# The Franciscan Observance in Bosnia and the problem of structural integrity: the disintegration of the Bosnian vicariate (1444-48) and the downfall of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province (1469)

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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# Abstract

This thesis examines the relationship between the development of the Franciscan Observance and the problem of the Bosnian vicariate's disintegration and the downfall of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province. Existing historiography lacks a comprehensive study of the problem that would examine the stages of withdrawal of the Bosnian vicariate's jurisdiction from different geographical areas and establish their relationship with the expanding Observance. My study also aims to integrate the findings of Western Medieval Studies about this late medieval reform movement with the local historiographic traditions. The main research question of the thesis is the extent to which the Observance played a role in the vicariate's disintegration, and what significance did it have for the later downfall of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province? My thesis is divided into three sections exploring these problems. The first section deals with the foundation and territorial expansion of the Bosnian vicariate, as well as the problems of adoption and adaptation of the Observant identity. The second section examines the retreat of the vicariate's jurisdiction from three areas, Southern Hungary, Apulia and Dalmatia, and its relationship to the developing Observance. The third section focuses on the history of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province and its downfall. My work demonstrates that this twofold structural collapse was directly related to the development of the Observance. The problems of obedience and religious conduct, both central topics of the Observance, kept re-emerging, and they fractured the vicariate into various conflicted families, representing its different parts, and caused discord between the friars in Bosnia and their Cismontane superiors. Internal clashes broke down the Bosnian vicariate across its constituent elements and later led to the downfall of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province. Finally, my thesis establishes the Bosnian vicariate in the framework of Observance's internal diversity and demonstrates that the story of the Franciscan Observance is not complete without Bosnia.

# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements ..... iii

Abstract ..... iv

Table of Contents ..... v

List of Figures ..... viii

List of Abbreviations ..... ix

Note on transcriptions and translations ..... x

**Introduction** ..... 1

a) Scholarship and contribution ..... 3

b) The sources ..... 7

c) The structure ..... 14

**Section I: The Bosnian Observant Franciscan vicariate: origin, expansion and controversy ..... 17**

**Chapter 1:** Founding and sustaining the Franciscan vicariate in 'the land of heretics and schismatics' ..... 18

I.1.1. *Translatio sedis* and its consequences ..... 18

I.1.2. The foundation of the Bosnian vicariate ..... 28

I.1.3. Relation between challenges to the Franciscans in Bosnia and the vicariate's expansion ..... 32

Conclusions ..... 44

**Chapter 2:** Bosnia adapts the Observant identity: medieval and modern controversy ..... 46

I.2.1. Origins of the Franciscan Observant movement: the medieval controversy ..... 48

I.2.2. Rise of the Observance in the Bosnian vicariate ..... 53

I.2.3. The problem of the role of Bosnia in the history of the Observance ..... 57

I.2.4. The spiritual model of the friars in Bosnia ..... 61

I.2.5. A bridge between Bosnia and Brugliano ..... 66

Conclusions ..... 69

**Chapter 3:** Discord between the friars of the Bosnian vicariate and their Cismontane superiors ..... 73

I.3.1. 'As you have described it to me, [the vicariate] was most deformed in every possible way': Aspirations of the Italian reformers ..... 74

I.3.2. The problem of poverty of the friaries in Bosnia ..... 77

I.3.3. The problem of chaplaincy ..... 85

Conclusions ..... 86

**Chapter 4:** The patronage of Sigismund of Luxemburg over the Bosnian Observance ..... 88
I.4.1. Contesting the integrity of the Bosnian vicariate ..... 89
I.4.2. The end game of Sigismund's patronage ..... 90
I.4.3. Inquisition of James of the Marches in Hungary and its significance . 94
Conclusions ..... 98
**Section II: The disintegration of the Bosnian vicariate ..... 100**
**Chapter 5:** The Catholic transformation of Bosnia ..... 101
II.5.1. King Stjepan Tomaš embraces Catholicism ..... 102
II.5.2. Between the Bosnian and the Roman faith ..... 103
Conclusions ..... 107
**Chapter 6:** Breakup of the Bosnian and Hungarian Observants ..... 109
II.6.1. An attempted split between the Hungarian and South Slavic Observants (1444/45) ..... 109
II.6.2. Root causes of the split ..... 113
II.6.3. Reaction in Bosnia ..... 120
II.6.4. The ultimate Bosnian/Hungarian breakup ..... 123
Conclusions ..... 129
**Chapter 7:** The dismantling of the Bosnian Custody of St. Catharine in Apulia ..... 132
II.7.1. Reasons for the expansion to Southern Italy ..... 132
II.7.2. Suppression of the custody ..... 137
Conclusions ..... 141
**Chapter 8:** The controversy over five friaries in Dalmatia: expansion and withdrawal ..... 142
II.8.1. Circumstances of the removal of the five friaries ..... 142
II.8.2. The problem of the friaries in Venetian-controlled Dalmatia ..... 148
II.8.3. The evolution of the Ragusan approach ..... 152
Conclusions ..... 155
**Section III: The foundation and downfall of the Bosnian-Dalmatian Franciscan province (1464-1469) ..... 158**
**Chapter 9:** The times of upheaval: the historical background of the Bosnian-Dalmatian union ..... 159
III.9.1. The royal chaplain Marino ..... 162
III.9.2. The balance of power between the Roman and Bosnian faith in light of the Second war for Konavle ..... 167
III.9.3. The role of the Franciscans in would-be crusade of King Tomaš .. 169

III.9.4. Fall of Smederevo and the purge of the Bosnian church ..... 173
III.9.5. The Ottoman conquest of Bosnia and conflicted visions of restoration ..... 178
Conclusions ..... 184
**Chapter 10:** Discord between the Bosnian and Dalmatian families ..... 186
III.10.1. Restoration of the Cismontane jurisdiction over the Bosnian vicariate ..... 186
III.10.2. Expansion of the Bosnian-Dalmatian discord into the 1450s ..... 188
III.10.3. Pius II orders the foundation of one common province ..... 195
Conclusions ..... 199
**Chapter 11:** The Bosnian-Dalmatian province: a failed project ..... 201
III.11.1. Triennium of Bernardino of Aquila ..... 201
III.11.2. The Bosnian family adapts to the Ottoman rule ..... 209
III.11.3. The Observant chapter of Mantua and its consequences ..... 219
Conclusions ..... 229
**Conclusions** ..... 232
Bibliography ..... 239

# List of figures

Figure 1. Stećak (a gravestone) of Gost Milutin, the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo ……..…24

Figure 2. A self-portrait of Krstjanin Radosav …….……...……25

Figure 3. The map of the medieval Franciscan friaries on the territory of present day Bosnia and Hercegovina …….45

Figure 4. Foundations for the Bosnian vicariate and the Conventuals by 1415……116

Figure 5. Foundations for the Franciscan branches between 1415-40 ……..117

Figure 6. Galatina, central nave, Temptation of Christ …….135

Figure 7. The edition of the letter 'to the bishop of Kotor'……146

Figure 8. The original commission for Nicholas de Gondola ....……...147

Figure 9. Franciscan friaries of the province of St. Jerome by 1517 ..……..157

Figure 10. Political map, c. 1460 ……..161

Figure 11. Territorial division of Bosnia after 1463 ……..…...183

Figure 12. The Franciscan museum in Fojnica …….213

Figure 13. Seals of the provinces *Bosna Croatia* and *Bosna Argentina* ……...216

# List of Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| **AB** | *Acta Bosnae* |
| **ACR** | [Državni arhiv u Dubrovniku]: *Acta Consili Rogatorum* |
| **AM** | *Annales Minorum* |
| **AMH** | *Analecta monumentorum Hungariae historicorum literariorum maximum inedita* |
| **BF** | *Bullarium franciscanum* |
| **CD** | *Codex diplomaticus Regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae* |
| **IS** | *Illyricum sacrum* |
| **LDL** | [Državni arhiv u Dubrovniku]: *Lettere, e commissioni di Levante* |
| **MH** | *Vetera monumenta historica Hungariam sacram illusstrantia* |
| **MS** | *Monumenta Serbica* |
| **MSM** | *Vetera monumenta Slavorum meridionalium historiam illustrantia* |
| **Regestum** | *Regestum observantiae cismontanae (1464-1488)* |

## Note on transcriptions and translations

Transcriptions from primary sources keep original spelling and interpunction. Contractions and abbreviations were expanded. All translations are mine unless stated otherwise.

# Introduction

The purpose of this dissertation is to study the relationship between the expansion of the Franciscan Observance and the twofold problem of the Bosnian vicariate's disintegration and the downfall of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province. The late medieval religious reform movement of the Observance has recently attracted a lot of attention, but its scholarly analysis still remains imbalanced between the Latin Christendom's heartland and its 'peripheries'.[1] My work helps to expand the interest of Western Medieval Studies in the sources and material on the Observance in Bosnia and other parts to which the vicariate expanded. It also integrates the findings of Western scholarship with the local historiographic traditions on the Franciscans.

The Franciscan Bosnian vicariate was founded in Bosnia in 1339 with the purpose of restoring the Catholic church as well as eradicating a 'heresy' which had dominated religious life in this land for the previous century. Although a seemingly marginal affair, the vicariate did not remain confined to Bosnia for long, expanding quickly beyond it, to encompass friaries across a very large geographical area. By the end of the century, the vicariate had friaries in Bosnia, in other parts of the Balkans, in Southern Hungary, along the Eastern Adriatic coast and even in Southern Italy. The vicariate was often referred to as stretched between 'the Adriatic and the Black Sea' in the papal sources, alluding to its vast expansion. This meant that the Franciscans of the vicariate acted in a very heterogeneous religious and social environment. Despite its initial expansion, by the mid-fifteenth century, the Bosnian vicariate crumbled into a smaller entity, losing its convents in Italy and north of the Sava River, the historical boundary of the Hungarian kingdom. Its jurisdiction in Dalmatia also became contested, but the controversy was inconclusive and lasted for over a decade. In 1463, the papacy ordered the foundation of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province consisting of the friaries of the Bosnian vicariate and the Observant houses in Dalmatia. The province however was riddled by internal discord, and was dismantled in 1469 by the decision of the general

[1] James Mixson, 'Religious Life and Observant Reform in the Fifteenth Century', *History Compass*, 11/3 (2013), 201–14 (p. 206).

chapter summoned on the island Bisentina on Lake Bolsena. Thus the foundation and the downfall of the province were a continuation of the earlier controversy.

A particular focus of my study falls on the role of the Franciscan Observance in this remarkable loss of structural cohesion. The Observance was a late medieval reform movement which took root in almost all types of religious orders and communities. Recently, it has attracted a great deal of interest among the Western medievalists.[2] As a self-conscious programme of renewal and restoration, the Observance inevitably brought division, which is perhaps most demonstrable in the case of the Franciscan order.[3] The Observance reopened old Franciscan controversies over the interpretation of the order's rule.[4] Over the course of the fifteenth century, the Franciscans split into two main factions, the proponents of the reform, called the Observants, and their opponents, the more conservative Conventuals. It is important to emphasise that the Bosnian vicariate found itself in the reformed camp relatively early. It is furthermore important to point out a remarkable chronological proximity: around the time of the Bosnian vicariate's disintegration, the Franciscan Observance got the pivotal momentum with the issuing of the bull *Ut sacra* (1446), which established a restructuring of the order by setting up the Observance's autonomous chain of command under the two vicars general.[5] This suggests a relationship between the two developments. The main research questions of my thesis ask what role did the Franciscan Observance play in the Bosnian vicariate's disintegration? Was it responsible for the vicariate's loss of cohesion? Was its progress merely coincidental to the disintegration? What relevance did it have for the later downfall of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province?

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[2] Mixson, 'Religious Life and Observant Reform', pp. 201-02; Gabriella Zarri, 'Ecclesiastical Institutions and Religious Life in the Observant Century' *A Companion to Observant Reform in the Late Middle Ages and Beyond*, in eds. James Mixson and Bert Roest (Leiden: Brill, 2015), pp. 23-59 (pp. 35-43).

[3] Duncan B. Nimmo, *Reform and Division in the Medieval Franciscan Order. From Saint Francis to the foundation of the Capuchins* (Rome: Capuchin Historical Institute, 1987), p. 1; Bert Roest, 'Observant Reform in Religious Orders', *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, 4, ed. by Miri Rubin and Walter Simons, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 446-57 (pp. 447-48).

[4] Letizia Pellegrini, 'An Irreducible Plural: Franciscan Observances in Europe (15th Century)', *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome*, 130 (2018); https://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/4515?clearcache=oui&lang=it [accessed 17.01.2023].

[5] *Ut sacra* confirmed offices of two vicars general, one for the family beyond Alps (*Ultramontane*) and the other for those on the Italian side (*Cismontane*). The Bosnian vicariate joined the Cismontane side of the family a year before *Ut sacra*, and therefore my study will focus on the Cismontane structures. Any time I refer to a 'vicar general' it is going to imply the Cismontane one by default, unless specified otherwise.

### a) Scholarship and contribution

The historiography on the medieval Franciscan Bosnian vicariate is abundant. Bosnian historiography has continued to produce very valuable synthetic works dealing with the Franciscans in the Middle Ages, among which I should emphasise the contributions - spanning for over a century - of Vjenceslav Batinić, Julijan Jelenić, Dominik Mandić and Jozo Džambo.[6] All but the last author were Franciscans, which is quite telling about the environment of this historiography, as studies written by Franciscan historians have often been apologetic. The works of Mandić were assessed by some as generally uncritical, yet I consider his *Franjevačka Bosna: razvoj i uprava Bosanske vikarije i provincije (1340-1735)* very useful for its very comprehensive use of sources.[7]

My dissertation is obviously different from such works, not least because it is published in English, yet also because it is not a synthetic work about the Franciscans in medieval Bosnia, but a particularly problem-driven study. The scholarship has struggled with explaining the unusually large expansion of the Bosnian vicariate, which my thesis clarifies in the first chapter, as well as some other parts. Furthermore, the purpose of my thesis is to cover a gap in the scholarship, which is lacking an in-depth scrutiny of Bosnian vicariate's structural collapse based on a detailed examination of the relevant sources.[8] There is an absence of a comprehensive study establishing the relationship between the various stages of withdrawal of the vicariate's jurisdiction from different geographical parts, and how was that

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[6] Vjenceslav M. Batinić, *Djelovanje franjevaca u Bosni i Hercegovini za prvih šest viekova njihova boravka*, 3 vols (Zagreb: Tisk. Dioničke tiskare, 1881-1887); Julijan Jelenić, *Kultura i bosanski franjevci*, 2 vols (Sarajevo: "Prva hrvatska tiskara" Kramarić i M. Raguz, 1912/15); Dominik Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna: razvoj i uprava Bosanske vikarije i provincije, 1340-1735* (Rome: Hrvatski povijesni institut, 1968); Jozo Džambo, *Franjevci u srednjovjekovnoj Bosni* (Sarajevo: Kulturno-povijesni institut Bosne Srebrene, 2022). The Bosnian historiography have also produced a range of shorter articles, among which I should emphasise the contribution of Bazilije Pandžić: Bazilije Pandžić, 'Djelovanje franjevaca od 13. do 15. stoljeća u bosanskoj državi', in *Kršćanstvo srednjovjekovne Bosne*, ed. by Želimir Puljić (Sarajevo: Vrhbosanska visoka teološka škola, 1991), pp. 241-68. For a more detailed overview of the scholarship dealing with the Franciscans in Bosnia in the Middle Ages, see: Džambo, *Franjevci*, pp. 26-40, 311-23.

[7] On this problem, see: Nada Klaić, 'Dr. Dominik Mandić, Rasprave iz stare hrvatske povijesti, Hrvatski povijesni institut, Rim 1963', in *Historijski zbornik*, 21/22 (1968–1969), 605-611; Džambo, *Franjevci*, p. 34; Mladen Ančić, 'Mjesto Bosne i Hercegovine u konstrukciji povijesti Dominika Mandića (Kako danas čitati djela Dominika Mandića)', *Dr. fra Dominik Mandić (1889. - 1973.): Zbornik radova sa znanstvenog simpozija u prigodi 40. obljetnice smrti* ed. by Robert Jolić (Mostar/Zadar: Hercegovačka franjevačka provincija Uznesenja BDM/Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2014), pp. 867-883.

[8] Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, pp. 111-17, 128-32; Stanko J. Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa u Dalmaciji i Istri: opservantska obnova i samostani Provincije Sv. Jeronima u 15. st.* (Zadar/Split: Franjevačka Provincija Sv. Jeronima u Dalmaciji i Istri, 1999), pp. 56-57, 85-93; György Galamb, 'A ferences obszervancia magyarországi térnyeréséhez' in *Magyaroknak eleiről: ünnepi tanulmányok a hatvan esztendős Makk Ferenc tiszteletére* ed. by Ferenc Makk (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 2000), 165–81 (p. 181); Benigno F. Perrone, *La regolare Osservanza Francescana nella Terra d'Otranto* 2 vols. (Galatina: Congedo, 1992), vol. 1, p. 28.

related to the expansion of the Observant movement. The working hypothesis of this thesis is that there was indeed a relationship between the disintegration of the Bosnian vicariate and the Bosnian-Dalmatian province with the development of the varying interpretations of the Franciscan vocation within both structures, brought about by the Observance. Finally, for my analysis, I am going to consider other factors leading up to these structural collapses, such as involvement of the political powers into the Franciscan matters.

Because the Bosnian vicariate expanded beyond Bosnia in the Middle Ages, it has also been studied in other historiographic traditions. Furthermore, the first autonomous Franciscan Observant administrative units in Dalmatia and Hungary, which became fully fledged provinces after 1517, namely the Dalmatian province of St. Jerome and the Hungarian province of the Most Holy Saviour, trace their roots to the Bosnian vicariate, and this attracted further international attention. Croatian scholarship has always paid close attention to religious matters in Bosnia. I should emphasise as particularly relevant a fairly up-to-date monograph about the Franciscan Observance in Dalmatia and Istria by Stanko Josip Škunca, dealing extensively with the problem of the Bosnian vicariate's presence on the Adriatic coast.[9] Shared history and a proximity of language allowed for a good integration and exchange between the Bosnian and Croatian historiographies. The same can be said about Serbian historiography, but it was less concerned with the history of the Franciscans.[10]

The Franciscan Observants played a very prominent role in the Hungarian Late Middle Ages. The spiritual leadership of John of Capistrano (1386-1456) over the Christian army in the battle of Belgrade in 1456 is perhaps the most iconic moment of the Observance in Hungary. Furthermore, the Observant friars played an important role as preachers of the peasant uprising of György Dózsa in 1514. Thus it does not surprise that the Observance has attracted a great deal of interest in Hungary.[11] The history of the Bosnian vicariate, and in particular of its friaries in Hungary, was often presented as a prelude to the history of the Hungarian Observance in Hungarian synthetic studies.

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[9] Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa,* pp. 43-45.

[10] A work in Serbian which was particularly useful in my research was the milestone work on urbanisation of the medieval Bosnia: Десанка Ковачевић-Којић, *Градска насеља средњовјековне босанске државе* (Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1978). The author dealt a lot with the archival material from Dubrovnik, some of which concerned the Franciscans.

[11] To get a sense of the role of the Observance in Late Medieval Hungary, see: https://archivum.ferencesek.hu/index.php?modul=dokumentumok&ut=01%20Enchiridion%2F20%20Magyar%20rendt%F6rt%E9net&behiv=02%20Magyar%20ferences%20k%F6z%E9pkor.htm [accessed 21.01.2023].

Hungarian scholars dealing with the Franciscans still rely on a century-old two-volume work by János Karácsonyi.[12] More recently, new research on the Observants has been published by György Galamb and Beatrix Romhányi in more problem-focused articles.[13] Finally, a very comprehensive monograph on the Hungarian Observants was published by Marie-Madeleine de Cevins.[14] Even though it is in French, I have treated it essentially as integral to Hungarian scholarship, because it built mainly on Hungarian historiography, including the initial sections dealing with the emancipation of the Hungarian Observants from the Bosnian structures. The linguistic barrier between Hungarian and the former Yugoslav/South Slavic scholars has clearly hindered the dialogue between their historiographical traditions, which although dealing with overlapping problems, did not fully benefit from one another's contributions.

Another important historiographical tradition is Italian. The early modern chroniclers Francesco Gonzaga and Bonaventura da Fasano claimed that the Observance in Apulia (it. *Puglia*) originated from the custody of St. Catharine of the Bosnian vicariate.[15] This attracted the attention of the Italian scholars dealing with the Observance in the *Mezzogiorno* (South Italy).[16] However, the problem of the Bosnian custody in Apulia has remained a relatively marginal issue and has been studied as an isolated case rather than in the context of the rest of the vicariate.

Thus we can distinguish three historiographical currents dealing with the Bosnian vicariate yet not integrated very well with one another. We have scholarship coming from the former Yugoslav countries, that is Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian, which may be labelled 'South Slavic' for the sake of simplicity. Another one is Hungarian, and the third one Italian. Differentiation of these three historiographical traditions stems from the linguistic barrier, but

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12 János Karácsonyi, *Szent Ferencz rendjének története Magyarországon 1711-ig*, 2 vols (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémiam, 1922/1924)

13 Galamb, 'A ferences obszervancia', pp. 165–81; György Galamb, 'Eretnekség és inkvizíció Dél-Magyarországon', in *Fehér Lovag: tanulmányok Csernus Sándor 65. Születésnapjára,* ed. by László Gálffy, and Sáringer, János (Szeged: Lazi Kft., 2015), pp. 139-51; Beatrix F. Romhányi, 'Das Konstanzer Konzil und die Ankunft der Franziskaner-Observanz im mittelalterlichen Ungarn' in *Das Conzil von Konstanz und Ungarn*, ed. by Attila Barány (Debrecen: Universität Debrecen/Ungarische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2016) pp. 237-70; Beatrix F. Romhányi, 'Social Network and Resources of the Observant Franciscans in Hungary at the End of the Middle Ages', *Chronica,* 13/15 (2017), 125-35.

14 Marie-Madeleine de Cevins, *Les franciscains observants hongrois de l'expansion à la débâcle: vers 1450-vers 1540,* Bibliotheca seraphico-capuccina 83 (Rome: Istituto storico dei Cappuccini, 2008)

15 Perrone, *La regolare Osservanza,* vol. 1, p. 21.

16 Primaldo Coco, 'La vicaria di Bosnia e i primordi dell'osservanza in Puglia (1391-1446)', *Studi francescani* Ser. ns (1921), 246-62; Perrone, *La regolare Osservanza*, vol. 1, pp. 20-28.

there is also a methodological layer to the problem: each of them was effectively interested in the history of the vicariate along national lines. They prioritised their focus on the 'Bosnian', 'Dalmatian', 'Hungarian' or 'Apulian' Observants, rather than on a holistic understanding of the Bosnian vicariate, which was a structure expanding regardless of the 'national' borders.[17] Therefore, my approach differs from previous studies in that it transcends national boundaries to focus on the Bosnian vicariate as a medieval religious structure. In this vein, my study integrates these three historiographic currents in order to effectively examine the Bosnian vicariate and its disintegration, which sets up an aspect of this thesis' contribution.

The next aspect of my work's contribution is the integration of my study with Western scholarship on Franciscan Observance. I have already mentioned that this field has recently become quite vibrant within Medieval Studies, which provides an avenue for my study to transcend the periphery. An expansion of interest in the Franciscan Observance beyond Latin Christendom's heartland has been called for by some prominent Western authors in the field, recognising the geographical imbalance of coverage.[18] It is indeed unfortunate how unaware the mainstream publications on the Franciscan Observance are about the role of the Bosnian vicariate.[19] It is normally treated as a complete periphery of the order, with no relevance for its general history. However, the vicariate established contacts with the family of Paoluccio of Foligno very early on, and later the vicariate's friars even claimed that the Franciscan Observance as such in fact originated from Bosnia. This will be clarified in the second chapter of the first section, but it is worth emphasising that the fate of the Italian branch of the Observance was relatively early on intertwined with that of the Bosnian vicariate. An aspiration of this thesis is to bring Bosnia out of obscurity and establish its place in the general narrative of the Franciscan Observance.

The third aspect of my contribution, intrinsic to the previous one, is opening up this 'peripheral' region to Anglophone scholarship. Religious life in medieval Bosnia is very obscure and understudied in the West, despite its remarkable originality, mainly manifested in the rise of the 'heretical' Bosnian church. This 'heresy' has attracted a great deal of

[17] Mandić consequently re-interpreted any medieval Bosnian national element as 'Croatian', which is an operation often referred to as the 'Croatisation of the Bosnian Middle Ages'. This is to demonstrate that there is another layer to the problem, which are entrenchments of the post-Yugoslav context, but it will not be possible to disentangle this in my thesis.
[18] Mixson, 'Religious Life and Observant Reform', p. 206; Pellegrini, 'An irreducible plural'.
[19] John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order from its Origins to the Year 1517* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968) p. 444; Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 577; Grado G. Merlo, *In the Name of Staint Francis: history of the Friars Minor and Franciscanism until the early sixteenth century* (New York: The Franciscan Institute, Saint Bonaventure, 2009), p. 378.

attention of the South Slavic scholars, yet it is often absent from discussions of European heresy, in spite of its influence and relative longevity.[20] Another side of the coin is the 'orthodox' aspect of Bosnian religious life, represented by the Franciscans. To these competitors for souls, we should also add the Serbian Orthodox church present in some parts of the Bosnian medieval state, and finally, Islam brought with the Ottoman expansion. It was rare to have this much diverse religious influence in one place in medieval Europe. Some remarkable cross-faith interactions took place in Bosnia in very peculiar circumstances.

The last aspect worth signposting as contribution is my archival research in the State Archive in Dubrovnik (cro. *Državni arhiv u Dubrovniku*). The research allowed me to re-examine selected individual sources already published, as well as to reveal some additional unpublished material. This matter will be further clarified in the next subchapter, because it needs to be put into the context of sources and earlier editions.

### b) The sources

The sources used in this thesis can be divided to documentary (mainly normative and correspondence) and narrative (chronicles). The majority of my sources are the papal bulls preserved in the papal registers, stored in the Vatican archive. This material has been published in various editions, the most important being the multivolume series of the *Bullarium Franciscanum*, especially the first two volumes of the *nova series*, covering the chronological range (1431-1471) in the interest of this thesis.[21] I used other editions which included some sources not present in the *Bullarium*, such as the two-volume *Vetera monumenta historica Hungariam Sacram illustrantia* as well as the first volume of *Vetera monumenta Slavorum Meridionalium historiam illustrantia* edited by Augustin Theiner.[22] Another important edition is *Acta Bosnae* by Euzebije Fermendžin. The editor collected his material from various local archives in East-Central Europe and Italy, and his edition has

[20] What is referred to by the western scholars is often very outdated or completely incompatible with the South-Slavic scholarship. While this thesis is not about the Bosnian church, the first chapter will introduce it as a central element of medieval religious life in Bosnia. My discussion will be aimed at readers unfamiliar with the phenomenon; I will therefore present the mainstream historiographical frameworks. A fairly comprehensive work opening up the Bosnian church to the Anglophone public is: John Van Antwerp Fine, *The Bosnian Church: Its Place in State and Society from the Thirteenth to the Fifteenth Centuries: A New Interpretation* (London, Saqi, 2007).

[21] *Bullarium Franciscanum Romanorum pontificum constitutiones, epistolas, ac diplomata continens tribus ordinis minorum, clarissarum et poenitentium*, 7 vols (Rome, various publishers, 1759-1904); *Bullarium franciscanum*, Nova Series 3 vols (Florence: Ad Claras Aquas, 1929-49).

[22] Augustin Theiner (ed.), *Vetera monumenta historica Hungariam Sacram illustrantia* 2 vols (Rome: Typis Vaticanis, 1859-60); Augustin Theiner (ed.), *Vetera monumenta Slavorum Meridionalium historiam illustrantia*, 2 vols (Rome: Typis Vaticanis, 1863).

some documents which are otherwise not edited in other works, and not just papal bulls but also other kinds of sources.[23] The downside of his work is that it arbitrarily and sometimes quite extensively abbreviates sources based on subjective criteria, and the reductions are sometimes not apparent. Some individual papal sources relevant for the topic can only be accessed through some other, even older editions.

A separate case is constituted by the *Annales Minorum* by the Irish friar Luke Wadding.[24] This multi-volume work on Franciscan history started to be published in 1625, and was edited in the eighteenth and then in the twentieth century by Quaracchi.[25] Wadding had access to ample archival material. He was allowed to use the Vatican archive. Furthermore, in 1619 Minister General Benignus of Genoa ordered all Franciscan provincials to forward to Rome transcriptions of the documents relevant to their history.[26] There are still some papal bulls and other sources relating to the Bosnian vicariate which can only be found in the *Annales Minorum*. Wadding provided a lot of interpretation of the order's history, some of which is obviously outdated but I considered it nonetheless important to consult his information, because he also used some sources which have not been preserved. Such is for example the case of the letter of the Bosnian vicar to John of Capistrano from 1451, inviting him to visit Bosnia (mentioned by Wadding, but not transcribed in *Annales Minorum* nor otherwise preserved).[27] Some of Wadding's interpretations might have been made based on such material, but this is obviously speculative.

When it comes to the material preserved locally, it is very scarce, and that relates to all places where the vicariate expanded. There is almost nothing preserved from medieval Bosnia, even though it was a functioning kingdom with administrative structures, having its royal chancery, as well as chanceries of various noble houses. The archives of the Franciscan friaries in Bosnia offer some early modern material, but nothing medieval.[28] The Ottoman

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[23] Euzebije Fermendžin (ed.), *Acta Bosnae potissimum ecclesiastica cum insertis editorum documentorum regestis ab anno 925 usque ad annum 1752* (Zagreb: Jugoslavenska Akademija Znanosti i Umjetnosti, 1892).
[24] Luke Wadding, *Annales Minorum seu trium ordinum a s. Francisco institutorum*, 32 vols, 3rd ed. (Florence: Quaracchi, 1931–48).
[25] I will be using the most recent edition.
[26] 'Luke Wadding' in *Catholic encyclopedia*, from: https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15521d.htm [Accessed 01.03.2023].
[27] AM, vol 12 (1451), p. 130.
[28] Gregor Čremošnik, 'Ostaci arhiva bosanske franjevačke vikarije', *Radovi*, 3 (1955), 5- 56 (p. 5); Jozo Džambo, 'Povijest mentaliteta – jedan historiografski pristup fenomenu bosanskog franjevaštva', in *Sedam stoljeća bosanskih franjevaca 1291-1991* ed. by Marko Karamatić (Samobor: Franjevačka teologija, 1994) pp. 233-52 (pp. 245-46); Mladen Ančić, *Na rubu zapada: tri stoljeća srednjovjekovne Bosne* (Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 2001) p. 226.

conquest of Bosnia in 1463, as well as later political upheavals, had a devastating impact on the survival of the sources. A bull of Pope Paul II of 11 July 1469 tells us that:

> At the time when that kingdom was occupied by the Turks, the friars of the said province, fearing the danger of a complete destruction of books […] and also apostolic privileges, indulgences and letters granted to these houses and to the vicar and the friars, almost all these things they carried from the said friaries to others, and gave in custody to the guardians and friars and others, well as to various lay people: some of these things namely to the kingdom of Hungary and some to Dalmatia, and others to Sclavonia and to other parts that were deemed safe from the Turkish invasions.[29]

This demonstrates the efforts of the friars of the vicariate to preserve their legacy in face of adversities. Gregor Čremošnik identified twenty-two papal documents which used to belong to the Bosnian vicariate, in the friary in Ljubljana.[30] In this particular case, we are dealing with the documents received by the vicariate, or with their transumpts.

For my research, the most significant parts of the papal bulls are presentations of the petitions made to the curia. They gave a rare opportunity to hear the voice of the friars of the Bosnian vicariate, clarifying their agenda and struggles. The bulls normally state that quite clearly, yet also very generally and concisely. The disadvantage of the papal registers is that they are records of what the curia dispatched, but not what it received. Reading the petitions themselves would give us a much broader understanding, but unfortunately, we have only a handful of such cases, so each is very valuable. We have for example a petition of the Bosnian ruler, Ban Stjepan II, to the pope noted in the proceedings of the Venetian senate on 3 April 1347, or a remarkable report summarising the petition to Pope Nicholas V recorded by the Friar Elias of Požega, usually referred to as *Status locorum vicariae Bosnae*, clarifying forms of economic sustenance of the Bosnian friaries.[31]

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[29] *Eo vero tempore, quo regnum ipsum ab eisdem Turchis occupatum fuit, fratres dictae provinciae metuentes periculum perditionis librorum* […] *nec non privilegiorum, indultorum et literarum apostolicarum, ipsis domibus et Vicario ac Fratribus concessorum, illa fere omnia de domibus praedictis ad diversas allias domos dicti ordinis detulerunt et eorum guardianis et fratribus, et quaedam illorum etiam diversis personis saecularibus in custodiam dederunt, quaedem videlicet in regno Hungariae et quaedam Dalmatia, alia vero in Sclavonia aliisque partibus, quae ab eorundem Turchorum invasionibus tutae existimabantur*. BF, ns. II, p. 778.

[30] Čremošnik, 'Ostaci arhiva', pp. 6-8.

[31] AB, pp. 28-29; Athanasius Matanić, 'De duplici activitate S. Iacobi de Marchia in regno et vicaria franciscali Bosnae', *Archivum franciscanum historicum*, 53 (1960), 111-127 (pp. 126-27). For the translation of *Status locorum vicariae Bosnae* see: I.3.2.

Beyond the papal registers, other important registers I studied belonged to the Ragusan series *Lettere, e commissioni di Levante*, which records the Ragusan government's external correspondence. The sources relevant to the Franciscans were edited by Benvenuto Rode and published in *Miscellanea Francescana* in the early twentieth century.[32] I have identified some issues with this edition, and therefore examined volumes myself in Dubrovnik State Archive. This revealed that Rode unintentionally merged some sources with one another, and furthermore, I discovered some previously unpublished material and finally, I could correct the dating of some individual documents.[33] Unfortunately, the register series has a 33-year gap of coverage between volumes XVI (1454-60) and XVII (1493-1568), which does not allow for an in-depth examination of the problem of the downfall of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province from a Ragusan perspective. There are some individual sources from that 'gap' period inserted into vol. XIV, but otherwise the continuity of the registers is broken. Lastly, I found some relevant information in the series *Acta Consilii Rogatorum,* which consists of much shorter notes from the proceedings of the Ragusan senate, occasionally dealing with the friars arriving to Dubrovnik as envoys. Disentangling previously merged sources and integrating unpublished material has helped me to better analyse aspects of the discord between the Bosnian vicariate and the Ragusan state. Although the State archives in Zadar have some material, such as registers of correspondence with Venice or papal bulls, worth further examination when it comes to the history of the Bosnian vicariate, these must be left to further research.

In Hungary, since the sixteenth century, the Franciscan province of the Most Holy Saviour, stemming from the Bosnian vicariate, kept its archive in the friary of Gyöngyös, which preserved some sources relevant to its Bosnian past.[34] This archive was investigated by Fermendžin, who selected some sources (mainly bulls and charters) for his *Acta Bosnae*.

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[32] Benvenuto P. Rode, 'Documenti francescani di Ragusa', *Miscellanea Francescana di storia, di lettere, di arti*, 13 (1911), 144-55; Benvenuto P. Rode, 'Documenti francescani di Ragusa', *Miscellanea Francescana di storia, di lettere, di arti*, 14 (1912), 14-26, 54-66, 119-28, 170-92.

[33] The sources erroneously merged with one another are the commission for Nicholas de Gondola, Ragusan ambassador to the pope and the vicar general, from 18 January 1447 (LDL, vol. 13, 223 v. – 225 v.), a letter to Cardinal Corano from the same day (LDL, vol. 13, 225 r.) and a letter to the Bishop of Kotor, Marino Contareno, from 18 July 1447 (LDL vol. 13, 237 r.). For further evaluation see the subchapter II.8.1. The source previously unpublished yet relevant for the Franciscan history is a letter of the Ragusan government to the Cardinal of Santa Maria Nova from 16 April 1450, asking for his support for their petition. Similar letters were sent to the Archbishop of Dubrovnik and John of Capistrano, see III.10.2.

