arguments in support of the thesis that Meran actually refers to a maritime part of Dalmatia and hence the confluence of the titles duke of Dalmatia-Croatia and duke of Merania.²² For

thold IV as *dux Meranie* is indeed dated *anno ab incarnatione Domini MCLXXX, indictione XII*, that is 1180, however, the document is only preserved in two later editions: a 15th-century German translation of the original 1180 donation and a confirmation of the 1180 donation by Berthold IV and his sons written between 1188 and 1204, a forged document; in both cases the titles might have been changed from the original. Oefele dated the document first to 1180 (Oefele, *Geschichte*, pp. 145–146, no. 253, citing the German edition) and the confirmation to a period between 1188 and 1204 (*ibid.*, p. 166, no. 377). The *in extenso* versions of these documents are edited in Hormayr, *Sämtliche Werke* 3, pp. 157–160 (German translation) and pp. 160–163 (confirmation). It is a historiographic consensus that the duchy was given to the counts of Andechs in 1180 – during the diet of Altenburg (September 1180) – for the same reason that the march of Styria was elevated into a duchy (also in 1180) – to remove the comital houses of Andechs and Styria from the jurisdictions of the newly appointed Bavarian duke Otto II of Wittelsbach (also in 1180). *Regesta Imperii* 4/2.3, nos. 2562 (conferment of Bavaria to Otto II of Wittelsbach), and 2563 (the elevation of Styria from a march into a duchy) ed. Opll, pp. 261–262. See also Schütz, *Das Geschlecht*, pp. 66ss; Freed, *Frederick Barbarossa*, p. 438; Lyon, *Princely Brothers*, p. 115. Note on house of Andechs naming conventions: there are currently several systems of naming in use when referring to the counts of Andechs, some that take into account the members of the older line, the counts of Diessen from which the counts of Andechs stem from, and the others that do not. According to the traditional one, used by Oefele for example, Berthold the first margrave of Istria from house Andechs who dies in 1188 is Berthold III; according to the more recent one, used by Lyon for example, this same individual would be called Berthold II, his father being Berthold I of Andechs. However, this Berthold I (termed according to Lyon's system) was also called count of Diessen (*de Diezzen*), of Plassenburg (*de Plassenberch*) and of Kamnik (*de Stein*). In regional Istrian historiography (and in national Slovenian, Croatian and Italian as well) it is much more common to use the older system of naming, the one used by Oefele, and this is the one that I will use throughout this paper. Oefele, *Geschichte*, p. 10 (Stammtafel); Tyroller, *Genealogie*, pp. 150–151, 153–154, 158–160 (Stammtafel 10); *Herzöge und Heilige*, p. 272 (Stammtafel). Cf. Lyon, *Princely Brothers*, pp. 182, 240 (appendix).

¹⁹ Oefele, *Geschichte*, p. 72.

²⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 171ss, regestum 426ss.

²¹ Popularized by a 15th century Bavarian chronicler Veit Arnpeck for example. Veit Arnpeck, *Chronica Baioariorum*, ed. Leidinger, pp. 206–207. Subsequently taken over by e.g. Köhler, *De ducibus Meraniae*, p. 9; Hormayr, *Versuch einer pragmatischen*, pp. 168–173; Schultes, *Diplomatische Beyträge*, p. 191.

²² Hormayr, *Über die*, pp. 153–172, subchapter 4 titled “Woher entstand der Herzogs-Titel von Meran?” The same arguments were delineated in his later monograph-lengthy account “Die Grafen von Andechs, Diessen, Plassenburg, Wolfratshausen und Ambrab, Markgrafen von Istrien, Pfälzgrafen in Burgund, Herzoge in Dalmatien, Kroatien und Meran”, edited in Hormayr, *Sämtliche Werke* 3, relevant passages on pp. 190–211, esp. pp. 208–10.

example, the anonymous author of *Historia peregrinorum*, a chronicle of the Third Crusade, clearly stated that Berthold IV was *dux Dalmacie sive Meranie*.²³ The same synonymous relationship is found in another crusader account, *Historia de expeditione Friderici imperatoris*, where the very count of Andechs is titled *dux Dalmatię que et Croatia seu Merania dicitur*.²⁴ Moreover, Hormayr cited both *Historia Salonitanorum* of Archdeacon Thomas and documents from *Illyricum sacrum* – an 18th-century collection of ecclesiastical primary sources pertaining to Dalmatian bishoprics edited by Daniele Farlati – that spoke of a region called *Maronia* and of a *dux Marianorum* in the context of the Kingdom of Croatia and Dalmatia.²⁵ Finally, Henry Sendlinger of Munich, continuing the world chronicle of Rudolf of Ems, wrote of “a land Meran” that “lay between Hungary and a heathen land that was once called Dalmatia”.²⁶ Based on these primary sources, Hormayr confidently concluded that the title of a *dux Meranus* must refer to a Dalmatian-Croatian region.

Throughout the nineteenth century the “Dalmatian Merania” thesis steadily gained ground at the expense of “Tirolian Merania”. Thus in 1863 Franz Xaver Krones von Marchland wrote with conviction that the Duchy of Meran(ia) cannot refer to the Tirolian city, but must connote Istria and Dalmatia; the name of the region would stem from the German “Der Lande ‘am Meere’”, and from “Meer an”, meaning literally “lands by the sea”.²⁷ This opinion was also followed by the Ljubljana-born historian August Dimitz in his multi-volume classic account of the history of Carniola.²⁸ However, it was not until a landmark publication on the history of the house of Andechs, penned by the already mentioned Bavarian historian and archivist Oefele, that a new era of research on the Duchy of Merania was ushered in.

Although Oefele simply took over the existing theses on the provenance of Meranian ducal title, chiefly the arguments propounded by Hormayr, the main value of his publication and the reason why it stood the test of time as the classic

²³ *Imperator ergo in exercitu quinque bellicas turmas instituit... Prima siquidem acies fuit incliti Sueuorum ducis... secunda Boemorum et Ungarorum... tertia Bertholdi ducis Dalmatie sive Meranie...* *Historia peregrinorum*, ed. Chroust, p. 138, l. 20–28. This chronicle was known to Hormayr and his contemporaries by way of an older edition prepared by Jacob Basnage under the title *Friderici I imperatoris cognomento Barbarossae expedition ad sepulchrum Domini ab aequaueo auctore conscripta* and published in *Thesaurus monumentorum ecclesiasticorum* 3, pp. 499–526, quoted passage on p. 509.

²⁴ *Historia de expeditione Friderici imperatoris*, ed. Chroust, p. 31, l. 14–15.

²⁵ Hormayr, *Sämtliche Werke* 3, pp. 208, 210. The relevant passage in *Historia Salonitanorum* is the following: *Istaque fuerunt regni eorum confinia... ab aquilone vero a ripa Danubii usque ad mare Dalmaticum cum tota Maronia et Chulmie ducatu*. Archdeacon Thomas of Split, *Historia Salonitanorum*, c. 13, ed. Perić et al., p. 60. The relevant document cited by Farlati in *Illyricum sacrum* 3, p. 155, refers to a *Iacobus dux Marianorum* (better edition in CD 1, no. 134, ed. Kostrenčić et al., pp. 169–170) and stems from the era of king Zvonimir (although its authenticity is questionable). I will return to the question of equating *Maronia* to *Merania* later in the paper, namely in n. 47.

²⁶ *Ein lant Meran ist genannt / Und lag zwischen Ungern und dem haidnlant / Daz hier zuvor Thalmatiana*. Quoted from Hormayr, *Sämtliche Werke* 3, p. 209.

²⁷ Marchland, *Umriss des Geschichtslebens*, pp. 51, 157.

²⁸ Dimitz, *Geschichte Krains* 1, p. 159, n. 1. The book was translated into English by Andrew J. Witter (here Dimitz, *History of Carniola*, p. 109, n. 4).

account of the history of the house Andechs-Merania lies in the appended collection of primary sources, edited as detailed *regesta*.²⁹ In full accordance with Hormayr, Oefele argued that Tirolian Merano had nothing to do with the title awarded to both counts of Dachau and those of Andechs. Instead, the Meran in question indeed referred to a jurisdictional region of the Dalmatian-Croatian Kingdom.³⁰ These claims were based on the same primary sources analyzed by Hormayr, including Farlati's *Illyricum sacrum*, *Historia Salontiana* of Archdeacon Thomas and Sendlinger's continuation of Rudolph's chronicle. Oefele even took over the linguistic explanation according to which Merania stems from German "Meer an", just like Marania does from Slavic "More", meaning sea; both names literally translate to a *maritima regio*, "a land by the sea".³¹ Finally, Oefele also cited a 14th-century *regestum* of a 1366 document enumerating the possessions that Hugo VIII of Duino (Slo./Cro. Devin, Germ. Tybein) held from the Aquileian Church; the lord was said to have had, among others, lands *in Meran sive in Croatia*.³² Based on all of these passages from the primary sources, the archivist ascertained that the Duchy of Merania was in essence a *pars pro toto* synecdoche for the Duchy of Dalmatia-Croatia.

These duchies were, concluded Oefele, only honorary titles, bestowing absolutely no jurisdictions in these territories to their respective dukes; since both titles in essence referred to the Kingdom of Dalmatia-Croatia, a polity outside of imperial jurisdictional sphere, they were only titular duchies.³³ The Bavarian historian, however, had to somehow explain the two mentions of a *Ducatus Maraniae* in sources from 1221 that explicitly posited this mysterious territory to the east of the river Livenza in Friuli. Namely, in the conflict between the commune of Treviso and the Patriarchate of Aquileia, the patriarch demanded in July 1221 that the Trevisans return all the occupied territories *ab aqua Lipientiae a montibus ad mare per totum Forumiulium usque ad Ducatum Meraniae*.³⁴ The papal legate who was sent to arbitrate the conflict decreed in August of the same year that the commune of Treviso was to hand over to the Patriarchate *omnia loca, castra et villas constitutas ab aqua Lipientiae ad Ducatum Meraniae a montibus usque ad mare per totum Forumiulium*.³⁵ Oefele offered an explanation: *Ducatus Meraniae* in these two sources must refer to "all the possessions of the counts of Andechs in Carinthia, Styria and Carniola", but only

²⁹ Oefele, *Geschichte*, pp. 107–219, a total of 703 *regesta*; a further 24 documents were published *in extenso* on pp. 223–249.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 71–3.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 72.

³² This was a new piece of evidence, unknown to Hormayr. Oefele cited the *regestum* of the document from the edition of *Thesaurus Ecclesiae Aquileiensis* edited by Giuseppe Bianchi. TEA, no. 1264, ed. Bianchi, pp. 358–359. To this day, the *in extenso* version of this charter has not been found. The *regestum* in question was not made by Odorico I Susanna, who compiled the majority of the *regesta* and whose work, titled *Thesauri claritas*, forms the majority of Bianchi's edition, but by his son John, who continued his father's work. The entire project was finished by John's son, Odorico II. On *Thesaurus ecclesiae Aquileiensis* see Corgnali, *Intorno al*, pp. 11–35, esp. p. 18.

³³ Oefele, *Geschichte*, pp. 71–72.

³⁴ *Documenta historiae foroiuliensis*, no. 64, ed. Bianchi, pp. 26–28 (quotation on p. 27).

³⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 66, ed. Bianchi, p. 30.

up to river Isonzo in the east as this was Friuli's easternmost border.³⁶ To validate this thesis, the archivist cited a document from 1254 issued by Hartmann Junior, the count of Kyburg, that mentions "all dependencies or properties, castles, villages and jurisdictions existing in the dioceses of Chur and Konstanz [belonging] to the Duchy of Merania" – here the term *Ducatus Meraniae* is indeed used to designate the entire domain of the comital house of Andechs.³⁷

The thesis on the Croatian provenance of the Duchy of Merania was widely accepted by subsequent generations of historians, but the precise location of this Dalmatian-Croatian "land by the sea" remained a mystery for decades. For example, August Dimitz claimed, only partially in accordance with Oefele, that Merania "refers to the Margraviate of Istria", probably because the counts of Andechs held the title of Istrian margraves from 1173 to 1208.³⁸ Georg Herlitz was no more precise when he wrote in 1909 that Merania is "a Dalmatian coastline that first belonged to Istria".³⁹ Regardless of the fact that this maritime region could not be located more precisely, there was a general consensus that *Ducatus Meranie* was only a titular duchy and that it referred to a coastline region of Dalmatian-Croatian kingdom.⁴⁰

It was not until Ljudmil Hauptmann published his landmark study on medieval Carniola that the territory of Merania was finally exactly demarcated.⁴¹ The Slovenian historian accomplished this feat by analyzing two famous narrative sources discussing the early medieval borders of the Kingdom of Croatia in relation to Merania. According to the older text – the famous treatise written in 10th century by the Byzantine emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenite later dubbed *De administrando imperio* – the eastern borders of the Kingdom of Croatia-Dalmatia reached as far as the "frontiers of Istria" and the town of Labin (Ital. Albona) (but not including it).⁴² However, the second source – a century and a half younger account penned by

³⁶ Oefele, *Geschichte*, p. 73, n. 2.

