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REPRESENTATIONS OF ST. GEORGE ON COINS MINTED IN THE MEDIEVAL CITY OF BAR

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ABSTRACT

The paper analyzes the iconography of the representations of St. George on the coins of the Bar commune, minted back in the fourteenth century. It was noticed that the image of St. George on horseback slaying a dragon, which is on the obverse of coins minted in Bar, was also on the seal of the city of Bar, as well as on the seal of the Bar Cathedral Chapter dating back to the fourteenth century, because St. George, the patron of the cathedral which was the seat of the Archdiocese of Bar, with the development of the commune also became its patron. The iconographic solution of the representation of the patron saint of Bar points to a temporal constant when following an important iconographic template which seems to have been the foundation for the design of the symbol on which the visual identity of the Bar commune, as well as its cathedral, is based. It would appear that the template should be sought in the very cathedral located in Bar itself, which was the source of the cult of St. George in Bar.

Key words: coins of the Bar commune, city seal, representations of St. George, Cathedral of St. George in Bar, the seal of the Bar Cathedral Chapter, fourteenth century

RAPPRESENTAZIONE DI SAN GIORGIO SULLE MONETE CONIATE NELLA CITTÀ MEDIEVALE DI BAR

SINTESI

Il seguente articolo analizza l'iconografia di San Giorgio raffigurata sulle monete del comune di Bar, coniate dal XIV secolo. È emerso che la rappresentazione di San Giorgio a cavallo che uccide il drago, raffigurata sul dritto delle monete di Bar, era anche presente sul sigillo comunale di Bar come pure sul sigillo del capitolo della Cattedrale, risalente al XIV secolo, perché San Giorgio, il patrono della Cattedrale, sede dell'arcidiocesi di Bar, con lo sviluppo del comune, ne divenne il patrono. La soluzione iconografica della rappresentazione del patrono di Bar indica una costante nel seguire un modello iconografico

importante che sembra essere stato la base per l'ideazione del simbolo su cui si basa l'identità visiva sia del comune di Bar che della sua Cattedrale. Pare che il modello vada cercato proprio nella Cattedrale di Bar, che era la fonte del culto di San Giorgio a Bar.

Parole chiave: moneta del comune di Bar, sigillo comunale, raffigurazioni di San Giorgio, Cattedrale San Giorgio di Bar, sigillo del capitolo della Cattedrale di Bar, XIV secolo

INTRODUCTION

In existing numismatic literature, which dealt with the money used by the commune in the medieval city of Bar, the iconographic and iconological analysis of the representations on the coins at the time were almost ignored. However, the iconography of the representations and inscriptions on the coins, as a historical document, deserves special attention, given that money has always expressed the identity of the ones who issue it. The French anthropologist Maurice Godelier viewed money as “a symbol, a visible sign of the history of individuals and groups, whose meaning comes from the most hidden depths of social structures” (Godelier, 1982, 243), reminding us that money, apart from its main purpose in market exchange, is the bearer of social, religious, and especially political meaning. At the same time, its mass production, durability and widespread use made it the first means of communication to be used for political and ideological purposes. The aim of this paper is to provide an iconographic analysis of the representations of St. George on the coins of the Bar commune, whereby special attention will be paid to the cult-related and political reasons that in the Middle Ages formed the basis for the placement of a holy figure on the city's coinage.

Medieval Bar now lies in ruins, but in the Middle Ages, it held an important place among the ancient, fortified towns of the southern part of the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea. Although it is considered to have been founded in the early Byzantine era, its first verified mention was in the tenth century, under the name *Antibareos*, in the episcopal notices of the Constantinople church (Bošković, 1962, 7; Mijović & Kovačević, 1975, 93). It would then be mentioned by Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus in his work *De*

administrando imperio who included it on his list of the border castles of the Byzantine Theme of Dyrrhachium (Durrës), which extended all the way to Dioclia (Porphyrogenitus, 1967, 145). Archaeological research shows that the oldest fortified settlement was formed at the end of the eighth and the beginning of the ninth century, and that the city center was located in the southeast zone, where the Church of St. Theodore, built as early as the ninth century, was located on the most prominent city plateau (Bošković, 1962, 9, 11–12, 195; Janković, 2007, 89).