[34] For a very useful overview of that archive's history, see: https://archivum.ferencesek.hu/index.php?modul=dokumentumok&ut=03%20Lev%E9lt%E1r [accessed 21.01.2023]

Today these sources are kept in the Hungarian Franciscan Archive (*Magyar Ferences Levéltár*) in Budapest.[35]

Unfortunately, the evidence relating to the vicariate's activity in Apulia is scanty, as the regional archival material kept in Galatina suffered many losses.[36] Primaldo Coco consulted the State archive in Lecce and the archive of the convent of St. Claire in Nardò, and discovered two papal bulls otherwise unpreserved in the registers, relating to Galatina, one allowing for Bosnian takeover of the friary (1391), and another removing it from the Bosnian jurisdiction (1446); these are the key sources clarifying the Bosnian expansion to and withdrawal from Apulia.[37]

The last documentary source worth emphasising is the register of the Cismontane vicars general (1464-88), known as the *Regestum observantiae cismontanae*.[38] It records copies of the letters and documents issued or received by the vicars general, proceedings of the Observant chapters and contains some other notes. Of such Franciscan registers, it is the oldest one preserved, but it is clear that such registers were created and used in the order earlier on. Wadding for example claims to have seen the register of the Minister General William of Casale (1430–1442).[39] Only the earliest part of the *Regestum* falls within this thesis' chronological framework, but it is nonetheless a very valuable source, giving an insight into the perspective of the Cismontane Observant leadership. Some earlier letters of the ministers and vicars general relevant to my topic have also been preserved on a more individual basis and are scattered across different editions.

The significance of narrative sources, especially Franciscan chronicles, have usually been played down in historiography.[40] The main issue that Bosnian historians had with these sources is the fact that the Franciscan chronicles produced in Bosnia date from the

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35 The relevant sources must belong to the fond classified as the 'pre-Mohács' documents: Csaba Borsodi, 'Ferences iratok, levéltárak Magyarországon 2002-ben' in *A ferences lelkiség hatása az újkori Közép-Európa történetére és kultúrájára.* 2. ed by Sándor Őze, Norbert Medgyesy-Schmikli. Rendtörténeti konferenciák 1/2 (Piliscsaba/Budapest: Művelődéstörténeti Műhely, 2005), pp. 561–70 (p. 568).

36 Pasquale Corsi, 'I francescani osservanti della Vicaria di Bosnia in Puglia' in *Dal giglio all'orso. I principi D'Angiò e Orsini del Balzo nel Salento*, ed. by Antonio Cassiano and Benedetto Vetere (Galatina: Dipartimento dei Beni delle Atri e della Storia, 2006) pp. 236-49, (p. 249); Perrone, *La regolare Osservanza*, vol. 1, p. 24.

37 Coco, 'La vicaria di Bosnia', pp. 258-59.

38 Clemens Schmitt (ed.), *Regestum observantiae cismontanae (1464-1488)* Analecta franciscana XII (Rome, Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1983).

39 Regestum, p. 12.

40 Džambo, 'Povijest mentaliteta', p 247.

seventeenth century at the earliest.[41] While this is indeed the case, I do not share this negative attitude, because the foreign Franciscan chronicles are very valuable when diving into the problems of identity, ideology and memory. Therefore, I re-examined the narrative sources in my work. My approach was that of the juxtaposition of different chronicles against one another, or against a different narrative or documentary source. I did not do that in order to present one or the other source as more reliable, but to demonstrate relationships and contrasts between them, and to elaborate on their ideological layers.[42]

The sixteenth-century Hungarian Observant chronicle proved to be an invaluable source for my research.[43] It exists under various names in historiography, such as 'Cronica' or the 'chronicle of Gyöngyös', but I will refer to it as the Hungarian Observant chronicle. It is an anonymous compilation, and it presents the history of the Bosnian vicariate, proceeded by the history of the Hungarian Observant vicariate, created as a result of the Bosnian-Hungarian breakup. There are seven manuscripts of the chronicle, presenting a uniform textual tradition for the story encapsulated between 1313-1533, but from then on being continued inconsistently. Up to 1533, the chronicle had multiple authors, whose identities remain debatable. It claimed to have been written based on the chronicle of Balázs of Szálka, Bosnian vicar in the 1420s, and continued with the recollection of an old friar, Gregory of Ilok, 'who until this day served under the obedience of all Hungarian Observant vicars with honour'.[44] One can see some other sources being used, such as the Chronicle of the Twenty-Four Generals or *vitae* of some Franciscan saints (such as Bernardino of Siena). The text of the chronicle up to 1501 was written in the first years of the sixteenth century, but it was later interpolated and expanded.[45]

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41 Džambo, *Franjevci*, pp. 20-21.

42 See in particular chapters two and eleven.

43 On the Hungarian Observant chronicle, see: Ferenc Toldy (ed.), *Analecta monumentorum Hungariae historicorum literariorum maximum inedita*, vol. I (Pest: Academiae Hungariae typographus, 1862), pp. 324–25; Euzebije Fermendžin, 'Chronicon observantis provinciae Bosnae Argentinae ordinis s. Francisci Seraphici' *Starine* 22 (1890), 1-67 (pp. 1-2); Stanko Andrić, *The Miracles of St. John Capistran* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2000), pp. 31-32; Balázs Kertész, 'A magyarországi obszerváns ferencesek krónikájának szerzőségéhez' in *Nyolcszáz esztendős a ferences rend. Tanulmányok a rend lelkiségéről, történeti hivatásáról és kulturális-művészeti szerepéről*, 1, ed. by Sándor Őze (Budapest: Napló Kiadó, 2013) pp. 164-186 (pp. 164-66); Balázs Kertész, 'The 1499 Constitutions of the Hungarian Observant Franciscan Vicariate', *Chronica*, 15 (2017), 177–78; Antal Molnár, *Die Formelsammlungen der Franziskaner-Observanten in Ungarn (ca. 1451-1554)*, Analecta Franciscana vol. 19, ns. 7 (Rome: Editiones collegii s. Bonaventurae 2022), pp. 89-95.

44 *Qui sub obedientia omnium vicariorum Familiae Observantiae de Hungaria usque hodie militavit cum honore*: AMH, p. 241.

45 Kertész, 'The 1499 Constitutions', p. 178.

There are two editions of the chronicle, by Ferenc Toldy (1862) and Euzebije Fermendžin (1890).[46] The latter is quite an odd case, because it is effectively a chronicle compiled by Euzebije Fermendžin for 1339-1735, using the Hungarian Observant chronicle, but interpolated with other sources. For this reason, I will stick to the edition by Toldy, who edited the chronicle based on one manuscript. Hopefully, one day a full critical edition based on multiple manuscripts will be published, which would allow revisiting some of the problems identified in my thesis. There are some further issues with using the chronicle. It is in essence a Hungarian source, and even the parts dealing with the Bosnian vicariate are fairly uninterested in the matters of the Bosnian Franciscans, because it is centred on the matters of the Hungarian part of the Bosnian vicariate.[47] As a religious narrative source, the chronicle intertwines historical events with anecdotes, such as an appearance of the spirit of the Bosnian vicar and bishop of Oradea (hun. *Nagyvárad*), John of Korčula, to a later successor of the diocese, Farkas, to whip him to death, or the story of a knight and his squire, who after having fallen in battle, rose from the dead and assaulted Đakovo's custodian.[48] The relevance of the Hungarian Observant chronicle lies in its dialectical and ideological significance. It is filled with polemics, particularly when it came to asserting that the Franciscan Observance as such originated from the Bosnian vicariate, a claim fostered in the Hungarian Observant vicariate, but as I am going to argue, it was no less relevant for the medieval Bosnian vicariate.[49]

The historical recollection found in the Codex of Gyöngyös (GYFK Cod. Med. 3.) was sometimes interpreted as the eighth manuscript of the Hungarian Observant chronicle, but as Molnár recently demonstrated, it is a genuinely distinct source.[50] This text is much better integrated with the general history of the Franciscan order, in contrast to the very Hungary-oriented recollection of the Hungarian Observant chronicle.[51] Furthermore, it clarifies some ambiguities regarding the split between the Hungarian and the South Slavic Observants created by the Hungarian Observant chronicle.[52]

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[46] AMH, pp. 213-315 (page order is broken, page 272 is followed by 283); Fermendžin, 'Chronicon observantis', pp. 1-67.
[47] See the second chapter.
[48] AMH, pp. 239, 242-43.
[49] I evaluate this in the second chapter.
[50] Molnár, *Die Formelsammlungen*, p. 89.
[51] Molnár, *Die Formelsammlungen*, p. 95.
[52] See the chapter six.

Another important source is the *Chronicle of the Friars Minor of the Observance* of Bernardino of Aquila (1420-1503).[53] This chronicle was written around 1480, in an effort to set up a historiographical framework for the Cismontane Observant Franciscans, based on the collective memory of the family, which makes it very important for our understanding of the reform movement.[54] Furthermore, Bernardino of Aquila had been the vicar of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province. He recollected his triennium (1464-67), as well as the history of the province, in chapters 29-32.[55] The chronicle will also be used in other parts of my work because of its ideological significance. Bernardino did not spare bitter words for the Bosnian Franciscans, but this is something that I will elaborate on later. I am also going to occasionally use the *Chronicle of the Twenty-Four Generals,* and in individual cases some other narrative sources.

This overview obviously does not cover all sources relevant to my study, but it lays out the framework of my source base. It is evident that the sources created by the Bosnian Franciscan family are lacking, and their voice is heard mostly through an intermediary source, like a bull or another letter, sometimes heavily mediated with prejudice. We have some better insight into the perspective of their Italian superiors, but as will be demonstrated in my thesis, they were often alienated from the agenda of the Bosnian Franciscan family. The role of the relationship between the friars of the Bosnian vicariate and their Cismontane superiors will be given a lot of attention. Furthermore, the Bosnian vicariate expanded well beyond Bosnia. This caveat makes perspectives developed by the Franciscans remaining under the Bosnian jurisdiction yet not dwelling in Bosnia relevant. A lot of my analysis will therefore focus on the demonstration of conflicted agendas between the Franciscans representing different areas of the vicariate.

### c) The structure

My thesis consists of eleven chapters divided into three sections. The first section focuses on the development of the Bosnian vicariate to the mid-fifteenth century. It explains the vicariate's foundation, expansion, and the development of distinct constituting elements

[53] For over a century, historians used the edition by Lemmens (1902). However, more recently, Letizia Pellegrini published a more up to date critical edition of the chronicle: Letizia Pellegrini (ed.), *Bernardino Aquilano e la sua Cronaca dell'Osservanza con nuova edizione e traduzione a fronte* (Milan: Edizioni Biblioteca Francescana, 2021). Bernardino of Aquila, also called of Fossa (a small town near Aquila), where he was born. On Bernardino beyond his vicarial role see: Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, pp. 13-40.
[54] Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, pp. 112-13; Merlo, *In the name of Saint Francis*, p. 351.
[55] The chronicle was likely intended to continue, but the manuscript finished rather abruptly. Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 70.

in its ambit. This section also discusses the problem of adaptation of the Observant identity, examining the development of a religious model in Bosnia different from that formed in Latin Christian lands, in particular in Italy, as well as elaborates why that carried so much potential for controversy. Finally, it discusses the role of the political patronage of Sigismund of Luxemburg over the Observance in the Bosnian vicariate and its consequences.

The second section deals with the disintegration of the Bosnian vicariate in the 1440s. This section encapsulates chapters ordered geographically rather than chronologically, dedicated to what happened in different parts of the vicariate, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of the disintegration. The dates indicated by the title (1444-48) are somewhat orientational: they do not encapsulate the process in absolute terms. One may argue that the expansion of the vicariate in 1347 to Ston and Đakovo already carried seeds of future discord because both places lay beyond Bosnia.[56] Similar is the problem with the end date because the Bosnian vicariate did not stop losing its cohesion. What these dates represent is the relatively short time span between important events, happening simultaneously in different areas of the vicariate and which were sometimes intertwined with one another, when the vicariate was reduced to a much more confined entity than it used to be.

The third section deals with the rise and fall of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province. The events of the 1440s opened up rather than concluded a controversy between the Bosnian and Dalmatian Observants. The province was created to provide a remedy to inconclusive quarrels, but it was riven with so much discord that it was dismantled in 1469. In this sense, the foundation and history of the province were a continuation of an earlier controversy, and thus integrally, they represent a twofold disintegration case. The breakup of the province represents a good stopping point, because it ultimately concluded the long lasting controversies about the Bosnian vicariate's settlements around the cities of Zadar and Dubrovnik.

That is not to say that the problem of the Bosnian vicariate's structural integrity could not be analysed beyond my thesis's framework. By the decision of the Observant chapter of Assisi, 29 June 1514, the Bosnian vicariate was divided into two provinces: one for the friaries in Croatia, and another one in Ottoman-ruled Bosnia, called *Bosna Argentina*.[57] This breakup however falls outside my chronological framework for feasibility reasons. The early

[56] AB, p. 28.
[57] AB, p. 307.

sixteenth century represents a chronologically distant period from the one in focus (mid-fifteenth century), requiring a lot of further research not possible within time-frame of doctoral study. Whilst the last chapter contains some reflections on the aftermath of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province's downfall, a full study of the breakup of 1514 would require a more in-depth investigation of the later papal bulls and further examination of the *Regestum*, as well as using other sources. The key to understanding that part of the Franciscan history in Bosnia was their adaptation to Ottoman rule, which is a very complex problem.

The final remark I should make is that some scholars might expect that my thesis will feature James of the Marches (it. *Giacomo della Marca*, 1393–1476), who was the Franciscan friar active in the region in 1430s, and in 1457. However, during the doctoral research, it became apparent to me that the role of James of the Marches in the Observant reform in the region has been consistently overexaggerated by the scholars. The present thesis features James, but not as prominently as some might expect. At the same time, I offer my article on the travels of James of the Marches in East-Central Europe, which although not an integral part of this thesis, it is a product of the same phase of my studies on the Franciscan Observance in Bosnia.[58] The article clarifies why I would argue that James was not as relevant for the Observance's development, as he is often assessed as.

[58] Paweł Cholewicki, 'Travels by St James of the Marches in East Central Europe, 1432– 1440', in *Path to Salvation. Temporal and Spiritual Journeys by the Mendicant Orders c. 1370-1740*, ed. by Benjamin Hazard (Lausanne: Peter Lang, 2023) pp. 83-116.

# Section I: The Bosnian Observant Franciscan vicariate: origin, expansion and controversy

This section discusses the development and expansion of the Bosnian vicariate until the mid-fifteenth century. It will open with presenting the exceptional religious situation in Bosnia, including the emergence of the 'heresy', which was the prime reason for the foundation of the vicariate. The section will be then dealing with the vicariate's foundation and growth. It will also examine the formation of distinct constituent elements in it. The first section also discusses the process of adaptation of the Observant identity by the vicariate. In particular, I am going to demonstrate the discrepancy of the religious model fostered in Bosnia from that developed in Latin Christian lands, and I will explain why this sparked controversies. Finally, I am going to discuss the political patronage of Sigismund of Luxemburg over the development of the Observance in the vicariate, and elaborate on its consequences. This section will already establish the potential points of contention between various parts of the vicariate. It will also discuss the potential of the reform movement to fracture the vicariate.

# Ch. 1: Founding and sustaining the Franciscan vicariate in 'the land of heretics and schismatics'

The first chapter of this study starts with an outline of the context of the creation of the Bosnian vicariate. It will discuss what challenges the vicariate faced, how its leadership dealt with them and why it expanded to various places. This will set up the stage for the main analysis of this work, which concerns the relationship of the challenges to the Bosnian vicariate's integrity to the problem of the Observant reform. Bearing in mind the readers unfamiliar with the Bosnian Middle Ages, I will start by giving some necessary context, focusing primarily on religion. Although with the vicariate's expansion transcends the confines of Bosnia, my work is undoubtably centred on it and on its Franciscan family.

### I.1.1. *Translatio sedis* and its consequences

The borders of today's Bosnia west to the Drina and south to the Sava correspond roughly to the territories of the medieval kingdom of the Kotromanić dynasty that had developed out of a significantly smaller Bosnian banate.[59] The Bosnian geographical position in the centre of the Western Balkan hinterland pre-determined it as a place of intertwined influences, as it was located on a boundary between the Greek and Latin languages, Eastern and Western parts of the Roman empire and Catholic and Orthodox Christianity.[60] The earliest known records of the Christian church in Bosnia come from the sixth century, and the Catholic *Ecclesia Bosnensis* appears for the first time in a source dated to 1089. This bishopric remained under the supervision of the archbishoprics of Split, Bar and Dubrovnik, the latter being the Bosnian archdiocese until the first half of the thirteenth century.[61] At the same time, the Bosnian diocese was immersed in the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition because it was dominated by a Slavic-speaking population.[62]

[59] The term 'banate' refers to a political and territorial entity governed by ban, sometimes translated as 'duke' or 'viceroy'. Banates were not uncommon form of government in South-eastern Europe. Andrić, *The Miracles*, p. 31.
[60] Dubravko Lovrenović,'Krist i Donator: Kotromanići između vjere rimske i vjere bosanske –I. (Konfesionalne posljedice jednog lokalnog crkvenog raskola)', in *Fenomen "Krstijani" u Srednjovjekovnoj Bosni i Humu* ed. by Franjo Šanjek (Zagreb/Sarajevo: Institut za istoriju u Sarajevu, 2005), pp. 193-237 (p. 194).
[61] Franjo Šanjek, 'Kršćanstvo Bosne i Hercegovine', *Croatica Christiana Periodica*, 16/30 (1992), 119-52 (pp. 122-24)
[62] Lovrenović, Dubravko, 'Krist i Donator', pt. 1, p. 194.

The political history of Bosnia has a rich South Slavic historiography. Its various developments and controversies are only going to be evaluated in my study, when they are relevant for the Bosnian vicariate. Bosnia as a political entity emerged in the context of the grand contest between Hungary and the Byzantine Empire over South-eastern Europe in the second half of the twelfth century. In the following three centuries, Bosnia remained under Hungarian hegemony, the nature of which as well as suitable terminology remains a hotly debated field of Bosnian Medieval Studies.[63] Bosnia gradually increased its political potential in the course of the fourteenth century and reached its apex following its elevation from banate to the kingdom in 1377 under Tvrtko I (?-1391, ban of Bosnia from 1353). By that time, it had managed to incorporate the land of Hum (bos. *Humska zemlja*) and to expand to parts of Dalmatia and Serbia, the latter of which entered a phase of disintegration after the death of Tzar Stefan Uroš IV Dušan in 1355. Tvrtko I also showed an ambition to intervene in Hungarian affairs, particularly during the Hungarian succession crisis in the years 1382-87. With the depletion of many silver mines in Western Latin Christendom, and the Hussite wars in Bohemia, the major silver mining centre in East Central Europe, Bosnian deposits of silver attracted a lot of foreign attention, boosting local economic development.[64]

After the death of King Tvrtko I Bosnia started to decline. Its magnates, the 'lords of Rusag' (bos. *Rusaška gospoda*) initiated destabilising insurrections and foreign interventions.[65] What was worse, the Ottoman Empire emerged in the East, and various parts

[63] Much of the older scholarship described this relationship as that of 'vassal' and 'sovereign', but more recent works undermined such terminology as anachronistic, using the work: Susan Reynolds *Fiefs and Vassals: the Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted* (Oxford: Clarendon press, 1996). Some Hungarian scholars conceptualised this in the context of *Archiregnum Hungaricum*, which is an anachronistic idea describing the Hungarian overlordship over its South-eastern subjects in the Middle Ages. More on this, see: Szablocs de Vajay, 'Das "Archiregnum Hungaricum" und seine Wappensymbolik in der Ideenwelt des Mittelalters', in *Überlieferung und Auftrag: Festschrift für Michael de Ferdinandy zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. by Josef Gerhard Farkas (Wiesbaden: Wiesbaden Pressler, 1972) pp. 647-667. In South Slavic historiography, this term was adapted in: Mladen Ančić, 'Od zemlje do kraljevstva: Mjesto Bosne u strukturi Archiregnuma', *Hercegovina : časopis za kulturno i istorijsko nasljeđe*, 26 (2015), 9-88. Lovrenović argued for a more personal rather than state level conceptualization of the relationship between the rulers of Hungary and Bosnia, arguing that Bosnia and Hungary remained two distinct entities, both assuming the legal-political concept of *Corona regni*. Dubravko Lovrenović, 'Hungary and Bosnia 1387-1463: Between Stereotypes and New Interpretations' in *Friars, Nobles and Burghers – Sermons, Images and Prints: Studies of Culture and Society in Early-Modern Europe - In Memoriam István György Tóth*, ed. by Jaroslav Miller and László Kontler (Budapest: CEU Press, 2010), pp. 33-46 (p. 40).

[64] Branislav Đurđev, 'Rudarstvo u Bosni i Herzegovini u srjedjem vjeku' in *Radovi sa simpozijuma Rudarstvo i Metalurgija Bosne i Herzegovine od prahistorje do početka XX vijeka* ed. by Fikret Ibrahimpašić (Zenica: Izdanja muzeja grada zenice, 1999), pp. 185-210; Paweł Cholewicki, 'The role of the Franciscans in the kingdom of Bosnia during the rein of King Stjepan Tomaš (1443-1461)', in *CEU Annual of Medieval Studies* vol. 25, ed. by Ildikó Csepregi (Budapest: Archaeolingua, 2019), pp. 107-20 (p. 108).

[65] Rusag was an assembly of the Bosnian nobility, responsible for the most important policy-making in the kingdom. Cholewicki, 'The role of the Franciscans', p. 108.

of the Balkans fell victim to it, being vassalized or annexed. The Ottomans started to make incursions into Bosnia in the second half of the fourteenth century, and in 1415 it became an Ottoman tributary.[66] Their grip over Bosnia grew steadily over the fifteenth century through military campaigns and the use of internal animosities to their advantage. Finally, in May 1463 they launched a grand invasion under the direct command of Sultan Mehmed II (1432-81, reign in 1444-46 and 1451-81), who conquered Bosnia, and its last king of the native Kotromanić dynasty, Stjepan Tomašević, was executed. This event remains a decisive caesura that concluded the medieval period for Bosnian historiography, thus the events immediately following it tended to be understudied. This period however will be fleshed out in my work, because the Bosnian-Dalmatian Franciscan Observant province was conceived in an aftermath of the conquest.

Before Bosnia was conquered, it had become quite conspicuous for its 'heretical' dissidence. Several religious controversies of the first half of the thirteenth century led to the severance of the Bosnian obedience to the archdiocese of Dubrovnik and the translation of the Bosnian bishopric from its homeland to Đakovo, a locality in the kingdom of Hungary, (today Croatia) where its control over religious life in Bosnia was purely nominal.[67] This ecclesiastical vacuum was filled by an indigenous Bosnian church (bos. *Crkva bosanska*) which did not plead allegiance either to Rome or Constantinople. Both 'great churches' condemned the Bosnian church as dualist and heretical. Modern scholarship has scrutinised these accusations to quite a remarkable degree, and it remains strongly divided as to the interpretation of the Bosnian church's theology, identity and practices. Because the presence of 'heresy' in Bosnia was an underlying reason for the foundation of the Bosnian Franciscan vicariate, and because some of these 'heretics' will appear at various points of this study, I will elaborate further on this church's emergence, its status in the medieval Bosnia as well as mainstream scholarly positions.

Over the course of the first half of the thirteenth century (technically since 1199), the Roman curia received a good number of reports that heretics adhering to the dualist creed settled in Bosnia and spread their false views among the local population 'just as *lamiae*

[66] Emir Filipović, '*Exurge igitur, miles Christi, et in barbaros viriliter pugna…* The anti-ottoman activities of Bosnian King Stjepan Tomaš (1443–1461)' in *Holy War in Late Medieval and early modern East-Central Europe,* ed. by Janusz Smolucha, John Jefferson and Andrzej Wadas (Cracow: WAM, 2017), pp. 201-42 (pp. 201-04)

[67] Srećko Džaja and Dubravko Lovrenović, 'Srednjovjekovna Crkva bosanska', *Svijetlo rjecči*, 25 (2007), 3-14 (p. 7).

breastfeeding their brood'.[68] Catholic ecclesiastic circles quite promptly related them to the Cathars.[69] The dualist creed attributed to the Cathars was a belief in the two principles, the good and the bad, represented by God and Satan, both of whom were creators. The 'good' God created all the spiritual beings, while Satan, identified with Jehovah of the Old Testament, those of the matter 'in six days'. Such a departure from the Nicaean article about one creator of 'all things visible and invisible' had a number of theological, anthropological, Christological, and soteriological implications for the rest of doctrine, with which the historiography has dealt extensively.[70] It was clear to the Church that the spread of such views, if left unchecked, would lead to the condemnation of the souls. However, the extent to which the Bosnian 'heretics' actually believed any of this is hotly debated, what will be clarified later in this subchapter, by presenting the three dominant historiographical frameworks.

The papacy took various measures to tackle the problem of heresy in Bosnia over the thirteenth century, including papal legations, an abjuration, agreements with the bans of Bosnia, a Dominican mission (including construction of at least two convents), but also calls for a Hungarian-led crusade.[71] The latter and most drastic measure, however, seems to have effectively materialised only once, namely in the campaign of Duke Coloman (also referred to as Coloman of Halych, 1208-1241) in 1237-38.[72] Any progress achieved by the crusaders in Bosnia was nullified due to the Mongol invasion of Hungary. The papacy also tackled the Bosnian bishopric, which it assumed to be involved in the controversy. On 5 June 1232 Pope Gregory IX issued a letter to the archbishop of Kalocsa and the bishop of Zagreb, where a set of grave accusations against the Slavonic bishop of Bosnia were presented.[73] He was accused of being illiterate (presumably in Latin), of being a public defender of the heretics, of getting his position by simony, of not celebrating the holy sacraments, of being ignorant of the proper baptismal formula, of living in a village with some heretics and finally, that his

[68] *Velut lamie nudatis mammis catulos suos lactent*. Following the source from: Dženan Dautović, 'Nulla spes sit … Bosnia and the Papacy in the Thirteenth Century' in *Spécimina Nova Pars Prima Séctio Médiaévalis*, vol. 11, ed. by Marta Font, Gérgély Kiss and Endré Sashalmi (Pécs: Monár Nyomda es Kiadó Kft, 2021) pp. 97-125, (p. 99)
[69] Franjo Šanjek (ed.), *Bosansko-humski krstjani u povjesnim vrelima (13.-15 st.)* (Zagreb: Barbat, 2003) pp. 74-77.
[70] Walter L. Wakefield and Austin P. Evans, *Heresies of the High Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), pp. 9-37.
[71] This period has been in a close focus of South Slavic historiography since the mid nineteenth century. For a most up to date reconstruction of these events in English, see: Dženan Dautović, 'Nulla spes sit', pp. 97-125.
[72] Dautović, 'Nulla spes sit', p. 112
[73] Tadija Smičiklas (ed.), *Codex diplomaticus Regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*, vols 2-15 (Zagreb: Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, 1904-1934), vol. 3, p. 362.

brother was a 'public heresiarch', whom he did not reprimand.[74] The papal legate in Hungary, James of Pecoraria, was to investigate these accusations, and he apparently found the Bosnian bishop guilty of some of them, and the bishop's defence of 'ignorance by simplicity' was not accepted.[75] By the end of 1233 the bishop was replaced by the Dominican friar John of Wildeshausen (c. 1180-1252), later Master General of his order.[76] The replacement caused some major unrest in Bosnia, and crusade was called in order to secure Catholic activity against heresy in Bosnia.[77] This phase of papal operations aimed at the eradication of heresy in Bosnia was concluded on 27 March 1248, when Pope Innocent IV forbade any further military activity into Bosnia until the faith of the ban was re-examined by Bishop of Senj Filip and the Franciscan provincial of Split.[78] We do not know the result of the investigation, but no serious attempt to tackle the problem of the Bosnian heresy was undertaken until the next century.

The papal operation regarding the bishopric in Bosnia brought some long-term repercussions. A campaign was launched in Hungary to subjugate the Bosnian bishopric to the archdiocese of Kalocsa.[79] The successor of John of Wildeshausen in the Bosnian see, Ponsa, accused the archdiocese of Dubrovnik of tolerating the process of the Bosnian bishopric lapsing into 'heresy'. The archbishop of Kalocsa did indeed become the metropolitan of Bosnia following the bull from 28 August 1247.[80] The bull declared that 'the Bosnian church as much as the diocese in no way pertained to the Roman church, because it had lapsed completely to the faithlessness of heretical depravity since its sins condemn it'.[81] The Bosnian bishop chose Đakovo as his permanent seat and moved there by May 1252. Đakovo, albeit not in Bosnia, remained the 'canonical' Bosnian bishopric until the modern period. In 1735, the Holy See founded the Apostolic Vicariate for Bosnia, and assigned Franciscans as apostolic vicars to direct it, thereby formally ending the jurisdiction of the nominal 'bishop of Bosnia' over Bosnia. On 5 July 1881, Pope Leo XIII issued the bull *Ex hac augusta Principis Apostolorum cathedra* which restored the regular Church hierarchy in Bosnia and Herzegovina. With this restoration, the Bosnian (1735–1881) and the

[74] Šanjek, *Bosansko-humski krstjani,* p. 15.
[75] MH, vol. 1, p. 113.
[76] Dautović, 'Nulla spes sit', p. 106.
[77] Šanjek, Franjo, *Bosansko-humski krstjani,* p. 16.
[78] MH vol. 1. pp. 205-06; Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna,* p. 39.
[79] MH, vol. 1, pp. 201-02.
[80] MH, vol. 1, pp. 204-05.
[81] *Quod cum tam ecclesia quam diocesis Bosnensis, quae ad Romanam ecclesiam nullo medio pertinet, totaliter lapsa sit peccatis exigentibus in perfidiam heretice pravitatis*. MH vol. 1, pp. 204.

Herzegovinian (1846–81) vicariates were abolished. That is not to say that other ecclesiastic structures were at no point in time present in the medieval Bosnian state. Some Dalmatian Catholic dioceses as well as the Serbian Orthodox church operated within its confines after it expanded, but the current discussion concerns its heartland.

The Cyrillo-Methodian Christianity in Bosnia, organised by this point by the Catholic *Ecclesia Bosnensis* under the jurisdiction of the archbishopric of Dubrovnik was severed from the Church following the translation to Đakovo. As a result, it developed its own religious structures that appeared officially for the first time in a charter dated to 1326/29 as the Bosnian church.[82] The Bosnian church was tolerated by the rulers of Bosnia until 1459, when its members were given a choice of Catholic baptism or expulsion, an episode which will be given consideration in the later chapters.[83] Some individuals perhaps affiliated with this creed appeared in some early modern Turkish *defterler*, which are most likely their last attested mentions, but this does not indicate precisely the Bosnian church's final disappearance.[84]

The Bosnian church was run by a religious order having its own internal hierarchy. The term religious order illustrates well Bosnian church's structure, because it captures its clear monastic outlook. This was likely because its religious members were in fact an offshoot of some 'orthodox' monastic tradition.[85] At the church's head stood *Djed*, who was also claimed to be the 'true' bishop of Bosnia. After *Djed*, their hierarchy denoted *Strojnici*, individuals of leadership, among whom we would encounter *Gosti* and *Starci.*[86] The rest of the order's members were called *Krstjani* in the vernacular sources, meaning Christians, while some Latin sources would call them *religiosi*. *Krstjani* is an ambiguous term that could also refer to 'lay' believers, but I will be using it here to denote the members of the Bosnian church's religious hierarchy, in a way in which the term was perhaps mostly used in the medieval sources.[87] The *Krstjani* grew to great prominence in Bosnia, because their order had

[82] Lovrenović, 'Krist i Donator', pt. 1, p. 196. Paweł Cholewicki, *The role of the Franciscans in the kingdom of Bosnia during the reign of King Stjepan Tomas (1443-1461)*, (Budapest: Central European University, 2017) p. 16.
[83] See III.9.4.
[84] Džaja and Lovrenović, *Crkva Bosanska*, pp. 14; Dubravko Lovrenović, *Bosanska kvadratura kruga* (Sarajevo: Dobra Knjiga, 2012), p. 51.
[85] Leon Petrović, *Kršćani bosanske crkve* (Sarajevo: Dobri pastir, 1953), p. 184; Maja Miletić, *I 'krstjani' di Bosnia alla luce dei loro monumenti di pietra*, (Rome: Pont. institutum orientalium studiorum, 1957), p. 185.
[86] The exact origin, meanings and roles of these functions remains debatable. Šanjek, *Bosansko-humski krstjani*, pp. 35-38.
[87] Jaroslav Šidak, *Studije o "Crkvi bosanskoj" i bogumilstvu* (Zagreb: Liber, 1975) p. 55.

effectively become a spiritual pillar of political stability in Bosnia.[88] The high-ranked *Krstjani* became some of the most trusted advisors to the Bosnian rulers and noblemen, and they appeared on some vernacular charters as guarantors.[89] In its contacts with Bosnia, Ragusa tolerated the *Krstjani*'s religious dissidence for the sake of their mediatory potential.[90] *Gost* Radin Butković, who will make an appearance later in this study, became a respected figure in the city, and he was granted the freedom of faith by a Ragusan charter.[91] He was also given a valuable fur coat by the Hungarian King Mathias Corvinus (1443-1490, king of Hungary since 1458).[92]



Fig. 1 *Stećak* (a gravestone) of *Gost* Milutin, the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo, my photo.

[88] Šidak, *Studije o "Crkvi bosanskoj"*, p. 97; Srećko Džaja, '"Dobri Bošnjani" i "Boni Homines"', in *Zbornik o Pavlu Anđeliću* ed. by Karamatić, Marko, (Sarajevo: Franjevačka teologija, 2008) pp. 105-130 (p. 163); Dubravko Lovrenović, 'Krist i donator', pt. 1, pp. 203, 207; Cholewicki, *The role of the Franciscans* , p. 18.
[89] Šanjek, *Bosansko-humski krstjani,* pp. 38-39.
[90] Sejfudin Isaković, 'Crkva Bosanska u očima Dubrovačkih savremenika', *Historijska traganja* 15, ed. by Vera Katz (Sarajevo: Institut za istoriju, 2015) pp. 101-126 (pp. 114-115)
[91] MS, pp. 472-73. See II.5.2. and III.9.2.
[92] Dubravko Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti: sveta kruna ugarska i sveta kruna bosanska 1387-1463* (Zagreb: Synopsis, 2006), pp. 369, 393.




Fig. 2 A self-portrait of *Krstjanin* Radosav, Radosav's manuscript, from: *Codice Borgiano illirico,* vol. 12, fol. 58v. Available at: https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Borg.ill.12 [Accessed 01.08.2022]

The historiography of the Bosnian church has been developed to quite an impressive level, and it has become strongly divided on the question of its creed, called 'the Bosnian faith' in the vernacular and Ragusan sources. Intricacies of study of a dualist medieval heresy have blended with some entrenchments of national historiographies, and this produced a very complex scholarship. An article by Dženan Dautović, drawing on earlier contributions of Jaroslav Šidak and Pejo Ćošković, provides quite an effective and relatively up to date orientation to this complex historiography.[93] He divided existing studies into three frameworks: 'the [Eastern] Orthodox framework' (bos. *Pravoslavni okvir*), 'the dualist framework' (bos. *Dualisticki okvir*), and 'the orthodox framework' (bos. *Pravovjerni okvir*). The first one refers to Orthodoxy as an Eastern Christian denomination (*Pravoslavlje*), and the last one to the orthodoxy of Christian beliefs (*Pravovjerje*). 'The [Eastern] Orthodox framework' assumes that the Bosnian church was in its foundation Eastern Orthodox, similar to that in Serbia and Bulgaria.[94] It generally speaking assumed sceptical views of sources accusing the Bosnian church of dualism and pointed out similarities between the *Krstjani* and the Eastern Orthodox monastic communities. It found some proponents in Serbia (Vaso

[93] Dženan Dautović, 'Crkva Bosanska: Moderni historiografski tokovi, rasprave i kontroverze (2005-2015)', in *Historijska traganja* 15, ed. by Vera Katz (Sarajevo: Institut za istoriju, 2015), pp. 127-59.
[94] Dautović, 'Crkva Bosanska', p. 129. The framework is attributed to Božidar Petranović and his work: Божидар Петрановић, *Богумили. Црква Босанска и крстјани* (Zadar: Demarki-Ruzier, 1867).