³⁷ *Nos Hartmannus junior de Kiburc notum facimus universis presentes litteras inspecturis, quod nobilis vir Hugo comes palatinus Burgundie et nobilis A. comitissa palatina uxor eius dederunt nobis pro dote seu maritaggio Elizabeth filie eorundem primogenite uxoris nostre mille Marcas argenti boni... et quicquid iuris habebant et habere debebant in castro quod dicitur Linzeborc et suis appendiciis ac rebus aliis, castris, villis et iuribus existentibus in Curiensi et Constantinensi diocesibus ad dominium ducatus Meranie... spectantibus. Urkunden für die Geschichte der Stadt Bern*, no. 328, ed. Zeerleder, pp. 446–447 (quotation on 446). Oefele, *Geschichte*, p. 73, n. 2.

³⁸ Dimitz, *Geschichte Krains* 1, p. 159, n. 1.

³⁹ "Ein Küstenstrich in Dalmatien, der Istrien zunächst gelegen war, trug der namen 'Meran'." Herlitz, *Geschichte der Herzöge*, pp. 19–20.

⁴⁰ There were, on the other hand, different opinions. E.g. in 1903 Dane Gruber took over the "Tirolian Merania" thesis that he based on a completely wrong reading of Oefele. The Croatian historian argued that Tirolian Meran owes its name to Croatian migrants from Dalmatia who called their new home in Tirol "the land of mariners". Gruber, *Bertold Meranski*, p. 19. The thesis merits no further comment and even Gruber himself later gave up on the argument and, one would assume, re-read Oefele. Gruber, *Povijest Istre*, p. 86.

⁴¹ Hauptmann, *Krain*, pp. 315–484 (German original) = *Nastanek in razvoj Kranjske* (Slovenian translation). I will be citing from the Slovenian edition.

⁴² "From the river of Zentina begins the country of Croatia and stretches along, on the side of the coast as far as the frontiers of Istria, that is, to the city of Alburnum, and on the side

the prolific Arab cosmographer Muhammad Al-Idrisi as part of his famed *Book of King Roger* – positions the western Croatian border between the towns of Lovran (Ital. Laurana) and Bakar, the former being “the last maritime town of Aquileian land”, the latter “the first of the lands of Croatia that take the name of Dalmatia”.⁴³ Based on these historical accounts, there was only room for one conclusion: the western border of the Kingdom of Croatia moved between the late 10th and mid-12th centuries from the Učka mountain range (Ital. Monte Maggiore) to the river Rječina (Ital. Fiumara) – this territory was annexed to “Aquileian land” at the expense of the Croatian-Dalmatian kingdom. In this context “Aquileian land” could only refer to Istria, a margraviate of the Holy Roman Empire under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Aquileian patriarchs who, moreover, owned the most landed estates on the Peninsula.⁴⁴ Furthermore, the Aquileian *ministeriales* lords of Duino with lands *in Meran sive in Croatia* held, among others, the towns of Mošćenice (Ital. Moschiena), Veprinac (Ital. Apriano), Kastav (Ital. Castua) and Rijeka (Ital. Fiume) – all these places are situated exactly between the Učka mountain range and Rječina (see map 1).⁴⁵ Thus, the mystery of Merania was solved at last and

of the mountain country it encroaches some way upon the province of Istria.” Constantine the Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, c. 30, ed. Moravcsik, trans. Jenkins, pp. 145, 147. It was Mommsen who famously ascertained that Labin did not belong to Croatia, *usque ad* meaning “up to, but not including”. Mommsen, *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* 3, p. 389. Chapter 30 was not written by the emperor, but by another, anonymous author. Bury, *The Treatise*, pp. 524–525, 556–561. See also Ančić, *Zamišljanje tradicije*, pp. 133–151, esp. pp. 143ss.

⁴³ The full title of Al-Idrisi’s book is literally translated as “The Book of Pleasant Journeys into Faraway Lands” and it is conventionally called *Opus geographicum* in Latin or *The Book of King Roger* after the commissioner of the work, king Roger II of Sicily. The entire work has been edited in original Arabic and published as Al-Idrīsī, *Opus geographicum, sive “Liber ad eorum delectationem qui terras peragrarare studeant”*, ed. Cerulli et al., 9 vols (Napoli 1970–1984). I have not consulted this edition. The chapters dedicated to Italy and its neighbors, including Croatia, were edited in original Arabic and translated into modern Italian as *L’Italia descritta nel “Libro del Re Ruggero” compilato da Edrisi*, ed. Amari–Schiaparelli, relevant passages on pp. 83–84, 106. I will be citing exclusively from this edition, namely the Italian translation. On Al-Idrisi see Oman, *Al-Idrisi*, pp. 1032–1035. See also Baldazzi, *Il Mediterraneo*, pp. 160–164.

⁴⁴ The patriarchs of Aquileia expanded their possessions and jurisdictions in Istria by way of royal/imperial donations and *donationes pro remedio animae* of distinguished Istrian lords. Thus, the Church of Aquileia acquired the town of Muggia (Slo./Cro. Milje) in 931 by way of a donation of Italian kings Hugo and Lothar; in 977 the patriarchs bought Izola (Ital. Isola) from a Venetian Vitale Candiano; Pićan (Ital. Pedena), Stari Pazin (Ital. Pisinvecchio) and Plomin (Ital. Fianona) were donated to Aquileian Church by Saxon emperors, namely Otto III and Henry II; the regal rights over the bishoprics of Poreč, Trieste and Pula, including the right to appoint and invest bishops, were donated by emperor Henry IV in 1081, 1082 and 1093 respectively; in 1096 Nigrinjan (Ital. Nigrignano) was donated to the Aquileian Church by a John, son of Rantulf; Petrapilosa (Ital. Pietrapelosa, Germ. Rauenstein) was donated by duke Henry of Eppenstein in 1102 and a princely donation by Ulrich II, the son of Ulrich I of Weimar-Orlamünde brought numerous castles and walled hill-top towns under the lay *potestas* of Aquileian prelates. Benussi, *Nel Medio evo*, pp. 288–307. For the donation of Ulrich II, including the best edition of the charter, its facsimile and translation into modern English, Banić, *Donationes pro remedio*, pp. 45–67.

⁴⁵ This is known from the testament of Hugo VIII of Duino analyzed by Peter Štih and Miha Kosi. The testament is held in the Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv in Vienna in the collection *Allgemeine Urkundenreihe*, sign. AUR 1374 VI 24. Two other towns of Merania region, Lovran

the jurisdictional microregion could finally be precisely outlined: it was the small maritime territory on the eastern coast of the Istrian peninsula stretching from the town of Brseč (Ital. Bersezio) to the river Rječina and bordering the Kingdom of Croatia-Dalmatia.⁴⁶ Consequently, the *Maronia* and *dux Marianorum* cannot refer to the Duchy of Merania in question as the *Maronia* mentioned by Archdeacon Thomas refers to the island part of the Split diocese.⁴⁷ Even though Hormayr and Oefele were wrong to connect Merania with the Dalmatian Maronia, they were ultimately right in concluding that Merania refers to a Croatian-Dalmatian territory.

Moreover, not only was the geographical location of Merania uncovered, but it was also ascertained that this jurisdictional region had been torn away from the Kingdom of Croatia and indeed put under the *potestas* of the Holy Roman Empire. Consequently, the dukes of Merania could have had real jurisdictional powers in their duchy; however insignificant and small it may have been, Merania was not necessarily a merely titular duchy. As a result of this new interpretation, the sources from 1221 mentioning a *Ducatus Meraniae* to the east of river Livenza would refer to the actual Duchy of Merania, situated at the easternmost border of the Patriarchate of Aquileia.⁴⁸

However, solving the mystery of the exact location of Merania simply engendered a larger riddle – it remained to be uncovered how, when, and why the Kingdom of Croatia lost this territory in the first place, why it was conferred upon the counts of Dachau, then the counts of Andechs and, lastly, the Patriarchate of Aquileia. To this day there are only three accepted theses regarding these questions and all of them, as shall be demonstrated, are lacking in support. The present paper thus offers a new solution to these interpretative problems by closely (re)examining all the primary sources attesting to the putative takeover of Merania and contextualizing the change of jurisdictions differently from the dominant historiographical narratives. First, the three theses will be presented in detail along with all the counterarguments. According

(Ital. Laurana) and Brseč (Ital. Bersezio), belonged to the counts of Gorizia (see map 1). For all of this see Kosi, *Spopad na prehode*, pp. 40ss, n. 137. For the transcription of the relevant part of Hugo VIII's testament, Štih, *I conti*, p. 143, n. 7.

⁴⁶ Hauptmann, *Nastanek*, pp. 78–83. There were, however, disagreements with Hauptmann's location of Merania. E.g. Erwin Herrmann published a paper in 1975 in which he tried to argue that the Duchy of Merania refers to a territory between the rivers Tagliamento and Corno. Herrmann, *Die Grafen*, pp. 1–35, esp. 10–14. Such theses have been met with little success. For a historiographic overview of this issue see also Aigner, *Vojvodina Meranija*, pp. 39–54 (bilingual Slovenian/German edition).

⁴⁷ This was famously argued by Stjepan Gunjača, taken over by Mirjana Matijević-Sokol, the leading authority on *Historia Salontiana*, and subsequently by the editors of the English translation of Thomas's chronicle. Gunjača, *Ispravci i dopune* 3, pp. 102–105; Matijević-Sokol, *Toma Arhiđakon*, p. 135; Archdeacon Thomas of Split, *Historia Salonitanorum*, c. 13, ed. Perić et al., p. 61, esp. n. 8 where the editors correctly define Maronia as “the insular part of the archdiocese of Split, later to be separated from it and made into the bishopric of Hvar (the islands of Brač, Hvar and Vis)”. The *dux Marianorum* would thus have to refer to a royal official with jurisdictions in (roughly) the same area. The old opinion that *dux Marianorum* refers to the independent rulers of the Narentines has successfully been deconstructed and proven untenable in Ančić, *Miho Barada*, pp. 17–43.

⁴⁸ Hauptmann, *Nastanek*, p. 83.

to their proposed main protagonists of the Meranian takeover they will be dubbed the “Royal Thesis”, the “Ulrich Thesis” and the “Duino Thesis” respectively. Once all leading interpretations have been deconstructed, the paper will introduce the new thesis as well as the contextual framework in which it is embedded. Finally, the study concludes with counterarguments to the newly proposed thesis, demonstrating that while some aspects may be challenged due to the quantity and quality of surviving primary sources, the new interpretation is nevertheless a significant improvement over the existing historiographical narratives.

Solution 1: The “Royal Thesis”

The first influential historiographical narrative regarding the jurisdictions over Merania was penned by Bernardo Benussi, a champion of 19th-century Istrian medieval history.⁴⁹ Benussi based his thesis on a very biased reading of *De administrando imperio*, specifically c. 30. According to the Rovinj-born historian, the old Roman border between Istria and Liburnia had indeed been the river Raša (Ital. Arsia), but by the second half of the 6th century this border had already shifted to the river Rječina, *Tarsia* in Latin.⁵⁰ Benussi based this argument on the 14th-century Venetian chronicle written by Andrea Dandolo, the future doge who indeed wrote of Istrian borders during the Avar incursions that had been *ab urbe Tarsia*.⁵¹ This shift from *Arsia* to *Tarsia* occurred, according to Benussi, already in the age of emperor Constantine I in the 4th century. In support of this argument Benussi cited Mommsen who simply wrote that “whether Plomin was incorporated to Istria in the age of Constantine, or whether it continued to be attributed to Dalmatia, is uncertain”.⁵² As this very emperor territorially reorganized the Empire and since “Istrian bishoprics appear to already exist at the time of this sovereign”, Benussi felt there was no need to back his argument any further.⁵³

This borderline at Rječina, continued Benussi, also moved and this is corroborated by Constantine Porphyrogenite who wrote that “the hills mark its [Istrian] borders to Dalmatia”.⁵⁴ These “hills”, Benussi claimed, could only refer to Ćićarija as Labin mentioned in *De administrando imperio* as the city bordering Istria and Croatia, was not Croatian, but Istrian. Benussi’s thesis rests partly on Mommsen’s reading of c. 30 of Porphyrogenite’s manual according to which the *usque ad Albo-*

⁴⁹ On Bernardo Benussi see Ivetic–Radossi, *Prefazione*, pp. 5–14.

⁵⁰ Benussi, *Nel Medio evo*, pp. 56–58. His most detailed account of this shift from *Arsia* to *Tarsia* is idem, *Tharsatica*, pp. 162–178.