In the ninth and tenth centuries, Bar was part of the Byzantine Empire, until the rise of the Slavic Principality of Dioclia (Duklja) in the eleventh century under the rule of Prince Stefan Vojislav, which won its independence by defeating the Byzantine army in 1042 (Bešić et al., 1967, 385–386; Živković, 2006, 83–84; Šekularac, 2007, 14–15, 42–43). It was only after the death of King Bodin of Dioclia in 1101, who ruled over Bar, that dynastic turmoil occurred, and the city once again found itself under Byzantine rule. Between 1183 and 1186, the Raška prefect Stefan Nemanja took the city and annexed it to the Great Principality of Serbia, along with other coastal towns that were then taken from the Byzantine Empire (Bešić et al., 1967, 408–410; Šekularac, 2007, 20–21, 25). After the death of Serbian Emperor Dušan in 1355, when his empire began to weaken, the city passed into the hands of the Balšić dynasty, the regional lords of Zeta, who had their own court in Bar in the 1360s. The situation changed in 1405 when the Venetians briefly took control over it, only to regain it again from 1412 to 1421 (Ćirković et al., 1970, 88–128; Šekularac, 2011, 47; Spremić, 2016, 68–86). Subsequently, the city would undergo a constant change of rulers, first by the Serbian despot Stefan Lazarević, then despot Đurađ Branković, after which it was for a brief period of time occupied by the Bosnian duke Stefan Vukčić Kosača (Šekularac, 2007, 25). Venice took Bar once again in 1443, and it remained under its rule until 1571 when it fell to the Ottomans (Ćirković et al., 1984, 54–55).

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNE AND THE RIGHT TO MINT MONEY

The period from the thirteenth to the fourteenth century was marked by the rise of the medieval city of Bar and other towns on the Zeta coast, a time when the communal organization of the towns thrived. With the privileges that the towns along the Zeta coast received from the Serbian rulers, a medieval commune/town with its own district became a separate, legally, and economically unique entity, where over time the rights of rulers boiled down to collecting an annual tribute and appointing a town prince (Ćirković et al., 1984, 26–29; Antonović, 2003, 143–147). In the second half of the thirteenth century, the royal privileges and rights given to towns, along with local customs, were shaped into city statutes, which became not only a basic collection of legal documents, but

also a political symbol, representing the identity of the community that issued them (Lonza, 2012, 7). Although the Bar city statute has not been preserved,¹ it was first mentioned in historical sources in 1330, although it is considered to have been created earlier (Ćirković et al., 1984, 28; Antonović, 2003, 118; Marković, 2014a, 168).

The further development of the city autonomy accompanied the development of its economy, and with the rise in the economy of the medieval city came the need to mint coins (Bošković, 1962, 273–277; Ćirković et al., 1984, 21–23; Hrabak 1999, 167–197; Premović, 2021, 19–49). One of the autonomous rights that the towns on the Zeta coast, Kotor, Bar, Ulcinj, Svač, Drisht and Shkodër, received from Serbian rulers was the right to mint their own coins, copper *follaros* and *half follaros* that fulfilled a town's internal needs; however, there are data that indicate that the coins also circulated between the towns (Rešetar, 1924, 484). The choice of representations and inscriptions on the coins, as well as on the town seal, played an important role in the formation and promotion of communal identity (cf. Marinković, 2006; Odak, 2022b). This is why each town made its own decisions regarding the minting of coins and their appearance. The coins were minted in the town mint, and the work related to its organization and the selection of moneyers was regulated by the city statute, as shown by certain provisions relating the Kotor city statute.² Statutory provisions on the minting of coins in the medieval and the work of the mint have not been preserved, but the Bar mint is mentioned in a final will and testament from 1452, which states: *per Antiuari quando lauorauī la cecha de li grossi de Balsa per mio pagamento* (Ivanišević, 2001, 68). A Dubrovnik document dating from 1441, which mentions the mint of despot Đurađ in “Albania”, also refers to the Bar mint: *ceche Albanie per ipsos empte a domino dispoto Georgio*. The mint was leased³ to the Dubrovnik residents Bogeta Milovanović and Jakob P. Primojević, who hired the Dubrovnik goldsmith Jakša Miladinović as the minter, and whose compensation amounted to one-third of the profit from the mint customs (Hrabak, 1953, 193).