Glušac), but because Sima Ćirković (1929-2009), a great authority on medieval Bosnia in Serbian scholarship and beyond, assumed the 'dualist framework', the popularity of 'the [Eastern] Orthodox framework' dropped drastically, leaving the floor for two other frameworks to become mainstream positions.[95]

The cornerstone of 'the dualist framework' in modern historiography was undoubtedly laid by Franjo Rački (1828-1894) in his work *Bogomili i Patareni*.[96] He assumed that the Bosnian church was a part of the neo-Manichean movement of the High Middle Ages, formed in Bosnia by the Bogomils expelled from Serbia. Some later historians following this framework assumed instead that the Catholic (and Slavonic rite) *Ecclesia Bosnensis* lapsed to dualism following the developments of the first half of the thirteenth century, thus itself becoming the 'heretical' Bosnian church, with *Djed* continuing the tradition of the Slavonic 'canonical' bishops. Such authors are considered to represent the 'syncretistic' position.[97] There are plenty of Catholic, including Franciscan, and Eastern Orthodox sources of various character condemning the Bosnian church as dualist/heretical, labelling its adherents most often as 'the heretics of Bosnia', 'the Patarens', 'the Manicheans' and 'the Babuni' (serb. *Бабуни*). The contributors to this interpretational framework recognised however the importance of sources produced by the Bosnian church, or at least not hostile to it. The interpretation of the material produced by the Bosnian church has become the main source of ambiguities in the scholarship. The authors of the dualist framework argued that these sources have indeed some dualist elements, for example by suggesting dualist readings of the *glossae* of the biblical manuscripts, or by pointing to similarities between the ritual found in the manuscript of *Krstjanin* Radosav with that of the Cathar manuscripts of Lyon or Florence.[98]

The 'orthodox framework' is perhaps the most internally heterogenous of the three.[99] It generally assumes, like the 'syncretistic' position, that the Catholic *Ecclesia Bosnensis* transformed into the 'condemned' Bosnian church after losing ties to Rome, yet without

[95] Vaso Glušac, 'Srednjovekovna "Bosanska crkva" bila je pravoslavna'' in *Prilozi za književnost, jezik, istoriju i folklor*, 4 (Belgrade: Državna štamparija Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca, 1924), pp 1-55.
[96] Franjo Rački, 'Bogomili i Patareni' pt. 1, *Rad JAZU*, 7 (1869), 84-179; Franjo Rački, 'Bogomili i Patareni' pt. 2, *Rad JAZU*, 10 (1870), 160-263.
[97] This would include Mihailo Dinić, Sima Ćirković and Pejo Ćošković.
[98] Aleksandar Solovjev, 'Vjersko učenje bosanske crkve', *Rad JAZU*, 29 (1948), 5-46; Aleksandar Solovjev, 'La doctrine de l'E´glise de Bosnie' *Bulletin de l'Académie Royale de Belgique, Class de Letters*, 34 (1948), 481-534; Šanjek, *Bosansko-humski krstjani*, pp. 338-48.
[99] This framework was formed following works of Jaroslav Šidak where he provided a systematical criticism of Rački. Šidak turned to more 'Dualist' positions in later works. Dautović, 'Crkva Bosanska' p. 130.

actually becoming dualist but remaining Christologically orthodox. The religious order of the *Krstjani* is argued to be an offshoot of some pre-existing 'orthodox' monastic tradition.[100] Proponents of this framework demonstrate the underlying political motivations of those whistleblowing about the 'heresy' in Bosnia. They point to the problems with Catholic and Orthodox sources, such as a tendency for 'archaization' of the contemporary heretical beliefs, their general bias, the pressure of the inquisition and many other methodological issues, extensively discussed by the scholars of medieval heresy.[101] Finally, they do point to contradictions between the Latin or Eastern Orthodox and the Bosnian church's material. The scholars of the orthodox framework argued that the Bosnian biblical manuscripts, vernacular Bosnian charters, and the very famous testament of *Gost* Radin present the Bosnian faith as 'untainted' by dualism.[102]

The interpretation of the vernacular sources has remained the focus of the debate. A lot of ambiguity stems from actual proximity between the 'dualist' and 'orthodox' (especially monastic) semantics. To give a very plain example, the title of 'prince of this world' used to describe Satan in one of the Bosnian *glossae* may have dualist as much as orthodox connotations (John 12:31/2 Corinthians 4:4).[103] There is not a source clear enough that would definitely move the scales for one or the other framework. The orthodox framework has perhaps remained slightly more active over recent years than the dualist one, as several important works debunking some previous dualist interpretations of the vernacular material were published.[104] The historiographic controversy over the Bosnian church is obviously not something that can be solved in the scope of my thesis, but an awareness of these debates and the *Krstjani*'s ambiguous status is important to get a better understanding of the religion in Bosnia in the Middle Ages. Furthermore, the *Krstjani* will make an appearance in various parts of this work, contesting for dominance of the religious life in medieval Bosnia with the Franciscans.

[100] Petrović, *Kršćani bosanske crkve,* p. 184; Miletić, *I 'krstjani' di Bosnia,* p. 185.
[101] John Arnold, *Inquisition and power, Catharism and the confessing subject in medieval Languedoc*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania press, 2001), pp. 74-110.
[102] Šanjek, *Bosansko-humski krstjani,* pp. 359-67.
[103] Šanjek, *Bosansko-humski krstjani,* pp. 336-37.
[104] Mainly works on the Bosnian biblical manuscripts done by Lejla Nakaš and Ema Mazrak.

### I.1.2. The foundation of the Bosnian vicariate

Bosnia neighboured the Franciscan provinces of *Sclavonia* in the south (centred in Dalmatia and renamed to 'the province of Dalmatia of St. Jerome' in 1393) and of Hungary in the northwest, but neither seemed to have an impact on Bosnian religious life in the period under discussion.[105] The foundation of the Franciscan Bosnian vicariate in 1339 was preceded by several papal permissions for some activities of individual Franciscan friars in Bosnia, issued since the late thirteenth century.[106] An invitation for Franciscan proselytizing activity as well as an inquisition triggered some resistance from the Dominicans, even though they had to cease any activity in Bosnia following the events of the first half of the thirteenth century. According to the chronicle of Peter of Bodrogh (before 1259), the Dominicans cooperated with the crusading efforts of Coloman, restoring churches and converting the heretics, and even handed those unrepentant to be burned. Later on however, their two convents in Bosnia were burned by the heretics, most likely suggesting that it became untenable for the order of preachers to stay in Bosnia after the withdrawal of the Hungarian troops.[107] Furthermore, the Dominicans did not manage to assert their rights at the Avignon curia in the next century, and it was the Franciscan order that was to conduct the pastoral activity in Bosnia in the years to come.

Franciscan Minister General Gerard Odonis (c. 1285 – 1348) travelled to Hungary in 1339, from where he travelled to Bosnia, having been asked to do so by the Hungarian king. He met with Ban Stjepan II (r. 1314-1353), and after some consultations, likely on 5 October, he founded the Franciscan Bosnian vicariate and appointed Peregrinus of Saxony as the vicar.[108] This foundation was then officially confirmed by the general chapter of Assisi in 1340. The vicars of Bosnia remained in direct obedience to the ministers general, and this only changed with the structural progress of the Observant movement in the mid-fifteenth century.[109] The Franciscan Bosnian vicariate was therefore a product of a triangular interaction between the papal curia, the Hungarian court, and the Bosnian ban. The

[105] Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 18. The term *Sclavonia* as used in the Middle ages was debated by the South Slavic scholarship, as it had clearly much wider geographical connotations than what is today Croatian Slavonia.
[106] Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, pp. 38-43.
[107] Šanjek, *Bosansko-humski krstjani*, pp. 134-35.
[108] Fermendžin, 'Chronicon observantis', p. 8. Interestingly enough, Toldy's edition does not provide the day of the foundation.
[109] Andrić, *The Miracles*, p. 19.

underlying agendas of these three were often made manifest throughout the history of the Bosnian vicariate, so it is worth examining them.

The main reason underlying papal interest in the vicariate's foundation was the eradication of heresy in Bosnia. The papal letter to Gerard issued on 28 February 1340 illustrates that Stjepan II made a good impression on the minister general, but that although willing to extirpate the heretics from his domain, the ban was reluctant to do so, for they might call for intervention from 'the schismatic' neighbours of Bosnia.[110] Such a strategic excuse – expressing the will to smite the heretics yet not doing so for fear of their political power - become conspicuous in the Bosnian diplomatic language whenever dealing with the papal curia. This demonstrates the strong roots of the *Krstjani* in the Bosnian society. Their 'extirpation' could not be a matter of some one-off execution. In such circumstances, the Franciscan mission relying on evangelisation, aimed at more gradual (re)catholicisation, seemed a more suitable, and more peaceful option.

The foundation of the Bosnian vicariate provided Stjepan II with an opportunity for a rapprochement and reintegration of his state with the Latin Christian world, which was undoubtedly politically advantageous. The existence of a Franciscan mission in his domain would invalidate, or at least discourage, any expansionism masquerading as a crusade from his Catholic neighbours. Indeed, some of the Croatian nobility tried to organise such a crusade just a few years before the foundation of the vicariate.[111] High-ranked friars of the vicariate entered the Bosnian court, opening foreign diplomatic channels which the *Krstjani* were not able to manage as 'condemned heretic'. Peregrinus of Saxony has undoubtedly become one of the ban's most trusted advisors and diplomats, whose mediation the Venetian envoys relied on in the opening phase of the war with Louis I (1326-82, king of Hungary from 1342).[112] Finally, the vicariate was to become the only functional Catholic structure in Bosnia, and so it provided an opportunity for the administration of sacraments for any Catholics coming to Bosnia, such as Ragusan merchants or Saxon miners, attracted by Bosnian deposits of silver. This allowed for more economic exchange and growth.

[110] AM, vol. 7 (1340), pp. 273-74.
[111] Dženan Dautović, 'Historiographic controversy about the Crusades against Bosnian "heretics"', *Journal of Balkan and Black Sea Studies*, 3/4 (2020), 63-77 (p. 71)
[112] Anto Babić, *Iz istorije srednjovjekovne Bosne* (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1972) p. 87.

The Franciscan *Chronicle of Twenty-Four Generals* is the only source to state without any ambiguity that Gerard Odonis converted Ban Stjepan II to Catholicism.[113] The problem of the religious identity of the Bosnian rulers is in fact a very complex one. Scarcity of vernacular sources presents the challenge. Furthermore, the ambiguity stems from the fact that some individual rulers of Bosnia aimed to present themselves, depending on with whom they were dealing with, on one occasion as believers of the Bosnian faith, and of the Roman faith on another.[114] Such an unusual attitude to religion was not just a trait of the rulers but was attested for some nobility. For Kosače of the land of Hum, this balancing also involved a third faith, namely Serbian Orthodoxy, which was very influential by having an important monastery of Mileševa/Милешева in their domain. This is obviously presenting some serious methodological problem. Nonetheless, it is demonstrable of a political oscillation between the Roman and the Bosnian faith by the Bosnian court.[115] Both faiths were effectively legitimate creeds until the purge of 1459. A Ragusan charter issued in 1442, where the government obliged itself to pay back the deposit of silver to the Bosnian king upon receiving a letter guaranteed by 'the monks either of the Roman or the Bosnian faith', illustrates well this religious policy.[116]

Finally, the Hungarian agenda in the foundation of the vicariate should not be overlooked. Over the fourteenth century, the Hungarian kingdom flourished, and it directed a lot of its expansionist energy to affirm suzerainty over its weaker South-eastern neighbours.[117] These neighbours differed from Hungary in faith; they were Orthodox, apart from 'heretical' Bosnia. The installation and support of a mendicant structure preoccupied with the conversion of such territories would be logical for Hungarian foreign policy. Once converted, local ruling classes and population would be more receptive to accepting Hungarian overlordship, therefore there was a synergy between the Hungarian projection of power and Catholicization.[118] Considering that the Hungarian King Charles Robert urged the

[113] Noel Muscat (ed.), *Chronicle of the Twenty-Four Generals of the Order* (Malta: TAU Franciscan communications, 2010) p. 714.
[114] Lovrenović, 'Krist i Donator', pt. 1, pp. 197, 207. Cholewicki, *The role of the Franciscans*, p. 23.
[115] Fine, *The Bosnian Church*, pp. 225–227.
[116] Љубомир Стојановић, *Старе српске повеље и писма*, vol. 1, (Belgrade/Sremski Karlovci: Srpska manastirska štamparnja, 1929), p. 516. Cholewicki, 'The role of the Franciscans', pp. 110-11.
[117] Pál Engel, *The realm of St. Stephen : a history of medieval Hungary, 895-1526* (London/New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001), pp. 134-36., 163-67, 232.
[118] de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 137.

minister general to go to Bosnia, he was clearly aware of benefits the minister general's mission could bring.

Charles's successor, King Louis I was even more conspicuous for his proselytization efforts.[119] The Franciscan tradition, which cannot be confirmed by contemporary sources, credited him with the foundation of several Bosnian Franciscan friaries on the Southern Hungarian frontier, centred in the historical region of Banat, between the rivers Mureș, Tisza and Danube.[120] It is a matter of fact however that the Bosnian vicariate indeed expanded to this area and created a somewhat distinct nucleus of friaries by the end of the fourteenth century. Batholomew of Pisa in his *De conformitate vitae B. Francisci* (1385-90) lists Bosnian friaries in Đakovo, Varoš (near Posavski Podgajci, hun. *Alsán*), Turnu Severin (hun. *Szorény*), Orşova (hun. *Orsova*), Caransebeş (hun. *Karánsebes*), Cseri (most likely today's Sacoşu Turcesc in Romania), Bocşa Română (hun. *Kövesd*), Vidin (bulg. *Видин*), Ermény (disappeared, between Butin and Gherman in Romania), Kovin (srb. *Ковин*/hun. *Keve*), Banatska Palanka (srb. *Банатска Паланка*/hun. *Haram*).[121] Most of these friaries were built where the Catholic parish network was underdeveloped, but their friars were also tasked with converting the Orthodox population.[122] The names of the easternmost custodies of the vicariate provided by Batholomew of Pisa, *Custodia Bulagriae* and *Custodia Chevin* (of Kovin) suggests their overall aspirations for the conversion of the 'schismatics'.[123]

Louis's proselytization project indeed was not confined to the borders of the Hungarian kingdom. Eight friars of the Bosnian vicariate were famously tasked with the conversion of the Bulgarians following the takeover of the 'Tsardom of Vidin' and the formation of the Hungarian 'banate' of Bulgaria.[124] A letter issued in 1366 by the minister of the Province of Saint Francis in Umbria to the minister general, preserved in the *Chronicle of the Twenty-Four Generals* praises the Franciscan enormous success in Bulgaria and other places.[125] In 1369, five friars suffered martyrdom when Vidin was retaken by the

[119] Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen*, p. 172.
[120] Romhányi 'Social Network', p. 126.
[121] Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, pp. 231-33; Romhányi, 'Das Konstanzer Konzil' p. 238.
[122] Romhányi, 'Das Konstanzer Konzil', p. 238.
[123] Džambo, *Franjevci*, p. 113.
[124] Engel, *The realm of St. Stephen*, p. 165.
[125] Muscat, *Chronicle of the Twenty-Four Generals*, pp. 756-59.

Bulgarians.[126] The synergy between the proselytising ambitions of the Bosnian friars and the Hungarian power-building - be it inward or outward - is therefore quite demonstrable.

There is not much information on the above-listed friaries, most of which perished in the Ottoman incursions. Although this South Hungarian nucleus of friaries will not be explored in much further detail in my study, it should be emphasized that their foundation collectively marks the creation of a distinct network of friaries, structurally under the Bosnian vicariate, yet at the same time operating in a politically, socially, and religiously different context. Over the next century, the Franciscan family of the Bosnian vicariate in Hungary went through some profound transformations, a process leading up to the split of the vicariate into two, and so in chapter six of the next section, I will pick up from this point and continue the story of the Bosnian vicariate in Hungary.

### I.1.3. Relation between challenges to the Franciscans in Bosnia and the vicariate's expansion

The Franciscans working in Bosnia in the first decades following the foundation of the vicariate were foreigners coming from various Latin Christian lands rather than natives.[127] The first vicar of Bosnia actually coming from Bosnia was elected only in 1504.[128] Upbringing of home-grown friars proved to be a very long process, and it is difficult to pinpoint since when they constituted the majority of the vicariate.[129] Clearly the Dalmatians dominated the leadership of the Bosnian vicariate around the mid fifteenth century, as is evidenced by the lists of custodians from 1462 and 1464.[130] Nonetheless, in his chronicle, Bernardino of Aquila consequently distinguished the *fratres Bosnenses* from *fratres Dalmatini* (and also *Ragusini*).[131] How exactly did he drew the lines between them, considering that the 'Bosnians' Bernardino was often dealing with were actually native Dalmatians, coming from the Venetian and Ragusan territories? This problem with terminology can be extrapolated to earlier periods. The term 'Bosnian friars', although often used in the Middle Ages, actually presents a very complex problem, stemming from the international composition of the Bosnian vicariate, as well as the vicariate's expansion to so

[126] Muscat, *Chronicle of the Twenty-Four Generals*, pp. 761-63.
[127] Džambo, *Franjevci*, pp. 124-25.
[128] Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, p. 145; Džambo, *Franjevci*, p. 175.
[129] Džambo, *Franjevci*, pp. 170-75.
[130] AM, vol. 13 (1462), p. 289; Regestum, pp. 71-73.
[131] Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 258.

many places. Acknowledging that establishing the exact meaning of the term 'Bosnian friars' presents a challenge, it is nonetheless conspicuous that in our sources, the 'nationality' usually came as secondary category to the jurisdiction, as well as a sense of belonging to the Franciscan family centred in Bosnia. Recognising this ambiguity, I have used and will be using the term 'Bosnian friars' in my work primarily as demarking the friars under the jurisdiction of the Bosnian vicariate, as well as affiliated with the Franciscan family dwelling in the Bosnian kingdom.

For the friars coming from abroad, a departure to Bosnia was undoubtedly a missionary experience, called for by the ultimate article of the Franciscan rule. The Franciscans of the Bosnian vicariate operated in the lands of 'the heretics and schismatics', where the Catholic parish structures were either non-existent or underdeveloped. The missionaries earned a lot of respect because they had to face various adversities in the lands of their destination. It needs to be noted here that geographically speaking, Bosnia, while itself politically separate from Latin Christendom, neighboured the Catholic lands. This obviously differentiated the Bosnian vicariate's position from other Franciscan missionary structures, like those in China or the Holy Land.[132] That is not to say that the friars of the Bosnian vicariate did not face missionary adversities, but that this proximity provided them with some more resources to overcome them, but at the same time, faced them with some distinctive problems.

A petition to the Roman curia issued by the Bosnian ban as noted in the proceedings of the Venetian senate on 3 April 1347 is a good anchoring point for a discussion about the challenges to the Bosnian vicariate, because it illustrates some of them very well.[133] Notably, it is one of the rare cases where a petition to the pope is preserved but his response is not; the opposite is far more prevalent. The petition demonstrated that the vicariate had a disproportionally small number of suitable missionaries at its disposal for tasks ahead, and the petition presented this along the lines of 'the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few' (Matthew 9:37). The ban asked to allow the Bosnian vicar to accept the friars of any order, as well as secular priests willing to come, provided they were well-versed in doctrine and either knew the Slavic language or at least were able to learn it quickly. Similar petitions were common over the vicariate's history, and there were plenty of later papal permissions for the

[132] Moorman, *A History*, pp. 235-39, 429-38.
[133] AB, pp. 28-29.

reception of missionaries, including non-Franciscans, but numbers of those who arrived was often lower than intended.[134] Some of the later documents demonstrate attempts to prevent departures of friars from the vicariate to their home provinces due to the insufficiency of missionaries.[135] There is a rather well founded opinion in scholarship that the Western schism greatly and irreversibly decreased the numbers of incoming missionaries from Western Latin Christian lands to the vicariate due to intricacies of obedience at the time.[136]

Another problem the missionaries faced was the austerity of their convents. The petition asked that any neophytes should be allowed to be sent to 'great' houses in the neighbouring provinces for induction in doctrine and Latin language, implying it was not possible to do sufficiently in Bosnia. That requirement of education 'in doctrine' by the incoming missionaries hinted in the petition should be linked to this problem, as the vicariate in Bosnia would provide very limited learning opportunities, and obviously could not offer higher degree studies. The bull from 23 March 1462 allows the Bosnian friar Peter of Mile and his four companions to depart for study for up to seven years, entitling them to dwell in and be provided with necessities by any Observant or Conventual convent, because there was 'a great insufficiency of men skilled in philosophy, canon law and theology' in Bosnia.[137] In 1448 the Bosnian friars complained that they lost 'some friars excelling in the doctrine of the word as much as by example' by the measures of the Observant vicar general, James Primadizzi.[138] These demonstrate the value of educated friars in Bosnia.

Furthermore, the petition from 1347 asked so that 'for reason of recovery or illness' the missionaries should be allowed to return to their home provinces and be accepted there, and there is indeed some later evidence for the reluctance of the provincials to receive back such friars.[139] The problem of allocation of the elderly or sick friars became particularly conspicuous when the area started to be penetrated by the Ottoman raids. A letter of the legate Thomas Tomassini (?-1462) to John of Capistrano from 19 February 1451 stated that 'after the dangers of the Turks and the heretics the elderly and the old poor [friars] have no

[134] Čremošnik, 'Ostaci arhiva', pp. 18-24; AB, p. 39. BF, ns vol 1. p. 800; Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, p. 74.
[135] Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, p. 76; Hieronymus Golubovich, 'Descriptio codicis iaderensis', *Archivum franciscanum historicum*, 10 (1917) 220-26 (pp. 221-22).
[136] Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, pp. 73-74.
[137] *In provinicia et regno Bosnae virorum in philosophia, sacrisque canonibus et theologia peritorum magna penuria existat.* BF, ns vol. 2, pp. 523-24.
[138] *Fratres quoque nonnullos doctrina verbi pariter et exemplo pollentes.* BF ns vol. 1, p. 643.
[139] *Recreationis vel infirmitatis causa*. AB, p. 28.

rest, unless to return to the safe friaries in Dalmatia for a time'.[140] It is understandable that friaries in the Catholic lands would be more suitable places for such individuals, especially because the resources of the vicariate were very strained.

The friars of the Bosnian vicariate, and not just those old or sick, indeed feared the Turks and the 'schismatics', and that anxiety seems not unfounded. The codex of Gyöngyös mentions that in 1349 several friaries in Bosnia fell victim to the incursion from Serbia, and in 1367 to the Ottoman raid.[141] The martyrdom of the five friars in Vidin in 1369 has already been mentioned. These recollections suggests that the friars faced dangers since the early years of their mission, although not necessarily brought about by the Bosnian rulers or their subjects. The fifteenth century is not short of anxieties, especially given political upheavals. Wadding mentioned a martyrdom of two friars instigated by the Serbian Orthodox monks in 1454.[142] One papal document tells that during the siege of Jajce in 1464 many friars perished and four who were captured 'were given to the cruellest torture of martyrdom'.[143] Finally, some of the Catholic sources also spoke of the danger coming from the heretics.[144] Attempts to comprehensively analyse relations between the friars and the *Krstjani* in this light are for the most part hindered by the scarcity of Bosnian sources. Some friars were expelled from Bosnia and settled on the island of Pašman in 1389, where a friary was funded for them, but the circumstances of this expulsion are unknown.[145] There is also a story of martyrdom of five friars in Mile from the hands of the 'Patarens' in 1465, which was a retaliation for measures of king Tomaš. Notably, this is recorded after the collapse of the kingdom to the Ottomans, and no such incident seemed to have taken place before that in Bosnia.[146] The case of St. Nicholas Tavelić is very interesting in this light. According to his *vita*, he spent twelve years in Bosnia and he was very eager to die a death of the martyr, yet he found it only after

[140] *Post pericula Teucrorum et hereticorum non habent pauperes antiqui et senes refrigerium, nisi reducendo se ad tempus ad Conventus securos Dalmatie.* AM, vol. 12 (1451), p. 131.
[141] Molnár, *Die Formelsammlungen*, p. 96. The Ottoman incursion mentioned in 1367 would constitute the earliest known Ottoman attack on Bosnia, although the codex is not contemporary. Emir Filipović, ''Ardet ante oculos opulentissimum regnum…': Venetian reports about the Ottoman Conquest of the Bosnian Kingdom, A.D. 1463,' in *Italy and Europe's Eastern Border (1204–1669)*, ed. by Iulian Mihai Damian et al. (Frankfurt/Main: Eastern and Central European Studies, 2012), 135–55 (p. 138).
[142] AM, vol. 12 (1454), p. 250.
[143] *Crudelissimo martyrii supplicio dediti fuerunt*. BF ns vol. 1, p. 720.
[144] AB, p. 122.
[145] Ančić, *Na rubu zapada*, pp. 226-27.
[146] Fine, *The Bosnian Church*, p. 278.

he departed to the Holy Land.[147] It seems that an overall approach of the monarchy to religion made Bosnia relatively safe for the friars.

This religious policy also worked with regard to the *Krstjani*; until 1459 the monarchy did not allow any persecution of the Bosnian church. There is an undated (likely issued in 1379) letter of the long-term vicar of Bosnia, Bartholomew of La Verna (referred 'of Alverna' in the sources) to the friars of the vicariate, where he clarified the necessity of relying on help from the secular lords in coercing the schismatics to faith.[148] The vicar spoke in the Hungarian context, curiously leaving Bosnia out of his discussion, perhaps implying that such measures could not be implemented there.[149] Furthermore, the distinctive religious climate in Bosnia allowed for some extraordinary cross-faith interactions and ambiguous incidents, such as the sanctuary claim by *Krstjanin* Vlatko Tumurlić in the Franciscan friary in Sutjeska following the murder of his lord, Duke Pavle Radinović, or an invitation from the Council of Basel extended to the *Krstjani* to negotiate the Church union (which the *Krstjani* refused).[150]

Another prominent issue raised by the petition of 1347 was the problem of the legal status of the Franciscans of the vicariate regarding the administration of the sacraments and pastoral care. The petition asked the pope for the 'graces, privileges and indulgences' granted to the missionaries among the 'Tatars, heathens, and schismatics'. This seems to allude to the grants of the bull *Cum hora undecima,* issued for the first time by Gregory IX (1235) and reissued a few times by his successors.[151] This bull granted some exceptional rights to Catholic missionaries to allow them to administer the sacraments without the necessity to consult bishops, but also *i.a.* to preach, to bless liturgical vestments, to consecrate churches or to freely interact with any non-Catholics. The application of this bull necessarily sparked ambiguity, because Bosnia technically had a bishop, albeit himself not residing in Bosnia nor

[147] Ančić, *Na rubu zapada*, p. 228.
[148] He was the vicar of Bosnia between 1372-1408, but obviously not for all triennia in a row. Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, pp. 65-69, 73-81. The letter was issued between 1378-82, most likely in 1379. Dionysius Lasić, 'Fr. Bartholomaei de Alverna scripta inedita', *Archivum franciscanum historicum*, 55 (1962), 59-81 (p. 62). More on his letter also in III.9.4.
[149] Bartholomew was clarifying the bull from 22 December 1378, which allowed the friars to persuade the secular rulers to compel their subjects and vassals in all things concerning the salvation of the soul and strengthening of the Catholic faith by corporal or monetary punishments. Lasić, 'Fr. Bartholomaei de Alverna scripta', pp. 68-81.
[150] Pejo Ćošković, 'Krstjanin Vlatko Tumurlić i njegova doba (1403.-1423.)' *Croatica christiana periodica* 35 (1995), 1-54 (p. 30). Franjo Šanjek, 'Heterodoksno kršćanstvo u našim krajevima u Kapistranovo doba', *Croatica Christiana Periodica*, 11 (1987), 83-94 (pp. 85-87).
[151] BF, vol. 5, pp. 35-37, 211.

having any real influence on its religious life. Furthermore, the relationship between the Franciscan friars and the bishop in Đakovo were not always cordial. The case was even more complex on the Hungarian frontier along the Danube. Therefore, papal legislation of the fourteenth and early fifteenth century permitted to apply only some of that bull's articles to the vicariate. Its useability was limited in order to respect rights of the bishops, but the rights of the friars were expanded in a gradual manner over time.[152]

By the mid-fifteenth century the Bosnian vicariate had accumulated quite a range of missionary privileges. The bulls of Eugenius IV *Sacrae religionis* from 29 January 1445 and *Dum salubria* from 3 July 1446 bestowed a plenitude of spiritual power to the vicars of Bosnia, granting them all rights of *Cum hora undecima,* making them papal commissaries, granting them all rights of the Franciscan minister general within the confines of the vicariate and allowing them to govern tertiary communities, apparently quite developed in the vicariate by this point.[153] By that time, the Bosnian vicariate had accumulated numerous other documents granting them either very specific privileges regarding the pastoral care, like permissions to distribute some indulgences, or clarifying their missionary conduct in regard some problematic matters, like the set of answers to twenty-three questions sent by Bartholomew of La Verna to the Avignon curia.[154] In this way, the office of the Bosnian vicar have accumulated a sort of 'treasury' of papal privileges regarding a range of spiritual matters. It does not surprise that at the Bosnian-Hungarian split, each part coveted these privileges, but ultimately both were permitted to use them. Furthermore, the privileges of the Bosnian vicariate had come to be regarded as providing a desirable and practical legal framework for the missionaries in other parts of the world, and they were granted to the Observants in Tartary, Russia, Crete and Poland.[155]

The final key point of the petition of 1347 is that the Bosnian vicar should be allowed to receive places in 'Hungary and *Sclavonia*' for his friars, provided there were no convents of other orders in the same localities. Already in March that year, the pope permitted the

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[152] BF, vol. 6, pp. 420-21, 575-76; BF, vol. 7, pp. 510-11; Matanić, 'De duplici activitate', p. 113; Pandžić, 'Djelovanje franjevaca', p. 259.

[153] BF ns. vol. 1, pp. 416-18, 496-47.

[154] Some of the questions presented by Bartholomew are indeed complex, like how to deal with those converted from heresy who continued to revere the heretical hierarchs and partook in their rites *ore non corde*. Likewise, the case of a woman in an 'infidel' marriage who converted and married a Catholic, but the husband from her former marriage converted later on? Šanjek, *Bosansko-humski krstjani*, pp. 254-81.

[155] BF vol. 7, pp. 612, 671; Kazimierz Żuchowski (ed.), *Kronika Zakonu Braci Mniejszych Obserwantów (1209-1536)* (Kalwaria Zebrzydowska: Calvarianum, 2014), pp. 242-43.

friars of Bosnia to assume friaries in Ston (on the Pelješac peninsula near Dubrovnik) and in Đakovo, marking the vicariate's first step in an expansion beyond Bosnia.[156] The already mentioned friaries on the Hungarian Danube border were obviously part of that process, and their foundations were motivated by missionary purpose; the key role of the Bosnian vicariate. However, in time the Bosnian vicariate stretched its authority over a substantial number of friaries in Dalmatia, which included friaries of the Bosnian Ston custody on the Ragusan territories: Ston (1347), Badija (near Korčula, 1390s), Slano (1393), Rožat (1400) and Konavli/Pridvorje (1429) – and some places around the city of Zadar: Pašman (1389), Novigrad (c. 1394) and Ugljan (1430), which in time constituted the important Bosnian custody of St. Jerome.[157] The vicariate notably expanded across the Adriatic to Apulia in 1391. Over the first half of the fifteenth century, it also gained control over several friaries in the Hungarian mainland, including the royal residence in Visegrád (1425). The flexibility of expansion is quite remarkable, what begs the question: how to explain all these foundations in the Latin Christian lands?

The need for proselytizing activity in some of these areas – targeting the 'heretics and schismatics' on the Ragusan territories or the Greek minority in Apulia – was sometimes brought up as a factor in historiography, but overall, this aspect seems not that prominent (or it is even debunked by some more recent scholarship) what will be demonstrated in further chapters.[158] There is obviously not one single denominator; some of these friaries were founded for diverse reasons. Nonetheless, some patterns are discernible. One of them is that the Bosnian vicariate got control over most of the Observant foundations in these regions until the creation of the relevant structures in Hungary and Dalmatia in the mid-1440s. I will evaluate this problem later in this study. It is also clear that in one way or the other, the friaries in the Latin Christian lands helped to overcome the challenges hinted at by the petition of 1347, such as the placement of elderly or sick friars, or any Franciscan 'refugees' at times of unrest, as well as neophytes to the faith and potentially, to the order.

The case of Pašman has already been mentioned, as well as the role of the vicariate's Dalmatian 'safe friaries' as established by Tomassini in the mid-fifteenth century. In 1400

156 MH, vol. 1, p. 736.

157 Some Franciscan chronicles confuse jurisdiction over these friaries, see: Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, pp. 119-21, 126-29.

158 Ulrike Ritzerfeld, 'Santa Caterina a Galatina: un monumento per la 'latinizzazione della Puglia greco-bizantina o per le ambizioni autonomistiche dei Del Balzo Orsini?', *Convivium*, 5/1 (2018), 142-57.

Bartholomew of La Verna, due to the devastation brought by the Turks, was allowed to receive four friaries, one on Ragusan territory, one in Hungary, one on the island of Korčula, and the last one in any part which 'would seem proper for the refuge and protection of the friars of the said order'.[159] A papal document from 28 July 1425 tells us that the friars tended to take refuge not only in the Bosnian Dalmatian friaries, but also in those in Hungary.[160] A bull from 4 July 1421 reported that the friaries of the vicariate on the borders of Hungary and Dalmatia were used for refuge at the times of the persecution by the 'infields'.[161] The bull from 17 July 1421 allows the Bosnian vicar to take over a convent in Kovilj (serb. *Ковиљ*/hun. *Kabol*) and another one in an unknown location *i.a.* 'for the necessity of refuge due to the persecution of the Turks and other infidels'.[162] It is understandable that such foundations in Hungary would also serve as a refuge for the Franciscans living in the places on the Hungarian Danube border, which were in no less danger than those in Bosnia to the Ottoman raids.

The role of such foundations as centres for induction of the neophytes to faith is never explicit in the sources, but it obviously cannot be excluded. Another genuine issue was the problem of 'manpower'. A network of friaries in adjacent Latin Christian lands would obviously help to attract foreign friars. On this matter, the sources are explicit in the cases of two foundations in Southern Italy, in Galatina (1391) and Cortone (1400), which were supposed to serve as channels for any friars of whatever province 'who may want to traverse to the aforesaid vicariate', which must mean across the Adriatic for a mission.[163] This will be further evaluated in the chapter seven.

Finally, although implicit in the petition of 1347, the problem of general economic stability of friaries in Bosnia has been conspicuous throughout the Middle Ages. The sources often mention a twofold problem: that Bosnia was the land of 'heretics and schismatics' and

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159 *Et unum aliud in illa parte, de qua vobis videbitur pro Fratrum dicti Ordinis refugio et tutela*. AM, vol. 9 (1400), p. 567.

160 *Circa confinia regni Ungariae et iuxta mare* […] *haberent certa loca* […] *quod cum ab infidelibus et hostibus nominis Jesu Christi, videlicet hereticis et Turcis, impugnarentur seu persecutiones paterentur, aut alia causa de aliquibus domibus et infra dictos limites consistentibus expellerentur, ad eadem loca declinare sive refugium illic mansione ipsorum possent habere.* AB, p. 122.

161 AM, vol. 10, (1430), pp. 396-97.

162 *Refugii causa ob persecutionem Turcarum et aliorum infidelium.* AB, p. 115.

163 *Ad praedictum Vicariatum transire voluerint*. AM, vol. 9 (1400), p. 569. Both documents use essentially the same phrase and are generally very similar. Coco, 'La vicaria di Bosnia', pp. 258-59; AM, vol. 9 (1400), pp. 461-62.

that its socio-economic conditions were very austere. The papal bull *Dum fidem* from 4 April 1460 describes this in the following way:

> Just as we have learned, you are unable to remain in that place between the infidels and neophytes dwelling without certain provisions of your benefactors, because these parts are situated in such a way, that it is necessary for you to wander through extensive areas, because there are no cities, but only villages and small towns.[164]

The Franciscan order was funded with the idea of living off alms in order to experience a level of economic insecurity. One might think that Bosnia was therefore a perfect environment to cultivate poverty. However, an alms-based life of the mendicant orders could have been developed only in conjunction with the urbanization of medieval Europe, and the mendicants remained strongly associated with urban life over the course of their history. The report on which the bull was issued presents Bosnia as somewhat underdeveloped in this regard, which would obviously hinder such an economic model. While such a claim should be contrasted with research showing the progress of urbanization in Bosnia over the fifteenth century, I think it should be acknowledged that part of the challenge to the Franciscan economic stability indeed lied in the relative austerity of the socio-economic conditions.[165] James of the Marches even reported that some 'Bosnians and Morlachs, who are neither Christians nor Saracens' were so poor that they sell or kill children they could not nurture.[166] The other part of the problem was the religious heterogeneity of Bosnia. The bull *Excolentes* from 13 December 1369 mentions that the 'heretics' indeed tried to hinder alms collections by the friars.[167] I will not evaluate here the strategies of the vicariate to cope with the problem of austerity in Bosnia, but I will come back to this in the third chapter. What I will do here instead is to demonstrate how the expansion of the vicariate to Latin Christian lands helped to provide the friaries in Bosnia with economic stability.

The bull *Excolentes* allowed the friars of the Bosnian vicariate to collect alms in Hungary, Dalmatia and Croatia. James of the Marches noted this bull as kept in Ston, among

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164 *Sicut accepimus, inter infideles et neophytos commorantes absque certis benefactorum vestrorum provisionibus, ibidem permanere nequiretis, quia partes illae ita situatae sunt, quod oportet vos per loca spatiosa discurrere, cum ibidem nullae civitates, sed tantum villae et parva oppida habeantur.* BF, ns vol. 2, pp. 392-93.

165 Ковачевић-Којић, *Градска насеља*, pp. 55-132.

166 Dionysius Lasić, *De Vita et Operibus S. Iacobi de Marchia. Studium et Recensio Quorundam Textuum* (Ancona: Biblioteca francescana, 1974) p. 251.

