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HELIAS AND BLASIOUS DE RADOANO, RAGUSAN MERCHANTS IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

Based on unpublished and published documents from the State Archives in Dubrovnik (Ragusa), the article traces the lives of two important Ragusan merchants from the second half of the fourteenth century, Helias and Blasious de Radoano and their participation in the economic and political life of the city and in its international activity.

Among numerous Ragusan nobles and commoners who participated very actively in the trade between the East and the West, principally between the Balkan hinterland and Italy, two members of the “de Radoano” (Radoanich, Radohanich) family deserve special attention. Their contribution to the contacts among various regions with which Dubrovnik (Ragusa) traded at the time, as well as their activities in the city itself, were truly remarkable. It was not possible for me to establish the exact relationship between “Helias (Elias,” Ilija Radovanov) and “Blasious de Radoano” (Vlaho Radovanov) because no document which I have been able to consult provided firm information from which this relationship could be discerned. I shall, therefore, discuss separately the two de Radoanos, beginning with the less important but still very interesting Helias.¹

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Helias (Elias) de Radoano’s presence in Dubrovnik can be followed, at least according to documents in my possession, from 1363 to 1388. The first mention of “Helias de Radoano” dating from 1363 already shows his links with Venice. Indeed, he was entrusted by the executors of a will with carrying to that city 97 hyperpers and 9 grossi and giving them to the Venetians indicated in the will.² Another

¹ This article does not intend to be an exhaustive study of the two de Radoanos; rather, it hopes to stimulate further research. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Mrs. Kosara Gavriloic, of Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A., for editing my English text with greatest care and competence.
² Državni arhiv u Dubrovniku (State Archives in Dubrovnik, hereafter DAD), Distributiones testamentorum, II, 61–61v.
instance where we see Helias carrying money from Dubrovnik to Venice is found in a letter written in Venice on June 8, 1367 by the Venetian Donato Negro and addressed to “Todoro Scolmafoça,” chancellor of Dubrovnik. In it Donato acknowledges having received from Helias (“Ellia de Radoan”) the balance of the debt owed by a certain “ser Lucha” to the Venetian. A rare document in which both de Radoanos are mentioned dates from April 15, 1368 when “Blasus de Radoano” was ordered to keep in his care 100 ducats sent to him from Venice by “Helia Radoani” as part of proceeds from a sale of a “barchosium.”

In March 1372, Helias was one of four executors of a will and in October of the same year, obviously during a stay in Dubrovnik, he, together with several other Ragusans, appointed the distinguished Ragusan nobleman and diplomat, “ser Martolus de Tudisio” (Tudizić) as their representative in Venice and elsewhere. However, Helias himself returned to Venice at the latest in August 1375, where he is mentioned as “fattore” of the Ragusan patrician “ser Michael Nicoliçe de Martinussio (Martinužić),” but the relationship between Helias and ser Michael seems to have soured rather quickly. On March 5, 1376, ser Michael was demanding from Helias in the Venetian court an amount of 1120 ducats received by Helias through Venetian banks “for exchange transactions, silver and coins,” as well as “for other monies which he had received.” Helias’ lawyers did not contest the demand, and Helias was sentenced to pay ser Michael 1120 ducats.

There is, however, one very interesting element in this document: Helias de Radoano is twice mentioned as being “in carcere.” His incarceration may have been connected with the early stages of Dubrovnik’s involvement in the anti-Venetian coalition, which led to the war of Tenedos-Chioggia. The reaction to Helias’ troubles can be seen in a number of Ragusan documents. Almost immediately after the above-mentioned Venetian act of March 5, 1376, one finds several Ragusan documents in which a variety of persons registered what they had sent to Helias in Venice, most probably to make sure that their property and rights would not be lost. Thus, in April, the Ragusan court ordered a man who had received from Venice things belonging to Helias to deposit them in the shop of a patrician who was to keep them

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3 DAD, Diversa cancellariae, XXI, separate folium.
4 Ibidem, 182v. This order was repeated twice in the same month. Ibidem, 183v.
5 On March 15, 1372, Helias and three other executors of the will were ordered “quod debeant tenere sequestratas petias XXXV pannorum, libras XI de seta torecta que venerunt de Veneciiis.” Div. canc., XXIII, 90v.
6 DAD, Diversa notariae, IX, 58. On Martolus de Tudisio see B. Krekić, Un mercante e diplomatico da Dubrovnik (Ragusa) a Venezia nel Trecento, in B. Krekić, Dubrovnik, Italy and the Balkans on the Late Middle Ages, London 1980, V.
8 Archivio di Stato Venezia, Sentenze a giustizia — Petizion, busta 4, 40–40v.
9 On Dubrovnik’s involvement in these events see B. Krekić, Dubrovnik (Ragusa) and the War of Tenedos/Chioggia (1378–1381) in Krekić, Dubrovnik, Italy, VI.
sequestered. In May, several merchants registered silver and other things, which they had sent to Helias “in Riuoalto,” while he was “factor qui stabat Veneciis.” Of particular interest is an act of May 15, 1376, in which a patrician and a commoner declared that together they had sent merchandise to “Helia Radoanich, factori in Veneciis,” while the patrician had also sent to Helias four books. Could it be that these books were meant to help Helias pass his time in captivity?

There is no doubt that Helias spent a very long time in Venetian jails. At the end of August 1378, the Ragusan Senate unanimously adopted a proposition to exchange Helias for a “Tartarum venetum” who was in the Ragusan jail. This decision was, again unanimously, revised in the same meeting of the Senate. A Ragusan envoy going to Venice was to propose to the authorities in that city the exchange of any Venetian prisoner for Helias, with the proviso that no more than 10 ducats should be spent “to have that poor man who was captured in the service of our land.” In the same session, the Senate decided to give to Helias for his expenses 20 ducats and to his family “for their nourishment” 3 hyperpers a month. From these decisions and measures undertaken by the generally less than magnanimous Ragusan authorities, it seems evident that Helias de Radoano was not just a “fattore” of various Ragusan merchants in Venice, but that — more importantly — he was charged by the Ragusan government with tasks which the government considered important enough to provide for his and his family’s sustenance. Unfortunately, we do not know what these tasks were.

The attempt made in August 1378 evidently failed, and one year later, in early September 1379, the Ragusan Senate decided “to allow, if it were possible,” the exchange of Helias for the longtime distinguished Venetian merchant in Dubrovnik, Francesco Baldella, held in the Ragusan jail. This Ragusan offer also failed, as did the one made in August 1380 proposing to exchange Helias for another Venetian arrested in Dubrovnik. It was only after the peace of Turin, that Helias was finally able to return to Dubrovnik at the beginning of September 1381, having spent over five years in Venetian jails. The Ragusan government paid for the ship which brought him from Venice to Dubrovnik.

Almost immediately after his arrival in that city, Helias started taking an active part in local affairs. At the end of the same month of September 1381, he was ap-

10 Div. cane., XXIV, 138, 139, 144.
11 Ibidem, 143v, ad. f. 144.
12 Ibidem, 144v.
14 Reform. XXIV, 5; MR IV, 161.
pointed “misseta” together with a patrician and another commoner and was reappointed to the same duty the next year and the year after. More importantly, in late January 1385, Helias was appointed by the Minor Council as its “sindicus” to Valona and Durazzo to buy salt. He must have been successful in this enterprise for a few months later, in December of 1385, he was sent by the government as “sindicus” to the market at the Neretva (Narenta) to take care of some problems in the grain trade. He had the authority to impose penalties while at the Neretva.

Yet another mission of Helias de Radoano at this time shows what good reputation he enjoyed in Dubrovnik. In February of 1386, the Minor Council decided to reimburse Helias “for things and labor on the trip which he made with the ambassadors who were going to Lord Georgius de Balsa” (Balšić). A few days later it was stated that Helias would receive the reimbursement “for all the things he had lost.” Furthermore, in July of 1387 Helias was sent with a ship to “Apulea” (Apulia), probably to buy cereals, although there is no indication what the reason for this trip was.