- 1 A considerable number of statutes of the towns/communes located along the east coast of the Adriatic Sea have either not been preserved or have merely been retained in the form of fragments of later redactions. This also applies to the statute of the commune of the town of Koper/Capodistria, first mentioned in official documents dating back to 1238 renders it the oldest one on the east coast of the Adriatic Sea (cf. Darovec, 2023).
- 2 In the Kotor city statute, the work of the Kotor mint is indirectly mentioned in chapter 14 “On the election of minters”: “Also, as written above, two correct and expert minters are elected for six months over the town money that will be minted. Each of them should have a salary of 10 perpers, and whoever does not want to be in that service, will pay a fine of 25 perpers” (Antović, 2009b, 148).
- 3 In historical sources, it is often mentioned that Serbian rulers leased mints, usually for a year, taking the profit from the lease in advance.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH ON COINS MINTED IN BAR AND THE ICONOGRAPHY OF BAR COINAGE

Theodor Ippen was the first to write about the coins minted in Bar, publishing in 1901 in the *Numismatische Zeitschrift* magazine both a description and drawings of two types of these coins, where he mentioned St. George as the patron saint of the city (Ippen, 1902, 190–191). Then in 1910, also in the *Numismatische Zeitschrift* journal, the Austrian numismatist Karl Stockert published the most important work on the coins of the towns on the Zeta coast, “Die Münzen der Städte Nordalbanien” (Stockert, 1910, 101–111). In this paper, Stockert published a precise numismatic overview of all known coinages of towns/communes in Zeta, including the city of Bar, with, in addition to a brief historical overview, included a description and drawings of the coins, the time of their coinage, and data from documents related to the mints. Stockert’s work provided the basis for the presentation of the coins mined in the towns in this part of the Adriatic coast in volume VI of Vittorio Emanuele’s *Corpus Nummorum Italicorum* in 1922 (Savoia, 1922, 284–291). Alfred Makanec also wrote about the two *follaros* of Ulcinj and Bar in 1924 in the *Gazette of the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, also providing drawings and descriptions (Makanec, 1924, 107–108). The later scientific work that dealt with the coins minted in the city of Bar, apart from what was already presented in Stockert’s work, included very little new information. The only work that stands out is Sergije Dimitrijević’s *Dating of Copper Coins of Coastal Cities*, which presented new dating of coins minted in Zeta coastal towns (Dimitrijević, 2006, 311–326). Bogumil Hrabak (1953, 188–195) and Ljubomir Nedeljković (1974,



Fig. 1: Bar (municipality), follaro, the first type, the fourteenth century (Novaković, 2012).



Fig. 2: Bar (municipality), follaro, the second type, the fourteenth century (Novaković, 2012).

111–127) were particularly interested in the coins of the Balšić dynasty which were minted in Bar during their reign, while Božidar Šekularac also touched upon their coinage (Šekularac, 2011, 111–119).

City *follaros*, half *follaros*, and silver dinars were minted in the Bar mint during the rule of Đurađ II Stracimirović Balšić (1385–1403), while copper *bagattinos* circulated in Bar during the Venetian protectorate. It is believed that the oldest type of Bar *follaros* (Fig. 1) is a coin with a stylized letter G on the obverse, to which the circular inscription EOR GIVS was added. On the reverse, the coin bears the stylized letter A, followed by the circular inscription TIB AR (Stockert, 1910, 101–103, no. 156, 161). This type of coin has several subtypes, on which the inscription following the initials on the obverse is omitted (Stockert, 1910, 102–103, no. 157, 159), but there are also types on which the initials on the obverse and reverse are accompanied by three stars (Stockert, 1910, 102–103, no. 158–159).

While there is no doubt that the initial A on the reverse, with or without the accompanying inscription, refers to the name of the city – A(N)TIBAR, the initial G, or GEORGIVS, on the obverse, has been subject to different interpretations. Some researchers of coins minted in Bar do not attribute this inscription to the patron saint of the city, St. George, but believe that it refers to Đurađ (George) II Stracimirović Balšić, thus linking the beginning of this coinage to his rule over Bar in the 1360s (Stockert, 1910, 109; Makanec, 1924,

108). Others, on the other hand, linked the beginning of the minting of *follaros* in Bar in the first half of the fourteenth century (Ippen, 1902, 192; Dimitrijević, 2006, 322, 324), or even to the last quarter of the fourteenth century (Savoia, 1922, 290).