⁵¹ Andrea Dandolo, *Chronica per extensum descripta*, c. 2, ed. Pastorello, p. 86, l. 31.

⁵² Mommsen, *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* 3, p. 389.

⁵³ Benussi, *Nel Medio evo*, p. 60; idem, *Tharsatica*, pp. 165–166, 177, 181, 182–183.

⁵⁴ “Costantino Porfirogenito ci dice che dal tempo in cui L’Istria fu ridotta a provincia militare (Thema), i monti segnavano il suo confine verso la Dalmazia.” Benussi, *Nel Medio evo*, p. 57. This shift from Rječina to the Učka mountain range is also explicated in more detail in Idem, *Tharsatica*, pp. 169–171.

nam must be understood as “up to Labin, but not including it”.⁵⁵ This indeed is the most logical reading of the passage and to this day it is the dominant interpretation of the passage. Moreover, already in 1012 Plomin (Ital. Fianona) in the district of Labin was confirmed by emperor Henry II as a temporal possession of Aquileian Church, donated by his predecessors during the age of “counts Poppo and Sizo”.⁵⁶ While Benussi admitted that the mountain ranges of Učka and Ćićarija represent the natural, easily-defensible boundary, he nonetheless continued to interpret river *Tarsia* as the westernmost border of Croatia. The reasons for such an interpretation were the following: on the one hand, there were no “županijas” (territorial organization of medieval Croatian kingdom that could be translated as counties) northwest of Lika as he could not find them mentioned in Rački’s collection of Croatian primary sources, while on the other hand the bishop of Pula had jurisdiction over not only Labin and Plomin, but over the entire territory to the east of Učka up to the river Rječina, including Rijeka.⁵⁷ Therefore, while the easternmost border of Istria had in fact moved from Rječina to Ćićarija during the age of “barbaric” (Avar and Slavic) incursions of 6th and 7th centuries, this mysterious territory between Rijeka and Učka had, argued Benussi, not been a part of the Croatian kingdom – it was reconquered by the Franks already in the 9th century and formed part of *Regnum Italiae*.⁵⁸ In this line of argumentation Benussi was blinded by his unrepentant nationalism and strong anti-Slavic sentiment, usual for his day and age.⁵⁹ However, arguments catalyzed through such means are bound to be flawed and untenable.

⁵⁵ Benussi, *Nel Medio evo*, p. 57; Idem, *Tharsatica*, p. 170. See n. 42 in this paper.

⁵⁶ D. H. II, no. 243, ed. Sickel, pp. 279–280. These counts can only be dated to 10th century. Benussi, *Nel Medio evo*, pp. 329–330.

⁵⁷ Benussi, *Nel medio evo*, pp. 58, 62–64, 68, n. 190, but cf. p. 538; idem, *Tharsatica*, pp. 172–173. This fact regarding the ecclesiastic jurisdictions of bishops of Pula Benussi based on 17th-century description of Istria penned by Giacomo Tomasini. See n. 75 in this paper.

⁵⁸ This point was most emphatically made in his later writings. E.g. in 1922 he wrote that “[d]a quando appare nei documenti, Fiume non appartenne mai alla Croazia. Subordinata dall’epoca carolingica all’ autorità secolare dei vescovi di Pola, fu considerata parte della provincia aquileiese e con ciò del reame italico.” Benussi, *Il feudo*, p. 127. See also idem, *Tharsatica*, pp. 171, 176–177 where the author supports this thesis by citing the charter issued by Otto III to Aquileian patriarch John in 996, confirming the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Aquileian See over “the bishopric of Trsat” (Ital. Tersatto, near Rijeka). This is the only mentions of this *episcopatus Tarsaticensis* and the charter must be read in the context of disputes between the patriarchs of Aquileia and Grado (as well as between Aquileia and the Bishopric of Poreč) over the primacy of their Sees in the region, especially in Istria. It is in this momentous struggle that patriarch John IV sought “confirmation” of his jurisdictions from emperor Otto III based on the forged charter allegedly issued by Charlemagne in 803 (the forged charter must be dated to the 10th century) by which the Patriarchate of Aquileia received jurisdictions over all Istrian bishoprics, including the non-existent ones such as Rovinj and Trsat. Thus, the 996 charter does not testify to Aquileian secular dominion over Trsat and, consequently, over the territory between Učka mountain range and Rječina. Instead, it testifies to John IV’s attempts at securing the victory for his Church against the Patriarchate of Grado for the supreme ecclesiastical jurisdiction in Istria. The charter is edited in D. O. III, no. 215, ed. Sickel, pp. 626–627. On this charter see Leicht, *Il diploma ottoniano*, pp. 1–8, esp. pp. 2–5. On John IV, Tilatti, *Giovanni IV*, <http://www.dizionariobiograficodefriulani.it/giovanni-iv/> [last access: 04. 08. 2019].

⁵⁹ For a general context on how these issues manifested in historiography of this specific frontier region see Zabbia, *Ricerca medievistica*, pp. 221–241.

Thus, there was no Merania for this historian. There was only Istria up to river Rječina or mount Čičarija later, and from Rječina to the east there was Croatia. That would in turn lead to the conclusion that the Duchy of Merania was indeed a mere titular duchy referring to Dalmatia and Croatia and the Istrian historian did not fail to cite Oefele whose thesis he adopted.⁶⁰ However, he still had to explain how exactly this entire territory from Učka to Rječina ended up with the lords of Duino.

Benussi's solution was simple: the secular jurisdictions were simply given over to house Duino by the bishops of Pula who had in turn received the entire territory by way of a royal donation, issued sometime during the 9th or 10th century.⁶¹ The argument is based on two primary sources. First, there are 15th-century notes from the bishop of Pula Dominic de Luschi who wrote explicitly of his jurisdictions in the region in question, especially of various tributes in kind that were due to him by the lords of Walsee, the heirs to house Duino.⁶² According to De Luschi, the *census* owed to the bishop by the lords of Walsee comprised of one falcon, one riding horse and two hunting dogs. These symbolic gifts – nicely drawn on top of De Luschi's original notes – were due to every new bishop for their ingress into the Bishopric.⁶³ Specifically, this tribute was due for Rijeka, Kastav, Veprinac and Mošćenice, and this was enough for Benussi to ascertain the centuries-long secular jurisdiction of bishops of Pula over these territories.

However, upon closer reading it becomes clear that the secular lordship is not implied in these notes; the tribute is not due because the bishop had once been the temporal lord of these places, but because – and this is explicitly stated by De Luschi – the lords of Walsee (and one can suppose the lords of Duino before them) were given rights to levy tithes in these places.⁶⁴ Therefore, it was only the episcopal tithes that had been enfeoffed, not the entire temporal jurisdiction over the towns in question. This is further corroborated by the fact that the book of incomes of the Bishopric of Pula from the same period, 1426/29, feature detailed lists of various dues collected in Pula and its dependencies, in Medulin and the adjacent villages, in Vodnjan and Bale, in Labin and even in the distant Kostanjica in northern Istria, but at no place does it mention any incomes from places between Brseč and Rijeka – *in Meran sive in Croatia*.⁶⁵ At the same time, the tax roll (*urbarium*) of the counts of Walsee from c. 1400 explicitly lists the tithes (*zehent*) from all of the mentioned

⁶⁰ Benussi, *Nel Medio evo*, p. 397.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 258–259; Benussi, *L'Istria*, pp. 116–117; *idem*, *Tharsatica*, pp. 183–187. The most detailed argumentation of this thesis is *idem*, *Il feudo*, pp. 97–111.

⁶² These notes are edited in Gnirs, *Die Noten*, pp. 23–28.

⁶³ *Tenetur dominus de Valsa in quolibet episcopo novo dare unum equum parafredum et duos canes vibriseos id est braccos et unum avem austurem*. Gnirs, *Die Noten*, p. 25; Benussi, *Il feudo*, p. 103.

⁶⁴ *Omnia praedicta loca suprascripta vicelicet terram Fluminis, Castrum Castoe, Castrum Val Prenaz, Castrum Moscanic ... quibus locis ipse dominus de Valsa decimas exigit, quas et loca praedicta primo erant episcopatu et data fuerunt in feudum*. Gnirs, *Die Noten*, p. 25; Benussi, *Il feudo*, p. 103.

⁶⁵ Gnirs, *Zwei Rechnungsbücher*; *idem*, *Die Noten*, p. 25; Benussi, *Il feudo*, p. 103.

towns.⁶⁶ This practice of enfeoffing episcopal tithes to lay nobles is a phenomenon common to the entire medieval Latin Christendom and the ecclesiastical province of Aquileia exemplifies this practice perfectly.⁶⁷ For example, the tithes of Izola (Ital. Isola) belonged to the bishop of Trieste – not because his bishopric owned Izola as a temporal possession, but because it was part of his diocese – who enfeoffed it to count Engelbert II of Gorizia,⁶⁸ the bishop of Poreč enfeoffed tithes of Rovinj – a town not under his secular rule, but ecclesiastical – to a variety of his retainers, some even on quite inimical terms with the bishop.⁶⁹ Thus, when De Luschi writes that “these dogs show the maximum lord of my Church and Bishopric”, and that “I was ready to forsake the dogs if the said places and towns were to return to my Bishopric”, he simply refers to the right to collect episcopal tithes in the peripheral areas of his diocese; even though this right had been enfeoffed by his predecessors and the due tribute had not been paid “for over fifty years”, it nonetheless remained the prerogative of his Church that the unyielding bishop wanted fully acknowledged.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Kos, *Jedan urbar*, pp. 3–20, esp. p. 11 where Kos correctly states that “[t]ithe is a levy that was originally paid to the Church. In the period of our tax roll’s composition it [the tithe] was already in the hands of lay feudal lords”.

⁶⁷ Boyd, *Tithes and Parishes*, esp. pp. 90–91, 147–148, 151–153 (discusses a case from Piran in Istria from the 13th century), 165–177; Constable, *Monastic Tithes*, esp. pp. 113–114; Castagnetti, *La decima*, pp. 215–233; idem, *Le decime*, pp. 507–530; Eldevik, *Episcopal Power*, esp. pp. 10–15. Like the majority of northern Italy and the entire Veneto region, Istria too was a region of *quartesium* or *quartese* – one fourth of total tithe was always reserved for the local parish. The statute of Veprinac from 1507 testifies explicitly to this practice: “Our law is to give a tenth of grain and wine and lambs of which a fourth part goes to the priest” (orig. *Zakon naš e, da imamo gdi dat desetinu žita i vina i ênac; od toga grê popom četrti del.*). *Veprinački zakon*, cap. 35, ed. Margetić, p. 156. On *quartese* see e.g. Boyd, *Tithes and Parishes*, pp. 119ss.

⁶⁸ Izola was a temporal possession of the Patriarchate of Aquileia, purchased from Vitale Candiano, a Venetian citizen, by patriarch Radoald and confirmed by emperor Otto II in 977. D. O. II, no. 154, ed. Sickel, p. 174. The bishop of Trieste first enfeoffed the tithes of Izola to count Engelbert II of Gorizia who subsequently gave them to Ulrich II, patriarch of Aquileia, who in turn bequeathed them to St. Mary’s monastery in Aquileia. All this is read from the privilege of pope Alexander II issued to this monastery from April 1174. The best edition of this charter is *Urkunden des Klosters S. Maria*, no. 23, ed. Härtel, pp. 111–114. Noticeable is the same wording used by De Luschi centuries later where tithes and the corresponding place are both mentioned as belonging to the bishopric: *Wernhardus Tergestinus episcopus decimam cuiusdam loci sui Episcopatus cui Insula nominatur*. Again, this does not, just like in the writings of De Luschi, refer to secular ownership. CDI 1, no. 146, ed. Kandler, p. 284.

⁶⁹ E.g. CDI 1, nos. 167 and 168, ed. Kandler, pp. 315–316, and pp. 317–318. That the Bishopric of Poreč exercised only ecclesiastical and not also temporal rule over Rovinj was ascertained already by Benussi. Benussi, *Storia documentata di Rovigno*, pp. 42–50; idem, *Nel Medio evo*, pp. 226–227. An insightful paper on various disagreements (to put it very mildly) between bishops and their *milites*, very much comparable to examples from medieval Istria, is Reuter, *Filii matris nostrae*, pp. 241–276.