The last mention of Helias de Radoano in the documents in my possession dates from 1388. His former business partner, whose “fattore” in Venice he had been in 1375, as mentioned above, the patrician “ser Michael Nicoliče de Martinusso” had died, and his will was registered with the Ragusan notary on March 1, 1388. Attached to the will was a separate “libretto” which ser Michael kept and in it, among many other items dealing with his business in Venice, one finds the following declaration: “I wish that 12 ducats be given to Elia de Radoano who was ‘factore’ in Venice,” although Helias in fact should have given this amount to Michael because “he kept some of my money to my displeasure.” As will be seen, this is also the third and last document in which both Helias and Blasius de Radoano are mentioned, although separately, in the same act.

There is no will of Helias de Radoano, and we do not know when he died. However, a document, which will be considered at the end of this article, might indicate that he was still alive in 1410. His long stay in Venice, where he had not been only an agent of Ragusan merchants, patricians and commoners alike, but had also performed services for the government — something that he had to pay for dearly with over five years in Venetian jails; his activities in Dubrovnik itself after 1381; his missions for the city to Albania, the Neretva and Apulia; his participation in the Ragusan embassy to George Balšić, all these attest that Helias was obviously a man

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18 Odluke I, 250, 351.
22 Odluke II, 251.
23 Ibidem, 398.
24 DAD, Testamenta notariae, VIII, 246–250v.
whose international connections were multiple and significant. It is not surprising
that the Ragusan government took advantage of this fact. All Ragusans, merchants
and others, had to perform services required by the government. The government,
however, did not ask for such services from all Ragusans, but only from those whom
it knew capable of being effective in the fulfillment of given tasks. Helias de
Radoano was clearly such a man. He suffered because of it and, presumably, enjoyed
considerable prestige in the city through it.

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Even more important were the activities of “Blasius de Radoano,” (also known
as “Vlacotta Gladicossa, Gladicossich, Vladicossich”) whose presence in Dubrovnik
can be followed — according to unpublished and published documents available to
me — from 1357 until his death in 1398. The first mention in November 1357 shows
Blasius as one of the people who were ordered to inform the commune of the cheese
in their possession. Blasius had 180 “pieces of cheese.”25 In November 1361,
“Vlacotta de Radoano” was one of the four guards of the jail in which “Ćiue de
Buchia” (Djivo Buca) was kept for a protracted period of time.26 Two years later,
one finds Blasius already engaged in contacts with Venice. In September of 1363, he
gave to a man in Dubrovnik everything that his late brother had sent to him and that
Blasius had brought from Venice.27

By this time, and probably earlier, Blasius owned a shop in Dubrovnik. Indeed,
in January 1364 the Minor Council of that city allowed him to export from Dubrovnik
“miliaria VIII casei et III sepi,” on condition that he and others who had obtained simi-
lar permits send the cheese out of the city by the first available ships (but it is not said
to what destination). As for the tallow, Blasius and another merchant who had been
granted permission to export this article were ordered to furnish their shops with suffi-
cient quantities of tallow candles so that the supply may last until Easter. Furthermore,
although a maximum price of candles had been established on that same day, Blasius
and the other man were allowed “to sell to foreigners for the best (sc. highest price)
they could.”28 Next month, in February 1364, Blasius promised to the government to
bring to Dubrovnik by the end of May 500 “staria” of wheat for the price of 1 grosso
each “starium.” He kept his promise, delivering 568 “staria” in three installments and
was exempt from further obligations “quia solvit.”29

The fact that Blasius owned a shop in Dubrovnik at this time is confirmed by
an act from July 1365, in which he is called “Blasius de Radoano, stacionarius.” This

26 MR III, Zagreb 1895, 140–141. In September 1361, the Major Council allowed “Vlacota de
Vladicossa” to export three “miliaria” of cheese. Ibidem, 117.
27 Distrib. testim., II, 7v.
28 MR IV, 5. The price established on January 20, 1364 was “libra candelarum sepi non possit
vendi ultra follaros XVIII.” Ibidem, 117.
29 Ibidem, IV, 9.
was on the occasion when he and “Nicolaus spatarius” were made tutors of the heirs of the third wife of a man from Trogir. Interestingly enough, a few months later, in October 1365, the same two men were mentioned as “tutors of the heirs of the second wife” of the same man from Trogir. In November 1365, Blasius was once again granted permission to export tallow from Dubrovnik upon payment of regular customs fees and after undertaking to “keep his shop furnished with tallow candles until the end of April” and to sell them to everybody at legal price.

By 1366, Blasius was engaged in much more important tasks with which he had been entrusted by the government of Dubrovnik. Indeed, in May of that year, the Rector and the Minor Council addressed a letter “to you, Blasius de Radoano, our dear citizen” instructing him to go to Ancona, Recanati “vel ad Montem Sanctum” and to buy in one of these places “sex miliaria quingorum vini dentis, centum quinquos bonorum vinorum et bruschorum” at the best price he could obtain. He was to send the wine to Dubrovnik as quickly as possible on a Ragusan ship going there. Blasius was carrying 500 ducats for this operation, but the government did not exclude the possibility that even that large an amount might prove insufficient to fulfill its demands and ordered Blasius to buy wine on credit if necessary to obtain the quantity indicated above. The owners of the wine or their representatives would be paid off in Dubrovnik within one month. Blasius was authorized to lease ships which would be paid for by the government. Finally, he was exhorted to behave “so prudently and with discretion... as we hope that we might deservedly praise you.”

However, in 1366 Blasius de Radoano was also a ship owner. Towards the end of December of that year, he was ordered to “send immediately his ‘brachossium’ to Valona for the salt of the commune.” At this time Blasius acted as witness in the Ragusan court and in December of that year he was a guarantor for his servant “Jacobus” for the exports of a quantity of tallow from Dubrovnik. It is worth noting that in this document Blasius is called both “Blasius de Vlacicossa” and “Blasius Radoani.” In December of 1367, Blasius promised the Ragusan notary and chancellor Theodore Scolmogia to invest exclusively in oil the 400 ducats which he had received from him.

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31 Blasius was to sell the candles “ad racionem de folaris XVIII pro qualibet libra.” Ibidem, 21–22.
32 DAD, Litterae Levantis, II, 57v. J. Tadić (ed.), Pisma i uputstva Dubrovačke Republike, Beograd 1935, 151 (hereafter Pisma). In August of 1366 the government allocated to Blasius 5 hyperpers as payment for a “famulus superfluo” whom he had engaged when he was shopping for wine “in the service of the commune in Marchia.” MR IV, 51. On wine trade in Dubrovnik see D. Đinić-Knežević, Trgovina vinom u Dubrovniku u XIV veku, in Godišnjak Filozofskog fakulteta, IX, Novi Sad 1966, 39–85. See also P. Rokai, Dubrovnik I Ankonitanska Marka u srednjem veku, Novi Sad 1995, 87, 130.
33 MR IV, 76.
34 DAD, Acta Sanctae Mariae, Pr14, 71.
35 MR IV, 75. In February of 1367 Blasius was again allowed to export “tres miliaria sepi.” Ibidem, 83.
36 Div. canc., XXI, 150v. Pisma, XXVIII.
As already mentioned, one of the rare documents where Helias and Blasius de Radoano are mentioned simultaneously dates from April 1368, when Blasius was ordered to keep in his care 100 ducats which Helias had sent him from Venice as proceeds of the sale of a ship.\textsuperscript{37} Later, in September of the same year, Blasius and a patrician were acting as judges in a controversy between the representatives of “Pauluschus de Cudeleno” and “Chanussius Petri Saxinouich” concerning mines and mining rights in Fojnica and Ostružnica in Bosnia.\textsuperscript{38}

The period of Blasius’ greatest activity came in the seventies and eighties of the 14th century. In May of 1372 he acted in Dubrovnik as “procurator” of two distinguished Venetians. First on May 3, as “procurator... domini Marini Superancio,” substituted by “dominus Nicolaus Superancio” and another Venetian, Blasius declared that he had received “duas ballas panorum,” which contained nine pieces, and “unam libram auri filati” from the prominent Venetian merchant in Dubrovnik, “ser Nicoletts Miorato,” who was giving them on behalf of two other distinguished Venetians in the same city, “ser Marcus Guoro” and his late brother “Georgius.”\textsuperscript{39} The next day, May 4, Blasius acted in his capacity of “procurator” of another eminent Venetian “ser Benedictus Quirino,” on whose behalf he received from Matko, the son of the late doctor Nicholas, three “balle panorum.”\textsuperscript{40} Blasius’ contacts with the Venetians continued, and in June 1372 “Demetrius Orsi,” a Venetian, inhabitant of Bari, ceded to Blasius his rights to all ducats which had been deposited in Dubrovnik with the chancellor Theodore Scolmafogia and, in addition, assigned to him 36 ducats and 3 grossi which he was supposed to get from “ser Alusius Cornaro de Veneciis.”\textsuperscript{41} These links with prominent Venetians clearly show the growth of Blasius’ prestige, not only in Dubrovnik itself, but in the international trade of the time as well.