The following type of coinage originating from Bar bears the image of St. George on both the obverse and the reverse. The saint appears on two iconographic types (Fig. 2); on the obverse of the coin he is depicted as a mounted warrior slaying a dragon with a lance, with the inscription SG, while on the reverse he is shown standing and holding a lance in both hands and stabbing the dragon which lies at his feet. The representation of the saint on the reverse is accompanied by the name of the city DAN TIVAR (Stockert 1910, 105–106, no. 166–177). There were numerous issues of coins, all of which differed in weight. The same representations and inscriptions could be found on the *half follaros*, which differed from the *follaros* by the significantly reduced diameter of the coin plate and weight (Stockert, 1910, 106–109, no. 178–195). The high-quality engraving, as well as the precision and expertise in processing the molds, led to the assumption that the mold for these types of *follaros* and *half follaros* minted in Bar were made in the Dubrovnik mint (Stockert, 1910, 109), as was the case with one type of *follaros* from the town of Ulcinj (Rešetar, 1924, 186), and most likely, one type of *follaros* from the town of Drisht (Odak, 2022a, 36–40). The same depictions of the saint, in a slightly different style, are still found on *bagattinos*, money that was in use in the city of Bar during the Venetian rule, which will be discussed later.

Apart from copper coins, the silver dinars of Đurađ II Stracimirović Balšić were also minted in Bar. On the obverse, the coin bears the representation of St. Lawrence, the patron saint of the Balšić dynasty, standing and facing the viewer, wearing a dalmatic with a halo. He holds the Gospel in his right hand and a censer in his left. The representation of the saint is complemented by the inscription LAVRE NCIVS M. The reverse of the dinar bears the coat of arms of the Balšić dynasty, with the inscription M B GEORGI S TRACIMIR (Nedeljković, 1974, 116–117, fig. 9–10; Šekularac, 2011, 117).

St. George, whose representation marks the coins minted in Bar, was a Roman soldier martyred during the reign of Emperor Diocletian. The saint enjoyed great respect in the Byzantine Empire from the sixth century, when pilgrims spoke of his tomb in Lida as a place where miracles take place (Walter, 1995, 314). It was restored by Emperor Justinian I, and his popularity then grew, especially from the tenth century when he became the patron of the military aristocracy, and then of the Byzantine emperors (Mango, 1986, 218–219). St. George appeared on an imperial coin for the first time under the Komnenoi, during the reign of Emperor John II (1118–43) (Hendy, 1999, I, 261–263, pl. IX, no. 8a.1–d.3). However, although the image of the saint on horseback slaying a dragon was first encountered in a Cappadocian painting from between 976 and 1021 (Walter, 2016, 127), the mounted image of St. George, as well as

the image of the saint slaying the dragon, was not represented on Byzantine coins. It would appear for the first time on the money of the crusader state, the Principality of Antioch, minted by Roger I of Salerno (1112–19). On this coin, the saint is shown as a holy knight on horseback, piercing the dragon with his lance (Metcalf, 1983, 7, pl. 4, no. 55–57). From the beginning of the twelfth century, this depiction of St. George was also found in Italian art (Camelliti, 2012, 235–236) from where it reached the Zeta coast. The specific hagiographic scene in which St. George slays the dragon became particularly popular in the West after the thirteenth century, thanks to the *Golden Legend*.

THE CULT OF ST. GEORGE ON THE ZETA COAST

The long rule of the Byzantine Empire over the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea led to the adoption of cults of saints revered in the empire, especially in cities, where they became city patrons and where churches were built in their honor. St. George was the patron saint of Kotor and its diocese until the ninth century, when the relics of St. Tryphon were transferred to Kotor (Živković, 2010, 223–224). The lasting importance of the old city patron is indicated in the first chapter of the Kotor statute, which states that the city authorities and judges are elected on St. George's Day (Antović, 2009a, 1, 53). Legend has it that, when transferring the relics of St. Tryphon, they were first brought to the abbey of St. George near Perast, which was first mentioned in historical sources in 1166. It was then that the abbot of this Benedictine monastery attended the consecration ceremony of the Cathedral of St. Tryphon in Kotor (Farlati, 1800, 433; Smičiklas, 1904, 102).