167 MH, vol. 2, p. 92.

the privileges of the Bosnian vicariate, and it was found in the *corpus* in Ljubljana, what suggests that it was not a dead letter.[168] The permission to collect alms outside of Bosnia, in the Catholic and more urbanized areas indeed proved indispensable for the functioning of the vicariate, especially because now they could do that in the rich port towns of Zadar and Dubrovnik. We learn about this from the countermeasures of the convents in both places, both of which were part of the Dalmatian Franciscan province. The vicars of the Dubrovnik convent in 1435-36 tried to prevent the Bosnian friars from coming by shutting the convent's gates to them, but the Ragusan government took measures to solve this in favour of the Bosnian friars.[169] Alms begging in Dubrovnik was, according to the reports of the government, necessary for the survival of the four Bosnian friaries on the Ragusan territories 'because of barrenness and dryness of parts in which they are'.[170] The Ragusan merchants kept coming to Bosnia, establishing their enclaves in some of the mining centres and market towns, where they relied on the pastoral care of the Bosnian Franciscans.[171] The Dubrovnik archive holds registers of donations to the friaries in Bosnia by the Ragusan citizens, mostly one-off payments but also grants of fixed incomes from mined silver, like the tenth share of an income from mining pits of a certain merchant.[172] All of these illustrate a symbiotic relationship between Dubrovnik and the Bosnian vicariate in the Middle Ages.[173]

We encounter a remarkably similar relationship between Zadar and the three Bosnian friaries surrounding it. A complaint was made by the friars of Zadar that the friars of these three places collected supplies of bread, grain, wine and oil in their city.[174] The Bosnian friars kept coming for supplies at strategically opportune moments and places, having some help from lay people but they did so by breaking some of the statutes of the city of Zadar, which stirred up the complaint.[175] In response, on 19 August 1436 the minister general imposed

[168] Matanić, 'De duplici activitate', p. 115; Čremošnik, 'Ostaci arhiva', p. 17.
[169] Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, p. 60; Milenko Krešić (ed.), 'Jakov Markijski i pokušaj reforme u Bosanskoj vikariji od 1432. do 1438', in *Jakov Markijski i njegovo djelovanje u Bosni* (Sarajevo/Deževice: Univerzitet u Sarajevu/Katolički bogoslovni fakultet, 2016), pp. 159-81 (pp. 169, 174-75).
[170] *Quatuor monasteria vicariatus Bosnae vestre Bosne, que sine suffragio et subventione huius civitatis esse et stare non possunt propter sterilitatem et ariditatem partium in quibus sunt.* Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, p. 63.
[171] *Pro parte dilectorum filiorum dominii Ragusini, cum eorum nonnulli partibus Bosnae conversentur et a fratribus dicti ordinis, qui ibidem degunt, subsidia alia et ecclesiastica sacramenta percipiant,* BF ns vol. 1, p. 840.
[172] Ковачевић-Којић, *Градска насеља* , pp. 285-87.
[173] Džambo, *Franjevci,* p. 225.
[174] BF, ns. vol. 1, p. 130.
[175] *Panem mendicare diebus dominicis et feriis sextis et bladum seu triticum tempore quaestae dicti conventus ac vinum tempore vindemiarum ac oleum circa tinacia iuxta mare cum auxilio saecularium.* BF, ns. vol. 1, p. 130.

some constraints regarding the time and place when these goods could be collected by the Bosnian friars, but a year later the pope lifted them.

Complaints of the Franciscans from Dubrovnik and Zadar may give the impression that such collections were made to satisfy only the needs of these Bosnian convents closest to either of the cities, but it seems they contributed to the sustenance of the friaries in Bosnia as well, something which is suggested by alarmed reports of the Bosnian friars issued whenever their jurisdiction over houses in Dalmatia was contested. The already introduced letter of Tomassini to John of Capistrano (1451) presents it in the following way:

> Therefore, should your paternity understand that it is without a doubt entirely impossible for that vicariate to be able to be sustained without the association of the aforementioned Dalmatian friaries. Firstly, on account of necessities of life, such as wine, oil, vestments and similar, without which human weakness is not able to exist, and which it receives from that place, namely from the friaries of Dalmatia; for such things are not there in Bosnia not only for the poor friars, but neither for the magnates nor the rich.[176]

An earlier papal letter *Ad Romani pontificis providentiam* from 24 October 1448 states: 'Dalmatia, from which a lot of goods for the sustenance of the friars and houses in the parts of the infidels were coming'.[177] The dependence of the Bosnian houses on supplies from Dalmatia is in both cases made explicit, and it is important to note that some of the products collected in Zadar (wine, oil) are mentioned in the letter of Tomassini explicitly. Vestments were mentioned in the bull from 11 June 1437 as coming to Bosnia from Dalmatia.[178] A petition made by Francis Agrepolo to Pope Nicholas V, otherwise a great source on the economic measures of the Franciscans as undertaken in Bosnia, shows that the friars had horses for *i.a.* 'transporting wine from the maritime parts for some places up to six days distant', which equates to around 300 km, therefore, enough to deliver the cargo from the coast to inland Bosnia.[179] While the bull *Excolentes* allowed for similar measures in Hungary,

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[176] *Sciat igitur indubitanter P.V. quod omnino impossibilie est, Vicariam illam posse sustineri absque dictorum Conventuum Dalmatiae societate. Primo, propter vitae necessaria, quae abinde scilicet Dalmatiae Conventibus recipit, ut vinum, oleum, vestes et similia, sine quibus humana fragilitas esse non potest; non enim talia sunt in Bosna pro Fratribus pauperibus, sed neque pro dominis et divitibus.* AM, vol. 12 (1451), pp. 130-31.
[177] *Dalmatia, ex qua multa eis pro sustentatione fratrum et domorum in partibus infidelium exsistentium commoda proveniebant.* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 643.
[178] AB, p. 160.
[179] *Item sunt equi*, […] *ad portandum vinum de partibus maritimis pro aliquibus locis etiam ad sex dietas huc atque illuc.* Matanić, 'De duplici activitate', p. 126. The document is given a throughout analysis in I.3.2.

I observed evidence only for the economic reliance of Bosnia on Dalmatia, and perhaps Apulia as will be discussed in the relevant chapter; that is the southern parts of the vicariate. The letter *Ad Romani pontificis providentiam* responds to the complaints that the friars from Bosnia made against the Cismontane vicar general, James Primadizzi. They complained that he took Italian (Apulian) and Dalmatian friaries away from them, yet conspicuously, they did not lament over any friary from Hungary, even though that part also seceded from the Bosnian vicariate. This may be taken as an implicit evidence that the houses in Bosnia were much less reliant on support from Hungary then from the Southern part of the vicariate.

One might argue that the necessity for such an economic reliance on coastal friaries decreased over the fifteenth century. While at the end of the fourteenth-century Bartholomew of Pisa mentioned only four friaries in the custody of Bosnia (Visoko, Sutjeska, Lašva and Olovo), their number multiplied by the mid fifteenth century. Džambo maps thirty-nine medieval localities linked to the Franciscans in Bosnia, which is an impressive number (see fig. 3). Due to insufficiency of sources, the list does not discriminate between *conventus* and *domus*/*loca*, the latter being probably much more prevalent.[180] To get some idea about proportions, an extrapolation perhaps may be drawn from the case of the Hungarian Franciscan Observant vicariate, where a list from 1509 speaks of 12 Observant convents and 58 localities (so c. 20% of all settlements were convents).[181] Džambo's map also considers the modern borders of Bosnia and Hercegovina rather than the medieval kingdom. But even when keeping in mind those two critical adjustments, the expansion of the Franciscan settlements was quite impressive over the fifteenth century, because it synergized with the urbanization and Catholicization of Bosnia.[182] Such changes in the landscape suggest the friars should have been better off, especially considering they also undertook some extraordinary measures in Bosnia to bolster their economic stability. Although I think that this had to be the case, most evidence for the existence of the economic reliance of Bosnian friaries on the Dalmatian network comes from the mid-fifteenth century, demonstrating that it functioned in this period. Increasing Ottoman pressure over the fifteenth century should not be taken out of the picture as well. The final factor to keep in mind is that some of the economic measures undertaken in Bosnia were criticised by the Observant leadership, which

[180] Džambo, *Franjevci*, p. 228.
[181] de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 46.
[182] Ковачевић-Којић, *Градска насеља*, p. 292; Džambo, *Franjevci*, p. 228.

will be clarified in the third chapter. This in consequence would increase reliance of Bosnian houses on alms from Dalmatia.

**Conclusions**

As a conclusion to this chapter, I am proposing a hypothesis arguing that the expansion of the Bosnian vicariate to the Latin Christian lands was underlined by a necessity to sustain the Catholic mission in economically austere and politically restless area, where religious life was dominated by a competing 'heretical' religious order of the *Krstjani*. Although various works have shown an awareness of this relationship between the friaries in Bosnia and those in the adjacent Latin Christian lands, this is mostly done obliquely or clarified only partly rather than satisfactorily, so this chapter contributes by filling this gap. The vicariate's leadership wanted to secure the economic stability of the friaries in Bosnia, but also wanted to make sure there were places where the friars could take refuge in times of unrest, or where to house the most vulnerable members of the Franciscan family. They also wanted to establish channels in the Latin Christian lands through which new individuals could be summoned for pastoral work. Finally, these friaries could play additional roles which are not explicit in the sources yet make logical sense, such as induction to the faith of neophytes, formation of novices or networking with the Catholic nobility or merchants, who could support the missionary efforts in various ways.

This expansion, perhaps also overextension, had seeds of the future discord planted into it. The vicariate ended up controlling friaries over politically and socially diverse areas, making itself vulnerable to various internal discords as well as external threats. Frictions between the agendas of Bosnia, Hungary and the papacy also became visible in time. Finally, the vicariate did not expand along some established 'provincial' borders, but penetrated the confines of the Dalmatian, Hungarian and Apulian Franciscan provinces. Further chapters are dedicated to analysis of the vicariate's disintegration, in order to examine whether it was related to the Franciscan Observant reform, which is the topic of the next chapter.

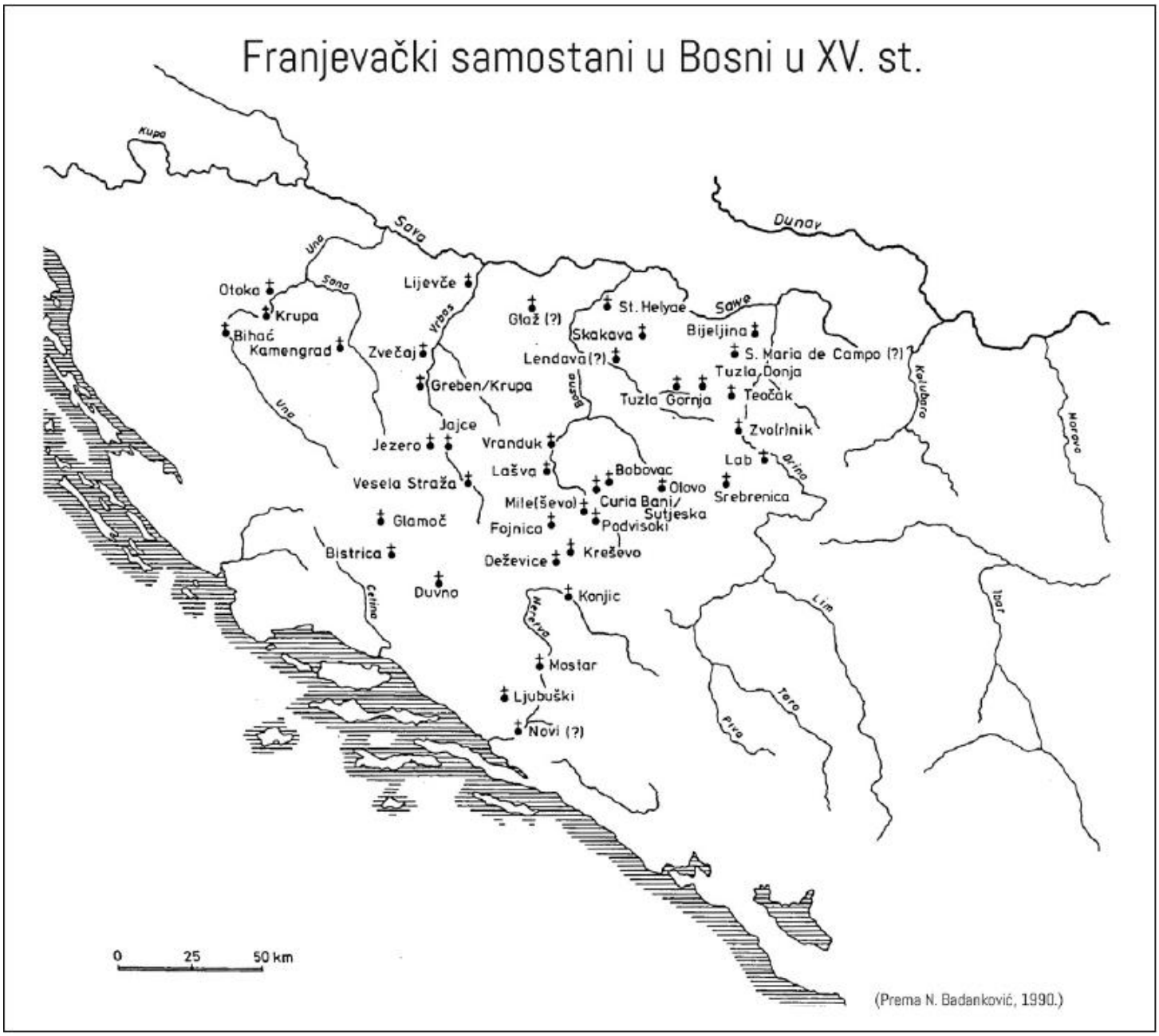



Fig. 3. The map of the medieval Franciscan friaries on the territory of present day Bosnia and Hercegovina, from: Džambo, *Franjevci*, p. 229.

## Ch. 2: Bosnia adapts the Observant identity: medieval and modern controversy

Although seen as a time of evident crisis by generations of historians, the Late Middle Ages have been appreciated recently also as a time of a profound spiritual renewal of religious communities.[183] The main force of this restoration was the Observant movement, which was promoted as a return to pristine foundations in most religious orders.[184] The Bosnian vicariate found itself relatively quickly in the reformed camp, and its friars played an important part in the formative phase of the Observant development. Some of the Observant pioneers, including James of the Marches and John of Capistrano were conspicuous for their contacts with the Bosnian friars. Despite this, the story of the Bosnian vicariate has not been properly integrated within the mainstream Western historiography of the Franciscan Observant movement, where Bosnia remains somewhat neglected. The purpose of this chapter is therefore to address this gap by providing an overview of the transformation of the Bosnian Franciscan vicariate into an Observant entity, to show the complexities of the sources, and to highlight the role of Bosnia in the Observance's formative period. Consecutive sections will then assess the role that this transformation played in the disintegration of the Bosnian vicariate over the 1440s and the fall of the Bosnian-Dalmatian union in 1469.

Part of the reason why the Bosnian vicariate remains something of a *terra incognita* in Western works on the Franciscan Observance, having acknowledged language barrier as an obvious obstacle, is that the regional scholarship itself - by which I mean South Slavic and Hungarian – is far from a consensus when it comes to the chronology and interpretation of the reasons for the transformation of the Bosnian vicariate into an Observant entity. When looking for answers to the question 'when and how did the Bosnian vicariate become Observant', one may find that it was founded already as Observant in 1339, or that it became Observant as a result of contacts of the vicar Bartholomew of La Verna with the followers of Paoluccio of Foligno (1309 – 1391) over the 1370s and 80s, or that its reform was linked to the Council of Constance (1414-18), or that it was reformed by James of the Marches over

[183] Mixson, 'Religious Life', pp. 201-02; James Mixson, 'Introduction' in *A Companion to Observant Reform in the Late Middle Ages and Beyond*, ed. by James Mixson and Bert Roest (Leiden: Brill, 2015), pp. 1-20.
[184] Roest, 'Observant Reform', pp. 447-48.

the 1430s, when he was active in East Central Europe and had become the vicar of Bosnia.[185] Inescapably intertwined with this is the problem of the identity of the Franciscans of the vicariate: are we talking about the 'first Observants', paving the way for the reform of the order, or merely about the 'Conventuals in an Observant habit', or maybe, about the friars following some 'third path', integrating Conventual and Observant elements? This does not cover all interpretations, yet already shows that they are not divided over details but essentials.

The problem of such a degree of inconsistency in historiographical interpretations undoubtedly stems from the insufficiency of contemporary sources and methodological challenges. The primary sources are scarce, especially regarding Bosnia. The methodological difficulty lies in drawing proper boundaries between Franciscan 'Observants' and 'non-Observants' in the sources. *De observantia* has obviously become a label carried by the friars and convents that embraced the reformed identity, but the adjective 'observant' in medieval religious dialectics was a widely used term when referring to the required religious discipline before the late medieval Observance even emerged. Furthermore, the Observant reform in the Franciscan order was not a novelty, but rather an extension of much older reform efforts, further problematising the problem of boundaries.[186] This is not without significance, because the language of the sources from the transition period is actually quite ambiguous. By calling themselves *Fratres ordinis sancti Francisci de observantia* in 1516, the Hungarian Conventuals illustrated this ambiguity perhaps to the best possible degree.[187] The term 'Observant' furthermore creates a dilemma whether accounts concerning religious conduct of the friars should be considered as evidence for the Observant identity or not. Finally, at the centre of this is the problem that in the Middle Ages, in Cismontane Observant circles there existed competing narratives on the question of the origin of the late medieval Franciscan Observant movement, not just narratives about the Observant reform in Bosnia in particular, but narratives of the origin of the Franciscan Observant movement as such, one of which

[185] Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, pp. 79-80, 86; Ančić, *Na rubu zapada*, p. 228; de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 34, 36-7; Coco, 'La vicaria di Bosnia', p. 252; Romhányi, 'Das Konstanzer Konzil', p. 246; Marijan Žugaj, 'Bosanska vikarija i franjevci konventualci', *Croatica Christiana periodica*, 13/24 (1989), 1-26 (pp. 11-13); Srećko Džaja, 'Katoličanstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini od Kulina bana do Austro-Ugarske okupacije', *Croatica Christiana periodica*, 16/30 (1992), 153-78 (p. 162); Srećko Džaja, 'Svijet politike i Franjevaštva u Europi 14. Stoljeća' in *Sedam stoljeća bosanskih franjevaca 1291-1991* ed. by Karamatić Marko (Samobor: Franjevačka teologija - Sarajevo, 1994), pp. 27-36 (p. 35); Andrić, *The Miracles*, p. 20; Džambo, *Franjevci*, pp. 147, 158.
[186] Kaspar Elm, 'Riforme e osservanze nel XIV e XV secolo' in *Il rinnovamento del francescanesimo l'osservanza*, ed. by Roberto Rusconi (Assisi: Atti dell'XI convegno internazionale di studi francescani ,1985) pp. 149-167 (p. 155); Merlo, *In the name of Saint Francis*, p. 349; Pellegrini, 'An irreducible plural'.
[187] de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 113.

placed it in Bosnia and the other debunked it. Mainstream scholarship usually approaches the former as completely anachronistic if not ludicrous.[188] However, I am going to start this chapter by giving it a benefit of the doubt rather than rejecting it out of hand. This operation will allow me to reapproach the questions of when and how did the Bosnian vicariate become Observant. It will also allow me to reflect on the established historiographic framework of the Franciscan Observant movement more critically.

### I.2.1 Origins of the Franciscan Observant movement: the medieval controversy

Historiography associates the origin of the Franciscan Observant movement with the group of Franciscan hermits keeping the rule *ad litteram* in Brugliano, in Umbria. The community was first set up in 1334, supressed in 1355 under suspicion of heresy, and then restored in 1368 by Paoluccio of Foligno.[189] Similar groups of radicals emerged in other parts of the Christendom, and collectively they gained a spectacular momentum following the Council of Constance. The Observant Franciscans attracted a lot popular support thanks to their preaching campaigns, fostered by those acknowledged as the four 'pillars' of the Observance, Bernardino of Siena, Albert of Sarteano, John of Capistrano and James of the Marches.[190] The bull *Ut sacra* issued in 1446 secured their structural autonomy, because it confirmed offices of two vicars general, one for the family beyond Alps (lat. *Ultramontane*) and the other for those at the Italian side (lat. *Cismontane*). The Bosnian vicariate joined the Cismontane side of the family even a year before *Ut sacra*.[191]

This is a very concise account of a historical background normally found in various handbooks for study of the Franciscan Observance.[192] It indeed presents a compelling story of the struggle and success of the reformers against all odds, and has become somewhat of a canon. However, one must acknowledge that the early history of the Franciscan Observance is actually quite poorly documented, and that it was first put together into a consistent narrative only in the late fifteenth century by the Observants, who were by this point very well established.[193] A work of great significance for historiography was the chronicle of

[188] Moorman, *A History*, p. 444; de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 21.
[189] Moorman, *A History*, pp. 369-72; Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 370-96; Merlo, *In the name of Saint Francis*, p. 344.
[190] Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 577.
[191] BF vol. 1, pp. 413-14.
[192] Moorman, *A History*, pp. 369-456. Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, pp. 20-26; Merlo, *In the name of Saint Francis*, pp. 346-68.
[193] Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 364-65.

Bernardino of Aquila.[194] The first chapter of his work audaciously traces the Observant lineage back to Angelo Clareno (1247 – 1337), who in his last will supposedly urged his followers, persecuted as the Fraticelli, to reconcile with the Franciscan order once it returned to the observance of the rule.[195] Over the next two chapters, the chronicle presents the well-known to us story of Paoluccio, who, dissatisfied with insufficient strictness of discipline within the Franciscan order, initiated his own eremitical group in the remote Brugliano with the permission of the Minister General Thomas of Frignano, and then dispatched some of his followers to smite the Fraticelli in Perugia.[196]

The final paragraph of the third chapter of the chronicle of Bernardino of Aquila abruptly introduces the Bosnian thread:

> From these things that were said in the present chapter and the previous one, it is demonstrable to be not true what some are claiming, namely that the Observance of our family commenced from the vicariate of Bosnia. Because it began, by divine grace, through father Paoluccio and the support of the lord of Foligno, as I wrote above at a greater length.[197]

This conclusion is obviously polemical. Bernardino did a similar operation already in the first chapter, concluding it with a call for the return of the Fraticelli to the Franciscan order, as now, he argued, there was a chance to observe the rule in the Observant family.[198] The story of the friar Pauluccio is used by the chronicle to debunk some opinions which traced the origin of the Franciscan Observance from the Bosnian vicariate. Such an opinion is unfortunately hinted at rather than described, but there is another source for such an 'alternative' storyline. It is provided by the first chapters of the Hungarian Observant chronicle, which claims that the Bosnian vicariate was founded as the first Franciscan Observant entity. It copies almost word by word the story known from the *Chronicle of the*

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[194] Clare Lappin, *The mirror of the observance : image, ideal and identity in Franciscan observant literature, c.1368-1517* (Edinburgh: Doctoral thesis University of Edinburgh, 2000) p. 66; Merlo, *In the name of Saint Francis*, p. 351.
[195] Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 116.
[196] Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 118-24; Moorman, *A History*, p. 372; Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 396-98; Merlo, *In the name of Saint Francis*, p. 352.
[197] *Ex his que dicta sunt in presenti capitulo et in precedenti, <patet> non esse verum quod quidam asserunt, scilicet quod observantia nostre familie a vicaria Bosne sumpsit exordium. Nam exordium fuit, divina gratia, mediante fratre Paulutio, favente domino Fulginensy, ut latius supra scripsi*. Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 124.
[198] Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 118.

*24 Generals* (c. 1370) about the arrival of the Minister General Gerard Odonis to Bosnia, converting the ban and many 'heretics', and setting up the first friaries.[199] However, instead of concluding that 'and having captured diverse places, a vicariate was founded in that place, which today is called of Bosnia' as it stands in the *Chronicle of the 24 Generals*, the Hungarian Observant chronicle says 'and having captured many places in that place, the first and only vicariate of the Franciscan family was founded, which is called today Bosnian'.[200] The reference to the 'family' undoubtedly signifies the Observant branch of the Franciscans, the term that was widely used by Observant writers, in contrast to the 'community' of the Conventuals. This is a quite a blatant interpolation of an earlier text, but it is not the only reference to the original Observant identity of the Bosnian vicariate claimed by the Hungarian Observant chronicle. A bit later, it says: 'and in the same year [1339], the same general, as I said before, when traversing to Hungary he founded the first Observant Franciscan vicariate in the Kingdom of Bosnia'.[201]

It was important for the chronicle's compiler(s) to claim that the first friaries in Bosnia were Observant, because in this way the Observant identity could be projected onto the Hungarian foundations under the Bosnian vicar. The deeds of the Franciscans in Bosnia, such as their efforts against the 'Patarens', are not really evaluated beyond what was copied from *Chronicle of the 24 Generals.*[202] The Hungarian Observant chronicle however praised the proselytising achievements of the friars of the vicariate in the lands at the Hungarian confines which King Louis I 'assailed and subjugated to his power', especially in Bulgaria.[203] It then gave some further details about Louis' takeover of Vidin and the story of the five martyrs, which follows the account and which we know already from the first chapter.[204] Then it describes the foundations of some of what seems as 'the first Observant' friaries in Hungary:

[199] Muscat, *Chronicle of the Twenty-Four Generals*, p. 714.
[200] *Et diversis captis locis, facta est ibi Vicaria, quae hodie Bosnensis appellatur.* Bernardius a Bessa (ed.) 'Chronica XXIV Generalium Ordinis Minorum: cum pluribus appendicibus, inter quas excellit hucusque ineditus Liber de laudibus S. Francisci' in *Analecta Franciscana* vol. 3 (Quaracchi: Typographia Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1887), p. 529; *Et diversis ibi captis locis facta est una et prima familiae minorum Vicaria, quae hodie Boznensis appellatur*. Toldy, p. 230.
[201] *Et eodem anno idem Generalis, ut praedixi, transeundo ad Hungariam primam Vicariam observantiae Minorum in Regno Boznae instituit*. AMH, p. 230.
[202] The Codex of Gyöngyös is slightly less ignorant of the Bosnian matters, see I.1.3.
[203] *Expugnando, suae subiecit potestati.* AMH, p. 231.
[204] See I.1.2.

> And these [friars] having obtained the benediction with humble obedience came gladly to the presence of the most devoted king of Hungary and the father vicar of Bosnia, for whom in accordance with the poverty, just as they wanted, they built many friaries on the borders of Hungary with joy, namely: Orşova, Haţeg, Kovin, Varoš or Lukovo, Harapko, and in Hungary Cseri and Caransebeş, Jenő. Evidently of Cseri the simple people derived a name to differentiate them from other friars, especially the Conventuals, and they did not cease to call them *Cherienses.* Behold the true obedience of the Observant Franciscans of Hungary in their beginning.[205]

We can recognise most of these friaries as foundations at the Hungarian Southern border, centred in the historical region of Banat. The chronicle claimed that the Hungarian Observant family traced its origin from there. The lack of reference to Đakovo, the first Bosnian friary in Hungary is conspicuous, as it had more importance for the mission in Bosnia. Furthermore, the story of making up the name *Cherienses* is remarkable. Other sources, such as the chronicle of János Thuróczy, attest that it was indeed used for the Hungarian Observants, but they are no earlier than the mid-fifteenth century.[206] An explanation of the chronicle is that it was derived from the friary in *Cheri* [likely today's Sacoşu Turcesc, Romania] but an alternative opinion was developed in the Hungarian scholarship that this name might come from some variation of the Slavic word for 'grey', which would mean that the Hungarian Observants were called the 'grey friars', just like the English Franciscans.[207] Whatever we make of it, it is also clear that underlying purpose of this narrative, like that provided by Bernardino, is polemical. On various occasions, the Hungarian Observant chronicle explicitly discredits some opinions held by the Hungarian Conventuals. The dynamics of the relationship between the Hungarian Observants and the Cismontane Observant leadership is also not without importance for what is being examined. Polemics underlying the Hungarian Observant chronicle however will not be evaluated further in this study, as they go beyond my chronological and thematic scope.[208]

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[205] *Iidemque* [fratres] *adepta benedictione cum humili obedientia ad praesentiam Regis devotissimi Hungarorum et Patris Vicarii de Bozna veniebant cum gaudio, quibus secundum paupertatem, sicut ipsi volobant, cum gaudio plurima loca in confinibus Hungari construxerunt, videlicet: Orsova, Hatehak , Kwnium, Alsán vel Luko, Harako, et in Hungaria Cheri et Sebes, Yenw, de quo scilicet Chery eisdem simplex populus, ad aliorum fratrum, praecipue convontualium differentiam, nomen invenit, nec ipsos usque nunc Cherienses nominare desinit. Ecce Minorum Observantiae de Hungaria vera obedientia in eorum exordio.* AMH, p. 234.
[206] de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 69.
[207] Karácsonyi, *Szent Ferencz*, vol. 1, p. 313; de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, pp. 69-70.
[208] This problem is going to be elaborated upon in the doctoral thesis by Jean-François Morvan from the Université Rennes.

The narrative claiming Bosnian origin of the Franciscan Observance is however definitely medieval. The Hungarian Observant chronicle claims to use medieval narratives.[209] A charter issued by the council of Basel in 30 April 1434 for the Observants of the vicariate claims that already king Louis I 'was bearing an unusual affection for them', and that they sustained much persecution from the 'infidels', striking a very familiar cord to what we have read in the Hungarian Observant chronicle.[210] The bull *Etsi ex debito* from 24 January 1445 starts by claiming that 'the Observant friars' have already served 'for a hundred years or more', which can only intend to mean that they were there since the vicariate's foundation.[211] In this way, the sources demonstrate that the development of the Observance in the vicariate went hand in hand with reinterpretation of the past. Finally, this claim was also referred to by Bernardino.

It is important to stress that Bernardino of Aquila was not merely recollecting some cloister gossips, but as the vicar of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province, he was actively involved in the supervision of the Bosnian Franciscans, with whom he obviously conversed, and whom he in fact grew to resent. The eleventh chapter of this thesis will demonstrate this through analysis of his vicariate. What is important here is that the failures of his vicariate may explain his scepticism about claims of the Bosnian origin. Another observation coming from juxtaposing Bernardino's work with the Hungarian Observant chronicle is that most likely there existed a 'Bosnian version' of the narrative about the Observant's movement origin from the Bosnian vicariate, because Bernardino did not govern the Hungarian Observant friaries, which by this point had separated from Bosnia. Although it is my hypothesis that there was indeed such a version, it is not obvious just from reading the Hungarian Observant chronicle, because it is conspicuously focused on Hungarian matters, and is in fact relatively ignorant of what was going on in Bosnia.

Any reconstruction of the hypothetical 'Bosnian recollection' of the story is obscured by the lack of sources. Although it is clear that this recollection had to be a different storyline, it is worth re-emphasising at this point that the Observants of the Bosnian and Hungarian friaries, until the breakup of 1440s, constituted a single structure, the Bosnian vicariate. Therefore what really matters for the following discussion is that a narrative was developed of an origin of the Franciscan Observance in the Bosnian vicariate, perhaps

[209] See introduction.
[210] *A tempore divie memorie Ludovici regis Hungarie, qui ad eos singularem gerebat devotionis affectum*. AB, p. 141.
[211] *Cum itaqe iam per centum annos et ultra eiusdem ordinis fratres de observantia nuncupatum* […]. BF, ns vol. 1, p. 413.

splitting into two different storylines later on. While what we have read in the Hungarian Observant chronicle may seem just as some rationalisation of the regional Franciscan history, the implications and ambitions of the narrative transcends such confines. This narrative inescapably claimed to present the storyline of the origin of the Franciscan Observant movement. But should such a claim even be considered tenable?

### I.2.2. Rise of the Observance in the Bosnian vicariate

Mainstream scholarship follows Bernardino's critical line not without good reasons.[212] Paoluccio had indeed succeeded in creating a distinct and autonomous nucleus of reformed hermitage friaries, consolidated over the 1370s and 1380s, which in time became the bedrock of the reformed structures of the order in Italy.[213] The fourteenth century sources usually call the followers of Paoluccio *fratres simplices, simplices ac devotos,* or also *fratres de familia* – the last one commonly used by the later generations of the Observants – and there are some even more explicit references that at this early stage, the observance of the rule had become something of a distinct characteristic of these hermits.[214] Bernardino's contemporary, James Oddi in his vernacular work *Franceschina* similarly presented the roots of the Observant movement as stemming from Paoluccio's friars, further demonstrating that such was indeed a common understanding of their past by the Italian Observants.[215]

The Hungarian Observant chronicle meanwhile boldly claims that the Bosnian vicariate was founded as an Observant entity, yet contemporary sources from the fourteenth century do not mention this as a part of the vicariate's identity, nor any particular Bosnian friary for that matter. Contemporary sources do not confirm an Observant growth in the Bosnian vicariate *ab ovo ad mala,* nor can we track any early, distinct and parallel Bosnian reform current to that of Paoluccio, like we see in France or the Spanish kingdoms in the fourteenth century.[216] Unambiguous evidence of any 'Observant' friaries in the vicariate comes only from the fifteenth century. The first one, to my knowledge, was Ozora, founded by a close confidant of Sigismund of Luxemburg, Pippo Spano, confirmed by the pope on 28

[212] Coco, 'La vicaria di Bosnia', p. 253; Moorman, *A History*, p. 444.
[213] Moorman, *A History*, pp. 372-73. Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 411.
[214] Michele F. Pulignani, 'Il beato Paoluccio Trinci da Foligno', *Miscellanea Francescana*, 6/4 (1896), 97-129 (pp. 112, 117, 119); Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 411, 421-22.
[215] Nicola Cavanna (ed.) *La franceschina: testo volgare umbro del secolo XV* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1931) pp. 85-89.
[216] Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 435-38.

May 1418.[217] Within a decade or a bit more, instantaneously, the Observance had already achieved a success, as I will demonstrate. Further Observant Hungarian foundations were Gyula (1420), Kovilj (1421), Coșeiu (hun. *Kusaly*, 1422), Visegrád (1425) and Urok (1427), all controlled by the Bosnian vicariate.[218] The vicariate's control over the Observants in Hungary may surprise, but it was indeed the case that the Observant foundations in Hungary and Dalmatia were initially subject to the Bosnian vicariate rather than any provincial vicar. Observants of the Dalmatian friaries of Ugljan and Daksa were described as being subjected to the vicariate of Bosnia 'according to their custom' in bulls from 9 July 1430 and 11 April 1435.[219]

I would however not consider the sources concerning new foundations as a good illustration of the Observance's development, because they are very selective and limited. In case of Bosnia in particular we are faced with some serious insufficiency, because the first Bosnian Observant foundation we know of was very late (Greben, 1437).[220] But clearly, alongside individual new foundations, the existing friaries of the vicariate also adopted the Observant identity. The bull *Sacrae religionis* from 28 July 1425 confirmed the vicariate's integrity so that the vicar and the friars of the Bosnian vicariate 'should be able to focus there on more peaceful divine ministry as well as regular observance'.[221] Although this may be too general to allow us to assess the stage of the Observant development in the vicariate, the reformed identity seems unequivocally attributed to its friars. Remarkably, besides the vicar, the sources mention also that his custodians might have governed the Observants. The bull *Rationi conruit* from March 1431 mentions the Bosnian custodian as having already governed the friaries on the borders of Hungary for some time.[222] A Ragusan instruction for their envoy

[217] BF, vol. 7, pp. 506-07; Žugaj, 'Bosanska vikarija', p. 13. Romhányi claims the convent of Perecske starts the series of foundations for the Observants in Hungary. Although she is probably right, my understanding is that making this foundation a starting one is based on an extrapolation rather than source evidence. The papal permission from 12 January 1415 for the foundation of Perecske was made for friars of 'some order' (*alicuius ordinis*) rather than saying that it was already back then intended for the Observant Franciscans. AB, pp. 99-100; Romhányi, 'Das Konstanzer Konzil', p. 242.
[218] Romhányi, 'Das Konstanzer Konzil', p. 242; BF, vol. 7, 626-27; AB, p. 126.
[219] BF, vol. 7, p. 737; BF, ns. vol. 1, p. 897.
[220] AM, vol. 11 (1437), p. 386.
[221] *Eo quietius divinis obsequiis ac regulari observantie intendere* […] *valeant.* AB, p. 123. Fermendžin misdated the document for 1424, but July 'anno octavo' for Martin V must mean 1425. Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, p. 87.
[222] There is some problem with dating of the bull, because although it is dated for the first year of Eugenius, it is also dated for 10 March (VI idus martii), which would mean a day before his coronation, when the popes usually were not supposed to issue any bulls. Hüntemann dated it for 10 March 1432, but I think it should be dated for the previous year, likely 11 March. The document was upholding the decision of Martin V from 16 February 1431, who did not manage to publish his bull before death, so it would be unlikely that his successor would wait for the whole year, especially considering that the bull's supplicant was Sigismund of Luxemburg 'the king who should not be deceived in regard to the accomplishment of that decision and concession', as we

to Basel from 5 June 1434 asked that the friary in Daksa should be controlled by the Bosnian vicar or his custodian of Ston.[223] These custodies had to be Observant by that time, demonstrating the success of the reform.[224]

On 30 April 1434, Sigismund of Luxemburg petitioned for a charter from the council of Basel for the Observants of the vicariate, assuring them of their territorial integrity, confirming the privileges and allowing them to elect Bosnian vicars, which although implicit, is the first source securing that office for an Observant.[225] Reference to 'some [*nonnulla*] places, friaries, convents and houses of the said order, called of the Observance of St. Francis, constituted in the regions of Hungary, Bosnia and Dalmatia' suggests somewhat proportional success of the Observance in different parts of the vicariate.[226] Žugaj (himself a Conventual Franciscan) interpreted the use of the word *nonnulla* as pointing to a minority of Observant friaries at the time, lingering among the 'many' Conventuals, even enumerating parts of the vicariate where there were supposedly no Observants at all, but he strongly downplays the Observance's success.[227] My reading of this charter is that it represents a tipping point after which the friars of the vicariate become identifiable as the Observants. This document sets up how the vicariate should be run, not how should it be run by an Observant 'minority'. It is made clear by other sources issued around that time as well as references to the vicariate's past privileges and the 'affection' carried for them by Louis I, which I have already pointed out. In the following years, the Franciscans of the vicariate indeed became conspicuous for their Observant identity. They kept electing the Observant vicars, and their most prominent members were always Observants.