Blasius seems to have had particularly lively commercial contacts with the above-mentioned “Marino Souranço” (Superancio). On October 26, 1372 “Nichus Gulielmi de Antíbaro” (Bar) had sold to Blasius 10 “miliaria” of oil for 26 ducats each. The oil was in Bar and was to be given to Blasius with the consent of the local authorities, on whose behalf the oil had been sold. Should the commune of Bar be dissatisfied, “Marinus Souranço de Veneciis” was to be notified. The reason for this notification lies certainly in the fact that Blasius had bought from “Souranço” the same amount of oil on the same day and at the same price.\textsuperscript{42} The relations between Blasius and the Venetian had soured, as can be seen in an act from February 1373, in

\textsuperscript{37} Div. canc., XXI, 182v. The same order was repeated twice. Ibidem, 183v.
\textsuperscript{39} Div. not., IX, 49.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibidem, 49–49v. On the Querinus in Dubrovnik see \textit{B. Krekić}, Alcune note sulla famiglia Querini a Ragusa nel Duecento e nel Trecento, in Studi veneziani, n.s. XLI, 2001, 49–76.
\textsuperscript{41} Div. canc., XXIII, 110.
\textsuperscript{42} Ibidem, 151v. A few days earlier a “dyaconus” declared that he had received from Blasius 7 ducats left to him in his brother’s will. Testam. not., VI, 102v–103v.
which, at the demand of Blasius, the government ordered the prestigious Venetian merchant in Dubrovnik, Francesco Baldella, to keep sequestered all the salt that he had “in his hands,” as property of ser Marinus. All of this indicates that by this time Blasius had established strong ties with prominent Venetians, not only in Dubrovnik but also in Venice itself.

Blasius’ rising standing in Dubrovnik becomes particularly evident from an extremely important and delicate diplomatic mission with which he was entrusted at the beginning of 1373. The fact that such a mission, involving two powers of the greatest significance for Dubrovnik’s future — Venice and Hungary — and matters of vital interest for the city, was not entrusted to one or more patricians, as was generally the rule, but to Blasius is the best proof of the prestige that he enjoyed in Dubrovnik and of the confidence the government had in his ability. Indeed, in January of 1373, Blasius was instructed to go to the Hungarian king, the mighty Lajos I, and present to him a letter from the Ragusan government, in which it complained to the king about the difficulties which the Venetians were causing to the Ragusans and asked the king to intervene in this matter. Blasius was also supposed to give letters and to explain the situation to the barons at the royal court and beg them to support the Ragusan cause with the king. The problem, according to the Ragusans, was created by the decision of the Venetian government to increase taxes and customs fees on the goods the Ragusans traded with foreigners in Venice, which was “contrary to ancient customs and freedoms.” For their part, the Venetians had intensified their trade with foreigners in Dubrovnik and thus deprived Ragusan merchants “of all their gains.” In view of this, the Ragusan government was forced to issue an order prohibiting all foreign merchants from carrying on trade with other foreigners in that city. Consequently, on Christmas Eve 1372, the Venetians publicly declared that from now on Ragusan merchants could not export or import any goods in Venice.

Blasius was carrying a copy of the Venetian proclamation and was ordered to show it to the king and to the barons, should they want to see it. He was to explain to the barons about the continuing Venetian threats and describe their “haughtiness and arrogance, about which menaces, haughtiness and arrogance we believe that you (sc. Blasius) are fully informed because you have heard and understood them.” Blasius was supposed to try to get replies from the king and the barons and then return to Dubrovnik. At the end of the instruction, was appended the text of the Ragusan decision concerning foreign trade in the city, from which can be seen that, contrary to their assertions mentioned above, they had in fact prohibited all trade and contacts with the Venetians, but not with other foreigners. As a matter of fact, Blasius was instructed to mention this order only if asked, otherwise “you must say nothing.” However, Blasius’ mission in Hungary did not bring the desired results. This is confirmed by the fact that in April 1373 the Venetian authorities strictly prohibited their

43 Div. canc., XXIII, 151v.
citizens, subjects and allies from carrying goods of any provenance to Dubrovnik\textsuperscript{45} but Blasius was not part of these political maneuvers any more.

Of course, during this time Blasius remained active in other fields. In March 1373 he was one of three guarantors for a debt of 60 ducats which a man currently in Scutari, in Albania, had contracted in January of the same year with a Ragusan.\textsuperscript{46} More interesting is a letter written on July 23, 1374 to the Ragusan government by two Ragusans in the mining locality of Ostružnica, in Bosnia. In this letter they mention that they had owed a debt of 550 ducats to the late “Palusco de Chudelin,” but asserted that one of them had paid it off in silver “in the presence of Blasio de Radoan,” two other men and the widow of the creditor. While it is not quite clear that Blasius was in Ostružnica at the time of the payment, judging by the way the text was formulated, it does seem very probable that he was.\textsuperscript{47} In November of 1374 and again in March of 1375, Blasius acted as witness on the occasion of sales of female slaves from the Balkan hinterland in Dubrovnik.\textsuperscript{48}

Blasius also remained in contact with prominent Venetians. Thus, in September of 1375, acting on behalf of “ser Aloysius Cornaro,” in Dubrovnik he hired two carpenters who were to go with a servant to Ulcinj and work there on Cornaro’s house.\textsuperscript{49} However, soon after this Blasius left Dubrovnik. When in November 1375 the government wrote a letter to “Piero di Tomasino,” it did so at the demand of “Bogauçe de Tolloe” acting on his own behalf and as Blasius’ “procurator.” The government’s letter ordering Piero to appear in the Ragusan court within one month after receiving the summons, was given to Piero — according to the report of two couriers who carried it — “in Glaiučna” in northeastern Bosnia, 23 days after it had been written in Dubrovnik.\textsuperscript{50}

The events and tensions connected with the war in the late seventies, in which Dubrovnik also participated and which were already mentioned, affected Blasius in a far less drastic manner than they did Helias de Radoano. Despite the hostility between Dubrovnik and Venice at the time, Blasius maintained his links with the Venetians. In April 1376, he and another merchant borrowed 350 ducats from “Zanibono Rambaldo quondam ser Jacobi.”\textsuperscript{51} In the following year, in 1377, Blasius acted as guarantor for 50½ “miliaria” of lead, that the Ragusan patrician “ser Lucas de Bona”

\textsuperscript{45} Ibidem, 104–105.
\textsuperscript{46} Pisma, 277–278.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibidem, 290. “...in prima pagie yo Stepoe d argento fin pec(?) il peso libre(?) XIII in presencia de Blasio de Radoan et Gyve de Longo....”
\textsuperscript{48} Iz arhiva, III, Beograd 1967, 31–32.
\textsuperscript{49} Div. canc., XXIV, 71.
\textsuperscript{50} Pisma, 318–319. On “Glaiučna,” Glavičica, see Staro srpsko rudarstvo, 95 and Dinić, Iz srpske istorije, 489, 526. In both of those works Glavičica is mentioned only in 1426.
\textsuperscript{51} Div. canc., XXIV, 155. In the same year Blasius was one of the executors of the will of “Vlachotta de Bratcho” whose daughter “Franusza” was married with the prominent Venetian living in Dubrovnik, “Johannes Salimbene, speciarius.” DAD, Vendita Cancelaria, II, 109v. See R. Ćukić, Mletačka porodica Salimbene u Dubrovniku u poznom srednjem veku, in Istorijski časopis, XXXVII, Beograd 1990, 29–61.
(Bunić) had received as a loan from “Philipus Barelli de Veneciis” and his companions.\textsuperscript{52}

At this time Blasius also engaged in an important operation of a totally different kind: on May 4, 1377 he leased the ship of a Ragusan patrician which was returning from Valona and was supposed to go to Iaffa carrying pilgrims and merchandise. The merchandise could be unloaded only in places permitted by Ragusan authorities. Along the way, Blasius and the ship were expected to stop over in Modon and then decide whether to continue the trip through Rhodes and Famagusta or via Candia. Once in Iaffa, the ship was to wait a fortnight for the pilgrims to go to the “Holy Sepulchre” and to return. Should the pilgrims, including Blasius, fail to return to Iaffa within two weeks, the ship was nevertheless to receive her freight in the amount of 500 ducats. On the way back, the ship was allowed to stop and load merchandise only in the same places where she had stopped when going to the Holy Land.\textsuperscript{53} This seems to have been the most far-reaching of all Blasius’ enterprises.