⁷⁰ *Ipsi vero canes maximum dominum ostendebant ecclesie et Episcopatus mey ... Et si sibi durum videtur; canes sibi dimittere paratus eram, si loca et castra predicta rederet Episcopatus mey*. Gnirs, *Die Noten*, p. 28; Benussi, *Il feudo*, p. 104. In the book of accounts of the Bishopric of Pula there is only one single entry mentioning *decime terre Fluminis* and it is mentioned in the context of expenditures, not incomes. Namely, the bishop of Pula paid three pounds of small denari to a certain *hostiarius*, who brought the tithes of Rijeka to Pula. Gnirs, *Die Noten*, p. 23. This is the only entry mentioning tithes from any place east of Učka in the book of accounts of

As an interesting side note, once the adamant De Luschis finally received his two dogs, he named them “Walsee” and “Duino”.⁷¹

This old argument that the bishops of Pula were the temporal lords of the entire territory to the east of the Učka mountain range up to Rijeka stems from pre-scientific historiography, namely the writings of an early modern historian, the Gorizian humanist Martin Bauzer (1595–1668).⁷² It was this scholar that wrote in his *Historia rerum Noricarum et Foroiuliensium* that the towns of Rijeka, Kastav, Veprinac and Mošćenice had once belonged to the Bishopric of Pula, that they were bequeathed to the lords of Duino and, in 1400, to their successors, the lords of Walsee; he even mentions the exact tribute that was due to every new bishop by these lords, precisely as described by Luchis.⁷³ Although Bauzer’s historical writings have been judged as “worthless for older periods”, it is clear that this particular passage stems from the same 15th-century notes of bishop De Luchis as it explicitly mentions the lords of Walsee and the impositions in kind owed to the bishop.⁷⁴ Other historians and chorographers of the era, most notably Giacomo Tomasini who also wrote in mid-17th century, only noted “very extensive jurisdictions” of the bishops of Pula, “encompassing many places of the Empire, among which Rijeka is prominent, a populous land situated opposite of Trieste, where at times the bishops reside due to cleanliness of air”.⁷⁵ Virtually identical was the description of his contemporary Prospero Petronio.⁷⁶ Thus it was only Bauzer who interpreted the bishops of Pula as worldly lords who had enfeoffed their secular possessions to the

Pula’s bishops and it does not even list these as incomes, so this line in itself does not prove the bishopric’s right to collect *decimae* in these lands as was argued by Benussi. Benussi, *Il feudo*, p. 106. Cf. Klen, *Feudalna desetina*, pp. 287–299, esp. pp. 287–88, who erroneously insists on a strict division between ecclesiastic and secular tithes, concluding that “[t]here are no notices thus far that would attest to simultaneous collection of both secular and ecclesiastic tithes in Rijeka.” Namely, there was only one tithe, ecclesiastic in origin, of which one fourth was universally reserved to the local chapter – the *quartese*. As bishops and archbishops began enfeoffing their tithes – the remaining three fourths that is – the *quartese* began to be called, somewhat misleadingly, “the ecclesiastical tithe” as opposed to “the secular tithe”; both were in fact simply parts of a single ecclesiastical tithe and this notion obviously eluded Klen.

⁷¹ *Quibus canibus imposui nomen uni Valsa, altero Duyno*. Gnirs, *Die Noten*, p. 28; Benussi, *Il feudo*, p. 104.

⁷² On Martin Bauzer (called Baučer in Slovenian) see Grossi, *Bauzer, Martino* <http://www.dizionariobiograficodefriulani.it/bauzer-martino/> [last access: 04. 08. 2019]; Mihelič, *Bavčer, Martin* <https://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi136331/> [last access: 04. 08. 2019].

⁷³ The full passage, quoted by Benussi, is: *Fluminis oppidum, Castua, Veprinacium et Moscheniza vici feruntur quondam fuisse fisci Pollensis Ecclesiae, collati fiduciae dynastarum Duinensium quorum ultimus memoratur Hugo ... quo mortuo ad annum salutis 1400, dynasta de Walda (Rupertus) institutus de Duino, de Senoseza, de Guteneco, de Flumine, Castua, Veprinacii et Moscheniza castellis, de quibus ultimis locis eo pacto institutus fertur a Polensi praesule ut quemvis novum praesulem, nova honoraret donatione duorum venaticorum canum, unius asturis et pulli equini eleganter exornati, ut eius loci documenta habent*. Benussi, *Il feudo*, pp. 97–98. The original Latin text remains unedited, only Slovenian translation has so far been published. Martin Bauzer, *Zgodovina Norika i Furlanije*, trans. Jelinčič.

⁷⁴ Grafenauer, *Struktura in tehnika*, p. 219. Mihelič, *Vloga Martina Bavčerja*, pp. 235–242.

⁷⁵ Tomasini, *De commentarij storici-geografici*, p. 471.

⁷⁶ Petronio, *Memorie sacre*, p. 261.

lords of Duino, and this argument rested exclusively upon the already discussed bishop De Luschi's notes. The same argument found its way into the writings of Angelo Vidovich, a 19th-century canon of Pula's chapter, who wrote that "the cities of Rijeka, plus Kožljak, Nova Vas (Ital. Villanova d' Arsa), Šušnjevića, Paz, Kastav, Veprinac and Mošćenice are places not only under spiritual, but temporal dominion of the bishops of Pula, and this is known from the old cadaster from the time of bishop Dom. de Luschi who died in 1451".⁷⁷ Again, Vidovich's argument is based on the same source, only this time with more places added to the list; all of these localities were indeed under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Bishopric of Pula, but no source attests to the supreme temporal authority exercised by the bishops.

This was, it seems, enough to forge the myth of worldly authority of the bishops of Pula that was subsequently popularized by the likes of Pietro Kandler (who read Vidovich), Rodolfo Pichler (who read Kandler), Max Doblinger (who read Pichler) and Carlo de Franceschi (who read Kandler and who has been read by every subsequent generation of Istrian historians).⁷⁸ Moreover, a scholar following in their footsteps and the author of an influential and voluminous monograph on the history of Rijeka, Giovanni Kobler, even "ascertained" the year of the original enfeoffment: 1139.⁷⁹ At this point it is needless to state that this is also completely ungrounded in primary sources; the lords of Duino indeed appear in historical records for the very first time precisely in 1139, but this document mentions neither the Bishopric of Pula, nor any territory situated between Učka and Rječina.⁸⁰ The year 1139 was simply picked as "the most likely period" when the supposed enfeoffment took place. The subsequent generation of less careful historians simply overlooked the "supposed" part of the argument and took the year 1139 as the date when the lords of Duino began exercising their jurisdictions in Rijeka, Veprinac, Kastav and Mošćenice.⁸¹

For Benussi, however, there was another source that led him to believe that there was more to the bishop's powers than merely ecclesiastic authority. Namely, in his study on the castle of Duino Rodolfo Pichler cited a document from 1312 that purportedly mentions the lords of Duino as holding Rijeka from the bishops

⁷⁷ This work, titled *Memorie sacre attinenti alla storia ecclesiastica della chiesa di Pola*, is still unedited. The original passage is quoted by Benussi: *Inoltre la città di Fiume, più Cosliaco, Villanova, Susgnevizza, Pas, Castova, Veprinac, e Moschenitze erano luoghi dipendenti dai vescovi di Pola e nello spirituale e nel temporale, come si ha dai catastici antichi ancor sotto il vescovo Dom. de Luschi che morì nel 1451*. Benussi, *Il feudo*, p. 101.

⁷⁸ Kandler, *Indicazioni*, p. 19; CDI 4, no. 1034, ed. Kandler, p. 1771; Pichler, *Il castello di Duino*, pp. 138, 165, 235; Doblinger, *Die Herren von Walsee*, pp. 334, 531–532; De Franceschi, *L'Istria*, pp. 98, 233, 434.

⁷⁹ De Franceschi, *L'Istria*, p. 434, citing personal communication with Kobler. Kobler, *Memorie* 1, pp. 47, 51, 258, although he never explained his argumentation for this very dating (Benussi does that for him in one of his more amusing inner dialogues, see Benussi, *Il feudo*, p. 113).

⁸⁰ CDI 1, no. 133, ed. Kandler, pp. 262–263. See also Kosi, *Spopad na prehode*, p. 40.

⁸¹ Simoniti, *Statut Mošćenica*, p. 98; Darovec, *A Brief History*, p. 30 (dating it to "the first half of 12th century"); Fabjanović, *Kastavština*, <http://istra.lzmk.hr/clanak.aspx?id=1325> [last access: 04. 08. 2019].

of Pula and not from the counts of Gorizia, their seigniors.⁸² Although Benussi criticized Pichler for not editing the source *in extenso*, he nonetheless took over these notices as given.⁸³ Thus, Benussi emphatically concluded that he “had no doubt whatsoever” that “Rijeka with Kastav, Veprinac and Mošćenice had been enfeoffed by the Bishopric of Pula to the lords of Duino and to the lords of Walsee”.⁸⁴ Not only was in this way the Aquileian regestum mentioning lands in *Meran sive Croatia* completely neglected, but the 1312 document in question – housed in Austrian Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv in Vienna in *Allgemeine Urkundenreihe* collection under signature AUR 4151 – does not mention the bishops of Pula in any way whatsoever, let alone as the putative lords of Rijeka; this part was simply inferred by Pichler and uncritically taken over by Benussi.⁸⁵

Even though these writings do not explicitly testify to the worldly authority of the bishops of Pula, they were nonetheless traditionally read as the definitive proofs that the bishops of Pula had originally been the secular lords of these towns and that they had subsequently enfeoffed them to the lords of Duino. The only thing that Benussi needed to solve was how the bishops of Pula became the worldly lords of this territory in the first place. His solution was imaginative: the bishops must have received the entire region by way of a royal donation issued by an Italian king sometime between c. 850 and c. 950. As there is no donation charter of the sort – absolutely no primary source that would attest to any sort of temporal jurisdictions of the bishops of Pula exists – Benussi based this argument simply on comparative examples: the nearby bishoprics of Poreč and Trieste both received royal grants precisely during this time period; therefore, the same process must have occurred in Pula as well.⁸⁶

⁸² Pichler, *Il castello di Duino*, p. 165. The lords of Duino were ministerials to both the patriarchs of Aquileia and to the counts of Gorizia. From 1366, however, they pledged themselves exclusively to house Habsburg and alienated all the possessions they held from their previous lords, a turn of events that spelled disaster for the waning Gorizian counts. On lords of Duino see Kos, *Iz zgodovine devinskih*, pp. 91–134; Štih, *I conti*, pp. 142–159; Kosi, *Spopad na prehode*, pp. 40–43, 90–94 and 214 (the most up to date family tree). The scholarship on *ministeriales*, famously defined as “unfree noble knights”, is substantial. See e.g. Bosl, *Noble Unfreedom*, pp. 291–311; Zotz, *Die Formierung*, pp. 3–50; Arnold, *Instruments of Power*, pp. 36–55. For a monographic treatment of the topic see e.g. Idem, *German Knighthood*; Bacci, *I ministeriali*.

⁸³ “È deplorabile che il detto scrittore [Pichler] non abbia trovato la necessità di pubblicare per intero o in calce o in appendice i documenti ch'egli poté avere dall'Archivio imp. di Vienna.” Benussi, *Il feudo*, p. 114, n. 2.

⁸⁴ “Che Fiume con Castua, Veprinaz, e Moschenizze fossero dalla chiesa vescovile di Pola date in feudo ai Duinati, ai Walsee, come abbiamo veduto non havvi dubbio alcuno.” Ibid., p. 106. Similar statement in idem, *Tharsatica*, p. 183.

⁸⁵ The document is published *in extenso* in *Listine o odnošajih* 3, no. 107 (appendix to charters from vols. 1–3 (1116–1347)), ed. Ljubić, pp. 438–439.

⁸⁶ “I vescovi di Pola avrebbero avuto i feudi al Quarnaro ... per opera ed al tempo dei re italici, di quei re che furono tanto larghi e generosi verso le altre chiese istriane: in numeri rotondi, fra l'850 ed il 950.” Benussi, *Il feudo*, pp. 108–111, quotation on p. 108. Similarly in idem, *Tharsatica*, pp. 184–185. Cf. the opinion of Kandler who, much like Benussi, argued that the secular power of the bishops of Pula began with a royal donation, but he thought it was Conrad II who issued the diploma, precisely in 1028 nonetheless. Kandler, *Indicazioni*, p. 19. This argument is also utterly unsubstantiated.