In the city of Bar, St. George was mentioned for the first time in the bull of Pope Clement III from 1089, by which the bishopric of Bar was raised to the rank of an archbishopric. On that occasion, the first archbishop of Bar, Petar, was bestowed with a pallium, and this sign of archiepiscopal dignity, as stated in the bull, could be worn during the celebration of major church holidays, the two feasts of the Angels, and for holidays dedicated to saints who were respected at the local level, St. George and St. Sergius and Bacchus (Thallóczy et al., 1913, 21–22; Jovović, 2005, 53–54). The beginning of the veneration of the cult of St. George in the city of Bar is linked to the change of the patron saint of the Bar Cathedral, because there is no earlier proof of local devotion to this saint. According to the new point of view, the cathedral, dedicated to St. Theodore, was destroyed in a fire (Farlati & Coletto, 1817, 12; Radonić, 1950, 247; Bošković 1962, 11), and was rebuilt and dedicated to a new patron – St. George, at the time of the coronation of King Mihailo of Dioclia in 1077 (Crnčević, 2013, 93–99).⁴ The patron saint of

4 Đurđe Bošković estimated that the Basilica of St. George was built in the twelfth century (Bošković, 1962, 19).

the Bar Cathedral could also have changed during the reign of King Mihailo's son, Konstantin Bodin (1081–99), during the promotion of the Bishopric of Bar to the rank of an archbishopric. This is indirectly evidenced by the king's seal dating from the second half of the eleventh century, depicting the frontal busts of two warrior saints, St. Theodore and St. George, as the king's protectors (Cheynet, 2008, 89–90), but also as patrons of the Duklja Cathedral (Preradović & Milanović, 2016, 104). The Vojislavljević dynasty considered St. George to be their patron, so the holy warrior is depicted opposite the portrait of Prince Stefan Vojislav, the founder of their dynasty, in the Church of St. Michael the Archangel in Ston, whose painting dates back to the last decades of the first half of the eleventh century (Babić, 2014, 18, 22, 138, pl. 35–36; Tomas, 2016, 50–52). Apart from the seal of King Bodin, the image of St. George can also be found on one of the seals of his son George (Gerasimov, 1938, 217–218), who himself bears the name of the holy warrior. Based on the abovementioned, it seems that it was precisely during the rule of the Vojislavljević dynasty in Bar that the state of Dioclia was promoted to the rank of a kingdom, and the church of Bar to the rank of an archbishopric, which rendered it the ecclesiastic center of Dioclia. Under the influence of the Dioclia rulers and their special respect for St. George, a new saint cult emerged in Bar. Over time, it would become the basis for the city's and then the communal identity. It can be noticed that the election of the new patron of the Bar Cathedral was not an essential turning point, because St. Theodore, the first patron of the cathedral, like St. George, was a warrior saint whose cult spread from Constantinople in the ninth century to the Mediterranean region, where the saint, before the transfer of the relics of St. Mark, was the patron of Venice (Fortini Brown, 1991, 518; Walter, 1999, 172).

ST. GEORGE AS THE PATRON OF THE BAR COMMUNE

The tradition of honoring St. George in Bar would reach its full potential during the development of the commune, when the saint became not only the patron of the cathedral, but was elevated to the status of the patron of the commune. The choice of the city's patron clearly indicates the maturing of the commune and the need for symbols that express and strengthen its collective identity (Webb, 1996, 6–8; Favini & Savorelli, 2013, 40–41; Lonza, 2017, 23). That is why his image was then portrayed on a communal stamp, as well as on the coins minted in Bar. The role of the seal to validate and authenticate documents made it an official material symbol that confirmed the identity and legitimacy of the communal authority (Bedos-Rezak, 1990, 36–38; Favini & Savorelli, 2013, 21). The seal of the Bar commune has not been preserved, and its oldest recorded print was found on a document that was kept in the Dubrovnik archives. This document from 1372 bore the impression of a black, round seal, with a left-facing mounted representation of St. George slaying the

dragon (Jireček, 1904, 17). The same iconographic solution is also found on the seal of the Bar commune (Fig. 3) that was two centuries younger, dating back to 1567, on a document which is kept in the Dubrovnik archive (HR-DADU 7.3.6, 7, 329).⁵ A drawing of the seal of the judges of the Bar commune (Fig. 4), with the same type of representation of the saint, and the circular inscription + SDLICUDICI DA TIVAR was published by Cesare Augusto Levi in 1896 (Levi, 1896, 43). During the Ottoman occupation of the city, the Christian population of Bar enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy until the mid-seventeenth century, as evidenced by a seal impression on a letter to the people of Dubrovnik from 1631, which they signed as *Li miseri Christiani della Comunita di Antivari*. On the barely visible seal image, there is a representation of St. George in the characteristic Bar iconography, supplemented by the inscription GEORGIVS•PROTECTOR•ANTIBAR (Marković, 2015, 425). The image of St. George on the seal of the Bar commune, which has not iconographically changed over time, pointed out the continuity of the commune primarily as a political entity, and of St. George as a symbol of communal power.