Although we have some hints for Conventual individuals in Bosnia, they were never prominent.[228] Furthermore, none of the numerous vicariate's internal struggles could be

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are told by the document. Some other bulls of Eugenius from 11 March 1431 also start with the words 'Rationi congruit'. Finally, 1431 would also fit with the first appointment of Julian Cesarini, to whom the bull is addressed, as the papal legate to Hungary on 11 January of 1431. *Domus fratrum ordinis Minorum de observantia nuncupatorum in regno* Hungariae […] *sub custodia et gubernatione custodis domus Bosnensis.* BF, ns vol. 1, pp. 30-31.

[223] *Sia et rimagna col monastero del daxa in recomendacia et governo del vicario de bosna o del suo custode de stagno.* Rode, 'Documenti francescani' 14, p. 58.

[224] Žugaj interpreted the role of the Bosnian custodian in Hungary as representative of the 'Observant minority', while arguing that vicar represented the 'Conventual majority', but this is clearly wrong reading provided that vicars or their custodians were mentioned interchangeably as supervisors of the Observants in Hungary and Dalmatia. Žugaj, 'Bosanska vikarija', pp. 11-12; Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, pp. 33-34.

[225] AB, pp. 141-42. Žugaj, 'Bosanska vikarija', p. 13.

[226] *Nonnulla loca, claustra, seu conventus et domus et domus dicti ordinis, de observantia sancti Francisci nuncupati, in Hungarie, Bozne et Dalmatie regnis constituta.* AB, p. 141.

[227] Žugaj, 'Bosanska vikarija', p. 14.

[228] BF ns. 1, pp. 799-800; MSM vol. 1, p. 393; Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 34; Krešić, 'Jakov Markijski', p. 164.

characterised as 'Observant versus Conventual'.[229] All of them took place between different 'national' groups of the Observants, referred to as 'families' (such as Bosnian, Dalmatian or Ragusan family), as well as the Observants from Bosnia against the Italian superiors.

The Bosnian Franciscans on a couple of occasions gravitated from obedience to the Cismontane vicar general to the jurisdiction of the minister general, although they never stayed out of the Cismontane chain of command for long.[230] These incidents will be given further attention in later parts of my study, but I introduce them here just to clarify that they should not be overinterpreted as attempts to break away from the Observance to the Conventuals.[231] The same manoeuvre was undertaken by the Hungarian Observants, and they did so for the same reason as the friars from Bosnia, which was to escape disciplinary measures of the Italian superiors.[232] The Hungarians effectively stayed out of the Cismontane chain of command from 1458 to 1502, yet clearly remained Observants, defining their distinctive identity as the friars 'of the Franciscan order of the Observance of the reverend father minister general'.[233] My interpretation is that the Bosnian Observants at times aspired to similar status. This essentially makes the solution opted by the Bosnian (and Hungarian) friars similar to that of any other Observants remaining *sub ministris*, such as the Villacrecians, Coletans, Amadeans or Clarenists.[234] Although the problem of obedience of the Bosnian friars does not affect my interpretation of their identity as Observants, it is fair to

[229] 'Magisters' emerging in Fermendžin's edition of the Bosnian king's letter from 1 April 1433, who resisted reforms of James of the Marches were sometimes interpreted as Conventuals, but that was not the term exclusive to the Conventuals, and furthermore, it is actually not the word we see in the manuscript, which is just an abbreviation 'mag', interpreted as standing for 'magis' in more up to date edition of the source by Nocco. My argument is that James was resisted by some high rank Observants of the Bosnian vicariate, because the Bosnian custody had to be Observant by that time. AB, p. 139; Lorenzo Turchi and Francesco Nocco, 'Giacomo della Marca e l'Est Europa' in *Osservanza francescana e cultura tra Quattrocento e primo Cinquecento: Italia e Ungheria a confronto,* ed. by Francesca Bartolacci and Roberto Labertini (Rome: Viella, 2014), pp. 87–136 (pp. 130-31); Džambo, *Franjevci*, p. 145.
[230] AB, pp. 203-04; BF ns 1, pp. 643; Ančić, *Na rubu zapada*, p. 173.
[231] See II.6.4., II.8.3. and III.10.1.
[232] de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, pp. 65-67, 72. Polish Observant Franciscan chronicler, Jan of Komorowo noted in his chronicle a threefold reason for the Hungarian secession from the Cismontane jurisdiction: the Hungarians did not want to give up some books that used to belong to John of Capistrano to James of the Marches, who came to Hungary in 1457, that the Observant general chapter wanted to assert a right appoint the Hungarian vicars, and that the Hungarians feared the disciplinary measures of the Cismontane superiors. Żuchowski, *Kronika*, p. 154.
[233] O*rdinis Minorum de observantia reverendi patris ministri generalis.* de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 64.
[234] Roest, 'Observant Reform', p. 448; Merlo, *In the name of Saint Francis*, pp. 397-98.

note that it did spark ambiguities in the Middle Ages.[235] That is because the vicars general ultimately strove to assimilate all manifestations of the Observance under their leadership.[236]

### I.2.3. The problem of the role of Bosnia in the history of the Observance

Before the Franciscans of the Bosnian vicariate became institutionally attached to the Observant identity, a chronological gap covers what might have been a formative period of the Observant Bosnia. So at first sight the claim of a Bosnian origin of the Observant movement may seem groundless. Furthermore, why should one even look for answers to questions about the Observance's origin in Bosnia, if Bosnia hardly provides any answers about the origin of its own Observant movement?

The relevance of the Bosnian vicariate is related to its cosmopolitan makeup.[237] Its substantial diversity is of great significance when assessing its role in the development of the Franciscan Observance, because whatever was happening in the vicariate, was inescapably intertwined with the developments in other Franciscan provinces. This intrinsic link seems to have been understood by the Hungarian's Observant chronicle compilers, who used it to foster their claims. Within the chronicle's internal logic, the Franciscan Observant movement was first developed in the vicariate, but its diffusion was associated with Italian missionaries, who spent some time working against 'the infidels and schismatics', before returning to their homeland.[238] One such individual was credited as having a particularly strong impact:

> Of whom a certain most devoted father, illustrious in every virtue and shining with sanctity, who had worked for thirty years in the vicariate of Bosnia, has returned to his hometown of Siena when he became an old man. Renowned in life and sanctity, he adorned his entire town of Siena. Thus, having heard of his reputation, many devoted young men were coming to him humbly and beggingly, so that he might accept them into the order. Among them was a certain young man, most devoted and of a very bright mind, elegant figure, noble birth and yet of more noble virtue, now full of glory

[235] This is particularly visible in the letter of the Vicar General Marco of Bologna to the Franciscans of Bosnia from 16 January 1455, where he declined to confirm Roberto Carraciollo, who abandoned the Observant branch, as the Bosnian vicar. The vicar general wrote that he was unable to assess whether or not the Bosnians were trying to abandon the family by having the 'controversial' Roberto confirmed by the minister general rather than the vicar general (*Quamobrem non possum certe non existimare, si modo illum a familia nostra segregatum dignovissetis*). AM, vol. 12 (1454), p. 249. More on this letter in III.10.1. See also II.8.3.
[236] Roest, 'Observant Reform', p. 448.
[237] See I.1.3.
[238] AMH, p. 236.

> in heaven, Bernardino of Siena. He likewise begged that venerable old man by requests, so that he should accept him into the order and appoint him to the service of Seraphic Francis. The said old man accepted him, because he had heard many splendid things about Bernardino.[239]

The missionary's example made a strong imprint on young Bernardino, implying that his later spirituality was in some way inspired by the old friar. The chronicle is clear that this encounter is supposed to be representative of a larger trend rather than an individual case.[240] This narratological operation creates a lineage between the acclaimed 'first Observant' Bosnian vicariate and the generation of the Franciscans who then promoted the Observant movement as a mainstream in the order, and who transformed it into something quite different from the marginal hermit movement, the 'official' bedrock of the Franciscan Observance.[241] The underlying purpose of this operation is to claim that the Observance came from the Bosnian vicariate. It should come as no surprise by this point that the Hungarian Observant chronicle is silent on the story of Paoluccio and his hermits. The story is also implicitly confined within the matters of the Cismontane part of the family, because the Observants from East Central Europe were not governed by the Ultramontane leadership.

The encounter in question was not something made up by the Hungarian Observant chronicle, but it is described in various *vitae* of Bernardino of Siena, the earliest of which was written by Barnabo of Siena in 1445.[242] We learn from them that the Sienese missionary's

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[239] *De quibus quidam devotissimus frater qui XXX. annis in Vicaria Boznae laboraverat, omni virtute clarus, sanctitate fulgens, cum senex esset, ad suam patriam Senensem remeavit, qui vita et sanctimonia clarus totam suam Senarum civitatem decorabat, ita, ut eius audita fama, multi ad eum iuvenes devoti veniebant, humiliter et supplicanter, ut eos ad ordinem reciperet, de quibus quidam devotissimus iuvenis scientia praeclarus, et forma decorus, nobili genere, sed nobilior virtute, nunc gloriosus in coelis, Bernardinus de Senis, similiter hunc senem venerabilem precibus exoravit, ut eum in ordinem reciperet, et Seraphici Francisci militiae adscriberet, quem senex dictus accepit, quia multa et praeclara de Bernardino audierat.* AMH, pp. 236-37.

[240] Some historians' reading of what follows after that passage even made them think that the old missionary also accepted John Capistran to the order, but this is clearly a misreading. AMH, p. 237. de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 36.

[241] Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 433; Andrić, *The Miracles*, p. 20.

[242] Barnabo of Siena, 'Vita I antiquior', in *Acta Sanctorum maii*, vol. 5 (Paris, 1866) pp. 107-17 (pp. 107–08). Eszter Konrád argued that the account found in the Hungarian Observant chronicle comes from *vita* by Ludovico of Vicenza. Eszter Konrád '„…quidam devotissimus frater, qui XXX. annis in Vicaria Boznae laboraverat" Giovanni Ristori, Sienai Bernardin lelki vezetője' in *Irodalomtörténet, tudománytörténet, eszmetörténet: Tanulmányok Tarnai Andor halálának 25. évfordulójára, Szerk.* ed by Ingrid Papp, (Budapest, Reciti, 2020) pp. 65-80 (p. 69). Although Barnabo's account does not mention the missionary's labors in Bosnia, they were mentioned already by Leonardo Benvoglietti, who wrote his *vita* in 1446. Franciscus von Ortroy (ed.), 'Vie de S. Bernardin de Sienne par Leonard Benvoglietti', *Analecta Bollandiana*, 21 (1902), 53-80 (pp. 73-74); Giulio Prunai, 'Leonardo Benvoglienti' in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 8 (1996), https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/leonardo-benvoglienti_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/ [accessed 22.10.2022].

name was John Ristori, but otherwise these accounts are not much different from what we have learned from the Hungarian Observant chronicle. Sienese sources confirm that John Ristori was indeed present at the council on 6 September 1402 to accept Bernardino as his spiritual son in the order, while in 1403 John was mentioned as the guardian of the town's friary.[243] These accounts suggest that John was indeed a prominent friar in Siena, yet none of the *vitae* used the encounter to establish any lineage for the Observant movement as originating from the Bosnian vicariate. Should we then just accept that the Hungarian Observant chronicle simply manipulates the original textual tradition - like it did with the *Chronicle of 24 Generals* - and so it is just too agenda-driven to be reliable?

Bernardino's biographers described John Ristori as *sanctus* and emphasised his edifying spirituality - formed by challenges of the Bosnian missionary environment - so for them the encounter was something of importance when interpreting Bernardino's personal growth in faith. Furthermore, the accounts of Barnabo of Siena and Leonardo Benvoglietti were based on recollections from Siena and written still before the framework of the Observant historiography was established, making them valuable sources. Finally, the *Vita Sancti Bernardini* by John of Capistrano, written before 1450, states that John Ristori in fact suggested to Bernardino, the newly accepted novice, to move from Siena to a nearby friary in Colombaio, run by the followers of John of Stroncone, who succeeded Paoluccio of Foligno.[244] This points out that John Ristori had a good relationship with the hermits, and that not only he inspired young Bernardino to became a Franciscan, but also inspired his reformed orientation. Thus Ristori is placed at the axis between Bosnian vicariate, the hermits of Umbria and the Observants of the *Quattrocento* generation. This link becomes even more relevant when we consider the historical role of Bernardino of Siena in bringing the Observance 'from hermitage to multitude'.[245] In these circumstances, a research question could be posed, to what extent was the Italian Franciscan Observance actually inspired by the missionaries returning from the Bosnian vicariate?

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[243] Konrád '„…quidam devotissimus frater', p. 70; Michael Robson, *The Franciscans in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006) p. 193.

[244] *Non diu post sentiens Bernardinus se, illo in loco, non posse Deo tranquillo animo servire convenienter regulae Sancti Francisci: quod homines saeculares quotidie eo adventarent, et quaedam aliae cause rationabiles ipsi suppeterent: ex concilio memorati patris excessit e patria sua, eiusque fretus benedictione ad eos Observantes iucundissimo animo commigravit, qui in Columbarij antiquo monasterio degebant, quod situm erat haud procul Senis.* John of Capistrano, 'Vita Sancti Bernardini Senensis', in *Sancti Bernardini Senensis opera omnia,* ed. by Jean de la Haye (Paris: Dionysius Moreau, 1636) pp. III-XXVI (p. IX); Konrád '„…quidam devotissimus frater', p. 73.

[245] Moorman, *A History*, p. 457; Robson, *The Franciscans*, pp. 194-95; Merlo, *In the name of Saint Francis,* p. 356.

This question unfortunately cannot be definitely solved by this study. One important example will be provided though, which paradoxically, comes from an author himself involved in debunking 'the Bosnian claim', Bernardino of Aquila. In chapter thirteen of his chronicle, he recollects a story of spiritual formation of Roberto Caracciolo of Lecce (1425-1495), one of the most famous Franciscan preachers.[246] As a young friar, Roberto acted as interpreter for a certain Hungarian Franciscan, who in turn instructed him in the art of preaching.[247] He taught him how to do 'bodily gestures' and 'exclamations' at the right moment, as well as to sometimes 'shout out terrifyingly'.[248] Bernardino makes it clear that this Hungarian friar was associated with the Bosnian vicariate.[249] Parallels between encounters of Bernardino with John Ristori and Roberto with the Hungarian friar make them almost typological. Two younglings about to become prominent Observants took their spiritual inspiration from experienced and religiously irreproachable missionaries, coming from the Bosnian vicariate to Italy. Having said that, I am aware of only these two cases. Nonetheless, their similarity makes one wonder whether or not they were indeed manifestations of some larger trend rather than individual cases.

The emphasis on training in preaching in Roberto's case is an intriguing one. Popular preaching had become a spearhead of the Observant movement's advance following the council of Constance.[250] The Hungarian friar instructed Roberto in strategies to attract an audience's attention and to engage them emotionally, which were conspicuous features of the Observant preaching campaigns.[251] At the same time, this was not something of a priority in the spiritual model of the family of Paoluccio, who stressed the eremitic and contemplative traditions of the Franciscan order rather than those of active apostolate.[252] That is not to say

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246 Giacomo Mariani, *Roberto Caracciolo da Lecce's Sermons as a Source for Religious and Intellectual History of Late Fifteenth-century Italy* (Budapest: CEU Doctoral dissertation, 2019) pp. 29-114. Also see III.10.1.

247 *Quidam autem Ungarus frater et in theologia magister et praedicator, et latinam linguam ignorans, vidit hunc juvenculum acuti ingenii et bonae indolis; accepit illum in socium et, cum populo praedicare vellet, ipsum sibi interpretari constituit.* Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 172. Perrone, *La regolare Osservanza*, vol. 1, p. 24. Mariani, *Roberto Caracciolo*, p. 36.

248 *Et gestus corporales et exclamationes tempore debito facere docuit, eumque aliquando confortans: terribiliter exclama! dicebat.* Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 172.

249 *Erant enim in dicta Provincia loca quaedam, que vicarie Bosne fratres tenebant, que tunc cum Provincia Ungarie unita erat.* Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 172.

250 Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 578.

251 Carolyn Muessig, 'Bernardino da Siena and Observant Preaching as a Vehicle for Religious Transformation' in *Observant Reform in the Later Middle Ages and Beyond* ed. by James Mixson and Bert Roest (Leiden: Brill, 2015), pp. 185–203 (pp. 185-86).

252 Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 422.

that the new generation of the Observants have forsaken their eremitic and contemplative roots completely, because actually, they came to promote a model of religious life balancing solitude with preaching and other activities involving interactions with the laity.[253] Famous for his engagement in popular preaching and great politics, John of Capistrano wrote to the Observant friary in Nuremberg on 15 October 1452 to 'flee from worldly company and love solitude'.[254] This shows that the Observants appreciated the benefits of the contemplative spirituality. Bernardino of Aquila perhaps went even further than an average Observant friar in his 'conservative' views on importance of solitude.[255] However the endeavors of the Observants to integrate both apostolic and contemplative elements in their spiritual model inevitably caused tensions. A question should be asked now, how does the spirituality of friars in the Bosnian vicariate fit within this dichotomy?

### I.2.4. The spiritual model of the friars in Bosnia

Ančić has compellingly argued in favour of a pastoral and apostolic spiritual model as fostered in the Bosnian vicariate over the fourteenth century.[256] The purpose of the foundation of the Bosnian vicariate was Catholicisation, which required active involvement in the life of the laity. The friars arriving in Bosnia were initially all foreign missionaries, who as we have learned from the Bosnian ban's petition from 1347, had to learn vernacular, and immerse themselves in the local environment more generally, in order to progress with their undertaking.[257] They arrived in a place with no other Catholic structures, so in their task of revivifying Catholicism in Bosnia, they needed to start from scratch. As various fourteenth-century bulls as well as the *Dubia* of the vicar Bartholomew of La Verna tell us, these activities included rebuilding the ruined churches and securing new foundations, administering the sacraments to the laity, preaching, and inevitably confronting the 'heretics'.[258] The bull *Excolentes* (1369) speaks of the friars as combating heresy 'by the sword of the divine word'.[259] Various anti-heretic treatises and articles of errors produced by

[253] Some scholars call such a mixed religious model as *via media*, and I am also going to use this term in this way, although being aware that it has earned some other meanings in the Franciscan scholarship.
[254] Translation from: Lappin, *The mirror of the observance*, p. 87.
[255] He complained for example against the Observants dwelling in the Conventual friary in Aquila, saying: 'Pro nostra salute facere non videbatur in civitate morari'. See: Andrea Mancini, 'Bernardino Aquilano's Travels in his Chronicle of the Friars Minor of the Observance', in *Path to Salvation. Temporal and Spiritual Journeys by the Mendicant Orders c. 1370-1740*, ed. by Benjamin Hazard (Lausanne: Peter Lang, 2023), pp. 55-82 (p. 68).
[256] Ančić, *Na rubu zapada*, pp. 228-29.
[257] AB, pp. 28-29.
[258] Ančić, *Na rubu zapada*, p. 230.
[259] *Gladio verbi dei.* MH, vol. 2, p. 92.

the Franciscan environment of Bosnia were intended as guidebooks to help members of their order to help to identify and confront the heresy; whatever we make of their value in studying the Bosnian church nowadays.[260] The friars also produced similar articles of errors of the Moldavian Hussites and the Serbian Orthodox church, with whom they were also dealing with.[261]

Furthermore, as I demonstrated in the first chapter, the socio-economic conditions in Bosnia were very strained. Thus the Bosnian friars needed to rely on the support of the laity, both in Bosnia and abroad. Such reliance demanded of them to actively attract the support of their patrons, as through chaplaincy service demonstrated by several fifteenth-century sources, or begging for alms in the Dalmatian port towns.[262] They also built their position by addressing the issues of those in the poorest conditions. They pursued Christian charity by administering sacraments to those infirm or disabled in their homes, and perhaps by taking care of the leprosaria - apostolate native to St. Francis - all of which in Bosnia were in the proximity of the Franciscan friaries.[263]

Such an environment does not exclude the potential for the development of contemplative religiosity in the Bosnian vicariate, but it clearly fostered a more interactive approach to the laity, focused on active pastoral care and preaching. Some historians tried to put forth an opposite argument, about the contemplative and eremitic spiritual model of an early Bosnian vicariate, perhaps anachronistically rationalising it as some form 'early Observance' in the likeness of the family of Paoluccio, but this is not something I agree with.[264] A similarly anachronistic interpretation seems to be given to the small size of the friaries in Bosnia, which supposedly evidenced that 'early Observant' spiritual model in Bosnia.[265] Whatever we make of their size, the first Franciscan foundations in Bosnia were made in the centres of power, mining and trade (the three of four provided by Bartholomew

[260] Dragutin Kniewald, 'Vjerodostojnost latinskih izvora o bosanskim krstjanima' in *Rad Jugoslavenske Akademije znanosti i umjetnosti,* ed. by Marko Kostrenčić (Zagreb: Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, Zagreb, 1949), 115-276 (pp. 163-81); Šanjek, *Bosansko-Humski krstjani*, pp. 282-99.
[261] AB, pp. 224-26; Šanjek, *Bosansko-Humski krstjani* pp. 300-05; Stanko Andrić, 'Saint John Capistran and Despot George Branković: An Impossible Compromise' *Byzantinoslavica – Revue internationale des études byzantines*, 74 (2016), 202-27 (p. 216).
[262] AB, pp. 149-50, 168.
[263] AB, pp. 161-62; Ковачевић-Којић, *Градска насеља* , p. 275; Džambo, *Franjevci*, pp. 233-35.
[264] de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 35.
[265] Pandžić, 'Djelovanje franjevaca', p. 253.

of Pisa, Mile, Kraljeva Sutjeska and Olovo, were excellent examples), which strikes a contrast with the spatial pattern of Paoluccio's friaries.[266]

Ančić's argument can be extrapolated to the fifteenth century, and Bernardino's chronicle illustrated the tension in question. Throughout his chronicle, he consistently juxtaposes two modes of religious conduct, *conversatio* and *sequestratio.* The former represents the world of the laity, which a friar needs to enter for alms begging or for pastoral care, while the latter stands for a life of solitude set up in a desolate friary.[267] A pursuit of *sequestratio* Bernardino sees as the proper form of Franciscan conduct, while *conversatio* is undesirable because it was associated with the Conventual modus vivendi. This dichotomy came into play when he made his assessments about the religious conduct of the friars of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province. He wrote:

> The Bosnians in those parts are parish priests, and therefore they continually keep in touch [*conversantur*] with the laity; and so, whenever they are coming to the parts of Dalmatia, they immediately hasten through the entire city and quickly capture familiarity with men and women. But the Dalmatians, who were educated in the Italian customs, escape such familiarity. And so with them differing in customs and will, they are unable to be united in love.[268]

Without yet having introduced Bernardino's vicariate of the province, this fragment is illustrative enough to show that he was more favourable to the religious conduct of the Dalmatian rather than Bosnian Observants.[269] By associating the Bosnian friars with *conversatio* he implicitly put their religious conduct in the same box as that of the Conventuals.[270] Should we perhaps accept then, that the Bosnian friars simply lacked discipline?

While Bernardino's overall assessment of the Bosnian conduct was generally negative, he had never evaluated it in detail. The quotation above however rings a familiar

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266 The localization of the fourth friary provided by Bartholomew, Lašva, remains a mystery. Džambo, *Franjevci*, p. 125.

267 Mancini, 'Bernardino Aquilano's Travels', p. 61.

268 *Bosnenses sunt in partibus illis parrocchiales, et ideo cum secularibus continuo conversantur; et ideo, quando ad partes Dalmatie veniunt, statim totam percurrunt civitatem et hominum et mulierum cito familiaritatem capiunt. Dalmatini vero, qui ad mores Ytalye educati sunt, tales familiaritatem fugiunt. Cum itaque differant moribus et voluntate, non possunt esse uniti in caritate.* Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 260.

269 See III.11.

270 Mancini, 'Bernardino Aquilano's Travels', p. 80.

bell in the context of our discussion. The conduct of the Bosnian Franciscans involved too much interaction with the laity for his taste, but he also hints at reasons for this: it was demanded by their pastoral tasks. The fact that they were called 'parish priests' should here be read literally: they were responsible for running parish pastoral care because there was no one else to do it.[271] The legal framework for that was provided by various papal bulls concerning administration of the sacraments.[272] Furthermore, perhaps the Bosnian friars endeavoured to attract familiarity in Dalmatian port towns because they relied on their economic support. It thus seems that Bernardino was critical of what were necessary adaptations of the friars in Bosnia in order to run their vicariate successfully. Aware of this nuance, an assessment of religious discipline becomes difficult, and perhaps unhelpful in an academic study, especially when we consider the scarcity and generality of sources, and so it is not going to be made in this study. Instead, I would like to conceptualise the problem in question in a framework of a genuine clash of ideas about the Franciscan conduct, fostered in two different environments. The problem of the ideal discipline of the Bosnian family will be further evaluated in the next chapter.

Furthermore, it is important to observe that the religious discipline of the Bosnian friars became a target of some major criticisms only after the vicariate started to be supervised by Italian Observant superiors. Before then, we actually have some scattered references to the exemplary religious conduct of the friars of the Bosnian vicariate, such as John Ristori or the Hungarian tutor of Roberto Caracciolo. Bartholomew of Pisa wrote in his chronicle that 'in this vicariate friars live according to the rule'.[273] On a couple of occasions, the Ragusan authorities praised the high standards of religious discipline of the Bosnian friaries on their territories, particularly in contrast to those of the Dalmatian province.[274] A former custodian of Ston, Simon, was described as a highly respected individual and a beloved confessor of the Ragusan citizens.[275] The Hungarian Observant chronicle described the friaries in Banat as built 'in accordance with poverty'.[276] The *Chronicle of 24 Generals* described the martyrs of Vidin as excelling in Christian virtue. Nicholas the Hungarian was

[271] Bernardino says on another occasion: *Illi vero Bosnenses cum secularibus magis domestici sunt, utpote quia curam parrocchialem habere a Romana Curia compulsi sunt, eo quod in partibus illis nulli seculares sacerdotes neque alterius cuiusquam religionis habentur.* Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 258
[272] See I.1.3.
[273] *In hac vicaria fratres secundum regulam vivunt*, Following from: Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa* p. 33.
[274] Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 60.
[275] Rode, 'Documenti francescani' 14, pp. 58, 60. Škunca, p. 65.
[276] *Secundum paupertatem*. AMH, p. 234.

described as a friar who for sixteen years dined once a day solely on bread and water and wore an iron chain and a hair shirt.[277] John of Aragon, 'buried in the vicariate', was said to have entered into the fire in the presence of heretics to their amazement, and later 'shone with many miracles'.[278] His unnamed companion remained amidst the flames until he recited the Psalm *Miserere mei, Deus*. St. Nicholas Tavelić and some of the other martyrs of Jerusalem were obviously another prominent group to have spent some time in Bosnia.[279] Some of this evidence may for various reasons be tangential to this analysis, but I would nonetheless re-emphasise spiritually edifying qualities of the missionary undertaking. Reviving Catholic religious life in Bosnia and other places was a very difficult undertaking, demanding a lot of psychological and physical determination.[280]

There was also a lot of effort to maintain discipline in the Bosnian vicariate, in order to make sure that it was successful. Vicar Bartholomew of La Verna secured some disciplinary rights for his office from the papal curia, including a right to send back any unsuitable (lat. *inutilis*) friar to their home provinces, or even to send those *ex nacione Bosnensi* to another province, if they could not keep up a high standard of religious life.[281] Besides being a long-term vicar of Bosnia, Bartholomew was also sent as a reformer to the friaries in the Holy Land by the general chapter of Aquila (1376).[282] Together with seven other friars, on 1 August 1377, they issued statues for religious conduct in these places (*Statuta Terrae Sanctae*). They contain eighteen articles, including points prohibiting the friars from accepting gold, silver or precious objects for private use, prohibiting women from accessing male friaries and the friars to visit women's convents on their own, or points concerning observance of fasts and reception of pilgrims. These statues resembled the spirit of the 'reformed' Franciscan constitutions, such as the constitutions of Narbonne (1260) or those of the bulls *Exiit qui seminat* (1279) and *Exivi de paradiso* (1312).[283] An important point was made concerning alms:

> Because the friars are unable to live nor to maintain the holy places among the Saracens without the pecuniary alms transferred by the Christian princes; the guardian by the council of the *discreti*, decided that one or two men, devoted, prudent and

[277] AMH, p. 235.
[278] Muscat, *Chronicle of Twenty-Four generals*, p. 714.
[279] AB, 50-51.
[280] Ančić, *Na rubu zapada*, pp. 228-29.
[281] AB, p. 36. Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna,* p. 76.
[282] Wadding, AM, vol. 8 (1376) p. 392-94.
[283] Perrone, *La Regolare Osservanza*, vol.1, p. 25.

> faithful, should be allowed to accept money and manage it according to the needs of the friars. For the sake of the stricter observance of the rule and manifest avoidance of money, they should not count the measure nor the amount collected, nor should they write down the amount received; they should not register alms they received on tablets, nor should they be in charge of the keys to the deposit of alms, nor should they accept nor ask for offerings at masses.[284]

The tension central to this point should be already familiar; the Franciscans of the Holy Land struggled to reconcile the rule with the demands of living 'among the Saracens', striking an obvious parallel with the friars of the Bosnian vicariate living 'among the heretics and schismatics'. Although the fourth chapter of the rule forbids the acceptance of money, friaries in the Holy Land could not be maintained without accepting it from the Christian princes, so the statues propose a solution to this dilemma. We have encountered a similar logic guiding the bull *Excolentes* (1369), issued when Bartholomew was the vicar of Bosnia; although friars should not beg for alms outside their native provinces, because Bosnia was filled with heretics, they were allowed to seek alms in neighbouring Christian lands. This overall demonstrates that Bartholomew was someone with an experience in proposing solutions to the intricate dilemmas of Franciscans on missions, making an effort to hold to the spirit of the rule. Furthermore, he seemed to have promoted what is referred to as the 'stricter observance of the rule' in the statues, something actually argued as conspicuous for Franciscan Observant reform currents by the scholars.[285] Should we therefore regard Bartholomew of La Verna as an Observant?

### I.2.5. A bridge between Bosnia and Brugliano

That Bartholomew was an Observant vicar is indeed agreed in large part of the scholarship dealing with the Bosnian vicariate, regardless of national tradition.[286] Interpreting him as such would allow the claim that an Observant current emerged in the Bosnian

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[284] *Quoniam inter Sarracenos absque pecuniariis eleemosynis a Principibus christianis transmissis, neque habitare possint fratres, neque Sacra Loca conservare; constituat Guardianus ex consilio discretorum, virum unum vel duos, devotos, discretos, fideles, qui pecunias recipiant, et juxta Fratrum indigentiam dispensent. Pro strictiore regulae observantia, et manifestiore pecuniae fuga, a praedictis Fratres eleemosynarum rationem, sive computum non exigent; quas recipiunt eleemosynas non scribant; quas distrahunt, in tabulas non redigant; pecuniarum depositi claves non retineant, in Missis oblationes non petant, nec recipiant.* Wadding, AM, vol. 8 (1376) p. 393.
[285] Merlo, *In the Name of Saint Francis*, p. 370; Letizia Pellegrini, 'An irreducible plural'.
[286] Karácsonyi, vol. 1, 312; Coco, 'La vicaria di Bosnia', p. 250; Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, p. 79; Perrone, *La regolare Osservanza*, vol. 1, p. 22; de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 34.

vicariate more or less chronologically simultaneously with the family of Paoluccio.[287] There is however a problem with this interpretation: whatever we make of Bartholomew's reform aspiration, his identity cannot, to my knowledge, be distinguished from that of a standard superior in the order. He was never unambiguously mentioned as an Observant friar in the sources, nor was he part of Paoluccio's movement or any other distinct Franciscan group. *Devoti idonei fratres* who were allowed to settle in Galatina under Bartholomew's rule in 1391 were sometimes interpreted by the Italian scholars as the Observants.[288] Although this sparks some ambiguity, because *devotos* was a term used to describe Paoluccio's followers, it was not exclusive to his family. The categories Observant/Conventual at the end of the fourteenth century were indeed not as clear as the scholarship often presumes, because that was still the formative period for the Observance. I would therefore argue that this binary approach to identity of Bartholomew of La Verna is too anachronistic in his case.

The problem of the early Observant orientation of the Bosnian vicariate does not end here, because the followers of Paoluccio actually established Bosnia as one of a few places they could go to during Bartholomew's vicariate. Some scholars interpreted in this light the bull from 22 June 1372, which allowed Bartholomew to accept up to sixty foreign missionaries 'from among the lettered and unlettered', mainly from the province of St. Francis.[289] This bit is remarkable, because Paoluccio's family was conspicuous for its lay character, but at the same time the bull is too generic to make any serious claim. A letter issued on 15 July 1388 by the Minister General Enrico Alfieri to Paoluccio is much more important. It established Paoluccio as the general's commissary of his family's hermitages, and it allowed him to dispatch his friars to whichever places in 'Italy, Bosnia and Corsica'.[290] It is remarkable to find Bosnia as one of the three geographical areas linked to Paoluccio's commissary powers, but at the same time, the source should not be overinterpreted. This does not mean that Bosnian vicariate has become Observant from this point onwards, not least because the Observance has not been established yet as a fully-fledged branch of the order.[291] What this letter indicates is that from then on Paoluccio could send individual friars to

[287] Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, p. 65.
[288] Perrone, *La regolare Osservanza,* vol. 1, p. 21; Coco, 'La vicaria di Bosnia', p. 258.
[289] *Inter litteratos et laicos*. MH, vol. 2, p. 117-18; de Cevins, *Les franciscains,* p. 34.
[290] *In quibuscumque locis seu territoriis aliis per dictam Italiam, Bosnam vel Corsicam pro tempore moraturos, mea auctoritate possis collocare.* AM, vol. 9 (1388), p. 93.
[291] Žugaj, 'Bosanska vikarija', p. 11.

Bosnia, but on its own is not even evidence that any of them really went there. However, how can we explain that Bosnia actually made it to the 'list' in the first place?

It is difficult to imagine that this letter does not hint at some form of earlier contact between the followers of Paoluccio and the Bosnian vicariate, otherwise why would he consider it appropriate to really send anyone there? It should be brought up here that the *Chronicle of 24 Generals* reported one of the martyrs of Vidin as 'Thomas of Foligno, a lay brother, a man of great devotion and of a most rigorous penance'.[292] Although there is some potential for a coincidence, it is hard not to link 'Foligno', Paoluccio's native town, with 'a lay brother', Paouluccio's family 'badge'. If Thomas was indeed one of the hermits of Umbria, the early date of the martyrdom (1369) would hint to some very early contacts between the Bosnian vicariate and the Umbrian family. While it would not allow us to argue that the Bosnian vicariate has been some first 'Observant structure', it would allow to claim that the Observance ever since its conception has been present in Bosnia.