But even before this trip, Blasius had been charged by the Ragusan government with an even more important task: in February of 1377 he was ordered to sail to Sicily with a Ragusan ship and there to buy at the best possible price grain for the commune and bring it back to Dubrovnik. He was exhorted to perform this service “solicitously and well” and was admonished that “you must fulfill and complete the business for the commune before engaging in any business for yourself, so that the commune might not suffer any damage because of any business of your own.” However, should he want to stay in Sicily after completing governmental business, Blasius could do so, of course, at his own expense.\textsuperscript{54} Blasius was again sent on a mission to buy grain in October of 1378, possibly again in Sicily, but there is no clear indication of his destination.\textsuperscript{55}

At one point, the war against Venice in which Dubrovnik was engaged at the time involved Blasius directly. Indeed, on February 16, 1380 the Ragusan government decided to send a galley to patrol the coast of Southern Italy and offered Blasius the opportunity to send his “brigantinum” with the galley, on the understanding that the “brigantinum” would have its share of profits. The “armata” was supposed to patrol from Trani to Ortona, going first to Manfredonia, “where it is said that there are ships of the Venetians, our enemies.” Depending on the weather and the news they would learn there, the captains were allowed to sail ten miles east and west of the prescribed zone. Blasius de Radoano was permitted “if he so wanted” to

\textsuperscript{52} DAD, Debita notariae, VIII, 51.
\textsuperscript{53} B. Krekić, Dubrovnik (Ragusa) et le Levant au Moyen âge, Paris — The Hague 1961, reg. 322.
\textsuperscript{55} On October 29, 1378, the Minor Council appointed three patricians to write the instructions for Blasius and on November 2, the instructions were unanimously approved by the Senate. Blasius was allowed to stay on and to take care of his own business after completing the purchase of grains for Dubrovnik, but he was not permitted to buy grains on his own behalf. MR, IV, 174, 175. In February of 1378 Blasius and ser Lucas de Bona had appointed two Venetians and a Ragusan as their “procuratores” to collect whatever was due to them from the goods of a man who had died, most probably in Venice. Div. canec., IX, 195v.
stay with his “brigantinum” in the region for his own business after the galley’s return to Dubrovnik.\textsuperscript{56} This permission, however, was revoked two days later, on February 18, when the Senate explicitly ordered Blasius to return to Dubrovnik on his “brigantinum” together with the galley. The expedition was expected to last two weeks and Blasius was allotted by the authorities 20 oarsmen for his ship, on condition that he “pay them as we pay those who are going in... our galley of XXIII banks and do for them everything that we do for them.”\textsuperscript{57} The next day, on February 19, the commander of the “armata,” the patrician “ser Matheus de Georgio” (Djurđević) was given detailed instructions for this operation, whose aim was “the devastation and destruction of the Venetians, our enemies, and of their goods.”\textsuperscript{58}

Whether the expedition lasted two weeks as planned or longer, by mid-April 1380, Blasius was in Dubrovnik, where he acted as executor of a will\textsuperscript{59} and was engaged in trade with Albania.\textsuperscript{60} However, towards the end of that month, his “brigantinum” was again engaged to go with the same galley but under a new commander to Apulia “to inflict damage on the Venetians, our enemies.” On this occasion, the “brigantinum” is mentioned as belonging to Blasius “and to his company.” She was to go at the risk of the Ragusan commune, and upon her return payment would be provided “to Blasius and his company” as the Senate found appropriate. The patron of the “brigantinum,” that is to say Blasius, was permitted to arm the ship at his own expense, was obliged to give a fifth of his booty to the captain of the galley and was to be “subordinate and to submit” to the captain of the galley. This time, the “armata” had a broader geographic scope than the February expedition. It was supposed to patrol the sea from Ortona in the west to Saseno and Otranto in the east. Even if the galley decided not to go into these areas, the “brigantinum” could do so, on condition that she give firm guarantees not to interfere with Dubrovnik’s friends.\textsuperscript{61} This expedition was short and successful, and already on May 15, 1380 the Senate was deciding on the sale “of vessels captured in Apulia” by the “armata” and on the division of money between its commander and Blasius “for the portion belonging to him for his “brigantinum”.”\textsuperscript{62}

In spite of naval operations along the Southern Italian coast, Apulia remained for Dubrovnik a vital area for the purchasing of food, especially grain. This is why one sees the Ragusan authorities, barely a week after the above decisions, granting permission to Blasius de Radoano and his company to go again with his “brigantinum” to Apulia. But this time the “brigantinum” was to carry a limited amount of goods and go for the purpose of obtaining grain for the city.\textsuperscript{63} In August,

\textsuperscript{56} Reform., XXIV, 85. Odluke, I, 17.
\textsuperscript{57} Odluke, I, 18.
\textsuperscript{58} Pisma, 401.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibidem, 408.
\textsuperscript{60} He was importing and selling in Dubrovnik “bischottum” that he had bought in Durazzo. Odluke, I, 99.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibidem, 34, 35. Reform., XXIV, 95v–96.
\textsuperscript{62} Odluke, I, 38. On July 26, 1380, Blasius was given 75 hyperpers as payment for the trip that the ship had made “for our commune in the armata.” Ibidem, 56.
\textsuperscript{63} Ibidem, 40.
Blasius was granted 10 ducats as compensation “for his ‘brigantinum’ being held by our commune.”

However, the war did inflict some damage to Blasius’ business. In a letter written by the Ragusan government to its ambassadors in Zadar (Zara) on June 25, 1380, the ambassadors were instructed, among many other things, to complain to the Ban of Dalmatia and Croatia about the attacks by the ships from Zadar, similar to those of the Genoese, on Ragusan shipping. The case explicitly mentioned was that of Blasius de Radoano who had sold textiles to a “Vale” from Ulcinj. Vale had sent a ship with wax to Blasius to pay for the textiles, and this ship was attacked by a “brigantinum,” commanded by a man from the island of Hvar. The wax was taken, and, as was pointed out, such events were “very damaging to our land.”

Despite the fact that by this time Blasius de Radoano was indubitably well regarded in Dubrovnik, he could not avoid the severity of the Ragusan government when he failed to fulfill obligations undertaken. In September of 1380, we see an example of this aspect of Blasius’ life and of the attitude of Ragusan authorities even towards its meritorious and prestigious citizens. At the end of July of that year, Blasius had undertaken to bring from Sicily to Dubrovnik 200 “salmas ad mensuram Apulie” of wheat, chickpeas and kidney beans, under penalty of 100 ducats. As he did not bring the promised merchandise, the ship he had sent having returned empty, Blasius was fined 100 ducats. Nevertheless, he obviously continued to enjoy the trust of the authorities and, when in late October the Senate adopted new and strict measures for the control of the marketing of tallow and of the production of candles, Blasius was one of three “populares officiales” elected to implement these measures.