It should be noted that the iconography of the image of St. George on the seal of the city of Bar corresponds to the mounted image of the saint on the obverse of the coins minted in the city. The position of the horse and the rider, facing left with a cloak billowing behind him, is the same on the seal and on the coin. The coin clearly shows the saint dressed in a tunic, with armor draped over it, and a triangular shield with a cross in the middle rests on the saint's shoulder. With the lance in his right hand, he pierces the dragon lying under the horse, while holding the reins with his other hand. Both the coin and the seal show the same type of dragon. As the dragon receives the fatal stab wound from the right, on some of the coins the lance is mostly covered by the horse's body.

The similarity is even more pronounced if one compares the representation of the saint on certain issues of these coins (Fig. 5) with the representation of St. George on the imprint of the seal of the Bar Cathedral Chapter (Fig. 6) preserved on a document from 1578 (Sella & Laurent, 1937, pl. LVII, no. 1780). According to the Gothic stylization and modeling of the characters, the seal dates back to the fourteenth century (Marković, 2014a, 404, fig. 2, 840). On the circular seal, showing the pantheon of saints especially revered in the Archbishopric of Bar the central part shows a Gothic frame with three figures of saints, in the center of which is a representation of St. George on a horse facing left, slaying a dragon with a lance, marked SA – G. On the right side of St. George is a figure of St. Peter with keys in his hands, and on the left is a representation of St. John the Baptist.⁶

5 The seal was published by Savo Marković (2022, 45, fig. 2).

6 Savo Marković, who was the only one who studied this seal so far, states that it is St. Paul who is depicted to the left of St. George, however, the iconography of the saint depicted with a characteristic cloak suggests that it is St. John the Baptist, whose cult was prominent on the Zeta coast (Marković, 2014a, 840).



Fig. 3: The imprint of the seal of the Bar commune from 1567 (Marković, 2022).



Fig. 4: A drawing of the seal of the judges of the Bar commune published by Cesare A. Levi in 1896 (Levi, 1896).

In the upper part of the seal, above St. George, there is a frontal figure of the Virgin Mary with Christ in her arms.⁷ The inscription + SIGILLVM. CHAPITULLI. ANTIBARENSIS. runs along the edge of the seal. The characteristic iconography of the representation of the patron saint of Bar indicates a temporal consistency in following an important iconographic template that seems to have been the basis for the design of the symbol on which the visual identity of the Bar commune, as well as its cathedral, is based. We believe that this template should be sought in the Bar Cathedral itself, which was the source of the local cult of St. George.

The cathedral was completely destroyed in an explosion in 1881 (Ćirković et al., 1984, 98). Its appearance was recorded by nineteenth-century travel writers, from who we learn that above the western portal, most likely in the tympanum, there was a marble relief depicting the patron saint of the church, St. George, mounted on a horse, slaying a dragon (Hecquard, 1858, 35; Rovinskii, 1883, 182). It is assumed that the portal was built during the major reconstruction of the western façade at the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century (Bošković, 1962, 20; Zagarčanin, 2006, 121). Bar relics and the reliquary of the cathedral, an important testimony to the cult of saints in the city, were not preserved. We only know a little about them from archival data from the end of the fourteenth century. Namely, due to the particularly difficult financial situation in which the Bar commune found itself under the rule of the Balšić dynasty, when taxes were raised and goods were confiscated from merchants, the city borrowed from merchants, and some of the relics of Bar were given twice as collateral.

⁷ In 1513, in the Bar Cathedral, two altars were mentioned, dedicated to St. George and the Holy Virgin (Blehova Čelebić, 2007, 68; Marković, 2014b, 39).



Fig. 5: Bar (municipality) follaro, fourteenth century (Novaković, 2012).

According to a document dated March 27, 1399, holy relics from the cathedral, which were contained in a large and a small chest, were given as collateral to Simo Ninković, a resident of Dubrovnik, as part of some previous business dealings (Thallóczy et al., 1918, 174; Marković, 2014b, 42–43).