Finally, Benussi searched for the exact date when the territories were first enfeoffed to the lords of Duino by the bishops of Pula. Even though he criticized his predecessors who dated the original enfeoffment in 1139 because their claims were unsubstantiated, Benussi likewise argued for a dating with no basis in primary sources: “the first decades of the 12th century”.⁸⁷ The first primary source that actually attests to lords of Duino exercising their jurisdiction in Merania, specifically Rijeka, stems from 1300 and has nothing to do with the Bishopric of Pula.⁸⁸

No royal or imperial donation to the bishopric of Pula from the Middle Ages has ever been discovered; moreover, the only primary source to ever link the lords of Duino to the Bishopric of Pula is the note of bishop De Luschi and its interpretation in terms of secular jurisdictions stands in complete contradiction with the 1366 Aquileian document. Despite this, Benussi’s thesis was largely accepted. Even though a part of the “Royal thesis” has fallen out of favor following Hauptmann’s landmark study of 1928, the old historiographic narrative to which Benussi lent his academic weight – according to which the bishops of Pula were the secular lords of Rijeka, Veprinac, Kastav and Mošćenice who simply enfeoffed these territories to the lords of Duino – is still widely accepted.⁸⁹ However, this thesis rests on an utterly biased and wrong reading of *De administrando imperio*, on a purely fictitious royal donation bequeathing upon the bishops of Pula temporal jurisdictions in territories east of Učka, and on a completely wrong reading of both the 1312 charter and the notes of bishop Dominic de Luschi – the crown “proofs” of the entire narrative. Furthermore, the 1366 document that explicitly testifies to lords of Duino holding lands *in Meran sive in Croatia* from the Aquileian Church had to be, for the sake of the thesis, wholly ignored.⁹⁰ As the only part that is “salvageable”

⁸⁷ Benussi, *Il feudo*, p. 113.

⁸⁸ The original document is lost, only a regestum survives, written by Pavel Puzel (1669–1721), an early modern scholar of Stična monastery, in his *Idiographia sive rerum memorabilium monasterii Sitticensis descriptio*. Puzel summarized the document with the following words: *Hugo vero de Dvino, vel Divno, seu secundum aliquos Tybein Dominus in Liburnia civitatis Fluminensis ad ora maris Adriatici sitae, concedit, ut de Sancto Vito, suo Fluminensi civitate, monasterium possit pro sua necessitate educere, beneficio clitellariorum equorum 50 soumas samiosve salis, et 6 olei, quotannis sine ullo telonio, muta aut vectigali*. Quoted from Kos, *Jedan urbar*, p. 3, n. 3.

⁸⁹ De Vergottini, *Lineamenti storici*, pp. 39, 44, but cf. p. 76; Pirchegger, *Überblick*, p. 512; Klebel, *Über die Städte*, pp. 58–59; Klaić, *Povijest Hrvata u ranom*, p. 467; Bertoša, *Istra od 6.*, p. 125; *Istria nel tempo*, pp. 242–243, 273; Škunca, *Prošlost Crkve*, p. 78; Banić, *Teme iz istarskog*, p. 454, n. 24 where the author wrongly designates the lords of Duino first as counts and then as advocates of Aquileian Church – they were neither and those titles belonged to the counts of Gorizia.

⁹⁰ Kobler, who subscribed to the “Royal thesis”, wanted to interpret the 1366 *regestum* in some way and his solution must have angered Benussi greatly. According to Kobler, Merania from 1366 refers simply to Istria – precisely to Kožljak, Hum and Vranja that the lords of Duino held from Aquileian Church (they did not, except for maybe Vranja) – and since a part of Istria inhabited by the Slavs was called Croatia by some (it was not, especially not in the Middle Ages), hence the *in Meran sive in Croatia* designation. Kobler, *Memorie* 1, p. 49. Kožljak had indeed been first a temporal possession of the Patriarchate of Aquileia, but it passed on – *sive iuste sive iniuste* – to counts of Gorizia by way of their ministerials, the lords of Kožljak. Although it was

from this historiographical construction is the fact that the bishops of Pula at some point before the end of the 14th century enfeoffed their episcopal tithes to the lords of Duino, the “Royal thesis” must be completely abandoned.

Solution 2: The “Ulrich Thesis”

Unlike Benussi, Hauptmann correctly interpreted c. 30 of *De administrando imperio* and defined the Učka mountain range as the border between Istria and Croatia in the mid-10th century. As this border had already shifted to the river Rječina by the mid-12th century, the territory the Kingdom of Croatia-Dalmatia lost had to be the mysterious Merania mentioned in the 1366 document. Once Hauptmann ascertained the exact territorial location of this historical border region, he proceeded to inquire into the modalities of its incorporation into the Holy Roman Empire. The Slovenian historian first investigated the age immediately surrounding Conrad II of Dachau as he had been the first imperial noble with the title of Meranian duke. However, according to Hauptmann, the imperial takeover of Merania could not have happened during the lifetime of Conrad II as Barbarossa’s planned invasion of Hungary never took place.⁹¹ Therefore, even before the mid-12th century, the region of Merania had to have been already incorporated into the Empire. Consequently, the roots of Conrad’s ducal title had to lie elsewhere. Hauptmann sought them in the count’s family inheritance; he found them in a woman named Williburga.

The prolific Bavarian humanist Johannes Turmair, also known by his alias *Johannes Aventinus*, wrote in the first half of the 16th century, as part of book seven of his famed *Annales ducum Boiariae*, that the wife of *Chunradus Dachunus* had been a certain *Billepyrga* who bore the count a son, *Chunradus secundus, dux Dalmatiae*.⁹² It is not known on what primary source Aventinus based this fact;

revendicated by the patriarchs for a short time in the first half of the 14th century (in 1342 patriarch Bertrand of Saint-Genies even confirmed its enfeoffment to lords of Duino who originally held it in pledge from Beatrice, the widow of Henry II of Gorizia), Kožljak was back in the *potestas* of Gorizian counts already before 1366. Hum mentioned by Kobler is simply a wrong reading of *turris que dicitur Cholmtz* that in fact refers to Humac, right next to Kožljak, and not Hum in the district of Buzet. For all of this, with detailed citation of primary sources, Štih, *I conti*, pp. 136–140. Finally, it cannot be ascertained who originally enfeoffed Vranja to lords of Duino, counts of Gorizia or Aquileian patriarchs. Vranja is mentioned neither in the testament of Albert III of Gorizia, nor among the documents of Aquileian Church. Primary sources only attest that the lords of Duino held Vranja in the second half of the 14th century and that it passed on to house Habsburg following the peace treaty of Šiška (Germ. Keissach, Keitsch) by Ljubljana (Germ. Leibach) of 1370, signed between the Austrian dukes and Venice. De Franceschi, *I castelli*, pp. 337–346. Peace treaty of Šiška is edited in CDI 3, no. 803, ed. Kandler, pp. 1364–1371.

⁹¹ Hauptmann, *Nastanek*, p. 83. See n. 14 in this paper.

⁹² *Ex Arionulpho et Beatrice nascuntur Otto Phalatiensis et Chunradus Dachunus. Huius uxor Billepyrga, filii, Chunradus 2. dux Dalmatiae, et Arionulphus Dachunus; ille Bergomi in expeditione Italica decessit anno nostris 1158.* Turmair, *Annales Ducum Boiariae*, lib. 7, c. 1, ed. Riezler, 3, p. 243. The editors of the older edition of *Annales Ducum Boiariae* had *Wilpyrga* instead of *Billepyrga*. Cf. Aventinus, *Annales Boioariorum libri septem*, p. 621. Conrad II indeed went to Bergamo as part of Frederick Barbarossa’s Italian expedition and he died there in 1159.

the *Chronicon Schirensense* that the author of Bavarian annals consulted does not mention this relationship.⁹³ It is often argued that Turmair, “the father of Bavarian historiography” read primary sources that have disappeared since his time, but it has also been demonstrated that he would sometimes let his imagination shape the narrative.⁹⁴ In any case, the name *Willibirch* is indeed mentioned in the necrology of Indersdorf abbey, a monastery founded by Otto IV of Scheyern (or I of Wittelsbach) c. 1120.⁹⁵ Since this monastery is closely connected with the counts of Dachau, both comital houses of Dachau and of Wittelsbach stemming from counts of Scheyern, the *comitissa Willibirch* reminded a lot of the *Billepyrga* mentioned by *Aventinus*.⁹⁶ Thus, it was already in 1784 that the editors of *Monumenta Boica* series published under the auspices of the Bavarian Academy of Science connected the two persons: by the name *Willibirch comitissa* they added “forte uxor Conradi I. Dachaw”.⁹⁷ Subsequent historians simply ignored the “forte” part. For example, two distinguished 19th century scholars who dedicated considerable attention to the history of house Dachau – Johan Ferdinand Huschberg and Friedrich Hektor the count of Hundt – both posited the mysterious Willibirg (sic!) as the wife of Conrad I, the father of Conrad II, the first duke of Merania.⁹⁸ However, it was Andreas Dauscher who took it upon himself to exactly pinpoint the origins of this mysterious countess.

Dauscher was inspired by the work of Hugo, the count of Walderdorff, and a passage from *The Weingarten History of Welfs* that read: “Sophie had four daughters

Tunc etiam Conradus Croatiae atque Dalmatiae dux, natione Noricus, de castro Dachowa oriundus, apud Pergamum finem vivendi fecit, eiusque corpus in terram suam deportatum, in monasterio Schiren sepultum est. Otto of Freising–Rahewin, *Gesta Friderici I. imperatoris*, lib. 4, c. 17, ed. Waitz–Simson, p. 257, l. 1–5.

⁹³ Konrad of Scheyern, *Chronicon Schirensense*, ed. Jaffé, pp. 615–623, esp. pp. 620–621.

⁹⁴ On *Aventinus* see Strauss, *Historian*; Schmid, *Die historische Methode*, pp. 338–395; and more recently Riedl-Valder, *Aventinus*.

⁹⁵ The best edition is *Necrologium Undensdorfense*, ed. Baumann, pp. 172–198, *Willibirch comitissa* on p. 174. On the founding of Indersdorf abbey see Sattler, *Zur Gründung*, pp. 470–477.

⁹⁶ There is some discrepancy in the naming of this Otto, the first member of the comital house Scheyern to move to Wittelsbach castle and thus assume the byname “of Wittelsbach”. According to Kamillo Trotter, he would be Otto V, but according to Franz Tyroller (and the majority of present-day scholars) he would be Otto IV of Scheyern. The problem is whether a count Otto mentioned in 1014 in Henry II’s charter to the Church of Bamberg should be interpreted as the father of Otto, the advocate of Freising and the husband of countess Haziga of Scheyern, or not. Since there are no primary sources that would attest to this family connection and since comital house of Scheyern stems from this marriage between countess Haziga and Otto, I am subscribing to Tyroller’s naming scheme. Trotter, *Die Grafen von Scheyern*, pp. 29–36; Tyroller, *Genealogie*, pp. 246–247, 254–255 (Stammtafel 18); D. H. II, no. 324, ed. Sickel, pp. 409–410. The most recent overview of the origins of comital house Scheyern and Haziga’s inheritance that made Otto *comes de Scheyern* is Holzfurtner, *Haziga und Otto*, pp. 23–35.

⁹⁷ *Monumenta Understorfensis*, p. 168 (the necrology was edited only partially under the title *Excerpta necrologii Understorfensis*, pp. 168–170). It should be noted that there are several entries with the name *Willibirch* in the necrology; why the editors decided on 14th of January that only mentions a *Willibirch* instead of 11th of January that mentions a *Willibirch comitissa*, is unknown. Cf. *Necrologium Undensdorfense*, ed. Baumann, p. 174.

⁹⁸ Huschberg, *Aelteste Geschichte*, p. 242; Hundt, *Kloster Scheyern*, appendix: Tafel über den Mannsstamm des Hauses Scheyern-Wittelsbach.

by duke Magnus: our Wulfhild, Eilika the mother of Margrave Albrecht of Saxony, a third whom the duke of Moravia married, and a fourth whom count Ekkehard of Scheyern took from a nunnery in Regensburg and joined to himself in marriage”.⁹⁹ Hugo of Walderdorff analyzed this chapter in relation to Sophie’s offspring and filled in the gaps left by the 12th-century anonymous author of the chronicle: the Moravian duke would be Conrad I of Brno (†1092) and his wife would be Walburga (surely from Wirpirk, mentioned by Cosmas of Prague), whereas Ricarda would be the name of Ekkehard’s wife.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, argued the count of Walderdorff, these Walburga and Ricarda could not be the daughters of duke Magnus because the anonymous Saxon Annalist (*Annalista Saxo*) explicitly wrote, in several places, that Sophie had only two daughters with Magnus Billung: Wulfhild and Eilika.¹⁰¹ Thus, the two other daughters, those that married the duke of Moravia and the count of Scheyern respectively, had to be Sophie’s children from her first marriage to Ulrich I of Weimar-Orlamünde, the first margrave of Istria.¹⁰²

These arguments were taken over by Andreas Dauscher who strengthened Walderdorff’s theses by adding onomastic and chronological dimensions: both Ricarda and Wilbirga (sic!) are names connected to Ulrich’s side of the family (his maternal side to be more precise) and are not found in the family of Magnus Bilung.¹⁰³ However, Dauscher’s arguments concerning the Moravian duke and his wife were the most important. Conrad I of Brno, argued Dauscher, could not have been the husband of Sophie’s and Ulrich’s daughter as the duke of Moravia had married a progeny of the house of Tengling – a Hildburg, daughter of Friedrich, the

⁹⁹ *Ipsa autem Sophia ex duce Maginone quatuor filias habuit: Wulfildem nostrum, Ailicgam matrem Adelberti marchionis de Saxonia, terciam quam duxit dux Maravie, quartam quam Egehardus comes de Scirin a quodam monasterio sanctimoniualium in Ratispona abstulit, ac sibi matrimonio copulavit. Historia Welforum Weingartensis*, c. 15, ed. Weiland-Pertz, p. 23.