Furthermore, Blasius continued to play an important role in the importation of food in Dubrovnik. In late February of 1382, he was supposed to bring to the city up to 500 “staria” of wheat or other cereals, “as much as he was able to bring.” He was promised by the commune 6 grossi a “starium.” However, should Blasius fail to bring this wheat, the above-mentioned fine of 100 ducats was to remain in full vigor. Blasius did not bring the cereals by mid-June, and the Senate extended the term until the end of September. It was only at the end of September that Blasius finally delivered 500 “staría” of wheat, for which he did not get any reimbursement, because “he was under an obligation to our commune to bring wheat.” However, for the additional 230 “staria” of wheat which Blasius had brought he was to receive 2 grossi for each “starium.”

In the meantime, on March 8, 1381, one finds an interesting and rather unusual piece of information: the Minor Council accepted the promise of the patrician “ser
Matheus de Georgio” and Blasius de Radoano concerning ships traveling to Brindisi for salt. Ser Matheus’ ship was supposed to undertake this trip, but should she be unable to do so, the ship belonging to Blasius should be made ready within “six working days...without impediment from God or weather” to take the place of ser Matheus’ vessel. Should they fail to do so, ser Matheus’ ship would have to go to Brindisi, all under penalty of 100 ducats.\textsuperscript{71}

Yet another rather unusual piece of information concerning Blasius and connected with the war in which Dubrovnik was engaged at the time, dates from May 1381. Blasius and another Ragusan merchant, “Nixa de Precho” were given permission by the Minor Council to take three “Venetian carpenters from among those who are in the jails of our commune.” They were to make repairs on Blasius’ and Nixa’s ships, while the two merchants had to give guarantees for the carpenters and pay 1200 ducats for each, should any of them escape.\textsuperscript{72}

The war was still going on at the beginning of August 1381, when the Ragusan government decided to send its galley of 24 banks and a new “brigantinum” to “seek and capture an armed Venetian ship.” The “comes” of this new “brigantinum” was to be Blasius de Radoano.\textsuperscript{73} In the same month, the peace of Turin was finally signed, and the war of Tenedos-Chioggia was over. For Dubrovnik peace offered an opportunity to reestablish the all-important commercial and personal links with Venice. As has already been mentioned, one consequence of the peace was the return of Helias de Radoano to Dubrovnik in early September of 1381.

For his part, Blasius continued his multiple activities. In mid-October, the Minor Council approved a rather peculiar loan for Blasius: he was to receive “duas trabes de rubro” from among those intended for the galley of the commune, on condition that he give “a good pawn in silver” and that he provide two beams “eius grossiciei et longitudinis;”\textsuperscript{74} In early 1382, Blasius was again one of the tutors of various individuals.\textsuperscript{75}

Much more interesting are several documents dealing with Blasius’ planned trip to Bosnia in the spring of 1382. First, on April 23, 1382, the Senate decided that Blasius should “in no way” go to Bosnia without explicit permission of the Senate.\textsuperscript{76} On May 7, the debate in the Senate continued and seems to have been rather animated. The proposal to allow Blasius to go to Bosnia was rejected and the final decision was postponed “until Saturday.” On May 10, the discussion resumed and 17 of 21 members of the Senate present voted in favor of permitting Blasius to go to Bosnia. However, the proposal to allow him to go “as he wishes” was rejected, and 14 senators voted to request that Blasius leave by Saturday.\textsuperscript{77} One might wonder

\textsuperscript{71} Ibidem, 166.
\textsuperscript{72} Odluke, II, 578.
\textsuperscript{73} Odluke, I, 157. In September of 1381 Blasius acted again as executor of a will. Ibidem, 163.
\textsuperscript{74} Ibidem, 172.
\textsuperscript{75} Ibidem, 204, 209.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibidem, 218.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibidem, 222. Blasius most probably did leave Dubrovnik in the following days. On May 27, “Zacharias, filius Phynetti de Venetiis” declared that he had received from Blasius’ “procuratores” a
why the Ragusan Senate found it necessary to discuss the trip of a merchant to
Bosnia, an area that great many Ragusans visited regularly? And why was the deci-
sion so difficult to make? In view of his well-established prominence, Blasius de
Radoano probably was supposed to do more than simply engage in trade in Bosnia,
that is to say that he was to perform some service for the government and that this
was why the timing of this trip was so delicate.

That Blasius did, indeed, play a significant role in relations between
Dubrovnik and Bosnia can be seen from a number of documents dating from the fall
of 1382. When on the last day of September the government discussed the need to
arm a galleys “because of a ship loaded with salt under the fort of the Bosnian king,”
the decision was delayed “until the arrival of Blasius de Radoano.” Next day, how-
ever, the Senate changed its mind and decided not to wait for Blasius but to send the
galley immediately. However, when they discussed sending the mercenaries to Ston
(Stagno), the second most important fortified town of the Ragusan state, with 18 out
of 20 ballots the senators decided to postpone making a decision “until the arrival of
Blasius de Radoano.” The importance of his presence in Dubrovnik at the time was
such that on October 3, 1382 the Senate decided “to send for Blasius de Radoano to
come to Dubrovnik.”78

These events were connected with a serious crisis which developed at the time
between Dubrovnik and Bosnia. The recently proclaimed Bosnian king, Tvrtoš I,
had decided to open a new salt market in a locality south of Dubrovnik, where he
built a fort, which became known as Novi. Dubrovnik saw this as endangering one of
its vital sources of economic prosperity — the monopoly of the salt trade in the area.
This brought about very tense relations between the Kingdom of Bosnia and
Dubrovnik, especially in the second half of 1382, and it is quite safe to assume that
Blasius de Radoano’s stay in Bosnia was connected with these events and that he
played an important role in their settlement which came about toward the end of that
year.79 The fact that yet another delicate mission was most probably entrusted to
Blasius certainly confirms his high standing in Dubrovnik.

Blasius, however, never neglected his business interests. In June of 1383, be
came part of a commercial company together with a Ragusan patrician and with
“Jacobs de Scolmofaga” from Brindisì, brother of the late longtime Ragusan chan-
cellor and notary Theodorus de Scolmofaga.80

This is the place to mention a group of decisions made by the Ragusan Minor
Council between July 24 and December 1, 1383 which poses an interesting question.
The first act, dated July 24, is the appointment of a scribe on the ship “quod

78 Odluke, I, 251, 252, 254, 255.
79 For these events see S. Čirkovic, Istorija srednjevekovne bosanske države, Beograd 1964,
80 Pisma, XXVIII.
patroniçat Blasius Radinouich.”81 This was followed on August 11 by a permission granted to “Helyas Radinouich” to build a house on communal land, on condition that he leave a measure of free space between his house and those of his neighbors, one of whom was Blasius de Radoano82 and on October 15 another man was appointed as scribe on a ship owned by “Blasius Radinouich de Insula de Medio.”83 One is tempted to identify Helias and Blasius Radinouich with Helias and Blasius de Radoano, and the fact that Helias is allowed to build his house next to Blasius’ might make the identification even more appealing. However, it should be pointed out that in Ragusan documents Blasius is always called either “de Radoano” or “Gladicossich, Vladicossich.” Even in the permit to build the house Helias is called “Radinouich,” but Blasius is called “de Radoano.”

Another suspicion-raising element is the indication in the document of October 15, 1383 that “Blasius Radinouich” was from “Insula de Medio”, i.e. modern Lopud, near Dubrovnik. True, as will be seen later, there is one single other mention of Blasius’ contact with a person from Lopud, but there is no other hint in any acts concerning Blasius, including his will, that he was from that island or that he had property or interests there. This is why I believe that Helias and Blasius Radinouich are most probably not identical with Helias and Blasius de Radoano.