Although in medieval cities the patron of the city cathedral and the patron of the commune were not always the same saint, in the towns on the Zeta coast, Kotor, Ulcinj, Svač, Drisht and Shkodër, it was common for these to have been the same saint. The cathedral in Kotor is dedicated to St. Tryphon (Mišić, 2010, 141), the cathedral in Ulcinj to the Holy Virgin (Mišić, 2010, 304), the patron saint of the cathedral in Svač was St. John the Baptist (Mišić, 2010, 249), the cathedral in Drisht was dedicated to the Holy Virgin (Mišić, 2010, 98), while the patron saint of the cathedral in Shkodër is St. Stephen (Mišić, 2010, 254). Representations of the aforementioned saints are on the obverse of the communal money of these towns,⁸ minted in the second half of the thirteenth and in the fourteenth century, while the reverse usually bears another town symbol—a representation of the city gates (Odak Mihailović, 2014, 174–181), or, as in the case of the town of Shkodër, the town coat of arms (Stockert, 1910, 80–85, no. 26–42). The images of the patrons on both sides of a coin would appear only in certain issues originating from the towns of Kotor (Savoia, 1922, 301–304,

⁸ Representations of local patron saints on coins in medieval towns were quite widespread in the West, and their likenesses could be found on coins from Aquileia, Trieste/Trst, Ljubljana, St. Veit an der Glan/Šentvid ob Glini and Friesach, minted in the thirteenth century (Štekar, 2008, 308–313).



Fig. 6: The imprint of the seal of the Bar Cathedral Chapter from 1578 (Jovović, 2005).

type III, no. 72–103, pl. XXVI– XXVII) and Shkodër (Stockert, 1910, 85–87, no. 43–52), which were minted in the fourteenth century. What distinguishes the coins minted in Bar in comparison to the coins of other towns/communes on the Zeta coast is the dominance of the representation of the city's patron saint in the iconography, and with the exception of the first issue, St. George is found on both the obverse and the reverse of all the coins minted in the Bar mint. It should be noted that in the medieval city of Bar, the representations of St. George on communal coins and seals not only pointed to his importance as the patron saint of the Bar commune, but also the importance of the cathedral dedicated to him as the seat of the Archdiocese of Bar. The presence of the archbishop's seat raised the rank of Bar in relation to the surrounding towns/episcopal centers that were subordinate to it and gave it a special feature, which the city emphasized in its visual representation. That is why, by all accounts, the figure of St. George over the western portal of the cathedral in Bar became a symbol of the Bar community.



Fig. 7: Bar's *bagattino* from period of Venetian domination, the fifteenth century (Novaković, 2012).

The iconography of the coins minted in Bar did not change for a long time, and strict traditionalism in their appearance was characteristic of the coins minted along the Zeta coast. Any more radical change in the design of the coins usually indicated propaganda intentions, as was the case with the *bagattinos*, which were in circulation in Bar during Venetian rule. In addition to the image of St. George, *bagattinos* also bore the symbol of St. Mark, the patron saint of the Republic of Venice which ruled the city at the time. The representation of the patron saint of Venice, next to the patron saint of the city on the coins in circulation at the time, was a common practice in all towns on the Zeta coast under Venetian rule. The first type of *bagattinos* had a representation of St. George standing and slaying a dragon with a lance on the obverse, followed by the inscription DANT IVAR. The reverse of the coin included the representation of the winged lion of St. Mark, and the accompanying inscription + S MARCVS VENE TIARVMIC (Stockert, 1910, 110–111, no. 196–198). Another type of *bagattinos* (Fig. 7) had a representation of St. George on horseback slaying a dragon with a lance on the obverse, accompanied by S GEORG ATIVARI, while the reverse included a winged Venetian lion, with the circular inscription + S MARCVS VENETI (Stockert, 1910, 111, no. 201). It is believed that the *bagattinos* originating from Bar were minted in Venice (Stockert, 1910, 109–110).

ONCE A PATRON, ALWAYS A PATRON: *SCUOLA DI SAN GIORGIO E TRIFONE*

Fleeing from the oncoming Ottoman advancement, residents from the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea fled to Italy,⁹ especially to Venice, where they founded brotherhoods. One of them was the *Scuola di San Giorgio e Trifone*, also known as the *Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni*, which was founded in 1451 (Čoralić, 1994, 44–45; Spremić, 2016, 160). During the first century after its foundation, the headquarters of the brotherhood members, who were mostly former residents of Bar and Kotor,¹⁰ was in the Church of St. John the Baptist of the Knights Hospitaller (*San Giovanni Battista del Tempio*), where they were given the right to erect an altar and dedicate it to St. George and St. Tryphon. The importance of St. George lies in the fact that on St. George's day, the brotherhood was obliged to give the prior of the monastery four ducats, two loaves of bread and one candle (Čoralić, 1994, 44–45; Spremić, 2016, 160). Although the brotherhood was under the protection of three saints, as St. George and St. Tryphon were joined by St. Jerome, the patron saint of Dalmatia since 1464 (Marinković, 2018, 28), the cult and iconography of St. George, a saint especially revered in Bar and Kotor, visually dominated the building (cf. Perocco, 1964; Trška, 2018; Barker, 2021). Since its origins, the main symbol of the brotherhood was St. George who, mounted on horseback, defeats the dragon (Sigovini, 1988, 19–29),¹¹ which is prominent on the brotherhood's flag, whose iconography corresponds to the representation of the saint in the Bar commune.