¹⁰⁰ Walderdorff, *Die Verwandtschaft*, p. 593. On Cosmas’ Wirpirik: Cosmas of Prague, *Chronica Boemorum*, lib. 2, c. 45, ed. Bretholz–Weinberger, p. 151, l. 12–13, n. 2.

¹⁰¹ *Annalista Saxo, Chronicon*, a. 1070, and a. 1106, ed. Nass, p. 416, l. 17–19, and p. 528, l. 7–12; Walderdorff, *Die Verwandtschaft*, p. 594.

¹⁰² Walderdorff, *Die Verwandtschaft*, pp. 594–595. Cf. the words of *Annalista Saxo*: *Magnus quoque dux Saxonie obit, qui duxerat uxorem Sophiam, viduam Oderlici de Wimmar, sororem Ladizlai regis Ungarorum, genuitque illi duas filias Wifhildem et Eilicam*. *Annalista Saxo, Chronicon*, a. 1106, ed. Nass, p. 528, l. 7–9. I have written extensively on Ulrich I of Weimar-Orlamünde as margrave of Istria and of his family relations, especially in my forthcoming paper “*Marchionatus Istrie origo: (Re)interpreting the Genesis of the March of Istria and the Socio-Generational Background of Its First Margraves (c. 1060 – c. 1100)*”. Cf. Würth, *Die Grafen*, pp. 91–132, although there are some mistakes and inconsistencies that I correct in my forthcoming paper. Note on nomenclature: This Ulrich of Weimar-Orlamünde, the first margrave of Istria who dies in 1070, is the second Ulrich to rule over the March of Carniola, his maternal great-grandfather, Ulrich I of Sempt-Ebersberg, being the first († 1029). Thus, he is at times called Ulrich II and his eponymous son Ulrich III († 1112). However, looking strictly agnatically, he is the first member of the comital house of Weimar-Orlamünde named Ulrich and should thus be called Ulrich I, even though he inherited the name (as well as the title of the margrave) from his mother’s side of the family (thus, looking cognatically, he would be Ulrich II). As medieval genealogies are regularly constructed agnatically, I will refer to this Carniolan and Istrian margrave exclusively as Ulrich I, his eponymous son being Ulrich II.

¹⁰³ Dauscher, *Ueber die Familie*, p. 165.

count of Tengling.¹⁰⁴ How can the notices from *The Weingarten History of Welfs* be reconciled with these facts? Dauscher's solution was ingenious: the 12th-century Weingarten monk must have made a mistake and wrote *dux Maravie* instead of *dux Maranie*!¹⁰⁵ Thus, triumphantly concluded Dauscher, the Williburg mentioned by Hundt as the wife of Conrad I must be the daughter of Sophie and Ulrich I of Weimar-Orlamünde.

Leaving aside the fact that Conrad I was not a Meranian duke and that there is absolutely no primary source that would attest to a Willibirch (or any other form of the name) as the daughter of either Ulrich I or Sophie, Dauscher's argument was, astonishingly enough, accepted. It was taken over by Anton Mell in his highly influential account on the history of Carniola and from Mell it was subsequently taken over by Ljudmil Hauptmann.¹⁰⁶

This family connection – (un)documented in sources as it is – lay at the very basis of Hauptmann's thesis, for it must have been precisely through this Williburga that Conrad II inherited the territories of Merania.¹⁰⁷ Moreover, Merania, at this point already a duchy, was also inherited, it is argued, by Berthold IV of Andechs in 1180. Following the death of Conrad III, who died without issue, the Duchy of Merania, would have passed on to the counts of Andechs by way of another family tie. This was either with the olden Weimar-Orlamünde line (Sophie II, the daughter of Poppo III and Ricarda of Spanheim, thus a granddaughter of Ulrich I and the already discussed Sophie, being the wife of Berthold II of Andechs, the grandfather of Berthold IV the first duke of Merania from the house of Andechs) or with the Wittelsbachs (Hedwig the wife of Berthold III, margrave of Istria,

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 166. The author never states from where he took over this "fact". He just writes "[i]n den genealogischen Tabellen erscheint als Gattin Konrads von Brunn eine Hildburg von Tenglingen (wohl eine Tochter Friedrichs von Tenglingen oder Beilstein, der um 1080 starb)." Bearing in mind that Dauscher wrote this paper in 1876, he could have consulted several genealogical tables that indeed posited the daughter of Friedrich of Tengling as the wife of Conrad I of Moravia, e.g. Chmel, *Der Österreichische Geschichtsforscher* 1, p. 230. This connection is wrong. The more up-to-date family tree of the Sighardingers posits Hildburg, the putative wife of Konrad of Moravia, as the sister of Friedrich I, count of Tenglingen, and the daughter of Sighard VI. Brunner, *Herzogtümer und Marken*, p. 86. However, the dominant opinion that Hildburg of Tenglingen is indeed the *coniunx Cunradi nomine Wirprik* mentioned by Cosmas of Prague is very much ungrounded in primary sources. Indeed, Cosmas mentions the offspring of the comital house of Tengling, namely Sighard X and his brothers, the bishop of Freising who he names Ulrich (should be Henry) and Frederick (who he names as their brother-in-law, should be just brother), as military companions to Ulrich II of Moravia, the son of Conrad I and Wirprik, but this is the only connection between these two families attested in the primary sources. The editors of 1923 edition of Cosmas' *Chronica* distanced themselves from this interpretation, but did not offer an alternative. Since I have discussed the possibility of Wirprik actually being the daughter of Ulrich I in details in my forthcoming paper "*Marchionatus Istrie origo*", I will not delve on this matter here, but it should be noted that there is far more evidence in support of the Weimar-Orlamünde thesis, than the Tenglingen one. Cosmas of Prague, *Chronica Boemorum*, lib. 2, c. 45, and lib. 3, c. 15, ed. Bretholz–Weinberger, p. 151, l. 12–13, and p. 177, l. 13–17, n. 2.

¹⁰⁵ Dauscher, *Ueber die Familie*, p. 166.

¹⁰⁶ Mell, *Die historische*, p. 29; Hauptmann, *Nastanek*, p. 83.

¹⁰⁷ Hauptmann, *Nastanek*, p. 83.

being the presumed daughter of Otto I of Wittelsbach).¹⁰⁸ In conclusion, prior to being elevated into a duchy in the 1150s, Merania had to have been a possession of Ulrich I, the margrave of Carniola and Istria. Hauptmann now only had to find a way by which this region changed jurisdiction from the Croatian kings to imperial margraves; he found it in a 14th century Hungarian chronicle.

The anonymous composer of the *Chronica de gestis Hungarorum* – a 14th-century illuminated narrative formerly called “Vienna Illustrated Chronicle” due to it being held in the Vienna Imperial Library until 1934, but now properly titled *The Illuminated Chronicle of the Deeds of Hungarians* (hereafter IC)¹⁰⁹ – penned the following account:

King Zvonimir of Dalmatia, who was a brother-in-law of Géza, sent messengers to King Solomon and Duke Géza and asked them to give help to him against his enemies, namely the Carinthians, who at that time had seized the border regions of Dalmatia. The king and the duke therefore collected an army and marched into Dalmatia, and they restored to him in its entirety the territory taken from him.¹¹⁰

For the history of Merania, this brief passage would spark a veritable historiographical revolution.

It was already Ferdinand Maksimilijan Šišić, a champion of Croatian positivistic historiography, who correctly ascertained that the passage in question refers to the

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 82. Older scholarship, that is before Hauptmann’s landmark study of 1928, saw the hereditary relationship exclusively by way of the marriage between Hedwig of Wittelsbach (at times taken for a sister of Conrad III of Dachau) and Berthold III (at times taken for Berthold IV). E.g. Herlitz, *Geschichte*, p. 14. Cf. Oefele, *Geschichte*, p. 22. It must be stated that there is no evidence from primary sources that would link this *Hadewic... uxor Bertholdi marchionis* mentioned in Diessen necrology to the comital house of Dachau; there is only a line in the testament of Frederick of Wittelsbach from c. 1168 that states: *item duas curtes in Puch, et duas Hovdorf delegatas in manu Udilrici de Lochusen, comiti B. de Andechse*. As this clearly refers to Berthold III of Andechs, this is the basis of the argument that the *Hadewic* in question was somehow related to the Wittelsbachs. *Necrologium Diessense*, ed. Baumann, p. 22. Frederick’s testament is edited in *Die Urkunden des Klosters Indersdorf* 1, no. 18, ed. Hundt, pp. 10–13. Although in his PhD thesis Jonathan R. Lyon correctly noticed that “[t]he identity of Margrave Berthold II[I] of Istria’s first wife, for example, remains a mystery”, that “virtually nothing else about her is known” and that even though “[h]istorians speculate that she was a member of the house of Wittelsbach”, “[t]here is, however, no evidence to connect her directly to that [Wittelsbach] family”, he still designated that very Hedwig as “Hedwig of Wittelsbach” in his 2013 monograph. Lyon, *Cooperation, Compromise*, p. 274; idem, *Princely Brothers*, p. 182. Tyroller also has a Hedwig of Wittelsbach, daughter of Otto IV of Scheyern as the wife of Berthold III of Andechs. Tyroller, *Genealogie*, pp. 251, 254–255 (Stammtafel 18). Trotter has this Hedwig as the daughter of Conrad II of Dachau. Trotter, *Die Grafen von Scheyern*, pp. 30, 35.

¹⁰⁹ On the history of this manuscript and its older denominations, see Karsay, *The Codex*, pp. 1–4.

¹¹⁰ *Misit itaque rex Zolomerus Dalmacie, qui sororius Geyse erat, nuncios ad regem Salomonem et duces Geysam, et rogavit eos, ut propria persona eorum contra adversarios suos, scilicet Carantanos ipsum adiuverent, qui tunc marchiam Dalmacie occupavera<n>t. Rex igitur et dux collecto exercitu iverunt in Dalmatiam et ablatam sibi restituerunt integre*. Note that the translators translated *marchia Dalmacie* as “border regions of Dalmatia”; I will translate it as “Dalmatian march” or “the March of Dalmatia”. IC, c. 99, ed. Bak–Veszprémy, pp. 188, 190 (Latin original), 189, 191 (English translation).

period between 1063 and 1067.¹¹¹ The fact that Zvonimir had not been a crowned king at the time – he is first mentioned as a *ban* (a sort of a viceroy) in 1070 and as a king in 1076 – did not matter to Šišić.¹¹² Moreover, the same historian interpreted the *adversarios suos, scilicet Carantanos* as none others than the military companions of King Henry IV during his 1063 campaigns against the Hungarian King Bela I, the opponent of young Solomon who was the son of late King Andrew I and husband to Judith, the sister of the young Roman king.¹¹³ Since Ulrich I of Weimar-Orlamünde, the first margrave of Istria, partook in this military expedition and since this very margrave was titled as *marchio Carentinorum* by chroniclers such as Lampert of Hersfeld and *Annalista Saxo*, Šišić concluded that it was precisely this individual who attacked Zvonimir's Dalmatian march.¹¹⁴ Thus, as Ulrich I occupied parts of Croatian-Dalmatian kingdom, the reigning king Peter Krešimir IV had been "preoccupied" by "serious unrests that have been triggered by the banning of Slavic liturgy and by other church reforms" and hence powerless to interfere.¹¹⁵ For these reasons, Zvonimir had to rely on his relatives on the Hungarian throne for help in reclaiming the lost territories; the help arrived after king Solomon and his duke Géza I made peace with each other and decided to aid their Croatian relative.¹¹⁶

For Hauptmann, this was the missing link that would complete his Meranian narrative. Having taken over Šišić's reading of the IC's paragraph, Hauptmann added one additional interpretative layer: Ulrich I had indeed taken over a large part of this "Dalmatian march", including Merania, and a large part was subsequently reclaimed by the joint military operation led by king Solomon, duke Géza I and *ban* Zvonimir, but the territory between the rivers Raša and Rječina was not among them. Thus, concluded Hauptmann, it was precisely in the 1060s – more precisely during Henry IV's 1063 military campaign against Bela I or its immediate aftermath – that Merania had been ripped away from the Croatian-Dalmatian kingdom and annexed to Ulrich's March of Istria, thus officially becoming a part of the Holy Roman Empire.¹¹⁷ Finally, continued Hauptmann, Ulrich II, the son

¹¹¹ Šišić, *Povijest Hrvata*, p. 527.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 527, n. 72. The first ever mention of Demetrious Zvonimir in charters, named as *Suinimir banus*, is CD 1, no. 84, ed. Kostrenčić et al., pp. 115–116. He was crowned in October 1076 in Solin and appears with the title *Chroatorum atque Dalmatinorum rex* already on 9th of October of the same year. CD 1, nos. 109 and 110, ed. Kostrenčić et al., pp. 139–141 and pp. 141–142. On the crowning of Zvonimir see e.g. Cowdrey, *Pope Gregory VII*, p. 447. For the dating of the crowning, Stipišić, *Pitanje godine krunidbe*, pp. 57–66. On the title and function of a *ban* in the early medieval Kingdom of Croatia, see Karbić, *Razvoj političkih ustanova*, pp. 110–112.