Let me mention an additional piece of information on Blasius dating from September of 1383. In her will, the wealthy and influential patrician lady, Philipa de Mençe (Menčetić), ordered among many other things that her house near the Rector’s palace be sold and should Blasius de Radoano want to buy it, the house should be sold to him for 1200 hyperpers less than the price asked from other buyers.84

In 1384 Blasius seems to have been mainly engaged in trade in foodstuffs. In January, the Minor Council gave its approval to his imports of ten “miliaria” of oil from Apulia, with the understanding that he would be allowed to re-export from Dubrovnik one third of said imports while two thirds would remain in the city.85 In May, Blasius was authorized to get “de sale communis usque ad IIIIC equos,” which he had to pay within six months.86 However, in mid-October of 1384, Blasius was in big trouble. The Senate started proceedings against him, and against “Ostoya Cranchouich” and the Florentine “Tadeus” who had founded a company and had imposed “innovations” in customs fees and diminished the freedom of merchants as far as wheat was concerned in a locality which is not mentioned. The Senate ordered that all innovations be abolished and the situation returned to what it had been before the arrival of the Florentine. At the same time, Blasius and Ostoya were ordered to

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81 Odluke, I, 337.
82 Ibidem, 341.
83 Ibidem, 354.
85 Odluke, II, 56.
86 Ibidem, 78.
go there personally and to negotiate as they were told.87 A decision of the Senate of December 9, 1384 makes it clear that the three partners had committed their transgression “ad Vriegum et Deualos,” that is to say at Vrego and Dievali in Albania.88 On that day, however, the Senate allowed everybody to go to these two places to look for cereals “knowing that, should any or all of those who went there for grain suffer... any damage because of Tadeus de Florencia, Blasius de Radoano or Hostoa Crancouch, these (three) would be held responsible for all damage and interest which (the merchants) may have suffered because of them.” In addition, the commune was reserving its own rights in the case.89

This was not the end of the controversy. On February 18, 1385, the Senate held a meeting on this topic which, from all indications, must have been very stormy. The senators first rejected a proposal to separate the proceedings against Blasius and Ostopoja from the one against Tadeus de Florencia, and ordered that there be only one trial for the three of them. It was then proposed that all those who had paid customs fees in excess of 8 Ragusan grossi “in Vriego et ad Deualos” register with the authorities. This, however, was rejected also. Finally, with a narrow majority of 14 out of 24 senators the Senate decided “to postpone the whole process” on condition that an order be issued to the three partners to do everything possible to bring all their cereals to Dubrovnik and nowhere else. The rights of other persons were to remain intact and, should the three partners fail to do as told, they would be punished “beyond the penalty foreseen by the Statute” at the government’s will.90 It seems probable that the accused complied with the governmental order thus putting an end to this case.

Such an outcome seems likely, especially in view of the events which took place soon thereafter. Indeed, at the end of February 1385, the Senate formed a committee of three patricians whose charge was to find a person willing to go at his own expense to “Vriegum et Deualos” and other places to buy cereals. Such a person would be allowed to keep a third of profits and would get one grosso for each “starium” of millet brought to Dubrovnik. On March 14, the Senate decided to appoint a “sindicus” to buy millet in Vriego. The names of Ostopoja Cranchouch, Blasius de Radoano and “Angelus Cacich” were put to the vote and Cranchouch was elected by 13 out of 20 ballots. However, he refused to go and paid a very substantial penalty of 100 ducats. In the end, it was “Milsa Cepichuch” who went to Vriego as “sindicus” in late March of 1385.91

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87 Ibidem, 99. The Senate ordered Ostopoja to leave Dubrovnik the next day and to take care of things that he had been told about. Letters were sent to Tadeus demanding that he immediately come to Dubrovnik. Ibidem. However, Tadeus apparently was not in a hurry to comply with this order and on November 25 the Senate decided to consider him “pro inobedientia,” and he was again ordered to come to Dubrovnik. Ibidem, 106.
89 Odluke, II, 108.
90 Ibidem, 156.
91 Ibidem, 159–161, 163. Milsa was not successful in his mission. On May 25, 1385, he was proclaimed in the Senate “pro falito,” was deprived of his salary for the trip and was obliged to reimburse the government for the expenses. More severe punishment was proposed, but it was rejected. Ibidem, 172–173.
As for Blasius de Radoano, he seems to have been in trouble again in April of 1385, this time in Bosnia. On April 8, the Senate decided to write a letter to the Bosnian king Tvrtko I concerning “innovations in customs fees paid by our merchants,” with the explicit statement: “not mentioning the name of Vlacotta de Radoano.” On the 19th of the same month, the Ragusan ambassadors in Hungary were ordered to present themselves, on their way back, to the Bosnian king and to inform him of Dubrovnik’s complaint. It had been proposed to send a special envoy from Dubrovnik to the king, but the proposal was rejected. At the same time, the Senate refused “to decide now on... Blasius de Radoano,” and postponed making a decision. This was the second time that Blasius was engaged in Bosnia. It is not clear whether he was there on the government’s or on his own business, but in any case, while his first mission had ended on a positive note, the second one seems to have resulted in trouble for him. However, there is no further information on the case.92

Blasius must have returned to Dubrovnik soon after this, for in mid-July he, Ostoya Crancouich and two other men were appointed tutors to the heirs of “G lie Longo.”93 At the beginning of August, the government ordered “Vlacotta,” who was the owner of a ship together with Blasius, to make all necessary repairs to the ship before a trip to Apulia, for which he had obtained permission, so that upon his return to Dubrovnik the ship could “proceed without delay on a trip it must make for our commune to get grain in Turkey.”94 At the time Blasius was in Dubrovnik and again acted as witness on the occasion of sales of female slaves from Bosnia to Italian merchants.95

Blasius’ multiple commercial contacts continued in 1386. In March of that year, the Minor council decided first that he should pay customs fees for the cloth he had bought from the Ragusan patrician ser Luchas de Bona on behalf of “Phylippus Barelli,” a Venetian merchant residing in Ulcinj. However, immediately thereafter, the Council graciously exempted Barelli from customs duties, so that Blasius did not have to pay for the cloth.96 Another item of information on Blasius’ activities dates from October 1386, when a man declared that he had been fully reimbursed by Blasius for his share of two ships, one sold in Venice and the other broken (“fractus”) in the arsenal.97

The year 1387 saw Blasius engaged again in commercial enterprises, which put him in contact with people from a variety of places. In March he was acting on behalf of “some Sicilians” and for this was accorded by the Minor Council 1000 “libre” of biscuits (“biscotto”) belonging to the commune, on condition that by Easter he return the biscuits “of the same weight, quality and goodness.”98 Later in the same year, Blasius participated in the export of Bosnian lead to Venice. On Decem-

92 Ibidem, 166.
93 Ibidem, 184.
94 Ibidem, 189.
95 Iz arhiva, III, 45–46.
96 Odluke, II, 260 (see also ibidem, 230). In May of 1386 and again in July of 1387 Blasius acted as a tutor of the heirs of deceased Ragusans, Ibidem, 272, 371.
97 Div, canc., XXVI, 119v.
98 Odluke, II, 356.
ber 3, 1387, acting as “procurator” of the prominent Bosnian noblemen and merchants, brothers “Žore and Matcho de Boxa” (Bokšić) Blasius promised on their behalf to the Ragusan patronic “ser Jacobus de Gondula” (Gundulić) to insure and to accept all risks for 125½ “miliaria” of lead which was loaded on the ship of a man from the island of Hvar and was to be taken to Venice. Ser Jacobus had had this lead deposited in his house together with a quantity of cloth and other things which were part of the price that Žore and Matko were supposed to pay for a house which Blasius had bought on their behalf. Blasius, furthermore, insured ser Jacobus for an additional 37½ “miliaria” of lead loaded on the same ship bound for Venice. This was to replace the above-mentioned cloth, which the patrician had given back to the Bokšić brothers. On their behalf, Blasius insured also ser Jacobus for the amount of 50 hyperpers, which he had given to the owner of the ship, and for 7 hyperpers paid to the porters who loaded the lead on the ship. Finally, Blasius obliged Žore and Matko to pay any damage which ser Jacobus might sustain. 99 This is certainly one of the rare early cases of maritime insurance in Dubrovnik, which later on flourished strongly. It is also perhaps the best illustration of the role which Blasius played in the commerce between the Balkan hinterland and Venice.