Furthermore, the report about the martyrdom of four friars, Deodat of Ruticinio, Peter of Narbonne, Nicholas Tavelić and Stephen of Cuneo, in Jerusalem in 1391, written not long after the event, claimed that:

> They spent many years in religious perfection, some in the vicariate of Bosnia, others in the vicariate of Corsica, and thereafter with great devotion they travelled to the holy city of Jerusalem, where they dwelled for many years in the regular observance, and underwent most severe martyrdom for Christ.[293]

Although links of Deodat of Ruticinio and Nicholas Tavelić - who were the friars who spent time in the Bosnian vicariate - to Paoluccio are unknown, the report pointed out at an already familiar network between Brugliano, Bosnia and Corsica. Furthermore, Peter of Narbona was otherwise known for having spent some time in a company of Paoluccio. Finally, we have just seen all four as described as practicing the 'regular observance'.[294] This indeed hints that the 'bridge between Bosnia and Brugliano' was opened in the fourteenth century, allowing for interaction and the development of communal bonds between two

[292] Muscat, *Chronicle of Twenty-Four Generals*, p. 761.
[293] *Qui etiam perfectione religionis morati sunt annis pluribus, aliqui in vicaria Bosne, aliqui in vicaria Corsice, dein magna devotione ad sanctam se transtulerunt civitatem Hierusalem, ubi morati sunt in observantia regulari annis pluribus, durissimum pro Christo martyrium sustinuerunt.* AB, p. 51; Džambo, *Franjevci*, p. 148.
[294] Džambo, *Franjevci*, p. 149.

families. Likely this is how the seeds of the inchoate Observance were planted in Bosnia, giving it a sense of belonging to the Observant branch of the order once it became more established.

A remarkable problem with this network is what to make of Corsica? However distant it may seem from Bosnia, some things do link both places. Franciscan vicariates were established in both places, which in time became Observant. We also find heretics in both places; in Corsica that was the heresy of the 'Giovannali'.[295] The vicariates were administrative constructs where the authority of the minister general was more immediate than in the provinces, so Enrico might have felt more entitled to permit Paoluccio's friars to venture there. Given that combating heresy was a preoccupation of the Franciscans in both places, my interpretation is that the followers of Paoluccio must have been interested in undertaking voyages against the heretics.[296] This observation carries some significance for our understanding of the Umbrian hermits, which is that they had to develop a significant anti-heretical vocation, something perhaps not associated with them very often, although their involvement in the expulsion of the Fraticelli from Perugia in 1374 is rather well known. An activity against the heretics was therefore an aspiration shared by the Umbrian hermits and the Bosnian missionaries, and a factor for why would they engage in contact. Notably, anti-heretic pursuit characterised the Franciscan Observance once it was established as a mainstream force in the fifteenth century.

**Conclusions**

The concluding point of this chapter is the assessment of the role of Bosnia in the formative period of the Franciscan Observant movement, in light of these conflicting narratives. The interpretation derived from the Hungarian Observant chronicle about the Franciscan Observance's origin in Bosnia is indeed unfounded. Furthermore, contemporary sources do not allow us to track any parallel and specifically Bosnian reform current to that of Paoluccio in the fourteenth century. Such was perhaps unlikely to develop considering the international and missionary character of the vicariate. This exceptionality, although having blurred the role of Bosnia in the formative period of the Franciscan Observant movement, at

[295] AM, vol. 15 (1506), p. 399; Raphael M. Huber, *A Documented History of the Franciscan Order, Part 1: From the Birth of St. Francis to the Division of the Order Under Leo X, 1182-1517* (Washington: The Nowiny Publishing Apostolate, 1944) pp. 765-66; John Moorman, *Medieval Franciscan Houses* (New York: Franciscan Institute/St. Bonaventure University, 1983), p. 696
[296] AM, vol. 8 (1373), pp. 655-56.

the same time made it a very important location for the Observance's early history, because it made it receptive to all various reform currents and individual pursuits of Franciscan perfection.

Bosnia had become something of a focal point for the Franciscan order's radical energy. It was a place where one could venture in pursuit of the twelfth article of the rule, to smite the heretics, and potentially, to find martyrdom, so it attracted the most zealous of the friars. In order to succeed in the expansion of faith, the vicariate had to be maintained in a highly disciplined manner. The chapter presented not only some displays of radical religiosity but also contacts between the followers of Paoluccio with the Bosnian vicariate. In this way, the seeds of the Observance were planted in Bosnia, which grew to become the dominant branch in the vicariate in time. I would argue that Bartholomew of La Verna was an Observant reformer in all but name, which may be enough to make him fall under the umbrella of the 'irreducible plural' of Observant currents as argued by Pellegrini.[297] In this vein, the religious model in Bosnia should not be interpreted as some 'third path', blending Conventualism and Observance, but instead, should be understood in the context of the Observance's internal diversity.[298] The Observance become an integral part of the Bosnian Franciscan's identity, even if their religious conduct varied from the Italian mainstream, or occasionally fought against the Cismontane vicars. Remarkably, the vicariate has also helped to foster the Observance in its formative phase beyond Bosnia.

Some of the individuals edified by their experience in Bosnia apparently made it back to Italy, where they became a source of inspiration for the new generation of friars, including Bernardino of Siena and Roberto Caracciolo. Bosnia was a place where the spirituality of an active apostolate was fostered, which also happened to be a vector of development for the new generation of the Observants. The narrative sources discussed here in fact point to Bosnia as a source of inspiration for this kind of spirituality. Sermons attracting the audience's attention and emotional engagement became one of the characteristics of the *Quattrocento* Observants, and it is possible that one might have learned such skills from the returning missionaries, who had put them to use in the vicariate. The vicariate was a place where one could come in pursuit of an ani-heretical vocation, something that had become one

[297] Pellegrini, 'An irreducible plural'; Letizia Pellegrini and Ludovic Viallet, 'Between *Christianitas* and Europe: Giovanni of Capestrano as a historical issue', *Franciscan Studies*, 75 (2017) 5-26 (p. 14). A similar view in: Merlo, *In the Name of Saint Francis*, p. 350.
[298] Džambo, *Franjevci*, p. 158.

of the Observant's badges. It is perhaps too farfetched to make an observation that the mainstream *via media* model of religious conduct of the fully developed Observance was something of a meeting point between the spiritualities of an Umbrian hermit and a Bosnian missionary. All of this demonstrates that the Bosnian vicariate has contributed to the order's renewal over the formative period of the Franciscan Observant movement, blending radical Franciscan elements from various places, including the Umbrian hermitages, but also outsourcing the experience of an active apostolate. And yet, Bosnia is rarely integrated into the mainstream historiography of the Franciscan Observant movement.

The inability of Bernardino of Aquila to satisfactorily govern the Bosnian friars perhaps made him dismissive of any claims about their potential contribution to the formation of the Observance, but he is not the Observance's only chronicler, nor was he the only Italian superior having trouble governing the friars in Bosnia. The next part of this section will provide some further examples of that. Such clashes undoubtedly had an impact on the version of the collective past of the Cismontane Observants. Bernardino's dealing with the Bosnian claim gave an impression of an effort to erase it from history. His work, alongside that of Oddi and later sixteenth-century Franciscan chroniclers was as much of an identity-building undertaking as a historical recollection. Former fringe groups often reflect in their narratives on clashes taking place as they were gaining momentum and becoming the mainstream, in order to affirm a dominant 'orthodoxy'. Chronicles discussed in this chapter represent two campaigns to set up a narratological framework for the next generations of Observants.

The narrative of Bernardino represents the victorious faction, but it shows a rather limited view of how much the Observant movement integrated on its way from a fringe hermit group to becoming mainstream. Following the Council of Constance, the Franciscan Observant movement was thoroughly transformed into an expansive, apostolate-focused faction of the Franciscans, settling closer to the populated centres, becoming politically and socially involved in all sorts of issues and attracting a wide range of support.[299] This meant it could no longer rely solely on its eremitic foundations, but it needed to absorb other reform currents and aspects of spiritual life so that it could keep going. These included, but were not limited to, parallel Ultramontane reform groups, the Franciscan legal and intellectual legacy,

[299] Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 587.

including that of the Spirituals, and as my analysis has shown, the model of active apostolate fostered in Bosnia, and a pursuit against heresy.[300]

The Hungarian Observant chronicle demonstrated that there existed an alternative and competing storyline: a claim tracing an Observant lineage from the Bosnian vicariate via the returning missionaries, who trained the new generation of the Observants to become the mainstream force. Judging by the consecutive Franciscan chronicles and modern scholarship, this was a defeated narrative. My study does not make an effort to restore it as some sort of 'lost but true' history of the Observant movement. This narrative was no less limited and ideologically driven in its recollection than that of Bernardino. My conclusion is simply that rather than allowing an ownership of history by the victorious narrative, historiography should consider both of them in a more balanced manner. I would go on to argue that it is in fact impossible to reduce the origin of the Franciscan Observance to a single root.

Romhányi started one of her papers by clarifying that what she considered an 'early' Observant movement in Bosnia was 'not the same as the Observant movement initiated by Saint Bernardino of Siena'.[301] This represents something of a relatively common understanding of the scholars dealing with the Bosnian vicariate. Leaving the problem of 'early Observant' aside, an observation to this disclaimer should be made that the same thing could be said about the movement of Paoluccio. The Franciscan Observance as such was in fact in the formative phase at the time. I am conscious that the methodological intricacy of studying the Observant movement as well as scarcity of sources concerning Bosnia allows for a multiplicity of interpretations of the development of the Observant progress in Bosnia, but as a place, as well as the family of the friars, it played a significant, if not indispensable role in the formative period of the Franciscan Observant movement. Such must have been the understanding of the Franciscans of the Bosnian vicariate in the fifteenth century, and it would stimulate their resistance to any disciplinary measures undertaken by their Cismontane superiors.

[300] Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 128; Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 580-83; Andrić, *The Miracles*, pp. 13-14.
[301] Romhányi, 'Social Network', p. 125.

## Ch. 3: Discord between the friars of the Bosnian vicariate and their Cismontane superiors

It has been indicated a couple of times already that the relationship between the friars of the Bosnian vicariate and the Cismontane leadership of the Observants was becoming progressively contentious. The adaptation of the Observant identity by the Bosnian Franciscans meant that their religious conduct became subjected to evaluation by the Cismontane leadership, which itself gained a strong position in the 1430s, leading to the establishment of the office of an autonomous vicar general in 1443, which became permanent three years later.[302] The Bosnian vicariate was subjected to this branch of the Observants by the bull *Etsi ex debito* from 24 January 1445.[303] The main sources of contention should also be familiar by this point. The Franciscans in Bosnia needed to adjust their religious conduct to the socio-economic conditions of the lands they came to. This meant that they could not always follow the same guidelines as their brethren in Italy or other places in Latin Christendom, as these practices were untenable in Bosnia. Such adjustments continued to be criticised by their Cismontane superiors, expecting them to conform to standards intended for all Observants. This may present the Cismontane superiors as somewhat inflexible, or even harsh, but the assessment of their disciplinary measures is restricted by the availability of sources, and their generic language. Interpretations of James of the Marches range in scholarship from a spotless saint to a bloodthirsty vampire, the latter linked to his involvement in the inquisition in particular, but also projected on his reform measures.[304] Along the lines already drawn by the previous chapter, demonstrating varying medieval versions of the origin of the Observant movement, this chapter aims for a balanced approach, conceptualising the problem in a framework of a clash of interpretations of the Franciscan religious conduct. But what were the issues of the discord and what were their implications?

[302] Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 624-34.
[303] BF, ns 1, pp. 413-14.
[304] For some insight into these positions see: de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 120.

### I.3.1. 'As you have described it to me, [the vicariate] was most deformed in every possible way': Aspirations of the Italian reformers

Bernardino of Aquila pointed out that the Bosnian friars did not maintain a proper sequestration from the laity, which has already been touched upon. Having said that, the Observance's transformation from a hermit faction into the mainstream current of the order brought about a change of ideas regarding religious conduct as well. It was no longer a matter of observing the rule literally, *sine glossa,* as promoted by Paoluccio and his followers, but as based on the 'reformed' papal constitutions issued for the order, importantly *Exiit qui seminat* (1279) and *Exivi de paradiso* (1312).[305] It is quite clear that whenever the friars of the Bosnian vicariate came under criticism from Italy, most of the time it was about not standing up to the demands of this interpretation of the Franciscan conduct.

The constitutions - remembered as 'Martinian constitutions' - confirmed by the general chapter of Assisi on 21 June 1430 restored some of the key articles of the earlier 'reformed' legislation of *Exiit* and *Exivi*.[306] Although Martin V and Eugenius IV needed to introduce some relaxations due to controversies that followed, the constitutions remained an important point of reference for the Franciscans, especially the Observants.[307] They also constituted the framework for the reform measures of James of the Marches, the first Italian reformer to spark a major controversy over religious discipline in Bosnia.[308] Their accent on standardisation and unification of religious conduct across the entire order is remarkable.[309] In this study I am going to use findings of my article dedicated to James's itinerary in East Central Europe in the years 1432-40, which marks a very important period for the Bosnian vicariate, to anchor a more extensive discussion about the discord over the religious conduct in Bosnia.[310]

James of the Marches was appointed the minister general's commissary in the Bosnian vicariate on 1 April 1432, visited Bosnia that year, and in 1435 he returned in the same role, yet this time became the vicar of Bosnia. On 22 August 1436, he also became an

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305 Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 587-93.

306 AM, vol. 10 (1430) pp. 176-89; Merlo, *In the Name of Saint Francis*, pp. 369, 372.

307 BF vol. 7, pp. 737-39; BF ns vol. 1, p. 34. Eugenius initially tried to restore the 'Martinian' constitutions to their full glory, yet ultimately failed in this and returned to the relaxations undertaken by Martin V. BF ns vol. 1, pp. 2-12. Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 610-12, 619-20.

308 Krešić, 'Jakov Markijski', p. 165.

309 Merlo, *In the Name of Saint Francis*, p. 372.

310 Cholewicki, 'Travels by St James of the Marches in East Central Europe, 1432– 1440', pp. 83-116.

inquisitor in Hungary and Austria, although he acted only in Hungary. Eventually, he was released from all his obligations in East Central Europe on 5 April 1440, marking the end of this phase of his activity.[311] He returned briefly later on, as he travelled to Hungary in 1457, yet no longer to supervise religious discipline in the vicariate, but to collect materials for the canonisation of John of Capistrano. James was very significant because he became a great authority in the Franciscan order. Furthermore, he was an individual of great prominence beyond the order, having the talent to win the trust of some high-ranking secular and ecclesiastic figures, including Sigismund of Luxemburg and Eugenius IV. Given his experience, he became an expert of a sort for the vicariate's issues among the Italian Observants.[312] Furthermore, he had some links to James Primadizzi and Bernardino of Aquila, the other two prominent critics of the Franciscan discipline in Bosnia.[313] As I am demonstrating in my article, James himself grew very critical of religious discipline in Bosnia. The Minister General William of Casale responded to James's report in December 1435: 'as you have described it to me, [the vicariate] was most deformed in every possible way'.[314]

The problem of the religious conduct in the Bosnian vicariate, in particular in its Bosnian 'heartland', carried all sorts of unpleasant implications. It was used in the petitions asking for the Bosnian vicariate's division over the 1440s. A bull from 31 August 1446 removing the friary in Galatina from the vicariate reports: 'indeed these friars of the Bosnian province held the said church and hospital […] against their rule carelessly and irresponsibly for fifty years and more'.[315] Another bull from 27 September 1447 criticised the Bosnian expansion over five friaries in Dalmatia in the previous year, because allegedly ever since: 'in these houses, friaries and places the divine cult is being diminished and the observance becomes lukewarm, and might cease completely'.[316] A document issued a day earlier had declared that some friaries of the vicariate: 'are deformed, and are known to require a lot of

311 BF, ns vol. 1, p. 211-12; Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, p. 98; Cholewicki, 'Travels by St James of the Marches in East Central Europe, 1432– 1440', p. 83.

312 *Qui de predictis verosimiliter bene debet esse informatus, cum Vicariatum dicte Vicarie gesserit multo tempore.* Golubovich, 'Descriptio codicis', p. 222.

313 Pope directed James of the Marches to James Primadizzi after returning from Hungary in 1440. Bernardino of Aquila was received into the order by James of the Marches in Perugia, on 12 March 1445. BF ns. 1, p. 222. Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 25.

314 *Quam ad me misisti, deformatissima fuit in quolibet genere*. AB, p. 148.

315 *Qui quidem fratres provinciae Bosnae dictam ecclesiam et locum* […] *per quinquaginta annos et ultra contra eorum regulam incaute et indebite tenuerunt,* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 506.

316 *In ipsis domibus, conventibus atque locis divinus cultus minui ac observantia huiusmodi tepescere et penitus cessare possent.* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 570.

correction and reform'. [317] These sources will be put into context in the next section of my work, but they demonstrate that the problems of religious observance (or at least their perception) and the vicariate's integrity were intertwined. Such negative views of the religious observance in the vicariate contrast strongly with the earlier evidence which showed the Bosnian vicariate as a focal point of the order's radical energy. So how did such a wave of criticism came about and how should it be evaluated?

Although unpreserved, James' report from 1435 must have presented a somewhat comprehensive picture of religious decline in the vicariate. However, one issue remained conspicuous in the sources concerning his reform in Bosnia, which also happened to be characteristic for most of the major Franciscan controversies: the issue of poverty. Undoubtedly, poverty represents the central element of the Franciscan spirituality. St. Francis called his followers to became equal to the poorest of the poor, to embrace the 'Lady Poverty'. Their sustenance was supposed to be based only on transient and uncertain means. They were supposed to beg for alms for their daily needs, and avoid any form of fixed rents. Handling of money was prohibited.[318] The Franciscan rule issued in the papal bull *Solet annuere* on 29 November 1223 regulated this form of religious life, but with the order's rapid expansion, it was increasingly difficult to literally follow all its precepts. Controversies over the interpretation of poverty started already during St. Francis's lifetime and continued, under various forms and manifestations, throughout the Middle Ages. The Bosnian vicariate, although positioned at the Christendom's frontier, was not free of such tensions.

Unfortunately, the sources from the 1430s are very general, as they do not specify in what way the regulations were broken, beyond that some friars were accused of misusing privileges regarding alms for necessities, begging for them without necessity, or at the expense of their friary.[319] The fact that we are talking about misusing privileges indeed suggests the existence of some out-of-ordinary arrangements, because the friars were obviously allowed to beg for alms by default. At the same time however, none of these sources suggest any extraordinary breach of the Franciscan rule that could not have happened anywhere else. Nonetheless, I would argue that the controversy sparked by James's reform had indeed more profound roots. We know James's reform measures were actively resisted

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317 *Nonnulla domus, loca et conventus* […] *deformata sint et correctionis ac reformationis* […] *quamplurimum indigere noscantur.* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 569.
318 Malcolm Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty: The Doctrine of the Absolute Poverty of Christ and the Apostles in the Franciscan Order, 1210-1323* (London: S.P.C.K, 1961) p. 51.
319 AB, p. 150.

by some very high-ranked Franciscans, who escalated the case to the king of Bosnia, Tvrtko II (?–1443, king in 1404–09 and 1421–43).[320] James was indeed resisted by some very prominent friars, who clearly could have not all been simply lax in religious discipline.[321] Furthermore, the form of Franciscan sustenance in Bosnia continued to be an object of significant criticism after James's departure. So what was the problem with the poverty of the Bosnian friaries?

### I.3.2. The problem of poverty of the friaries in Bosnia

It has been already argued that adaptive measures of the Franciscans in Bosnia built up tensions with their Italian Observant superiors, and my argument is that this framework also applies to the controversy about the poverty of the Bosnian friaries. The first chapter has illustrated how much of a challenge Bosnian socio-economic conditions were. It was said that one of the strategies which the friars undertook was going to Dalmatian port towns to beg for alms. Some of the older scholarship has argued that this was criticised by James of the Marches, but more recently this was debunked as based on misidentifying our reformer with James of Piacenza, the vicar of Ragusa.[322] James of the Marches was aware of the bull *Excolentes* from 1369, because he noted it among the privileges of the Bosnian vicariate.[323] Furthermore, he himself even sent some friars to Dubrovnik and Senj for alms.[324] Although begging for alms outside of one's own native province was against the Franciscan regulations, considering that the Bosnian vicariate had a papal privilege to do that, it would be unlikely to actually spark any controversy. However, apart from an external income collection, the Franciscans obviously also tried all sorts of means to provide for their living without leaving Bosnia, although these have not so far been discussed in this study.

The most important source when considering this problem is the so-called *Status locorum vicariae Bosnae*. It is a report of a petition made at the Roman curia by the friars of the Bosnian vicariate to the pope, written down by a prominent friar of the vicariate, Elias of Požega.[325] The petition was presented to Pope Nicholas V by an otherwise unknown friar

320 Turchi and Nocco, 'Giacomo della Marca', pp. 130–31.
321 Cholewicki, 'Travels by St James of the Marches in East Central Europe, 1432– 1440', p. 102.
322 Krešić, 'Jakov Markijski', p. 169.
323 Matanić, 'De duplici activitate S. Iacobi de Marchia', p. 115.
324 AB p. 168; Rode, 'Documenti francescani' 14, p. 61.
325 Matanić, 'De duplici activitate S. Iacobi de Marchia', pp. 126-27. Elias of Požega was mentioned as a 'custodian of our's kingdom custody of Bosnia' in a Bosnian royal letter to John Capistran; AB, p. 227. He was

Francis of Agrepolo. The report is preserved in the Capistrano archive, and it was clearly written down when the pope was already dead (he is referred to as *pie recordationis*).[326] The petition must have been made around the turn of 1454 and 1455, when we otherwise know that Elias of Požega met Marco of Bologna in Rome regarding a petition to confirm Roberto Caracciolo for the vicar of Bosnia.[327] The report demonstrates attempts to reconcile the Franciscan standards with the socio-economic austerity of medieval Bosnia. It shows that the vicariate came up with some original but also rather unorthodox, if not illicit, economic solutions. The pope actually approved them, as long as the friars proved they would not be able to keep up their friaries otherwise. Elias, unfortunately, did not specify whether that applied to all cases presented, and if not, then to which of them it did. The bull should have been issued in this case, but I could not find any bull by Nicholas V relating to this report. Perhaps it is just not preserved, or the pope died before issuing one. Considering that everything about it is important, and because it is referred to in other parts of this work, I am providing a translation of the whole report:

> Firstly, in some places there are a few poor laymen, who are called *iobagiones* of the friars, allocated to their service by the noblemen, in a number determined by the chapter of the vicariate, proportionally to the needs of the friaries. They provide the wood from the forests for the friars, and they deliver necessities to the friaries, namely grain and wine, concerning which the friars demand no tribute at all, but instead of that they feed them. However, whenever these noblemen want, they take them [*iobagiones*] away or exchange them. And when they want, at the time of a great need, they extort pecuniary tribute from them. And these *iobagiones*, just as it is presented, are present in the parts of Bosnia and Croatia where the friars live in the greatest hardship and would not be able to endure in these friaries without them. In coastal places however no *iobagiones* are allocated because they are not indispensable.

mentioned as the custodian of Greben on the list of the Bosnian custodians composed by Wadding for 1462; AM, vol. 13 (1462), pp. 289-90. Then he became a custodian of Jajce, according to the document of the union of Pašman in 1464; Regestum, p. 72.

326 Matanić, 'De duplici activitate S. Iacobi de Marchia', pp. 126.

327 Marco issued a letter on 16 January 1455, reporting: *Pauculis elapsis diebus, quibus me huc Romam contulerim, quosdam ex vestris Fratribus Valentinum sicilicet et Eliam inveni* […] AM, vol. 12 (1454), p. 249. See also III.10.1.

Also, in the aforementioned friaries there is cattle, in a number established at the vicariate's chapter proportionally to the needs of friaries, for transporting wood from the forests and for the delivery of the demanded grain.
Also, there are horses in similar numbers, for quick journeys for confessions, for the administration of the communion, for the baptism of children, and for delivery of wine from the maritime parts to some places distant for up to six days.
Also, by the will of the secular lords, in some poor places, they extort profits, that is some measure of grain from the common folk, so these laymen collect that from these secular lords and deliver to the friaries. And this happens in instances when the friars would have not found alms at all by begging.
Also, I know there are mills in three places, two of them being where the silver veins are exploited. These mills were bought by very rich citizens of these towns, in order to spare the friars the trouble of frequently running about bread begging. Many times, it was decided at the vicariate's chapters to sell them, but these citizens do not permit that, saying the friars have nothing to say about them. In the third place there is a mill, bestowed by a certain man in a testament, yet in a way that it should not be alienated from the church, and thus the friars are not entirely free with that third mill either.
Also, in seven places, silver ores are being begged by the friars at the gates, and on established days of the week, these ores are being sold by the procurators and necessities are being bought for the friars, nourishment and clothing.
Also, I know that in two places, in large parts of gardens of the friars there are crocuses, where the friars were gathering flowers to be sold, and they were purchasing oil and fabric for clothes, because the patron of these places was giving almost nothing for oil and cloths. But now I do not know whether they still have these crocuses and what are they doing with them.
Also, friars in poor places exchange grain for wine, because otherwise they would have no wine.
Also, the king each year gives designated pecuniary alms for cloth and oil, so that these friars should be able to have cloth and oil, but not to all places, because he gives nothing to some.
Also, that same king of Bosnia […] but not to all.
All these aforementioned things have been announced to Pope Nicholas, of blessed memory, by friar Francis of Agrepolo. He allowed all the things where the friars

otherwise would not be able to endure otherwise. I brother Elias was present when these grants were made. [328]

The Franciscan friars were supposed to sustain themselves by begging for alms, in order to experience a level of economic insecurity 'as pilgrims and strangers in this world', along the lines of 'do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself' (Mt. 6:34).[329] *Exiit qui seminat* defines that the Franciscan friars must sustain themselves only with 'these things which are offered freely or on those which are begged humbly or on those which are acquired by labouring; which is the threefold means of living provided for expressly in the rule'.[330] Meanwhile, the Franciscans of the Bosnian vicariate developed quite original methods to secure their economic sustenance which extended well beyond such a framework. The allocation of serfs, *iobagiones,* as a source of labour and provisions for the

[328] *Primo, quod [in] aliquibus locis sunt aliquot pauperes homines saeculares, per dominos temporales pro servitiis fratrum deputati, in numero prout in Capitulis eiusdem Vicariae determinatum est secundum exigentiam locorum, quos vocant iobagiones fratrum. Qui fratribus de silvis ligna portant et questas eorumdem fratrum ad loca comportant, videlicet bladum et vinum, de quibus fratres nullam exactionem penitus exigunt, sed potius eos nutriunt. Sed iidem domini temporales dum volunt, tempore magnae necessitatis, exactionem pecuniariam ab eisdem extorquent. Hii autem iobagiones, prout praefertur, sunt in partibus Bosnae et Croatiae, ubi fratres cum maximo labore vivunt neque sine ipsis in eisdem locis permanere possunt. In locis vero maritimis iobagiones non sunt, quia non sunt pro necessitate.*
*Item in locis supradicts sunt boves, in numero per Capitula Vicariae deputati iuxta exigentiam locorum, pro portandis lignis de silvis et pro comportandis questis bladi.*
*Item sunt equi, similiter in numero, pro velocibus discursibus ad confessiones, ad communionem faciendam, et ad baptizandum pueros, et ad portandum vinum de partibus maritimis pro aliquibus locis etiam ad sex dietas huc atque illuc.*
*Item, de voluntate dominorum temporalium in aliquibus paucis locis lucras, idest aliquas mensuras bladi de populo vulgari exigunt, ita quod homines saeculares eorumdem dominorum temporalium, colligunt et ad loca fratrum comportant. Et hoc in illis contratis, ubi fratres petendo elemosinam penitus nichil invenirent.*
*Item, in tribus locis sentio molendinum [esse], in duobus locis ubi minera argenti fodiuntur. Quae molendina fuerunt comparata per ditiores cives illorum oppidorum., ut frequens discursus fratrum cohibeatur pro petendis panibus. Pluries in Capitulis Vicariae fuit determinatum ut vendantur, sed ipsi cives vendere non permiserunt, decentes quod fratres nichil habent circa ea facere. In tertio autem loco [habetur] molendinum per quemdam hominem in testamento legatum, ita tamen ut ab ecclesia non alienetur, et sic fratres neque cum eodem tertio molendino sunt omnino liberi.*
*Item, in septem locis minera argenti per portas mendicantur per fratres, statutis diebus in singulis ebdomadis, ipsaque minera per procuratores venduntur et fratribus necessaria comparantur, victus et amictus.*
*Item, in duobus locis sentio bonam partem in [h]ortis fratrum crocum habere, ubi fratres flores congregatos vendi faciebant et emebant oleum et pannum pro vestitura, quia patronus illorum locorum quasi nichil dabat pro vestitura et oleo. Nunc autem ignoro si ipsum crocum habeant et quid de ipso faciant.*
*Item, fratres in paucis locis commutant granum pro vino, quia aliter vinum non habent.*
*Item, dominus rex pro vestitura et oleo dat determinatam elemosinam pecuniariam singulis annis, sed non in omnibus locis, quia in aliquibus nichil dat, [ita ut ta]liter ipsi fratres [vestitu]ram et oleum habere possent.*
*Item, idem dominus rex Bosnae … , sed non in omnibus.*
*Ista omnia supradicta fuerunt per fratrem Franciscum de Agrepolo domino Nicolao piae recordationis papae declarata. Quae omnia concessit, ubi fratres aliter permanere non possent. Ubi et ego fr. Helijas interfui ea concessa fuisse.* Matanić, 'De duplici activitate S. Iacobi de Marchia', pp. 126-27.

[329] Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 61.

[330] *Exiit qui seminat*, from: https://www.papalencyclicals.net/nichol03/exiit-e.htm [accessed 09.11.2022].

friaries is quite an obvious breach of the Franciscan standard, because it happened under compulsion of the noblemen, and because it provided provisions on a regular basis. Outright extortion of grain or even money from such subjects may seem perverse. The lack of *iobagiones* in Dalmatian friaries, however, suggests that the friars strove to conform to the standards of religious conduct as best they could where it was possible. Whatever we make of justifications made by the supplicants, it is clear that such a relationship could have sparked controversy.

A letter of Vicar General Marco of Bologna to Bosnian king Stjepan Tomaš from 26 January 1453 confirms this, because he forbade the king to compel his subjects to provide the friars with necessities of life, stating that 'coerced services do not please God'.[331] This shows that not only the nobility could undertake such measures, but even the king himself. Interestingly, the vicar general justifies his position by saying: 'because if we were to tolerate this, it would be not just distressing, yet in fact the most grievous and troublesome thing to do to other provinces and parts of ours, so we do not want to permit such things which we would reprehend in other places'.[332] This suggests a counter-argument against the usual excuse coming from Bosnia, seen also in *Status locorum*, namely that it was impossible to keep up friaries otherwise. It also illustrates the nature of the tension between the agenda of the Cismontane leadership of the Observants and the 'unorthodox' strategies undertaken in Bosnia.

The friars were forbidden to receive horses by *Exivi de paradiso* nor to use them for travel by the rule, 'unless they are forced to it by manifest necessity or sickness'.[333] We know from Ragusan sources that the Bosnian friars were getting horses in testaments of merchants, and from *Status locorum* we learn that they were used for delivery of the sacraments and wine.[334] The question is, does this fall under 'manifest necessity'? Similarly ambiguous was their use of gardens, because *Exivi de paradiso* forbade the friars to take profit from them. It states: 'to have however any gardens to be cultivated, and olive trees and other garden plots to be sold for a price, and also even vineyards, is repugnant to their rule and the purity of the Order […] since even having the aforementioned things to enjoy the price of harvest in their

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[331] *Ut a suis populis vel voluntarie vel invite fratribus nostris victui necessaria tribuantur* […] *facere ipsi nolumus* […] *quia servitia coacta Deo non placent.* AB, p. 217-18.
[332] *Hoc enim si tolerabimus, ceteris nostris provinciis ac partibus erit non modo grave, verum etiam molestissimum atque acerbissimum; facere ipsi nolumus, quae in aliis facta reprehenderemus*. AB, p. 217-18.
[333] AM, vol. 10 (1430), pp. 181-82. *Exivi de paradiso,* from: https://www.papalencyclicals.net/clem05/exivi-e.htm [from 09.11.2022].
[334] Ковачевић-Којић, *Градска насеља,* pp. 286-87.

own seasons, approaches the nature and form of profits'.[335] Provided the friars were 'only' selling these crocuses to acquire what can be regarded as utmost necessities (cloth and oil), which presumably they could hardly acquire otherwise, were they still breaking the rule? There is a similar problem with annual alms provided by the king for these same things, because the annual rents as such were forbidden by *Exivi de paradiso,* stating that 'there is no doubt, that it is not licit to the aforesaid friars to receive nor enjoy'.[336]

Finally, the friars were repeatedly forbidden from storing up provisions, for example grain in barns or wine in cellars, but how was such a precept reconcilable, if at all, with the system of sustenance built (with papal permission) between the Bosnian and Dalmatian friaries of the vicariate?[337] This might have not come under criticism of James of the Marches, but was attacked by the Franciscans of Zadar, as demonstrated in chapter one. To give some contrast, the friars representing the 'Mirebeau Observance', one of the precursor groups of the order's restoration according to the 'reformed constitutions' rather than 'literal observance', were once said to 'not store up corn, wine, or other provisions, but live from daily alms'.[338] Furthermore, the ordinance of their congregation stated 'let the statute on riding be properly observed, especially that the brothers are not to own horses, and if it is desirable to ride let them borrow as far as possible a humble beast'.[339]

These examples do not demonstrate all potential problems or ambiguities stemming from the conduct presented by the report but should have already shown that it indeed carried a lot of potential for controversy. The customs described by the report do not seem to be some sort of recent innovations, but they were deeply rooted. The report demonstrates the strong role of the vicariate's chapter in economic management. The Franciscans' relationship with the nobility shows the friars as integrated on a somewhat elevated position in the Bosnian 'social contract'. Wadding suggests that some of the solutions described in the report might have been indeed targeted already by James of the Marches. Wadding wrote that 'some [friars] dispersed through several houses and farms of the castle of Jajce were enjoying incomes because they were saying that they could not live otherwise among the nation

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335 *Exivi de paradiso*. A certain Ragusan merchant gave his 'small vineyard' the friars of Zvornik. Ковачевић-Којић, *Градска насеља*, p. 286.
336 *Exivi de paradiso*. See also: Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 285, 487.
337 Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 292-93.
338 Translation from: Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 483.
339 Translation from: Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 483.

infected by various heresies'.[340] It is remarkable to find this in Wadding's work, because it already contains an otherwise standard excuse used by the Bosnian friars, but it is unclear base on what did he claim that this has become an issue already during the James' vicariate. It should not be excluded however that Wadding had access to some lost source.[341] An attack on such strategies by James would not be surprising, because they were not yet confirmed by the papacy.

Whatever we make of the settlement made by Nicholas V, some of the issues brought up by the *Status locorum* returned during the pontificate of Pius II. On 4 April 1460, he issued the bull *Dum fidem* (already introduced in chapter one), which permitted some familiar yet controversial solutions, because otherwise 'enduring among the infidels and neophytes' was impossible.[342] We are told by the bull that the noblemen in Bosnia were accustomed to allocating a few 'serfs or peasants', to deliver 'from the remote parts grain, wine, wood and other necessities' to the friaries.[343] Furthermore, 'some' friaries had some 'horses, cattle and donkeys'.[344] The choice of the verb *consuesco, -ere* in both cases suggests that these were not some recent innovations but deeply rooted adaptations to socio-economic conditions. The petition for the bull was made by the friars 'because such provisions do not seem properly suited the purity of your rule', confirming that whatever excuses were used by the Bosnian friars, their strategy sparked controversies.[345]

We encounter similar strategies applied in the Bosnian vicariate beyond Bosnia. In a charter from 5 December, 1428 for the Hungarian friars of Cheri, Caransebeş, Haţeg and Orşova, Sigismund of Luxemburg stated that they:

> Should be allowed and be able to employ men, having estates or houses in these places and offering themselves willingly, who should be kept and be allowed to

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340 *Quosdam per singulares domos et praedia Castri Jayze dispersos, et proventibus gaudentes, quia aliter inter gentem varia haeresi infectam, dicebant se vivere non posse* […]. AM, vol. 10 (1432), p. 228.
341 Čremošnik, 'Ostaci arhiva', p. 33.
342 BF, ns vol. 1, pp. 392-93
343 *Domicelli servitores seu rusticos suos, quandoque duos, quandoque tres, quandoque sex deputare consueverunt; qui quidem servitores seu rustici de ipsorum domicellorum mandato vobis ad loca huiusmodi a partibus remotis bladum, vinum, ligna et alia necessaria portando ministrant*. BF, ns vol. 2, pp. 393
344 *Vos in quibusdam locis equos, boves et asinos pro necessitate vestra servare consuevistis*. BF, ns vol. 2, pp. 393
345 *Cum puritati regulae vestrae tales provisiones convenire non videantur.* BF, ns vol. 2, pp. 393

manage works of the friaries and friars, and they should be exempted from payment of all customary taxes and contributions to us or our officials'.[346]

Furthermore, in Caransebeş the friars were allowed to ask the local castellan to provide them with wood from the royal forest, whenever they needed, because 'they would not be able to collect it from another place unless we should make a provision for them'.[347] In this way, Sigismund secured a stable workforce and income of wood for the friars, solutions not necessarily befitting the 'reformed' constitutions, yet once again we hear similar justification.