¹¹³ Šišić, *Povijest Hrvata*, pp. 527–528.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 528–529. Lampert of Hersfeld, *Annales*, a. 1062, ed. Holder-Egger, p. 79, l. 12, a. 1063, ed. Holder-Egger, p. 88, l. 9-13; *Annalista Saxo*, *Chronicon*, a. 1062, ed. Nass, p. 405, l. 8. All the subsequent translations of passages from Lampert's *Annales* will be taken from Robinson, *The Annals*.

¹¹⁵ Šišić, *Povijest Hrvata*, p. 529. Šišić is referring to Alexander II's prohibition of Slavic liturgy. CD 1, no. 67, ed. Kostrenčić et al., pp. 94–96. See also Garzatati, *Ohrid, Split*, pp. 307–334.

¹¹⁶ Šišić, *Povijest Hrvata*, p. 529.

¹¹⁷ Hauptmann, *Nastanek*, pp. 84–85.

and heir to Ulrich I, gifted a majority of the lands he inherited from his father in Istria to the Patriarchate of Aquileia, including Lovran (he did not, the *Vrana* in question refers to Vranja, not Lovran), while the other part of Merania – from Lovran to Rijeka – belonged to the aforementioned Williburga and thus entered the domain of the counts of Dachau.¹¹⁸ This, Hauptmann argued, perfectly explains Al-Idrisi's description of Lovran as the last town of Aquileian lands and Bakar as the first town of Croatia – the part in between Lovran and Bakar, had been under the counts of Dachau.

The last step – the transfer of Merania from house Andechs to the patriarchs of Aquileia who in turn gave the lands *in Meran sive in Croatia* to their ministerials the lords of Duino – was at this point easy to deduce. Following the death of Otto VIII of Andechs (†1248), claimed Hauptmann, Berthold V, the patriarch of Aquileia and brother to Otto VIII, inherited, among other things, Merania and he “could have” donated this region to Aquileian Church during his life time (†1251).¹¹⁹ The narrative was now complete.

Hauptmann's thesis on the faith of Merania has been immensely popular and widely accepted. Bogo Grafenauer completely took it over and also argued that Ulrich II indeed possessed Merania by way of inheritance from his father because the town *Vrana* mentioned in the 1102 donation charter refers to Lovran (it does not).¹²⁰ Nada Klaić, a particularly influential Croatian medievalist, slightly modified Hauptmann's thesis, arguing that Solomon and Géza I helped Zvonimir reclaim the lost territories only after 1070 – after the death of Ulrich I who was also married to Géza's sister Sophie – but in relation to Merania she accepted the argument unchanged: this territory had once been Croatian, it was conquered by Ulrich I and was not reclaimed by Géza, Solomon and Zvonimir, thus remaining a part of the Holy Roman Empire.¹²¹ N. Klaić also delineated the territory of the mysterious “Dalmatian march” – the term that appears exclusively in the IC – and argued that it corresponded to eastern Istrian coastline, the Kvarner region including the towns

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 85. The argument is based on the donation charter from 1102 by which Ulrich II donates vast amounts of properties in Istria to patriarch Ulrich of Eppenstein and the Aquileian Church. However, none of the Meranian towns are mentioned in the donation. For the best edition of this donation charter, along with its translation into modern English, see Banić, *Donationes pro remedio*, pp. 59–64. See also n. 120 in this paper.

¹¹⁹ “The link between both [the counts of Andechs and the Patriarchate of Aquileia] could be the last descendent of the family, Berthold of Aquileia [Berthold V], of whom it is known that he had very richly endowed the Patriarchate from his family heirloom” (“Povezava med obema bi lahko bil zadnji predstavnik rodbine, Bertold Oglejski, o katerem je znano, da je zelo bogato obdaril patriarhat iz dediščine svoje rodbine.”). Hauptmann, *Nastanek*, p. 83. One such donation of Berthold V to the Patriarchate of Aquileia refers to Slovenj Gradec (Germ. Windischgrätz), donated with all its rights, jurisdictions, properties and dependencies in 1251. *Urkundenbuch des Herzogtums Steiermark* 3, no. 88, ed. Zahn, pp. 153–154.

¹²⁰ Grafenauer, *Vprašanje hrvatske krajine*, pp. 254–260, esp. 259. The argument is untenable – *Castrum Vrana* refers to Vranja, not Lovran. The same Vranja had been donated to Ulrich I by king Henry IV in 1064 as a reward for his “faithful service” (referring to his participation in the Hungarian campaign of 1063). D. H. IV, no. 135, ed. Gladiss–Gawlik, pp. 176–177.

¹²¹ Klaić, *Da li je*, pp. 125–138; eadem, *Historijska podloga*, pp. 225–279, esp. pp. 266–279; eadem, *Povijest Hrvata u ranom*, pp. 378–380.

of Rijeka and Vinodol as well as the islands of Cres, Krk and Rab – the geo-cultural area of Glagolitic script.¹²² Hauptmann's Meranian narrative survives to the present day and in its essence it has largely remained unchallenged and unmodified; both in regional Istrian scholarship and in national, Slovenian and Croatian historiography, Hauptmann's "Ulrich thesis" enjoys a dominant position, accepted by authoritative historians such as Miroslav Bertoša, Peter Štih and Neven Budak.¹²³ It took a bold historian – Lujo Margetić – to challenge the dominating view and to acutely point out several incongruous interpretative jumps in argumentation.

Solution 3: The "Duino Thesis"

Tenaciously swimming against the current, Margetić drew inspiration from Miha Barada, a prominent scholar of medieval Croatia who was the first to publicly challenge Hauptmann's thesis on Merania by proclaiming it to rest on "completely arbitrary arguments".¹²⁴ Margetić deconstructed Hauptmann's thesis by closely re-examining the following primary sources: the IC and its chapter on Zvonimir and the Carinthians, the donation charter of Ulrich II from 1102, the aforementioned two documents from 1221 mentioning the *Ducatus Meraniae*, and Al-Idrisi's description of the debated territory.¹²⁵

Regarding the 14th-century narrative source, Margetić argued that Hauptmann completely distorted the account of the events as described in the IC: Zvonimir was supposed to be the king, yet he is not; Carinthians are not really Carinthians, but a military detachment led by Ulrich I, the margrave of Carniola and Istria; the Hungarian king and duke were supposed to completely restore the occupied territories, yet they only recover a part.¹²⁶ According to Margetić, the IC should be read the same way as the *Cronica per extenum descripta* by Andrea Dandolo, as a narrative that does not shy away from "remorseless alteration of facts" in order to legitimize, celebrate and glorify its main protagonists – the Venetian commune and its doges for Dandolo, Hungarian kings for the compiler of the IC.¹²⁷ Therefore, the IC, being written just after the triumphant campaigns of Louis I of Anjou who (re)conquered Dalmatia and (re)affirmed the *potestas* of the Hungarian crown over this contested region, needed to depict the 14th-century change of jurisdiction in

¹²² Klaić, *Da li je*, p. 136 and passim; eadem, *Povijest Hrvata u ranom*, pp. 378-379. I will return to this issue later in the paper.

¹²³ Bertoša, *Istra od 6.*, p. 130; Štih-Simoniti-Vodopivec, *Slovenska zgodovina*, p. 72; Štih, *Od Karniole*, p. 476; Birin, *Pregled političke povijesti*, p. 63; Majnarić, *Karolinško, Otonsko*, p. 527; Nikolić Jakus, *Ugarska*, p. 619; Budak, *Hrvatska povijest*, p. 220, 256.

¹²⁴ Barada, *Hrvatski vlasteoski feudalizam*, pp. 14–15, n. 14.

¹²⁵ Margetić, *Rijeka i područje*, pp. 39–62.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 41–42.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 43. Margetić dedicated several studies to Venetian chroniclers, most notably Andrea Dandolo, in the context of medieval Croatia-Dalmatia. See e.g. Margetić, *Vjerodostojnost vijesti*, pp. 117–146; idem, *Vijesti Andrije Dandola*, pp. 209–258; idem, *Odnosi Hrvata*, pp. 4–15.

Dalmatia as “the return of legitimate state of things”.¹²⁸ Hence the story of king Zvonimir, the relative of Hungarian royal family; hence the noble military help and the successful recuperation of entire Dalmatia; hence the subsequent story of king Ladislav’s takeover of Croatia and Dalmatia following the death of king Zvonimir, undertaken not “out of greed, but because according to the rights of royalty the inheritance fell to him. For King Zvonimir stood to him in the first degree of affinity, and had no heir”.¹²⁹ The background of the whole story is simply the building of “moral legitimacy” for Hungarian sovereigns. In short, the IC paragraph in question was simple “political propaganda”, but – just as the story of Ladislav’s campaigns in Croatia-Dalmatia – there was an underlying factual basis that engendered the narrative in the first place: for Margetić, that was simply the attack of Géza I and king Solomon on the Kingdom of Croatia and Dalmatia.¹³⁰ Although he did not bother to specify more precisely why and when this putative Hungarian attack occurred, in one of his other papers Margetić argued that the forces invading Rab in the first half of the 1070s, traditionally believed to have been the Normans, were in fact the Hungarians.¹³¹ As a conclusion Margetić points out that absolutely

¹²⁸ Margetić, *Rijeka i područje*, p. 44.

¹²⁹ *Quod tamen rex non fecit propter cupiditatem, sed quia secundum regale iustitiam sibi competeat hereditas. Quoniam quidem rex Zolomerus in primo gradu affinitatis eidem at<v>inebat et heredem non habuit.* IC, c. 132, ed. Bak-Veszprémy, pp. 246 (Latin original), 247 (English translation).

¹³⁰ Margetić, *Rijeka i područje*, pp. 45, 57.

¹³¹ Margetić, *Pozadina prvoga ugarskog*, pp. 75–119; idem, *Odnosi Hrvata*, pp. 15–21. This argument is based on a line from a 14th-century narrative written by a pro-Venetian bishop of Rab, George de Hermolais, who stated in his *Miracles of St. Christopher* how a certain *Unragorum* (Farlati’s reading) or *Varagorum gens* (Rački’s reading) invaded the island. *Illyricum Sacrum* 5, ed. Farlati, pp. 231–235; *Documenta*, no. 224, ed. Rački, pp. 455–457. Traditionally, this invasion has been ascribed to Normans under count Amico II who indeed engaged in maritime warfare in Dalmatia precisely in this time. Margetić, characteristically swimming against the current, discarded the reading *Varagorum* and opted for *Unragorum* who he then identified as Hungarians. This argument has been largely abandoned in Croatian historiography, primarily because there are other primary sources attesting to Norman forces attacking Dalmatian islands and cities precisely during this period; even a Croatian king – most probably Peter Krešimir IV – was captured by Amico II and his Norman contingent (*comes Amicus regem Croatiae cepit*). CD 1, no. 107, ed. Kostrenčić et al., pp. 136–137 (quotation on 136); William of Apulia, *Gesta Roberti Wiscardi*, lib. 3, ed. Wilmans, p. 273, l. 393–395; Andrea Dandolo, *Chronica per extensum descripta*, c. 38, ed. Pastorello, p. 215, l. 28–30. It is still not entirely clear on whose behalf, if anyone’s but his own, count Amico II acted when he attacked Dalmatia. Since pope Gregory VII fostered amicable relations with Amico II and since he did propose an invasion of “a province by the sea, not far from us” in January 1075 to Danish king Sweyn II, it is possible that it was the Roman pontiff that stood behind this military expedition. Reg. Greg. VII, no. II, 51, ed. Caspar, pp. 192–194. On this letter see Šišić, *Povijest Hrvata*, pp. 543–547. Another possibility is that it was the Byzantine emperor, displeased with Peter Krešimir IV’s expansionism at the expense of imperial jurisdictions in Dalmatia, who directed Amico II. Cowdrey, *Pope Gregory VII*, pp. 440–441 (dates king Slavac erroneously, supports the former thesis); Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, pp. 55–56 (argues Amico II was “a freebooter”); Nikolić Jakus, *Južna Italija*, pp. 576–577 (best overview, takes no decisive stance); Budak, *Hrvatska povijest*, pp. 231–232 (supports the latter thesis). In any case, the argument that it was Amico II and his Normans that attacked Rab and not king Solomon and Géza as Margetić claimed is by far the more substantiated of the two.

nothing can be inferred from the IC regarding either the territories between Labin and Rijeka – Merania – or the jurisdictions of Carniolan-Istrian margrave Ulrich I.