CONCLUSION

Between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when the towns on the Zeta coast were part of the state of the Nemanjić dynasty, municipal government developed, and city communes acquired the right to mint copper coins for city use, known as *follaros* and *half follaros*. The iconographic analysis of the coins of the Bar commune, whose coinage dates to the fourteenth century, found that the mounted representation of St. George slaying the dragon, which is on the obverse of the coins minted in Bar, was a ubiquitous symbol of Bar in that period, so, in addition to the seal of the Bar commune, it also bore the seal of

9 A record still exists of the fact that a patrician of Bar, Marco Samuel Caloian, pleaded with the Tuscan Grand Duke in 1574 to allow the resettlement of one hundred families from Bar to Tuscany, via Ancona, so that they could avoid the "Turkish tyranny" (Marković, 2018, 605–606, 624–633).

10 On the basis of preserved wills in the brotherhood, which originate from the fifteenth to the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was established that the largest number of members came from Kotor and Bar (Čoralić, 2022, 3, n. 6).

11 Under the influence of the *Golden Legend*, the trend of representing St. George on a horse slaying a dragon spread to Venice as well, by the mid-to-late thirteenth century (Perry, 2014, 17).

the Bar Cathedral Chapter, and the same representation adorned the tympanum above the western portal of the Bar Cathedral. In its study of the genesis and the significance of this representation of the medieval city of Bar, the paper presents the development of the cult of St. George in Bar, who began to be honored during the reign of the Vojislavljević dynasty from Dioclia, and whose patron saint was also St. George. Then, instead of St. Theodore, the cathedral in Bar got a new patron, St. George, and the Bishopric of Bar was promoted to the rank of an archbishopric. The status of the archiepiscopal center emphasized the importance of Bar in relation to other towns and bishoprics in the area that were subordinate to it, so with the development of the Bar commune, the patron of the cathedral also assumed the role of the communal patron. From that moment, the mounted representation of St. George slaying the dragon, until then the symbol of the Archdiocese of Bar, became the central motif of the visual identity of the Bar commune.

UPODOBITVE SV. JURIJA NA KOVANCIH KOVANIH
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POVZETEK

Med 13. in 14. stoletjem, ko so bila mesta v Zetskem primorju del države Nemanjićev, se je v njih razvijala mestna oblast, mestne komune pa so si pridobile pravico kovanja bakrenega denarja za mestno uporabo, folarjev in polfolarjev. Pri ikonografski analizi denarja barske komune, ki so ga začeli kovati v 14. stoletju, se pokaže, da je v tistem obdobju vseprisoten simbol Bara bila podoba sv. Jurija na konju, ki ubija zmaja, kar zaznamuje averz barskih kovancev. Poleg pečata barske komune je ta podoba krasila tudi pečat barskega stolnega kapitlja, prav tako pa je bila upodobljena na timpanonu nad zahodnim vhodom barske stolnice. Pri obravnavi geneze in pomena te podobe za srednjeveški Bar je v delu prikazan razvoj kulta sv. Jurija v Baru, ki se je v mestu začel v času vladavine dukljanske dinastije Vojislavljevićev, katere zaščitnik je bil sveti Jurij. Takrat je barska katedrala namesto sv. Teodorja dobila novega zavetnika, sv. Jurija, barska škofija pa je bila povzdignjena v nadškofijo. Status nadškofijskega središča je poudarjal pomen Bara v primerjavi z drugimi mesti oziroma škofijami v okolici, ki so mu bila podrejena, zato je z dozorevanjem barske komune zavetnik stolnice postal tudi zavetnik komune. Takrat je podoba sv. Jurija na konju, ki ubija zmaja – dotlej simbol barske nadškofije – postala tudi osrednji motiv vizualne identitete barske komune.

Ključne besede: denar mesta Bar, mestni pečat, upodobitve sv. Jurija, katedrala sv. Jurija v Baru, pečat barskega stolnega kapitlja, 14. stoletje

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