The variety of Blasius’ business activities continued in 1388. When in January of that year the Minor Council issued new and stricter regulations of commerce and exports of oil from Dubrovnik, it was immediately specified that “the oil brought in these days by Blasius de Radoano” should be subject to the new rules. 100 Blasius also imported grain into the city at this time 101 and at the end of January together with an Italian was elected arbiter in a dispute between two Venetians in Dubrovnik. 102

More important is the previously mentioned document of March 1, 1388, in which both Helias and Blasius de Radoano are mentioned, although separately. I have in mind the “libretto” attached to the will of ser Michael Nicolić de Martinusso, in which Helias was mentioned as his “fattore” in Venice. With Blasius the situation was exactly the opposite: ser Michael had been “fattore” of “Vlacotta de Radohano dicto Gladicossa” in Venice where he sold some wares for which he wanted Blasius to receive 20 ducats and additional 20 ducats for other things. 103 The fact that Blasius had a Ragusan patronic as his “fattore” in Venice certainly is yet another testimony to his prestige and success in Dubrovnik.

100 Oduke, II, 451.
101 Ibidem, 453.
102 Div. canc., XXVII, 84v.
That Blasius belonged to a group of very prominent Ragusan commoner merchants is attested to also by an act of May 27, 1388. On that day the government decided to keep “Marinchus de Tobolcar” in a relatively better Ragusan jail, on condition that he provide “by lunch hour tomorrow” a guarantee of 1000 ducats that he would not escape. Should he fail to give such guarantee, he would be moved to a much worse place, the “lower jail.” Immediately after this, a group of six well-known Ragusan merchants pledged 1000 ducats for Marinchus. At the head of this group stood Blasius de Radoano with a pledge of 200 ducats.104

Soon thereafter, Blasius was sent on a new and important mission. On June 27, 1388 the Minor Council decided to send a “sindicus” for the purchase of cereals for the city. A fine of 100 ducats would be imposed on anyone who refused to go. The agent was given 20 ducats a month as his salary, payment for his servants and for his residence. He was allowed to engage in business deals of his own, except those concerning any kind of cereal and other goods of interest for the commune. However, once he fully satisfied the needs of the commune, the “sindicus” could buy cereals and other prohibited merchandise for himself. Also, if he wanted to stay there longer than the business of the commune required, he could do so but at his own expense. Blasius de Radoano was immediately elected “sindicus” and accepted the position. From an act of July 13, it can be seen that Blasius was sent first to Zadar. From there he was to go on a Genoese ship to Sicily, carrying “communal silver.” He was to be given a “sindicatus generalis” and was to leave Dubrovnik in five days.105 Although I do not possess further information on this trip, from previous experience one might assume that Blasius accomplished successfully his task.

Nevertheless, in May 1389 he was embroiled in a lawsuit against the treasurers of Dubrovnik and the Rector. Ser Nicolaus de Gondula was replaced for that occasion, obviously because of some conflict of interest,106 but I have no other information on this case. Blasius, however, continued in his other capacity as witness. Indeed, in May of 1390 two Ragusans sold five slaves, one man and four women, all “de natione et genere Bosinensium patarenorum” to “ser Bernardus Symonis Cathelano de Barchion” for 67½ ducats. Two days later ser Bernardus sold the same slaves to “Bonsignorio de Messina” for 95 ducats, and Blasius witnessed this sale.107

Blasius’ continuing links to Venice and Venetians can be seen in an act of October 31, 1390, when “ser Anthonius Zuchato de Veneciis” appeared in the Ragusan court as “procurator... egregii militis domini Petri Aymo de Veneciis” and asserted that he had learned that “Blaxius de Radoano” held in deposit a certain amount of silver and money, belonging to “ser Phylippus Barelli,” also a Venetian. Phylippus

104 Odluke, II, 471, 477–478. Blasius de Radoano and two other merchants pledged 200 ducats each, and three additional individuals pledged together 400 ducats. A note on the margin informs that the pledges were cancelled because Marinchus was committed to jail. Ibidem, 471.
105 Ibidem, 473, 475.
106 Ibidem, 551.
107 The man was cca 25 years old and the women between 14 and 40. Iz arhiva, III, 54–55. See also ibidem, 56. On Spaniards and Catalans in Dubrovnik at that time see N. Fejčić, Španci u Dubrovniku u srednjem veku, Beograd 1988.
and his “procurator,” the Venetian “ser Petrus Guoro” had substantial debts with Aymo, going back to 1388, and Zuchato now asked that Blasius be questioned under oath whether he had such money and silver and, if so, that it be given to Zuchato. Blasius was questioned and declared that Barelli had given him some pieces of silver “cum certis ligaturis,” together with the bags in which they were contained, all weighing 73 “libre.” Barelli had given this as pawn for 329 ducats he owed to Blasius. The court decided to sequester all silver in Blasius’ possession in excess of Barelli’s debt to him. However, Blasius was to keep his rights and could sell the pawned silver on condition that any amount over 329 ducats be given to Aymo or to his “procurator.”

This affair had a long sequel. In February of 1392, at the request of “Zaninus marinarius de Venetiis” acting as “procurator... domini Petri Guero (!),” the Ragusan court once again instructed Blasius to keep in his care all of Barelli’s belongings, over and above the amount Barelli owed him. This order was based on a sentence written down in Ulcinj in August of 1390. Blasius’ business with Guoro continued in 1392. In September of that year, Blasius declared that he owed to Petus Guoro 500 ducats, which were to be repaid within six months. From an additional note it would appear that the debt was repaid only sometime after May 1395. Finally in July 1393 “Anthonius Jacobi de Venetiis” representing Guoro received from Blasius a series of objects of silver and gold and some jewelry which Blasius had kept sequestered as property of Phylippus Barelli in accordance with the above-mentioned order of the Ragusan court.

Of course, Blasius’ activities continued elsewhere as well. In January of 1396, two Florentine brothers, “Bernardinus et Franciscus” accused the Ragusan judges in the Neretva market of having illegally taken from them ten female Bosnian slaves whom they were taking to Italy. The controversy involved the ship on which they were to be transported and the question whether or not the ship was within the jurisdiction of the judges. Without entering into details of this controversy, let me point out that the court in Dubrovnik ordered the judges at Neretva to carefully examine the case of the ship and to save her “and give her freely with all the equipment belonging to her to Blaxio de Radouan or to his envoy, because she was taken from our (men) by the pirates.” Obviously, Blasius, in addition to his other involvements, was still a ship owner as well.

By this time Blasius must have reached an advanced age. Assuming that he was at least 18 years old in 1357, when, as mentioned above, he appeared for the first

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108 Div. canc., XXIX, 149v–150.
110 Debita not., X, 161v.
111 Among the objects that Anthonius Jacobi had received were “primo annulli et unum dentelorium de argento, axule XIII de argento, paroli(?) LX pro una zoia de argento, que omnia sunt ponderis unciarum quinque et sagii unius; cercelli VIII auri, annulus I auri et resete septem auri et maspilli XXIII auri, quod aurum totum est ponderis unciarum quinque et dimidie, et unias quatuor perlarum.” Div. canc., XXX, 46.
112 Iz arhiva, III, 67–69.
time in the documents available to me, by the mid-nineties of the fourteenth century he would have been in his late fifties. This was, for the time in question, quite an advanced age, and it comes as no surprise that Blasius died in mid-May 1398. He had made his will four years earlier, in June 1394. In it he first bequeathed rather substantial amounts of money (10–20 hyperpers) to several churches in Dubrovnik and a much bigger amount (50 hyperpers) “per maltoletto.” This money was to be given to the heirs of his cousin, “Blaxio de Nadal.” He left his wooden house to his sister “Chatussa” (Katuša), but after her death it was to pass to his own heir. In addition, Blasius ordered that his sister be given 20 hyperpers a year for her needs and that “1 gonella et 1 chappa” be made for her. He bequeathed to each nunnery in Dubrovnik 3 hyperpers, and to the nunnery of St. Claire, where nuns of noble birth lived, he left 5 hyperpers. Another 5 hyperpers were to be given “ai leuros,” and a meal in the value of 20 hyperpers was to be organized for the poor. To his son, “Zago Benedetto,” Blasius left a house and two vineyards. However, Zago was to live with his (Zago’s) brother “Luchxa” (Lukša) until he was 20 years old. On his separation from Lukša, Zago was to be given 200 ducats. Should Zago die before the age of 20, the house and the vineyards must pass either to Zago’s heir, should there be one, or to Lukša. All the rest of his possessions (of which, unfortunately, we have no details) Blasius bequeathed to his son Lukša. Should, however both brothers die before Blasius, Blasius’ property was to be sold and the proceeds given to the poor. For some reason, at this point Blasius changed his mind and ordered that those 50 hyperpers designated for “maltoletto” mentioned above be given for works on the church of St. Blaise, protector of Dubrovnik, instead of the daughters of his cousin, because he had already made gifts “of my own” to his cousin. He also left 50 hyperpers to the prominent merchant “Triçe Vtölčich,” from whom he had bought the above-mentioned house, and 100 hyperpers “a veschouo Ratcho,” bishop of the island of Mrkan. Ratcho was also one of the executors of Blasius’ will, together with the patrician “ser Lucha de Bona... ser Alberto nodaro... ser Miltin de Priboe” and Blasius’ son Lukša. At the end of the will it is stated that it was completed on January 15, 1396, which might indicate that it was modified over time, and the clauses concerning the daughters of his cousin “Blaxio de Nadal” might support such an assumption.113