The next primary source, the donation charter of Ulrich II to the Patriarchate of Aquileia, was easily used as a counterargument to the dominant Meranian narrative. The donation, assuredly and correctly argued Margetić, makes absolutely no mention of any territory lying between the rivers Raša and Rječina. Thus, the charter itself can in no way support Hauptmann's thesis.¹³² Moreover, there is another document, a royal donation issued by king Henry IV to Ulrich I in 1064 by which twenty royal *mansi* were bestowed upon the margrave that would speak against Hauptmann's arguments.¹³³ Namely, the possessions donated to Ulrich I were all located to the west of Učka, right by the Croatian border as described by *De administrando imperio* (see map 1). Therefore, concluded Margetić, during the age of both Ulrich I and his son, Merania was still part of *Regnum Croatie et Dalmatie*.¹³⁴

For the two 1221 documents mentioning the Duchy of Merania Margetić simply took over the old opinion and arguments put forth by Oefele: *Ducatus Meraniae* simply refers to the entirety of possessions under the jurisdiction of the comital house of Andechs.¹³⁵ For Margetić, it would be unfathomable that the troops of Treviso reached as far east as the Kvarner region and that Istria would be considered as part of *Forumiulii*. Therefore, Oefele's interpretation, backed by the aforementioned charter of count Hartmann of Kiburg from 1254, is the only acceptable reading of the *Ducatus Meraniae* mentioned in the 1221 documents.¹³⁶

Finally, the description of Al-Idrisi, argued Margetić, does not support the view that Merania had been divided into two regions: the one extending from Brseč to Lovran being Aquileian, to other from Lovran to Rijeka being under the house Dachau. The Arab geographer clearly states that "after the lands of Aquileia... follow those of Croatia called Dalmatia" – the two distinct jurisdictional regions, Aquileian and Croatian, are unquestionably described as neighboring.¹³⁷

In the conclusion to his counterarguments Margetić states that even though Hauptmann took for granted the hereditary transfer of Merania from the counts of Dachau to those of Andechs – he indeed never detailed his argumentation for this claim – this is also untenable due to simple chronology: Conrad III died in 1182 and Berthold IV is called *dux* already in 1180 (*recte* 1181).¹³⁸ This argument was later taken over by Andrej Komac who masterfully demonstrated that Berthold IV's ducal title had nothing to do with house Dachau. Instead, convincingly argued Komac, it was the alliance between house Andechs and Frederick Barbarossa – the ruler who

¹³² Margetić, *Rijeka i područje*, pp. 45–46; Banić, *Donationes pro remedio*, pp. 59–64.

¹³³ D. H. IV, no. 135, ed. Gladiss–Gawlik, pp. 176–177.

¹³⁴ Margetić, *Rijeka i područje*, pp. 45, 56.

¹³⁵ Oefele, *Geschichte*, p. 73, n. 2.

¹³⁶ Margetić, *Rijeka i područje*, p. 47.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 48–49; Al-Idrisi, *Libro del Re Ruggero*, ed. Amari–Schiaparelli, pp. 83–84, 106.

¹³⁸ Margetić, *Rijeka i područje*, p. 49. The year of Conrad III's death is given in The Greater Annals of Schäflam, a. 1182: *Chounradus dux de Dachau obit. Annales Scheftlarienses maiores*, a. 1182, ed. Jaffé, p. 337, l. 12.

aimed to consolidate the Empire's southern borders by strategically strengthening the position of his powerful and dependable allies – that resulted with the elevation of Berthold IV to the rank of duke.¹³⁹ Furthermore, in complete accordance with Oefele, both Margetić and Komac concluded that Merania had indeed been a mere titular duchy as there was not a single primary source that would attest to any sort of factual jurisdictional power of either house Dachau or house Andechs in the territory between Brseč and Rijeka.¹⁴⁰ Finally, the last will and testament of Otto VIII of Andechs, by which all the possessions of this comital house were bestowed upon his sister Adelheid (†1279), fails to mention Merania simply because this region was not under the *potestas* of the titular dukes.¹⁴¹ Even if Merania had been automatically inherited by Otto VIII's sisters, argues Margetić, the territory could not have been inherited by Berthold V (†1251) as his sisters outlived him.¹⁴² Consequently, Hauptmann's thesis that it was Berthold V of Andechs, the patriarch of Aquileia, who "could have" donated Merania to his Church, is also untenable.¹⁴³

Although Margetić had been very successful in pointing out the many flaws in Hauptmann's argumentation, his solution to the Meranian problem was not that fortunate. Based on the fact that Ulrich II did not donate any possession between Učka and Rijeka led him to conclude that the imperial, or in this case Aquileian takeover of Merania must have taken place between 1102 and 1152/3, the year of Al-Idrisi's fabled account. Margetić had found one opening in the primary sources, more precisely in one narrative account, in which he then placed the beginning of the putative occupation. Namely, between the death of Hungarian king Coloman I in February 1116 and the attack on Dalmatia by the Venetian doge Ordelafo Falier in May of the same year, there was a visit by the Holy Roman emperor Henry V to Venice. This meeting between Henry V and Falier is described by Andrea Dandolo with the following words: "In the following month of May emperor Henry V, having arrived to Venice, was welcomed in the ducal palace as a guest... as he retreated, he promised to lend aid against the Hungarians who once again invaded Dalmatia".¹⁴⁴ According to the doge-chronicler, the emperor indeed honored his

¹³⁹ Komac, *Utrditev grofov Andeških*, pp. 283–294; idem, *Od mejne grofije*, pp. 55–63.

¹⁴⁰ Margetić, *Rijeka i područje*, p. 50; Komac, *Od mejne grofije*, p. 75. This is the dominant opinion in German historiography as well, advocated by e.g. Werle and, more recently, Jürgen Dendorfer. Werle, *Titelherzogtum*, p. 279; Dendorfer, *Von den Liutpoldingern*, p. 345. It is also adopted by Miha Kosi. Kosi, *Andeško-Meranski*, <https://www.slovenska-biografija.si/rodbina/sbi1000510/> [last access: 04. 08. 2019].

¹⁴¹ The testament is edited *in extenso* in Oefele, *Geschichte*, pp. 246–247, no. 21.

¹⁴² Otto VIII had two sisters, Agnes and Adelheid. The former died sometime between 1257 and 1263, the latter composed her last will and testament in November 1278, thus the year 1279 is usually taken as her death. For Agnes, MDC 4/2, nos. 2799, and 2800, ed. Jaksch, p. 592. For Adelheid, Chevalier, *Mémoires historiques* 1, pp. 362–367 nos. 55–58. See also Oefele, *Geschichte*, pp. 39–40, 42.

¹⁴³ Margetić, *Rijeka i područje*, p. 50.

¹⁴⁴ The full passage is: *In sequenti mense marcii Henricus quintus imperator, Veneciam accedens, in ducali palacio hospitatus est, liminaque beati Marci et alia sanctorum loca, cum devocione maxima, visitat, et urbis situm, edificiorumque decoritatem, et regiminis equitatem multipliciter commendavit, curiam etiam suorum principum tenens, pluribus monasteriis in-*

promise and lent aid, just as Byzantine emperor Alexius did, when Ordelafo Falier attacked Zadar soon thereafter.¹⁴⁵ Even though this is the only historical account that testifies to Henry V's aid in the Venetian recovery of Zadar and Dalmatia, and even though the *communis opinio* is that the promised help never arrived, for Margetić this was the key in solving the Meranian mystery.¹⁴⁶

It was precisely during these military campaigns, argued Margetić, that the imperial troops, led by Ulrich of Eppenstein, patriarch of Aquileia and loyal supporter of the imperial cause, took over the Croatian territory bordering the Margraviate of Istria, Merania. Thus, the help promised by the emperor to the Venetians was realized through these attacks on the north-western borders of Dalmatia, carried out by the ministerials and other vassals of the Aquileian Church, the most prominent among them being the lords of Duino.¹⁴⁷ The result of this joint military enterprise on the weakened Hungarian kingdom led by the underage king Stephen II was not just the loss of Dalmatian islands and cities to Venice, but also the loss of Merania to the Patriarchate of Aquileia. This chain of events, according to Margetić, explains both the lords of Duino as possessing lands *in Meran sive in Croatia* – they held it *de iure* from the Church of Aquileia, but they were *de facto* owners of these lands having conquered them themselves in the second decade of the 12th century – and the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the bishops of Pula over this region – they also got it from the patriarchs of Aquileia who, moreover, enjoyed the imperial privilege bestowing upon them the right to appoint and invest the prelates of *episcopatus Polensis*.¹⁴⁸

This thesis, concluded Margetić, is strongly influenced by the opinion of Miho Barada who claimed, back in 1950s, that Merania had been lost in 1116 and taken over by Holy Roman emperor Henry V.¹⁴⁹ The only difference between Barada's thesis – one that the historian never analytically argued and followed with corresponding footnotes – is that Margetić did not believe in any direct involvement of

munitatum privilegia de suis posesionibus Ytaliaci regni concessit, in quibus ducalis provinciam regnum apelat: multis igitur a duce et Venetis sibi impensis honoribus, in suo recessu, contra Ungaros, denuo Dalmaciam invadentes, auxillam sponpondit. Andrea Dandolo, *Chronica per extensum descripta*, c. 41, ed. Pastorello, p. 230, l. 16–22.

¹⁴⁵ *Dux autem, in proximo mense madii, suo undique colecto exercitu, et Henrici imperatoris atque Alexii Constantinopolitani advictus presidiiis, contra Ungaros, qui ad subveniendum castrum ladre redierant, in Dalmaciam egressus est.* Ibid., ed. Pastorello, p. 230, l. 23–25.

¹⁴⁶ As was correctly summarized by Makk, “it seems more likely that the support of the two emperors meant only an endorsement in principle of the war. The German sovereign was conducting his second Italian campaign in 1116-1117, the Emperor of Byzantium was fighting the Seljuqs in Asia Minor and the Kievan Russians in 1116, so neither could have been anxious to open up a new front by directly participating in the Hungarian-Venetian conflict.” Makk, *The Árpáds*, p.18. See also Kretschmayr, *Geschichte von Venedig* 1, p. 223.

¹⁴⁷ Margetić, *Rijeka i područje*, pp. 59–60.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 59–61. This privilege is only known by way of two 14th-century *regesta* in *Thesauri claritas. Item privilegium Henrici imperatoris quod patriarcha Aquilegensis libere possit eligere episcopum Polensem, sub data MXCIII. Item transcriptum privilegii donationis facte per Henricum imperatorem Aquilegensi Ecclesie de episcopatu Polensi*. TEA, nos. 536, and 539, ed. Bianchi, p. 227.

¹⁴⁹ Barada, *Hrvatski vlasteoski feudalizam*, pp. 14–15.

emperor Henry V or his troops; instead, the help came indirectly from the Patriarchate of Aquileia and its ministerials, the lords of Duino.

Even though Margetić pointed out many flaws in Hauptmann's Meranian narrative, his own solution to the problem was lacking. Specifically, the thesis of Aquileian military involvement in Venetian-Hungarian wars of 1116 is completely undocumented in primary sources. Even more baseless is any action whatsoever taken by the lords of Duino, the ministerial family itself only beginning to appear in historical records in 1139.¹⁵⁰ Finally, even if one decides to believe the words of Andrea Dandolo that Henry V somehow actually aided the Venetian troops, there is absolutely no evidence that the territory of Merania was impacted by these campaigns in any way. For these reasons, one would suppose, Margetić's thesis does not enjoy as prominent a place in historiography as Ljudmil Hauptmann's. Although it is acknowledged as an (unlikely) alternative scenario to Meranian takeover by the likes of Peter Štih and Andrej Komac, only a few historians have fully embraced the "Duino thesis", Tomislav Raukar and Maurizio Levak being the most prominent among them.¹⁵¹ As both solutions to Meranian mystery are lacking, there must be another option: one that would acknowledge the criticism levied against Hauptmann's thesis, but that would at the same time remain firmly grounded in primary sources.

(Appendix, primary and secondary sources as well as summary will be published at the end of the part 2 in the next issue of Zgodovinski časopis)

¹⁵⁰ See n. 80.

¹⁵¹ Raukar, *Hrvatsko srednjovjekovlje*, p. 273; Levak, *Istra i Kvarner*, p. 410.