The Bosnian vicariate expanded to the lands of the Frankopan counts ruling over parts of Croatia, who provided the friars with some similar yet controversial forms of income and labour.[348] On 7 April 1431 the Observant Franciscans of the Bosnian vicariate were granted the church and a friary of St. Mary near Trsat (today a part of Rijeka) by Martin Frankopan and his wife. That convent went with a generous donation of land, both cultivated and uncultivated, in the proximity of the Trsat's castle, including all benefits and incomes it could provide.[349] Fermendžin provided a testamentary charter he dated for 12 August 1468 issued by Martin, largely expanding the income base of the friary near Trsat.[350] A problem with this charter is that it refers to some bull of Sixtus IV (1471-84), so there is something wrong with it or with the dating. Whatever we want to make of it, it is interesting in that it assigns Morlachs (Vlachs from the Dalmatian hinterland, as well as Lika and Herzegovina) for service of the friary, a solution we are already familiar with from Bosnia. It also states that 'because the said friars are of the Observance', they were reluctant to accept the grant, yet it was in a way imposed onto them by the force of that papal bull.[351] This casts an interesting contrast to all sorts of accusations levelled against the friars of the Bosnian vicariate. The friary of Galatina on the other side of Adriatic was also supported by donations of fiefdoms

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346 *Similiter homines, fundos curiarum seu domos in eisdem habentes, sponte se offerentes eligere valeant atque possint, qui procurationes ipsorum claustrorum et fratrum in eis pro tempore existentium exercere valeant et teneantur; quique ab omni solutione solitarum daciarum et contributionum nobis et officialibus nostris faciendis exempti habeantur et supportati.* AB, p. 128.

347 *Nec ea aliunde habeant capere, nisi a nobis eis sit provisum*. AB, p. 130.

348 AB, pp. 134-36, 252-53, 271-72, 274-77.

349 AB, pp. 134-36.

350 AB, pp. 274-77.

351 *Et quia predicti fratres, cum sint de observantia, nobis pro huiusmodi testamento resistebant* […] *eis fratribus litteris apostolicis silentium imposuimus ac eos consentire fecimus.* AB, p. 276.

and farmhouses.[352] Thus it can be confirmed that controversial provision of resources and workforce for the friaries expanded beyond Bosnia and took various forms.

### I.3.3. The problem of chaplaincy

Criticism of the religious conduct of the Bosnian friars was clearly not limited to matters of poverty, but even less is certain in this matter. The critical remarks of Bernardino of Aquila have already been discussed in the previous chapter. James of the Marches became somewhat conspicuous for his fight against the chaplaincy service by the friars of the Bosnian vicariate, likely because such friars frustrated his reform measures, as some high-ranked friars escalated their issue with James to King Tvrtko II.[353] The king recalled having asked James 'not to start anything in our kingdom which until now had not been started by your holy predecessors [and] brothers' in a letter from 1 April 1433 on their behalf.[354] The minister general wrote two letters on 17 December 1435, and they annulled any existing arrangements allowing the friars to serve as chaplains 'to prelates and princes […] in the kingdom of Hungary and in the entire Bosnian vicariate', except for those pertaining to the imperial majesty.[355] Furthermore, the friars were forbidden to celebrate mass for the Bosnian king or anyone of suspicious faith.

These seem to be countermeasures against those friars trying to hinder James' reform attempt by allying themselves with the king. However, the scale of minister general's decision is quite remarkable, and perhaps should be considered in the reform context. After all, the chaplaincy service as such has been viewed by more reform-oriented members of the order as spoiling the Franciscan discipline.[356] Some scholars also pointed out the splendour of the friaries in Bosnian royal residences as not befitting the Observant religious model.[357] At the same time, the friary in the Hungarian royal residence in Visegrád remaining under the Bosnian vicariate was also a significant architectural investment, and yet Sigismund of

[352] Corsi, 'I francescani', p. 246.
[353] Turchi and Nocco, 'Giacomo della Marca', pp. 130-31.
[354] *Ne inciperentur per vos in eodem nostro regno, que usque modo non fuerunt per priores sanctos vestros fratres vestros exorta*. Turchi and Nocco, 'Giacomo della Marca', p. 130.
[355] AB, pp. 148-50.
[356] (Cel. 2, ch. 84–85): Ferrers Howell (ed.), *The lives of S. Francis of Assisi* (London: Methuen, 1908), pp. 257–59; Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 53, 68–69.
[357] Džambo, *Franjevci*, pp. 154-55.

Luxemburg was explicitly exempt from the annulment.[358] Based on this I would argue that James' measures against chaplaincy was as much a religious reform as an attack against an opposition in the order.

The problem clearly re-emerged over the mid-1440s, simultaneously with the disintegration of the vicariate. The Franciscans apparently refused to serve the sacraments to King Tomaš due to his contacts with hierarchs of the *Krstjani*.[359] Later on, the bull *Dum salubria* from 3 July 1446 stated that the friars of the vicariate were allowed to refuse holy communion to anyone they considered not properly confessed.[360] It furthermore stated that no one should have the friars of the vicariate as chaplains unless by the permission of the vicar or a custodian. However, on 18 July 1447 papal permissions were issued for Petar Vojsalić, King Tomaš and Queen Katarina to appoint two Observant chaplains without the necessity to ask for their superiors' permission.[361] Two months later, on 26 September, the right to appoint the chaplains in the Bosnian vicariate was granted to the Cismontane vicar general.[362]

These papal documents are unfortunately too general to give us a clear picture of what exactly was going on. Considering they were all issued based on various petitions issued within a short period of time, my interpretation is that a controversy over the appointments of chaplains must have taken place, involving agendas of the Bosnian royal court and noblemen likely juxtaposed against that of the Hungarian vicar of Bosnia, Fabian of Bács, and the Cismontane vicar general, James Primadizzi. Both of them were generally unfriendly to Bosnian friars, as will be explained in the second section.[363]

**Conclusions**

This chapter has outlined the sources of discord dividing the Cismontane leadership of the Observants and the Franciscans of the Bosnian vicariate regarding religious conduct. Although their clash had to concern the mode of religious conduct in a much more holistic manner than presented here, one can only reflect on the points which were either spelled out

[358] József Laszlovszky, *Medieval Visegrád: Royal castle, palace, town and Franciscan friary* (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd University, 1995), pp. 29-30.
[359] We learn about it from a letter papal letter to Tomassini from 11 November 1445: Daniele Farlati, *Illiricum Sacrum* vol. 4 (Venice: Sebastiano Coleti, 1769), pp. 257-48. There may be an issue with this source's authenticity, what I evaluate on that in my MA thesis: Cholewicki, *The role of the Franciscans*, pp. 50-54.
[360] BF, ns vol. 1, pp. 496-97.
[361] BF, ns vol. 1, pp. 539-40.
[362] BF, ns vol. 1, pp. 569-70.
[363] See chapter six.

or at least hinted at by the sources. The problem of poverty seems to have constituted the central point of the controversy. The underlying pattern shows both sides as having various approaches to the running of the Franciscan economy. The Bosnian friaries relied on a good deal of controversial means of sustenance, which although justified by the economic austerity of their environment, caused resistance from their Cismontane superiors, aspiring to keep up all Observants under their regime to the same standard. Repetitive petitions made to the Roman curia by either side demonstrated that both were determined to stand their ground. These observations allow us to expand the conclusions of the previous chapter. Namely, the discord about poverty and other issues was necessarily intertwined with the campaigns of both sides to assert themselves as the true founders of the Franciscan Observance. Both problems must have been related because the side 'getting hold' of the history of the Franciscan Observance would bolster its claim to define the acceptable framework of religious conduct.

# Ch. 4: The patronage of Sigismund of Luxemburg over the Bosnian Observance

The formative phase of the Franciscan Observant movement brought about a large restructuring of the Franciscan order. Various concessions granted to Paoluccio of Foligno and similar groups of reformers in other parts of the order set up a precedent for formation of an autonomous structure for those following more rigorous religious conduct in the order. By the time of the publication of *Ut Sacra* in 1446, setting up a parallel chain of command for the Observants, their autonomy kept gaining ground but also suffering setbacks on different occasions. One of the major setbacks took place at the chapter of Assisi celebrated on 15 June 1430. Although it proclaimed the reformed constitutions *Martinianae* as obligatory for the entire order, as has been discussed, it also intended to get rid of all the Franciscan vicariates, declaring that 'by this act, we want to invalidate the vicariate's office', at the end of the eighth article.[364] The manoeuvre has sometimes been described as something of a gamble on John of Capistrano's part to win the order's unity and reform at the same time.[365] This annulment is predominantly emphasised as a countermeasure against the recently set up Observant vicariates, but it was also applied to the missionary vicariates, making the Observants as well as the missionaries - not necessarily Observants themselves – share the same fate.[366] For example, the Franciscan vicariate of Russia founded in 1370 was divided between the province of the Orient and the Czech-Polish province by the end of 1430.[367]

Such a reconfiguration obviously put the Bosnian vicariate into a rather awkward position. This chapter is going to elaborate on the problem of the Bosnian vicariate's integrity in the stormy time around the chapter of Assisi, and it is going to emphasise the patronage of the Hungarian king Sigismund of Luxembourg as key to its survival. Furthermore, it is going to demonstrate the synergy between Sigismund's agenda and the institutionalisation of the Observance in the vicariate. Lastly, it will demonstrate the internal transformation of the vicariate influenced by this patronage, as well as the internal struggles that it triggered, setting up a transition for the second section of the thesis concerning the disintegration of the Bosnian vicariate in the 1440s.

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364 *Vicariatus officium ipso facto volumus expirare*. AM, vol. 10 (1430), p. 183.

365 Nimmo, Reform and Division, p. 609.

366 On missionary vicariates see: Huber, *A Documented History*, p. 762; Žugaj, 'Bosanska vikarija', p. 6.

367 Dariusz Karczewski, *Franciszkanie w monarchii Piastów i Jagiellonów w średniowieczu; powstanie-rozwój-organizacja wewnętrzna* (Cracow: Avalon, 2012), p. 285.

### I.4.1. Contesting the integrity of the Bosnian vicariate

Modern historiography broadly speaking has described the Bosnian vicariate as unaffected, at least immediately, by the decision of Assisi, as we obviously continue to see the Bosnian vicariate functioning in the course of the fifteenth century.[368] Already on 1 October 1431 a bull was issued for the Observants in Crete in response to their petition to establish a vicar for them, mentioning that in Bosnia the Observants had one instead of a provincial minister.[369] Although the vicariate of Bosnia as such was not annulled by the chapter of Assisi, it nonetheless encouraged aspirations of the neighbouring provinces to seize parts of the Bosnian vicariate for themselves. The first chapter discussed the expansion of the Bosnian vicariate to Hungary, Dalmatia and South Italy. While the vicariate's foundations in these parts were obviously beneficial for it, that did not mean the respective provinces were in favour of such a settlement. Petitions for confirmation of the vicariate's possessions in Hungary and Dalmatia demonstrated anxiety of its friars to losing them.

On 4 July 1421 Martin V issued a bull to the Bosnian bishop in Đakovo, assuring him of support for the confirmation made by the minister general of the vicariate's friaries which 'they held and possessed peacefully and in a calm manner for sixty-two years or so' on the borders of Hungary and Dalmatia.[370] The bull *Sacrae religionis* from 28 July 1425 tells us that 'some provincial ministers or other officials of this order were hostile to the friars who dwelled within the said borders [of the vicariate, near to the borders of Hungary and next to the sea] and they were striving to subjugate them to their power and to size said places for themselves'.[371] These sources do not just reflect on the tensions in the 1420s, but ponder upon the time of the first generalate of Antonio de Pereto (1405-08) and Angelo Salvetti (1408-09). Bartholomew of la Verna apparently got some confirmations of the vicariate's integrity already back then, which were upheld in the 1420s. Finally, the council of Basel issued a charter on 30 April 1434, referring to interferences of the provincials, but confirming

368 Pavao Živković, *Iz srednjovjekovne povijesti Bosne i Huma* (Osijek: Napredak, 2002), p. 318.
369 BF, ns vol. 1, p. 21.
370 *A sexaginta duobus annis, vel circa, tenuerunt et possederunt pacifice et quiete.* AM, vol. 10 (1421), pp. 397.
371 *Nonulli provinciales ministri seu officiale salii dicti ordinis, ipsis fratribus, qui degebant pro tempore infra limites antedictos* [*circa confinia regni Ungariae et iuxta mare*] *erant infesti, illosque sue potestati subiicere, dictaque loca sibi applicare moliebantur.* AB, p. 122-24. Fermendžin misdated the document for 1424, but July 'anno octavo' for Martin V must mean 1425. Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna,* p. 87.

that ‘the provincial ministers or other superiors of the order should have no jurisdiction over these friars as much as places, friaries, convents or houses’.[372]

All of these demonstrate, in some rather general terms, real undertakings or at least aspirations of the Hungarian and Dalmatian provincials to annex respective parts of the vicariate, taking place since the early fifteenth century. One might think that the chapter of Assisi 1430 should have given momentum to these tendencies, and the Bosnian vicariate should have faced the fate of the vicariate of Russia, which was a partition. Yet, this clearly was not the case. How should this be explained? It seems that although at least in Hungary some aspirations of the province were indeed stirred by the chapter, they were also quickly restrained. The bull *Rationi congruit* from March 1431 tells us that the custodian of Bosnia used to control the Observant friaries in Hungary, bordering the Turks, but lost it recently for an unspecified reason.[373] My hypothesis is that this happened as a result of the decision taken at Assisi, encouraging the Hungarian provincial to seize these houses. However, the Hungarian king Sigismund of Luxemburg stepped in on the vicariate’s behalf, and by his petition the papacy issued *Rationi congruit,* confirming the Bosnian custodian’s control of these houses. So, the vicariate’s integrity was preserved by his petition, but why would he be this invested in the vicariate’s integrity?

### I.4.2. The end game of Sigismund’s patronage

It is well established that Sigismund of Luxemburg developed a close relationship with the Franciscan Observants. Already at the council of Constance, he supported the petition of the French Observants (*Quaerimoniae*) by saying that it ‘is just, since we are gathered here in order to reform the state of the Church.’[374] Bernardino of Siena also helped him later to arrange the imperial coronation.[375] Patronage over the Observance in the Bosnian vicariate therefore corresponds well to a wider interest of Sigismund in the movement. Following the council of Constance, he and his entourage made of the Hungarian baronial elite commenced a policy of support of foundations of friaries of the Bosnian vicariate, some of which were explicitly said to be for the Observants, while others turned out to be

[372] *Quod provinciales ministri seu alii in ipso ordine superiores deputati nullam in dicta loca, claustra, conventus, ac domos et fratres eorundem iurisdictionem habeant.* AB, p. 141.
[373] BF, ns vol. 1, pp. 30-31.
[374] Translation from: Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 548-49.
[375] Moorman, *A History*, p. 465; Andrić, *The Miracles*, p. 20.

Observant eventually.[376] The Visegrád foundation in 27 June 1425 is particularly important because it offered the Observant friars the restored chapel of St. George in the royal residence for them.[377] The fact that the annulment of the chaplaincy arrangements at the request of James of the Marches omitted the emperor may confirm that the friars of Visegrád had indeed became Sigismund's chaplains.[378] Similarly, many of these new friaries were founded by the baronial elite, often in their residences, which is a new development when compared to predominantly royal foundations of the previous century (if we accept the Franciscan tradition).[379] This clearly points to the spiritual interests of Sigismund as much as the baronial elite in the Franciscan Observants. Romhányi used such evidence to propose quite a radical argument, effectively arguing that the Hungarian Observant foundations lay in Constance rather than the Bosnian vicariate, but I cannot agree with that.[380] While it is clear that explicitly Observant foundations in Hungary started to appear only after the council, we should not forget that Sigismund was having a great influence on what was going on at Constance in the first place. It is also clear that throughout his reign he was consistent in his political and economic support for the Bosnian vicariate. Finally, for him, this support was unequivocally the patronage of the Franciscan Observance.

The bull *Rationi congruit* was the response to Sigismund's petition, asking for the restoration of the Bosnian control over the Observants in Hungary, because:

> The friars had lived purely and honestly for the glory of God and the grace of the order in these houses according to their order's regular statutes, and therefore the said king desires, that these friars should not turn to enticements of the worldly conduct and lay vanities, but that they should purely and religiously serve God, to whom they were dedicated.[381]

This bit reveals a relationship between the quality of religious conduct and the problem of the vicariate's integrity. Because the friaries in question were Observant, the

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376 Romhányi, 'Das Konstanzer Konzil', pp. 242-44.
377 Laszlovszky, *Medieval Visegrád*, pp. 26-33.
378 AB, p. 149.
379 Romhányi, 'Das Konstanzer Konzil', p. 244.
380 Romhányi, 'Das Konstanzer Konzil', pp. 246-47.
381 *Fratres in domibus ipsis degentes secundum ipsius ordinis regularia statuta ad Dei laudem et religionis decorem pure et sincere vixerant, et propterea idem rex desideret, ne fratres praefati ad mundanae conversationis illecebras et saeculi vanitates se diverterent, sed Deo, cui dedicati erant, pure et religiose famularentur*. BF, ns vol. 1, p. 30.

Observance as such was involved, as juxtaposed against the unreformed Hungarian province. Obviously, good religious conduct was not the key reason underlying the favourable decision, and I am not even trying to suggest that it was indeed better in the vicariate than in the province, but it is important to mark this out as emerging in the dialectics. The key reason for the restoration of the Bosnian control over the Observants in Hungary, or at least parts of it, I see in the influence of the petitioner, Sigismund, arguably the most powerful individual of the Latin Christendom at the time, considering that the papacy was still recovering from the Schism.

Already as the emperor, Sigismund petitioned the charter of the council of Basel on 30 April 1434, which stated:

> These friars in aforesaid kingdoms have undergone many and diverse persecutions for the Catholic faith from the infidels and have attracted them to faith without limit by the life of their sanctity, morals and preaching, even in the time of Louis king of Hungary, of blessed memory, who was having for them a special affection of devotion.[382]

The charter was obviously issued for the Bosnian vicariate, but whatever we make of the existence of two branches of the order in the vicariate, its friars were unequivocally identified as the Observants in this document.[383] In this way, the reference is extrapolated to the Observant Franciscans as having been present already in Louis's period, which strikes a remarkably familiar chord to what we have read in the Hungarian Observant Chronicle. This perhaps should not surprise us, as the vicariate of Balázs of Szálka, an author of a chronicle claimed to be used by the Hungarian Observant chronicle, took place in the 1420s.[384] As a matter of fact, around this time, compared to other relatively recently established Observant vicariates, the Bosnian vicariate was the only one having almost a century-long and continuous history. It was just a next step for its Observants to appropriate the vicariate's history for their own branch and use it to their own advantage in the internal Observant disputes, which has been evaluated in the second chapter.[385] Sigismund's role was again key.

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382 *Eosdem fratres in regnis predictis etiam a tempore dive memorie Ludovici regis Hungarie, qui ad eos singularem gerebat devotionis affectum, ab infidelibus multas et diversas persecutiones pro fide catholica sustinuisse, et sine numero suis sanctis vita, moribus et praedicationibus infideles ad fidem traxisse.* AB, p. 141.
383 See I.2.1.
384 Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, pp. 85-87.
385 de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 43.

The charter shows that a reinterpretation of the past was promoted whilst the Observance was becoming the dominant force in the vicariate, demonstrating how profound identity-transformation was fostered under his patronage in the vicariate.

The end game of Sigismund's patronage over the vicariate and the Observance was to instrumentalise their religious potential for the Hungarian monarchy. My hypothesis is that in the Observant transformation he saw a chance to win the Bosnian vicariate for the Hungarian agenda, by providing it with the necessary political and economic support. I have already discussed the agenda of the Angevins regarding the vicariate, but this did not mean that vicars were won permanently for the Hungarian allegiance. The contact between Peregrinus of Saxony and Venice during its war with Hungary is the earliest example standing in a way of such interpretation, because Venice was using the vicar's mediation to prevent the Bosnian ban from entering the war on Hungarian side.[386] However, vicars of Bosnia from the 1420s until the Bosnian-Hungarian breakup of 1448 became conspicuous for their involvement in Hungarian affairs, while evidence for their activities in Bosnia is sparse.[387] Furthermore, they were either from Hungary (Balázs of Szálka, John of Baja, Fabian of Bács) or were strongly involved in Hungarian matters (John of Korčula, James of the Marches). It is a remarkable development because before Balázs, there was only one, short-term Hungarian vicar of Bosnia.[388]

The Hungarians must have gained a decisive influence on the appointments of the vicars, but it is unclear how. It might be because of the numerous foundations of friaries by the baronial elite.[389] The political rapprochement of Tvrtko II with Sigismund in 1426/27, as well as the later submissiveness of the Bosnian kings to Hungary may also be significant.[390] Although the vicars of Bosnia were initially appointed by the ministers general, Bartholomew of La Verna petitioned some unpreserved bull from Gregory XII, which granted the vicariate's friars a right to elect vicars.[391] Albeit causing some tensions with William of Casale, the right was confirmed by *Sacrae Religionis* (1425), Basel's charter (1434) and a bull of Eugenius IV (1437), all three marked with the Hungarian channels of influence.[392] The elections of the vicars Balázs of Szálka, who 'worked a lot for the holy Observance

386 Babić, *Iz istorije,* p. 87.
387 de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 42.
388 Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, p. 63.
389 de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 42.
390 Engel, *The realm of St. Stephen*, p. 236; Lovrenović, *Na klizištu,* p. 239.
391 AB, p. 123; Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, pp. 89-91.
392 AB, pp. 122-24, 141-42; Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, p. 100.

against the minister general' as claimed by the Hungarian Observant Chronicle, and James of the Marches, one of the four 'pillars of the Observance', demonstrate an ongoing synergy between the expansion of the Hungarian influence and the rise of the Observance in the vicariate.[393]

Over the fifteenth century, the Hungarian kingdom faced many challenges, opening up opportunities for the vicariate's friars to play a greater role in Hungarian religious life. The Ottoman expansion was obviously the most important development, because it required a significant reconfiguration of the Hungarian southern policy. While the kingdom could expand southeast under the Angevins, the Ottomans forced a more defensive posture from Hungary in the fifteenth century. Sigismund invested a lot of resources to fortify the southern border along the Danube.[394] That meant that Hungarian policy became less interested in the expansion of the boundaries of faith, than in means to protect them from the 'infidel' invaders. Hungarian historiography has often discussed the role of the Observant Franciscans as military chaplains, and undertaking of that role had roots in the Bosnian vicariate.[395] János Thuróczi claimed that many *fratres Cherienses* fell in the battle of Varna (1444).[396] On 11 January 1437, Sigismund sent a letter to James of the Marches, asking him to join the army he prepared against the Turks, with six to eight companions to boost the morale of the army.[397]

### I.4.3. Inquisition of James of the Marches in Hungary and its significance

Another important frontier of faith in East Central Europe was opened by the Hussite revolution, involving the Hungarian armies of Sigismund in an effort to suppress it.[398] The Hussite heresy emerged in Hungary as well, promoted by lapsed clergymen having links to the University of Prague, and gaining footholds over the 1430s in the market towns of the southern areas of Szerémség (cr. Srijem) and Bács.[399] A somewhat separate group was formed in Transylvania, having connections with Moldavia, where a significant Hussite hub

393 *Frater Blasius multum laboravit pro sancta observantia contra Ministrum Generalem,* AMH, p. 238.
394 Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen*, pp. 231-32, 237-38.
395 Karácsonyi, *Szent Ferencz*, vol. 1, p. 325.
396 de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 131.
397 Turchi and Nocco, 'Giacomo della Marca', p. 133.
398 Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen*, pp. 230-31.
399 Engel, The *Realm of St. Stephen*, p. 264; Galamb, 'Eretnekség és inkvizíció' p. 139.

was allowed to thrive by a tolerant policy of Voivode Alexander the Good.[400] The Hungarian kingdom did not face any major outbreak of heresy by this point, so its secular and ecclesiastic elites were unprepared.[401] This opened yet another window of opportunity for the vicariate's Franciscans, because smiting heresy was their specialty. In this field, the activity of James of the Marches was of particular significance, because he supervised an effective inquisition which eradicated the movement in the southern dioceses.[402]

He started to act against the Hussites in Hungary initially with the inquisitorial rights granted to him by the local bishops, and on 22 August 1436, he was appointed inquisitor of Hungary and Austria by the pope.[403] He continued his investigations until late 1439, when he withdrew from Hungary due to health reasons, and a papal letter issued on 5 April 1440 relieved him from all his obligations regarding the inquisition or imposed on him by the minister general.[404] According to the Hungarian Observant chronicle, the Hussites of the southern areas of Hungary, led by Tamás of Pécs and Bálint of Ilok, the first translators of the Bible to Hungarian, fled 'by night' to Moldavia from James's inquisition.[405] The inquisition was obviously not a one-man enterprise because James involved other friars from the Hungarian friaries of the Bosnian vicariate in it.[406] The Bosnian vicars who succeeded James (John of Baja and Fabian of Bács) were also appointed inquisitors (1439 and 1445 respectively).[407] The bull for Fabian from 23 January 1445 appointed him as well as his successors in the office of the vicar of Bosnia as inquisitors, and urged them to act freely whenever bishops would show reluctance in the prosecution of heresy for whatever reason.[408] The local secular lords and prelates were incentivised to aid the inquisition with the same indulgences as those crusading to the Holy Land. Besides the Hussites, the document drew Fabian's attention to witches. A bull from 3 July 1446 commanded Fabian to proceed also

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400 György Galamb, 'San Giacomo della Marca e gli eretici di Ungheria', in *San Giacomo della Marca nell'Europa del '400* ed. by Silvano Bracci (Padua: Centro Studi Antoniani, 1997) pp. 211-20 (pp. 213-14).
401 Galamb, 'Eretnekség és inkvizíció', p. 139; Marie Madeleine de Cevins, Marek Derwich and Beatrix Romhányi, 'Monasticism in Medieval Central Europe (c. 800-c. 1550)' in *Oxford Handbook of Medieval Central Europe*, ed. by Nada Zečević and Daniel Ziemman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022) pp. 507-30 (p. 516).
402 Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen*, p. 264; Galamb, 'Eretnekség és inkvizíció', p. 139.
403 AB, p. 153.
404 BF ns vol. 1, pp. 221–22.
405 AMH, p. 240. On this translation and its historiographical controversy, see: György Galamb, 'A Huszita biblia és a ferencesek. Megjegyzések az első magyar bibliafordítás kérdéséhez', *Egyháztörténeti Szemle*, 10/2 (2009), from: https://www.uni-miskolc.hu/~egyhtort/cikkek/galambgyorgy.htm [accessed 21.03.2023].
406 Galamb, 'Eretnekség és inkvizíció', p. 143.
407 BF, ns vol. 1, p. 198.
408 MH, vol. 2, pp. 223-24.

against some priests having concubines and refusing to acknowledge that that was a sin, as against the heretics.[409] These must be the same people James complained about as well.[410]

All these documents illustrate a significant and more permanent shift in the Bosnian vicariate's priorities and rights. Before James the vicars of Bosnia were not inquisitors, even though they acted against heresy. James's vicariate apparently changed the perception of the office, however, as becoming responsible for policing religious dissent in Hungary. The vicars of Bosnia also targeted the Hussite hub in Moldavia, which will be examined in the next section. The shift to Hungarian religious affairs went hand in hand with the marginalisation of Bosnian matters. James of the Marches was also, to our knowledge, the first vicar of Bosnia daring to antagonise the Bosnian king. He openly criticised the Bosnian policy of balance between the Roman and the Bosnian faith. Because his plans in Bosnia were frustrated by King Tvrtko II, at the assembly of Székesfehérvár in winter of 1435/36, James asked Sigismund of Luxemburg to intervene on his behalf.[411] This compelled Tvrtko to issue a charter favouring James's proselytising aspirations and reform measures.[412]

However, I have argued that James's real achievements in Bosnia could not be abundant, and feeling perhaps too restrained to pursue his ambitions by the Bosnian court, he chose to allocate his time and energy for Hungarian matters, mainly the inquisition, supported by the local secular and ecclesiastic elites.[413] The Hungarian Observant chronicle even claims that 'in that inquisition, he resigned from the vicariate', which although not literally true, is a good illustration of James's priorities.[414] Such an approach obviously aligned with the agenda of Sigismund of Luxemburg, suggesting his influence on James's plans. I have also already provided sources allowing us to extrapolate that the vicariates of James's successors followed a similar trajectory, as focused on the Hungarian religious matters and the inquisition, suggesting far-reaching consequences of the reconfiguration.

There is one final thing marking James's vicariate relevant for my discussion; the emergence and suppression of separatism in Dalmatia. James petitioned a bull *Ad ea ex debito pastoralis officii* prohibiting any attempts to separate some Dalmatian friaries from the Bosnian vicariate, issued on 11 June 1437. It reports that:

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409 MSM, vol. 1, pp. 394-95.
410 BF, ns. vol. 1, p. 161; Galamb, 'San Giacomo', p. 214.
411 Ernestus Birk (ed.), 'Aegidii Carlerii (Quinta legacio)' in *Monumenta Conciliorum Generalium seculi decimi quinti – Concilium Basiliense scriptorum*, 3 vols. (Vienna: 1857-86), vol. 1, pp. 676–677.
412 AB, pp. 150-51.
413 Cholewicki, 'Travels by St James of the Marches in East Central Europe, 1432– 1440', pp. 106-07; Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, pp. 108-09.
414 *In qua inquisitione vicariatum resignavit*. AMH, p. 239.

> Some debauched and lax friars of the said order plot to divide some friaries in the Bosnian vicariate, in which houses and convents of the said friars exist, by deceit and under the pretext of sanctity and benevolence with the help of lay people, and they continuously desire to incorporate and to join them with the friaries of the said order in Dalmatia.[415]

Unfortunately we do not get anything more precise about the circumstances of these endeavours. Some attempts were made to seize the coastal friaries of the Bosnian vicariate for the Dalmatian province, but we do not learn which friaries, in particular, were targeted, or who were the 'deceitful' friars or the lay people who helped them. By this point, the Bosnian vicariate controlled friaries on Ragusan (Ston, Rožat, Slano, Konavle) Venetian (Pašman, Ugljan, Novigrad, Korčula and likely a few others in some debatable localities in Split diocese) and Frankopan (Trsat, Senj) territories, which represented three very different political environments.[416] The annexation attempt in question most likely concerned the friaries in Venetian Dalmatia, because at the time both the Frankopans and the Ragusan government were supportive of the vicariate, while Venice supported the Dalmatian province. The problem of friars campaigning for the annexation is important. We have encountered some earlier references to the aspirations of the Dalmatian province, and it is an interpretation of Žugaj that James referred to the Conventual leadership of the province.[417]

In my interpretation however I follow the hypothesis of Škunca, who argued that the attempt was plotted by the Dalmatian Observants, wanting to establish their autonomy under the provincial, similarly to Observants in other Latin Christian provinces, rather than be part of the Bosnian vicariate.[418] Such an arrangement was eventually established after the secession of five Observant friaries from Bosnia in 1447, and this will be discussed later.[419] Furthermore, the Observance in Dalmatia became quite vibrant by the mid-1430s, as the movement was actually not confined to the friaries of the Bosnian vicariate, because there was a mention of the Observants in the friary of Zadar in 1419, and the Ragusan government

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415 *Nonnulli fratres dicti ordinis dissoluti et vagabundi sub sanctitatis specie et bonitatis simulatione saecularium personarum auxilio freti, loca quaedam in vicariatu Bosnae, in quibus domus et conventus dictorum fratrum existent, dividere procurant, et domibus et conventibus dicti ordinis in Dalmatia constitutis annectere et incorporare continuo student.* AB, p. 160.

416 Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, pp. 49-50, 119-21, 126-29, 132-36.

417 Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, pp. 51-52.

418 Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, pp. 51-52.

419 See II.8.2.

launched a policy of an independent reform of the convent in their city and on the nearby island of Daksa in 1428, in order to reduce the influence of Venice-patronised Dalmatian provincials.[420] A figure of authority among the Dalmatian Observants, Nicholas of Trogir, was sent to Donji Kraji against the heretics at the request of James of the Marches soon after, which speaks further in favour of the hypothesis, if we interpret this as a manoeuvre against endeavours to take the coastal friaries from the vicariate.[421] Whoever the friars referred to were, it is clear that the response was the suppression of their efforts, which aligned with the already demonstrated policy of Bosnian vicariate's preservation by Sigismund, although this time he did not petition for a bull. His relationship with James of the Marches however seems to have been cordial, so ultimately, the suppression of Dalmatian separatism should be partly credited to Sigismund's policy.

### Conclusions

The rise of the Franciscan Observance brought a lot of structural reconfigurations. The vicarial regime as such was contested at the chapter of Assisi 1430, in the name of the order's unity. Existing Observant vicariates were toppled, but also some older missionary entities with them. That put the integrity of the Bosnian vicariate in peril, but it has been argued in this chapter that because its friars found a powerful patron in Sigismund of Luxemburg, it prevailed during the stormy moment. From this perspective, the rise of the Observance strengthened rather than weakened the integrity of the Bosnian vicariate. Because the Observance could be fostered in the vicariate, a movement which Sigismund found spiritually attractive and politically beneficial, he took the vicariate under his powerful patronage. At the same time, he did not miss the opportunity to reshape it in accordance with his own aims, and indeed there was a synergy between the rise of the Observance in the vicariate and its domination by the Hungarian agenda. Remarkably, attacks on the vicariate's integrity in this period, at least as far as could be assessed, did not involve accusations against the Bosnian family's religious conduct. Quite the contrary, their good religious conduct was used by *Rationi conruit*, to defend the vicariate's integrity.

Sigismund's campaign brought about some far-reaching consequences. At the same time, the rise of the Observance must not be limited to his influence. The earlier two chapters have

[420] Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, pp. 59-60.
[421] BF, ns vol. 1, p. 148; Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 53.

demonstrated that the seeds of the Observance were sown in Bosnia already in the formative phase of the reform movement. The Dalmatian group supervised by Nicholas of Trogir was clearly at odds with the Hungarian monarchy, while the campaign of reform launched by Ragusa was their independent affair. None of these reform currents, however, diminish the achievements of the Sigismund's campaign, which effectively secured the institutionalisation of the Observance in the vicariate, certainly in the political arena, but they do demonstrate some diverse aspirations and ideas of the Observant friars within the vicariate's ambit.

In this way, although strengthening the vicariate's structure in the short term, the Observant transformation, guided by Sigismund's campaign, helped to unravel and accelerate rifts within the vicariate's family which in time made its integrity untenable. Setting Hungary and its affairs at the centre of the vicariate's gravity was not seen favourably in Bosnia, where the friars were concerned with reviving Catholicism. The republic of Venice was also clearly alarmed by such changes, considering its old rivalry with Hungary over Dalmatia. It must have been very upsetting for the Venetians to hear that attempts to annex some Bosnian coastal friaries to Dalmatian province went up in smoke in 1437. The friars on the Ragusan territories might have been more indifferent to the shift given their state's steady vassal position under Hungary. Finally, having acquired so much influence and attention, and being compelled to change their priorities from proselytization of the Orthodox to fighting the Ottomans and the Hussites, should the Hungarian Observants remain content to constitute a structure called 'Bosnian' for long?

# Section II: The disintegration of the Bosnian vicariate

The second section is dedicated to the disintegrating processes affecting the Bosnian vicariate in the years 1444-48. Its main purpose is to examine this loss of cohesion and its relation to the rise of the Franciscan Observance across the development of new structures, reform groups and efforts of centralisation of the reform. How did the Bosnian vicariate, where the seeds of the Observance found such a fertile ground to grow, collapse around the same time as the Franciscan Observance gained huge momentum, having secured its autonomy by the bull *Ut sacra* (1446)? The section is divided into four chapters, three of which deal with secession of a single (Hungarian, Apulian and Dalmatian) part of the vicariate individually. They will demonstrate the exceptionality of each case, yet will also discuss their common denominators and mutual relationships. These case studies are preceded by a chapter introducing key historical and political developments and events for the readers unfamiliar with Bosnian history. The main goal of the first chapter is to discuss quite dramatic changes in the religious policy in Bosnia of the mid-1440s. This historical contextualisation is relatively short here, but it will be continued in the third section, which encompasses a much larger chronological time-frame.

# Ch. 5: The Catholic transformation of Bosnia

The previous chapter reflected on threats to the vicariate's integrity coming from the Hungarian and Dalmatian provinces. However, powerful political figures intervened in favour of the vicariate's integrity. The Holy Roman Emperor as well as Hungarian King, Sigismund of Luxemburg, made the Bosnian vicariate's integrity part of his political agenda. In the late 1420s and early 1430s, the Ragusan republic also encouraged the vicariate's expansion on its territory at the expense of the Dalmatian province. Moreover, the Council of Basel and Pope Eugenius IV were also convinced of the necessity to preserve the integrity of the vicariate for its great role to expand the Catholic faith beyond the borders of Latin Christendom. This 'alliance' successfully repelled aspirations of the provincials.