Blasius de Radoano’s will, although not a very detailed one, confirms the image of a successful and well-to-do merchant and a man who enjoyed considerable prestige in Dubrovnik. The choice of executors of his will is another illustration of his standing. At the time of the writing of his will, Blasius was obviously a widower. I was not able to find out who his wife was. As for his sons, I do not have information on Zago Benedetto, but Blasius’ son Lukša seems to have engaged in commercial operations as his father had done.114

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113 Testam. not., VIII, 110–111. One of the vineyards was located “soura la terra de Merchana a li mollin.” I am most grateful to Dr Nenad Vekarić, Director of the Historical Institute of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Dubrovnik who kindly provided me with the texts of Blasius’ and his sister Katuša’s wills.

114 Div. canc., XXXII, 207.
As for Blasius’ sister “Chatussa,” she died in March of 1410. Her will is registered under an interesting heading: “Testamentum Katusse, sororis quondam Blasii de Radoano dicti Gnadicosich.” Thus, twelve years after his death, Blasius’ name and even his nickname were still an essential part of his sister’s identification. Katuša’s will contains some interesting information. In it she bequeathed small amounts of money to various churches and nunneries in Dubrovnik, as was the custom. More importantly, Katuša gave instructions regarding what to do with three vineyards in her possession in the suburbs of the city. One of these vineyards had been given to her “by my nephew” and it was to be sold and the proceeds given to orphans. As for the second vineyard, if the “pollounich” who worked there wanted to buy it, the vineyard should be sold to him; otherwise it should be sold to the highest bidder. From the proceeds of this sale 100 hyperpers were to be given to “Bogissa de Milos de Isola de Mezzo” (Lopud) in payment of a debt “of my brother Blasio,” a debt not mentioned in Blasius’ will. This is also the only mention of Blasius’ connection with Lopud. A third vineyard, located in Gruž, was to be given to the Franciscans in Dubrovnik, but as “la sclauigna non se po possedere dai frati,” she was to be sold and the proceeds given to the Franciscans. There is mention of “terreni che tene Elia de Radohanich” which Katuša did not want to take away from him during his life. After his death, however, they were to be given to a “don Nicola, figliolo de Blassio Zetimancha.” Ser Luca de Bona, with whom Blasius had had business dealings, was supposed to pay some money to Katuša, “which belongs to me from my nephews.” She directed that this money be given to the executors of her will, who were to use it to help the poor and for other good deeds. She left to her maid “Stanucha” everything inside her home, except for the “ancona” which must be given to the Franciscans. “Don Todero,” who was also one of her executors, and “don Nicola de Corsola” were to receive 2 ducats each.\footnote{Testam. not., IX, 140v–141.}

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As stated at the beginning, this article does not pretend to be a complete study of the life and activities of Helias and Blasius de Radoano. Still, the documents that I have been able to use give a truly impressive picture of their achievements, although the scale of their respective achievements was quite different. Most of Helia’s commercial activity and very probably some political work for the Ragusan government were concentrated in Venice and had to do with the Venetians. Because of this, he spent long years in Venetian jails. He was also active in the Neretva market and in Apulia and traveled to George Balšić — an enterprise that again led to losses for him. And, of course, he was engaged in the life of Dubrovnik itself, but none of this can be compared to the breadth and importance of Blasius’ activities. For forty years Blasius almost constantly traveled from Venice, Ancona and Recanati to Apulia, Albania and even Iaffa and Turkish shores in the Levant. In addition, not only was he in contact with people from Venice, Bosnia, Bar, Ulcinj,
Sutari and other foreigners in Dubrovnik itself, but most importantly, he was sent to several important and delicate diplomatic/commercial missions by the Ragusan government: to Hungary, to Bosnia, to Sicily etc. Blasius engaged in a variety of business activities and traded in a whole range of different merchandise. On top of it all, Blasius was also a ship owner and a shop owner; he was engaged in the daily life of Dubrovnik and obviously enjoyed high esteem in the city.

Helias and Blasius de Radoano, but especially Blasius, personify the kind of Ragusan merchants who, by skillfully exploiting Dubrovnik’s unique position between the Mediterranean and the mineral-rich Balkan hinterland, managed to establish themselves as important members of the community and as very valuable intermediaries in Dubrovnik’s international trade. At the same time, they were always ready to serve the community to the best of their ability. Although deprived of direct participation in the governmental decision-making process, which was monopolized by the patricians, such merchants made a vital contribution to Dubrovnik’s enviable economic prosperity and to its long-lasting political independence.

Барища Крекић

HELIAS И BLASIUS DE RADANO (ИЛИЈА И ВЛАХО РАДОВАНОВИ), ДУБРОВАЧКИ ТРГОВЦИ У ДРУГОЈ ПОЛОВИНИ XIV ВИЈЕКА

На основу необјављене и објављене графе из Државног архива у Дубровнику, аутор овога је — без претензија на потпуност — животе двије значајних дубровачких трговца, Heliasa и Blasiusa de Radoano (Илије и Влаха Радованових). Документи не дозвољавају да се утврди да ли је међу њима постојала родинска веза, па аутор разматра сваког појединачно. Хелиас-Илија се јавља у документима од 1363. до 1388. године. Његова пословна активност повезана је великим дјелом са Венецијом, па је тамо дошао и затвора у којем је провео више од пет година у доба рата око Tenedosa-Chioggie. По повратку у Дубровник, 1381, Илију је дубровачка влада слала у разне мисије у Албанију, Апулију и др., а учествовао је и у једном посланству код Ћурђа Балпића почетком 1386. Уста он је наставио бављење својим трговачким пословима.

Много важнији био је Блисисус-Влахо, Влакота Радовано (назван такође Гладикоса, Гладикосић, Владикосић). Влахо се јавља у документима 1357. године и до своје смрти, 1398, узимао је веома живог учешћа у трговини Дубровника, а такође и у неколико врло деликатних и важних дипломатских мисија у Угарској, Босни и на Сицилији. Његова пословна активност обухватала је читав простор Јадранског мора, од Венеције и Анконе, преко Апулије до пригорских приморја и Албаније, а такође и далеко изван тог мора,
све до Јафе и до турских обала на Леванту. У самом Дубровнику обављао је разне дужности које му је његов социјални положај дозвољавао, а увијек је одржавао интензивне везе са домаћим и страним трговцима. Имао је дућан у граду, а посједовао је и бродове. Влахо је без сумње уживао велики углед у Дубровнику. Имао је два сина, Зага-Бенедетта и Лукшу који су га надживјели, а такође и сестру Катушу.

Илија и Влахо Радованови врло су импресиван примјер дубровачких трговаца који су, вјешто користећи положај тог града-републике између Медитерана и рудама богатог балканског залеђа, одиграли велику улогу у самом граду, а посебно као посредници у дубровачкој међународној трговини, доприносећи тако завидном економском просперитету и дуготрајној политичкој независности Дубровника.