A different challenge to the vicariate's integrity was the Ottoman expansion. While the Ottomans naturally did not threaten to dismantle the legal basis of the vicariate's jurisdiction over houses in different parts of South-eastern Europe, their military incursions did pose a physical threat to them as well as to the Franciscan friars. A report of James of the Marches spoke of sixteen destroyed friaries.[422] Their attacks threatened the friaries in Bosnia, in other parts of the Balkans and in the south Hungary. The Ottoman expansion gradually put an end to the Hungarian aspirations in the Balkans, pushing back the missionary enterprises patronised by the Hungarian kings, which as was demonstrated, were organised by the Bosnian vicariate.

But despite these external threats, the factors leading to the more significant territorial reduction were of an internal nature. Vibrant Observant families grew in Hungary and Dalmatia under the jurisdiction the vicariate. They continued to receive permissions for new foundations, some of which were located in important centres of power or urbanisation. They also found powerful patronage of local aristocratic houses. In time, these Observants developed strong need for independence from the vicariate in pursuit of self-government, and in that they found a powerful patronage of the political powers, Hungary, Venice and Dubrovnik, having their own political ends to rid the friaries on their territories of Bosnian jurisdiction. Eventually, such pursuits found allies in the Cismontane leadership of the

[422] Mandić presumed that those sixteen friaries were destroyed in Bosnia, however, the text of this bull as well as those issued later referring to this report do not specify it. Judging by the context, it simply speaks of certain sixteen friaries that could been located in any part of the vicariate. BF, ns vol. 1, p. 159; Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, p. 110

Observants. Let us however outline the key historical and political developments of Bosnian Catholicisation, happening around the same time as the disintegration of the Bosnian vicariate, before moving on to three case studies analysing the Bosnian vicariate's disintegration.

### II.5.1. King Stjepan Tomaš embraces Catholicism

All Bosnian political developments of the fifteenth century unfolded in the shadow of gradual Ottoman expansion. The Ottoman military incursions into Bosnia started to take place in the second half of the fourteenth century, and in 1415 the kingdom was forced to yield and become an Ottoman tributary. Given the strategic position of Bosnia, it was used as a passage for devastating Ottoman raids to Dalmatia and to the southern parts of the kingdom of Hungary. Those raids occasionally brought devastation to Bosnia as well.[423] Finally, in May 1463 Sultan Mehmed II launched a grand campaign to conquer Bosnia, which succeeded in seizing most of the lands controlled by its kings, and Stjepan Tomašević was executed. Before that happened, however, Bosnia kept trying to find allies to stand a chance to endure.

Tolerance of the Bosnian church presented a potential obstacle for any talks about creating a united anti-Ottoman front with the Catholic powers. However, the success of the Council of Florence in July 1439 in bringing about a union of Churches lit optimism in ecclesiastic circles to restore more 'schismatics' or 'heretics' to the Christian oikumene governed from Rome. The dispatch of the papal legate and the bishop of Hvar, Thomas Tomassini, on 12 September 1439 to Bosnia, as well as the ascension of Stjepan Tomaš to the throne in late 1443, opened a phase of an unprecedently close relationship between the Holy See and the Kingdom of Bosnia, leading to the kingdom's embrace of Catholicism.[424] This change, combined with the Ottoman expansion, re-conceptualised Bosnia in the eyes of the contemporaries from the land of the 'heathens' to something of an *Antemurale Christianitatis* in quite a short time.[425] Furthermore, the appointment of an Observant friar George of Bosnia

[423] Emir Filipović, 'The key to the gate of Christendom? The Strategic importance of Bosnia in the struggle against the Ottomans', in *The crusade in the fifteenth century: Converging and Competing cultures* ed. by Norman Housley (London/New York: Routledge, 2016), pp. 151-68 (p. 157); Cholewicki, *The role of the Franciscans*, p. 39.
[424] Farlati, *Illyricum sacrum*, vol. 4, p. 256; AB, 175; Stjepan Krasić, 'Toma Tomasini, hrvatski biskup, teolog i diplomat (1429-1462)', *Starine* 63 (2005), 91-162 (p. 110); Luka Špoljarić, 'The Renaissance papacy and Catholicization of the 'Manichean Heretics': rethinking the 1459 purge of the Bosnian kingdom', in *Global Reformations: Transforming Early Modern Religions, Societies, and Cultures*, ed. by Nicholas Terpstra (London: Routledge, 2019), pp. 153-75 (p. 154).
[425] Filipović, 'Exurge igitur', p. 202.

on 2 September 1441 as chaplain of Eugenius IV definitely contributed to increasing of the papal attention to Bosnian case.[426]

Not long before his death, King Tvrtko II supposedly renounced the 'Manichean dogma' through an envoy sent to Rome, accompanied by Tomassini, and embraced Catholicism.[427] However, Tvrtko II died in November of 1443, and was succeeded by Stjepan Tomaš. The new king faced several major internal challenges to his legitimacy. He was an illegitimate son of King Stjepan Ostoja and he was already married to a commoner, Vojača.[428] The voivode of Hum, Stjepan Kosača refused to recognize him, and he promoted Tomaš's brother, Radivoj, to the Bosnian throne, driving the kingdom into a civil war.

From the beginning of his reign, Tomaš took serious steps for a real Catholic transformation of Bosnia. Two bulls issued for Tomaš on 29 May 1445 suggest that the papacy incentivised the king, apparently raised in the 'Bosnian faith', to convert to Catholicism with an offer of solutions to problems relating to his legitimacy, which were his illegitimate birth and marriage to a lowborn. Mediatory role of Tomassini is implied in a later bull issued on 30 July 1446, where the pope credited him with the conversion of Tomaš 'after many and diverse talks'.[429] Tomaš's conversion must have been taken very seriously by the Roman curia, as Pope Nicholas V on 19 June 1447 considered Tomaš 'the first among the Bosnian kings to accept the holy Catholic faith'.[430]

### II.5.2. Between the Bosnian and the Roman faith

On 29 May 1445 the pope removed the *defectus natalis* from Tomaš, declaring him a legitimate king of Bosnia, and dissolved his marriage to Vojača contracted *iuxta morem patrie*, thus allowing Tomaš to enter a marriage that would bring more political profit.[431] On 21 May 1446 he married Katarina Kosača (also Catherine of Bosnia, ?-1478) in Milodraž. Katarina was a daughter of Stjepan Kosača, so this marriage put a temporary end to the civil war. Katarina was coming from a religiously heterogeneous background, but before her

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426 BF, ns vol. 1, pp. 254-55.

427 There had been some questions raised about the letters' authenticity. Fine, *The Bosnian Church*, pp. 60-61.

428 Dženan Dautović 'The Papacy and Marriage Practices in Medieval Bosnia' in *Medieval Bosnia and South-East European Relations. Political, Religious, and Cultural Life at the Adriatic Crossroad*s, ed. by Dženan Dautović, Emir Filipović and Neven Isailović (Leeds: ARC Humanities Press, 2019), pp. 113-136 (p. 129).

429 *Post multos diversosque tractatum.* MSM vol. 1, 395-96.

430 […] *primus inter Reges Bosne sanctam fidem catholicam acceptaverit*. MH II, p. 237. On the problem of religious identity of the Bosnian rulers, see I.1.2.

431 MSM, vol. 1, pp. 388-89. On marriage practises in Bosnia in the Middle Ages see: Dautović 'The Papacy and Marriage Practices', pp. 113-136.

marriage she had to accept Catholicism, and remained very devoted to the new faith and to the Franciscan order, being herself a foundress of a church in Vrila.[432] Many Bosnian noble houses established contacts with the Roman curia, asking for the papal patronage for themselves with the mediation of the Bosnian Franciscans around that time.[433]

Not everyone in Bosnia favoured the new Catholic direction. The papal letter from 1 February 1448 mentions Tomassini as having reported at the curia that 'several noblemen and barons', including Stjepan Kosača and Ivaniš Pavlović, remained in heresy, together with those who are 'called monks', referring to the *Krstjani*.[434] Tomassini reported that he even tried to set up a religious disputation with them, and although they managed to agree on the place and time, ultimately, contrary to their promise, *Krstjani* did not arrive.[435] Stjepan Kosača remained indeed conspicuous for keeping up the policy of balancing between faiths – in his case that was, remarkably, not just two but three, Catholicism, the Bosnian church and the Orthodoxy.[436]

The court of Stjepan Kosača was conspicuous for its ties with the high-ranking members of the Bosnian church. During the so-called 'Second war for Konavle' (1451-54), which began as a war between Kosača and Ragusa, they emerged as members of his close entourage.[437] A charter that he issued on 19 July 1453 proclaiming reconciliation with his wife and son, was guaranteed by 'Lord *Djed* of the Bosnian church and the twelve *stroiniks*, among whom would be Gost Radin for his lifetime'.[438] Gost Radin in particular grew to be one of Kosača's most trusted advisors and courtiers, whom he called 'his monk'.[439] He

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[432] AB, p. 205; Cholewicki, *The role of the Franciscans*, p. 43.

[433] MH, vol. 2, p. 236; John Van Antwerp Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Late Twelfth Century to the Ottoman Conquest* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1994) p. 578; Krasić, 'Jakov Markijski', pp. 118-19; Dubravko Lovrenović, 'Krist i Donator: Kotromanići između vjere rimske i vjere bosanske – II: Konfesionalne posljedice jednog lokalnog crkvenog raskola' in *Tristota obljetnica stradanja samostana i crkve u Olovu (1704-2004),* ed. by Marko Karamatić (Sarajevo: Franjevačka teologia, 2008), pp. 17-54 (p. 34).

[434] Odorico Raynaldus *Annales Ecclesiastici ab anno MCXCVIII ubi desint cardinalis Baronius.* ed. by Johannes D. Mansi, vol. 9 (Rome: Typis Leonardi venturini, 1752), pp. 537-38; Krasić, 'Jakov Markijski', p. 119.

[435] *Cum tua fraternitas eos nonnunquam requisiverit, ut de veritate fidei catholicae inter te atque ipsos tractaretur, promiserunt se quidem id facturos esse, atque ad eam rem locum et diem certum statuerunt, demum te ad diem et locum accedente et paratum te offerente, illi contra promissa sua venientes ad locum ipsum accedere contempserunt.* Raynaldus, *Annales Ecclesiastici*, p. 537.

[436] Ivica Puljić, 'Crkvene prilike u zemljama hercega Stjepana Vukčića Kosače' in *Fenomen 'Krstjani' u srednjovjekovnoj Bosni i Humu*, ed. by Franjo Šanjek (Sarajevo/Zagreb: Institut za istoriju u Sarajevu/Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2005), pp. 239-67 (pp. 249-50, 263).

[437] Fine, *The Bosnian Church*, p. 251.

[438] MS, p. 459; Translation according to: Fine, *The Bosnian Church*, p. 254.

[439] Šanjek, *Bosansko-humski Krstjani*, p. 34.

negotiated a peace treaty between Kosača and Ragusa, signed on 10 April 1454, restoring the *status ante bellum* and ending the Second war of Konavle. [440] His role was very appreciated in Ragusa, which awarded him with 400 ducats, and in November of 1455 he received a house in the city, together with a warrant of freedom from any attempts to convert him from the 'faith that he professes'.[441] When in 1459/60 Tomaš expelled the believers of the Bosnian faith unwilling to be converted, they found their first refuge on the lands of Kosača, who was described by Pius II as their 'comrade in perfidy'.[442]

Furthermore, the land of Hum had a considerable number of Orthodox believers. Stjepan Kosača founded Orthodox church of St. George in Sopotnica in 1454 and another one in Šćepan Polje (Mon. *Шћепан Поље*), and several more are presupposed to be his foundations.[443] There are interesting scholarly presuppositions of cross-faith use of these sacral spaces in Hum. Both foundations of Kosača include a chapel on the northern side of the presbytery, which according to some scholars were used by his Catholic wives for masses.[444] Kosača's uncle and predecessor, Sandalj Hranić, by some historians described as a believer of the 'Bosnian faith', is presumed to be buried in an Orthodox church in Šćepan Polje (a different one than founded by his nephew), under a stećak. [445] Since early 1448, to further satisfy his Orthodox subjects, Kosača started to title himself Duke (Herceg) of Saint Sava, a title which he then used consistently, thus paying tribute to the famous Serbian saint whose relics were held in a monastery of Mileševa in his eastern domains. He sent some gifts to the monastery of Sinai, what seemed controversial to local monks, who thought of him to be a 'kutuger' (gr. *Κουδουγέρος*), that is a dualist heretic. However, from the response of the Patriarch Gennadius II we learn that Kosača maintained a good relationship with the Metropolitan bishop of Mileševa David, who considered Kosača a 'Christian in his soul'.[446] Such attitudes did not prevent Stjepan Kosača from asking for Franciscan missionaries to

[440] MS, pp. 465-69.
[441] 'Da ne bude usilovan' od' nikogar' iziti iz' vjere, koju vjeruje'. MS, pp. 472-73.
[442] Wiliam D. Grey and Harold U. Faulkner (eds), *Commentaries of Pius II*, vols 22, no. 1-2/4 (Northampton: Smith's college studies in History, 1936/37), vol. 5, p. 366.
[443] Ковачевић-Којић, *Градска насеља*, pp. 301-02.
[444] Ковачевић-Којић, *Градска насеља*, p. 302; Puljić, 'Crkvene prilike', p. 427.
[445] Ковачевић-Којић, *Градска насеља*, p. 300.
[446] Šanjek, *Bosansko-Humski Krsjani*, pp. 319-23.

Hum from the king Alfonso of Aragon in 1454, who ruled in Naples, or sending envoys to the Roman curia, who testified about the sincerity of his Catholicism.[447]

Meanwhile, the influence of Catholicism in the royal domains of the Bosnian king grew. The royal couple also became engaged in the foundation of new Franciscan friaries, but the scale of their initiative cannot be properly assessed due to the insufficiency of sources.[448] In the summer of 1446, king Tomaš planned to be crowned in the Catholic rite. Ragusan envoys attending the royal marriage with Katarina in Milodraž in May reported that following the ceremony, a coronation of the royal pair was planned in Mile.[449] On 20 July 1446 Tomassini took the crown from the treasury of the church of St. Domnius in Split, dispatched by the pope for the Bosnian king. [450] Afterwards, however, any trace of this crown is lost in the sources and no new papal crown was dispatched to Bosnia until late 1461, when Tomašević was crowned.[451] This mysterious disappearance of the crown for Tomaš attracted a lot of speculation. According to Pius II's *Commentaries*, which is a large narrative autobiography, messengers of Tomašević told the pope that his father had not accepted the crown due to fear of the Turks and the 'Manichaeans', and such a perspective is assumed by some scholars.[452] However, Džaja and Lovernović pointed at Hungarian influences as preventing the coronation of Tomaš, because it would undermine the Hungarian suzerainty over Bosnia, which the Hungarian kings still claimed.[453]

Given the strong Catholic orientation of Tomaš's reign from its beginning, one would expect him to take some steps against the Bosnian church. In fact, it might have been one of the conditions to gain papal favours back in May 1445.[454] However, no persecution of the Bosnian church was recorded until 1459. The manuscript of *Krstjanin* Radosav was dated to the 'days of king Tomaš', what is sometimes interpreted as a sign of the king's tolerant approach. [455] The royal vernacular charter from 22 August 1446, which bestowed the town of

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447 Lajos Thallóczy (ed.), *Studien zur Geschichte Bosniens und Serbiens im Mittelalter* (Munich: Duncker & Humblot, 1914), p. 401.
448 Pejo Ćošković, *Bosanska kraljevina u prijelomnim godinama 1443-1446* (Banjaluka: Institut za istoriju u Banjaluci, 1988) p. 142. Lovrenović, 'Krist i Donator' pt. 2, pp. 34-35.
449 Lovrenović, 'Krist i donator', pt. 2, p. 31; Ćošković, *Bosanska kraljevina,* p. 136.
450 Ćošković, *Bosanska kraljevina,* p. 141.
451 Lovrenović, 'Krist i donator' pt. 2, p. 32.
452 Grey and Faulkner, *Commentaries*, vol. 11, p. 740.
453 Srećko Džaja, 'Bosansko srednjovjekovlje kroz prizmu bosanske krune, grba i biskupije', *Jukić*, 15 (1985), 81-162 (pp. 96-97); Lovrenović, 'Krist i Donator', pt. 2, pp. 33, 40, 50.
454 MSM, vol. 1, p. 388.
455 *Codice Borgiano illirico,* vol. 12, fol. 58v.

Ključ with some villages to the sons of the Voivode Ivaniš Dragišić, was guaranteed by 'Lord Djed [Miloje], the Bosnian church and the good Bosnians'.[456] This suggests more strongly that until that time the Bosnian church was not only tolerated but it maintained its traditional role in the political life of Bosnia in spite of all Catholic advances.

A papal letter to legate Tomassini dated 11 November 1445 describes Tomaš as not only tolerating the 'Manichaean' heretics but also honouring their *electos*.[457] For that, according to the letter, the Franciscans supposedly excommunicated the king and refused to administer the holy sacraments to him. Tomassini was ordered to investigate the case, and should he find the king's assertions about the political strength of the 'Manichaeans' to be true, and reverence paid to *electos* to be 'just a human honour, and not an adoration', he should compel the Franciscans to return to the administration of the sacraments to Tomaš.[458] This is a very remarkable source, yet there are some issues with its authenticity, which I raised in my MA thesis, mainly relating to the lack of this source in modern editions of the papal registers, and an odd comment about the king's Catholic upbringing.[459] The implications of the letter are potentially significant, pointing out that the king's continuous tolerance of the *Krstjani* lead to tensions with the Franciscans. The controversy might have been somehow related to the dominance of the Hungarian leadership in the vicariate at the time, but it is not explicit in the letter. Whatever we make of that, animosities between the royal court and the Bosnian Franciscans could not last for long, with Tomassini having likely intervened and mediating a settlement. On 18 June 1447 a bull was issued for the king allowing him to appoint two Observant Franciscans to be his chaplains without the permission from their superiors, demonstrating a steady relevance of the friars in the religious life of the king.[460]

**Conclusions**

A range of internal and external factors compelled King Tomaš to launch a major Catholicisation campaign of Bosnia, the realm broken between different faiths. This created a

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[456] *Da im' se toi ne ima poreći ni potvoriti ni na mane doiesti ni za ednu neviru ni zgrihu kralev'stvu našemu, što ne bi ogledano gospodinom' didom' i cr'kvom' bosanskom i dobrimi' bošnami*. MS, pp. 438-40. Fine, *The Bosnian Church*, pp. 242-43.
[457] IS, vol. 4, p. 257.
[458] *Et ea reverentia,* […] *solum sit honor humanus, non adoratio, ex qua Dei contumelia subsequatur*. IS, vol. 4, p. 257.
[459] Cholewicki, *The role of the Franciscans*, p. 50.
[460] BF, ns vol. 1, p. 539.

window of opportunity for the Bosnian Franciscans to establish Catholicism as the dominant force of the Bosnian religious life across all social layers. Such aspirations obviously required resources and support. One might think that such a reconfiguration would elevate the status of the Bosnian Observants within the order and at the Roman curia. While this happened to some degree, around the same time the Bosnian vicariate lost its cohesion. This is because the Franciscan Observance happened to have been gaining its own momentum following the chapter in Rome, and the issuing of the bull *Ut sacra*. At first sight, these might seem counterintuitive. After all, was Bosnia not a place where the Observance was fostered? Should Franciscan gains not bolster the Bosnian vicariate?

# Ch. 6: Breakup of the Bosnian and Hungarian Observants

An incident between the Hungarian and South Slavic (Bosnian and Dalmatian) Observants taking place most likely in 1444 was the first unambiguous indicator for the Bosnian vicariate's loss of internal cohesion. This was the first event in a series of events leading up to the substantial reduction of the Bosnian vicariate's size, that is to the territory between the Adriatic and the River Sava. In 1448 the Hungarian Observants formed an independent vicariate, claiming the legacy of the Bosnian vicariate as well as all its ample privileges for their own, yet ceasing any religious or political ties with Bosnia. This chapter will explore the unfolding of events leading up to the formation of the Hungarian Observant vicariate from the friaries formerly making up the 'Hungarian part' of the Bosnian vicariate. It will reflect on the first unsuccessful split of the Hungarian and South-Slavic Observants in 1444-45, evaluate its underlying causes, and finally it will take the ultimate breakup of the two families and its consequences into focus. This chapter will also introduce James Primadizzi, who is very relevant for other chapters of this section because he was the vicar general authorising different decisions of secession.

### II.6.1. An attempted split between the Hungarian and South Slavic Observants (1444/45)

We have not yet encountered any source unambiguously illustrating the building up of any tensions between the Bosnian and Hungarian Observants under the jurisdiction of the Bosnian vicar. Any attempts to seize the Bosnian friaries in Hungary were made by the Hungarian province, which was a force external to the Bosnian vicariate and the Observance, as discussed in the previous section. However, in the mid-1440s, this changed, because we have heard of an outbreak of a major discord between the two families.

The first contemporary source to report this is the papal bull *Etsi ex debito* from 24 January 1445, stating that:

> A discord between the Hungarian friars on the one side and the Bosnians and other Slavs dwelling on this side of the River Sava, on the other, was reported for us, to such a degree

that they came to the division of vicars of the order, because the Hungarians elected a vicar for themselves, while the Bosnians and the Slavs elected a different one in turn.[461]

The bull itself annulled the division and restored the integrity of the vicariate together with all its privileges. Unfortunately, we learn nothing else about the Hungarian-Bosnian/South Slavic split from other contemporary sources. However, the Hungarian Observant chronicle elaborates on the encounter. Before diving into the narrative, I should mention that the manuscript had marked the end of the narrative of Balázs of Szálka with the election of John of Baja for the Bosnian vicar, and the following part was claimed to be the recollection of an old friar Gregory of Ilok.[462]

Gregory's story starts with a recollection of the Hungarian-Bosnian discord, but the account must be treated with a lot of caution, as it is not contemporary. It tells us:

> When that friar John of Baja was the vicar of Bosnia of the Franciscan family, there was a great quarrel between the kings of Hungary and Bosnia, and he was sent to the Hungarian king in order to arrange peace, namely in that year when he ought to celebrate the chapter. Therefore coming to Hungary and having summoned the simple friars, he exhorted them, asking them for a postponement of the chapter in this way: Dearest brothers! […] it is evident to us in all things, that since many wars are taking place now between the kings of Hungary and Bosnia, it is therefore necessary so that we should postpone the chapter to the next year, when there would be peace and concord between those kings […] for this reason indeed, I have now been sent. Having said that, at once a great mutter began in the consistory among the friars on account of the necessity of the friars and their simplicity, saying certain things, that is that we were not holy friars, since we brought forward the concerns of kings and specifically various particular words of princes (behold where is the Franciscan Observance in Hungary, where it has root, which grew to such a tree most high). And then a certain Hungarian friar named Michael of Szond stepped forward, and violently snatched the seal from that vicar, and from then on they started to approach the Hungarian lords and barons, whom they humbly petitioned, so that they should ask

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461 *Nobis ad audientiam relata est discordia inter fratres Hungaros ex una, et Bosnenses ceterosque Sclavos citra flumen Savae residentes ex altera partibus, quod ad divisionem venerint vicariorum ordinis praelibati in tantum, quod Hungari elegerint sibi vicarium pro seipsis, et Bosnenses et Sclavi alium sibi elegerint e converso.* BF, ns vol. 1, pp. 413-14.

462 AMH, p. 241. See introduction.

> the king for them, in order that he should made a petition to the pope to establish the vicar for the Observant friars in Hungary. He arranged that, and thus permission was petitioned from Eugenius IV, whose bull is kept in the Observant convent in Buda. These things happened in 1444.[463]

Such is the 'foundation myth' of the Hungarian Franciscan Observant vicariate, which in time evolved into *Provincia Sancti Salvatoris in Hungaria Ordinis Minorum*. John of Baja was elected a successor of James of the Marches in the office of vicar of Bosnia, and according to Wadding, John's second triennium was confirmed by Bernardino of Siena in 1441, thus an organisation of the next chapter would indeed fall to 1444, the year indicated by the chronicle.[464] Other than that, the story presented has some serious inconsistencies with what we know from contemporary sources.

There was no war going on between Bosnia and Hungary around the time.[465] Quite the contrary, their relationship was normalised by a charter from 27 May 1444.[466] It remains unclear why we hear of a Hungarian-Bosnian war. One possibility might have been to explain the tension between the Hungarian and Bosnian Observants, which is not really explained by the chronicle. Another is that it would explain why the chapter needed to be postponed for the next year. Remarkably, in January 1444 the Ragusans wrote to the vicar, expecting him to be found in the 'Christian camp'.[467] Considering that we know of some friars *Cherienses* as falling in the battle of Varna, the Bosnian vicar might have been involved somehow in the

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[463] *Quando iste Frater Iohannes de Vaya praedictus foret Vicarius Boznensis Familiae Minorum, Reges Hungarorum et Boznae fuit magna dissensio exorta, propter quod pro pace habenda, Frater Ioannes Vicarius praedictus missus fuit ad regem Hungarorum, eo videlicet anno, quo capitulum celebrare debeat. Veniens ergo in Hungariam, et fratribus subtilioribus convocatis exhortabatur eos, dilationem capituli petens ab eis in hunc modum: Fratres dilectissimi!* […] *quod etiam nobis manifestum est in omnibus, quoniam inter Regem Hungarorum et Boznae iam bella plurima fuerunt facta. igitur ut capitulum ad annum futurum transferamus necesse est, ut inter Reges praedictos pax et concordia habeatur* […] *pro qua et ego nunc missus sum. Haec dixit, et statim inter fratres ex desiderio religionis et eorum simplicitate magnus rumor ortus fuit in consistorio, dicentibus quibusdam, quod non ideo sancti sumus fratres, ut regum curas et principium varia verba specialiter curiosa proferamus (Ecce ubi Observantia Minorum de Hungaria, ubi radicem habuit, et in tantam altissimam crevit arborem). Et tunc quidam frater Hungarus nomine Michael de Zond irruit inter alios, et manu violentia sigillum ab ipso Vicario rapuit. Et extunc dominos Hungaros et Barones adeunt, quos petunt humiliter, ut pro eis Regi supplicarent, ut a Domino Papa impetraret, quod in Hungaria fratribus de Observantia Minorum Vicarium concederet, ipse paret, et sic factum est et supplicatum, et impetratum a Domino Papa Eugenio Quarto concessum, cuius bulla habetur Budae in conventu Fratrum Minorum de Observantia, et haec facta fuerunt Anno Domini millesimo quadringentesimo quadragesimo quarto.* AMH, pp. 241-42

[464] AM, vol. 11 (1441), p. 157; AMH, p. 241.

[465] Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, p. 111.

[466] AB, p. 185; Filipović, 'Exurge igitur', pp. 213-14.

[467] Nicolae Iorga (ed.), *Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisades au XVe siècle*, vols 5 (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1899-1916) vol. 2, p. 401.

campaign of Władysław Warneńczyk, which would explain why he would want to postpone the chapter. Another problem is that the bull establishing the Hungarian Observant vicariate was *Ineffabilis* issued by Nicholas V on 10 February 1448, and not by Eugenius IV. But why did the two sides continued fighting?

The solution of *Etsi ex debito* might seem like a perfectly balanced conciliatory proposal, but it was not. The bull confirmed Fabian of Bács, favoured by the Hungarian side to be the vicar of Bosnia until the next chapter, planned for 1447. This decision fits the earlier policy of Eugenius, supportive of the Bosnian vicariate's integrity but also of its Hungarian leadership, which has been discussed in the previous section. The Hungarian Observant chronicle says that Fabian was elected at the chapter of Jenő, identified by some historians as the same assembly as that summoned by John of Baja, yet already the Hungarian Observant chronicle implies that the chapter of Jenő was actually a different one, assembled later on.[468] The recollection of the Codex of Gyöngyös is helpful when considering this problem, because it provides with a more coherent version of events. According to it, the Hungarian Observants firstly held a chapter in Ozora in spring 1444 following the Bosnian vicar's departure to Bosnia, and elected Fabian of Bács as their own superior.[469] The bull *Etsi ex debito* annulled the division, and the Hungarian friars assembled again, this time in Jenő, what must have happened in 1445, and they confirmed Fabian of Bács as a vicar of the re-integrated Bosnian vicariate, according to the papal wish.[470]

What was a new development of *Etsi ex debito* was the effective alienation of the minister general from the matters of the vicariate. The authority to elect the Bosnian vicar was confirmed for the friars of the vicariate, who would be subject to the Cismontane vicar general. Although the minister general maintained a right of confirmation, the Bosnian vicars could govern before being confirmed, and should the general ever reject the election, the vicar of Bosnia could still govern the vicariate 'by apostolic authority'. A similar solution was used by *Ut Sacra* regarding the vicars general a year later.[471] This is a remarkable development, likely intended as a workaround because of the time-consuming nature of the

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[468] *Quo facto primum Capitulum celebratum est in Jenew, et ibi primus Vicarius eligitur Frater Fabianus de Kenieres.* AMH, p. 242; Karácsonyi, *Szent Ferencz*, vol. 1, p. 326; de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 40.
[469] *Quare reversus est memoratus vicarius Bozam, et interim fratres Hungari in loco de Ozora congregati capitulum celebrarunt. In quo fratrem Fabianum de Kenyeres in vicarium elegerunt.* Molnár, *Die Formelsammlungen*, pp. 96-97.
[470] Neither the chapter in Ozora nor in Jenő can otherwise be confirmed by contemporary sources.
[471] BF, ns vol. 1, p. 499.

appointment procedure, and the potentially destructive consequences of the election's rejection. Thus the document overall implies that the Bosnian vicariate had overextended too much to follow the traditional procedures of the vicar's appointment. However, neither the bull nor the dramatic narrative of the chronicle satisfactorily explain the root causes of the split between two Observant families, divided along the national lines. As is usually the case with such building up of internal tensions, they often cannot be reduced to a single cause. Why then, did we find the Bosnian and the Hungarian Observants at each other's throats in 1444/45?

### II.6.2. Root causes of the split

The main reason for the building up of internal tensions is that the Hungarian Observants went through a thorough transformation as a family over the first half of the fifteenth century. Their plans and aspirations had become incompatible with those of the Bosnian/South Slavic friars as a result. Some features of this transformation were already touched upon in the fourth chapter, however, it is worth returning to some already familiar issues, and to contextualise them with the developments of the 1440s.[472]

The most important change was the consolidation of the Hungarian leadership of the Bosnian vicariate. From the 1420s, the vicars were either Hungarians or were having good relations with the Hungarian court. They prioritised matters relating to Hungarian religious life and became involved in policing religious dissent as inquisitors in particular. The Hussite heresy spreading in Hungary was brought to their attention, and James of the Marches dealt a blow to it in the southern dioceses. However, some Hussites fled to Moldavia, joining an already existing hub, which remained an issue for the Hungarian clergy. The Hussites were reported as coming from Moldavia to Transylvania over the 1430s and 1440s, putting the souls of the faithful in danger with their teachings.[473]

The first Hussites emerged in Moldavia in the 1420s and according to a letter of the bishop of Baia, John of Ryza from 5 March 1431, they gained some recognition from the Voivode Alexander the Good (c. 1375 – 1432, voivode from 1400).[474] While Catholic bishoprics were founded in Siret (1371, lat. *Ceretensis*) and in Baia (1413), their networks

[472] See I.4.2.and I.4.3.
[473] MH vol. 2, p. 223; MSM, vol. 1 p. 394; BF ns I, p. 416; Galamb, 'San Giacomo', pp. 213-14.
[474] Claudia Florentina Dobre, *Mendicants in Moldavia: Mission in an Orthodox Land (Thirteenth to Fifteenth Century)* (Daun: AUREL, 2008), p. 70.

were underdeveloped, and Catholicism in this land has always been dominated by the mendicants from Poland and Hungary, as both kingdoms competed for influences over Moldavia in the fifteenth century.[475] It is not by chance that the Franciscans of the Bosnian vicariate were seen as most suitable agents to act against the Hussites in Moldavia, as they had missionary experience, and for them it would be a continuation of the inquisition of James of the Marches.[476] The papacy issued a range of different documents between 1439-1446 aiming to provide a legal basis for a permanent organisation of the mission in Moldavia under the authority of the Bosnian vicar, with aims to assist local Catholics with sacraments in places distant from Catholic dioceses, to convert the Orthodox, and most importantly, to eradicate the Hussite heresy.[477] I have already discussed some of these documents in the first chapter as granting or re-affirming missionary privileges.[478] Although these bulls technically concerned the vicariate in its entirety, it is clear from the context that they were issued in response to the challenges of the Moldavian enterprise. The last source relevant for the Moldavian mission of the Bosnian vicariate comes from 3 July 1446.[479] After the Hungarian-Bosnian split, the Moldavian mission was taken over by the Hungarian vicariate.

There is very little to be learned about any real activity of the Bosnian vicariate's Franciscans in Moldavia. Some authors even doubted whether they ever set foot in Moldavia, but the documents from 1440 and 1442 suggest that the vicariate indeed dedicated some resources and manpower to the Moldavian mission.[480] Juan Torquemada composed thirty-eight articles of errors held by the Hussites of Moldavia, according to which they held position of Docetism in regard to Christ's passion, like the Manichaeans. Torquemada's text was likely based on reports from the Bosnian vicariate.[481] Whatever the Observants managed to achieve in Moldavia, it is clear that they had no chance for any long-term success.[482] Voivodes were Orthodox, and for them Catholicism was identifiable with the meddling by foreign powers in Moldavia. In the following years, groups of Observant friars led by László of Tar and Transylvanian Custodian Sebastian Jánosi were expelled from Moldavia, while the

[475] Dobre, *Mendicants in Moldavia,* pp. 36-40, 80.
[476] AB, p. 178; Karácsony, *Szent Ferencz*, vol. 1, p. 325.
[477] AB, pp. 175-6, 178-80; BF, ns vol. 1, pp. 416-18; MH vol. 2, pp. 223-24, 228-30; MSM vol. 1, pp. 394-95.
[478] See I.1.3.
[479] MSM, vol. 1, p. 393.
[480] Dobre, *Mendicants in Moldavia,* p. 80.
[481] Šanjek, *Bosansko-humski krstjani,* pp. 300-305.
[482] Dobre, *Mendicants in Moldavia*, pp. 75-77.

Hussites enjoyed tolerance until they diminished in the 1460s.[483] Nonetheless, it is demonstrable that around the time of the first Bosnian-Hungarian split, the Moldavian mission was an important agenda for the Hungarian part of the vicariate, while its South Slavic counterpart prioritised the efforts of (re)Catholicisation of Bosnia, as it did for the previous hundred years.

Another important manifestation of the transformation was the distribution and roles of the new foundations in Hungary. That was also touched upon in chapter four when I discussed Sigismund's patronage over the vicariate, but it should be evaluated further, especially because the interest in the Hungarian Observants did not cease with Sigismund's death (1437). János Hunyadi, who took up the leading role in the Hungarian kingdom in the 1440s, shared a devotion to the Observants, for whom he founded a friary in Teiuș (hun. *Tövis*) in 1442 as well as the friary of Șumuleu Ciuc (hun. *Csíksomlyó*), which was intended to accommodate friars departing for the mission to Moldavia.[484] Similarly, the baronial elite continued to support the Franciscan Observants. According to estimations made by Hungarian scholarship, around the time of the Hungarian-Bosnian split, the vicariate controlled around twenty-five friaries north of Sava.[485]

Engagement of the baronial elite in foundations for the Bosnian vicariate was a new development of the fifteenth century when compared to the predominantly royal foundations of the fourteenth, at least if we follow the Franciscan tradition. Furthermore, these new foundations generally followed a different spatial pattern.[486] Although they were still emerging in what we would describe as the South-eastern part of the kingdom, they were no longer concentrated at the very frontier along the Danube (see maps below).[487] They were often built in the residences of their patrons.[488] The increasing Ottoman danger should also be taken into account when discussing the change of pattern.[489] The Ottoman incursions put those older friaries of Banat in danger, and some of them were destroyed. With the new

[483] AMH, pp. 247-48; Dobre, *Mendicants in Moldavia*, p. 79.
[484] Karácsonyi, *Szent Ferencz* vol. 1, p. 325.
[485] Karácsonyi, *Szent Ferencz*, vol. 1, p. 326; de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 33.
[486] Romhányi, 'Das Konstanzer Konzil', pp. 238-39.
[487] Galamb, 'A ferences obszervancia', pp. 170, 178.
[488] Romhányi, 'Das Konstanzer Konzil', pp. 244-45.
[489] Romhányi, 'Das Konstanzer Konzil', p. 239.

foundations, the vicariate's centre of gravity moved closer to the Hungarian heartland. This contributed to fading of any bonds established between the friaries north and south of Sava.

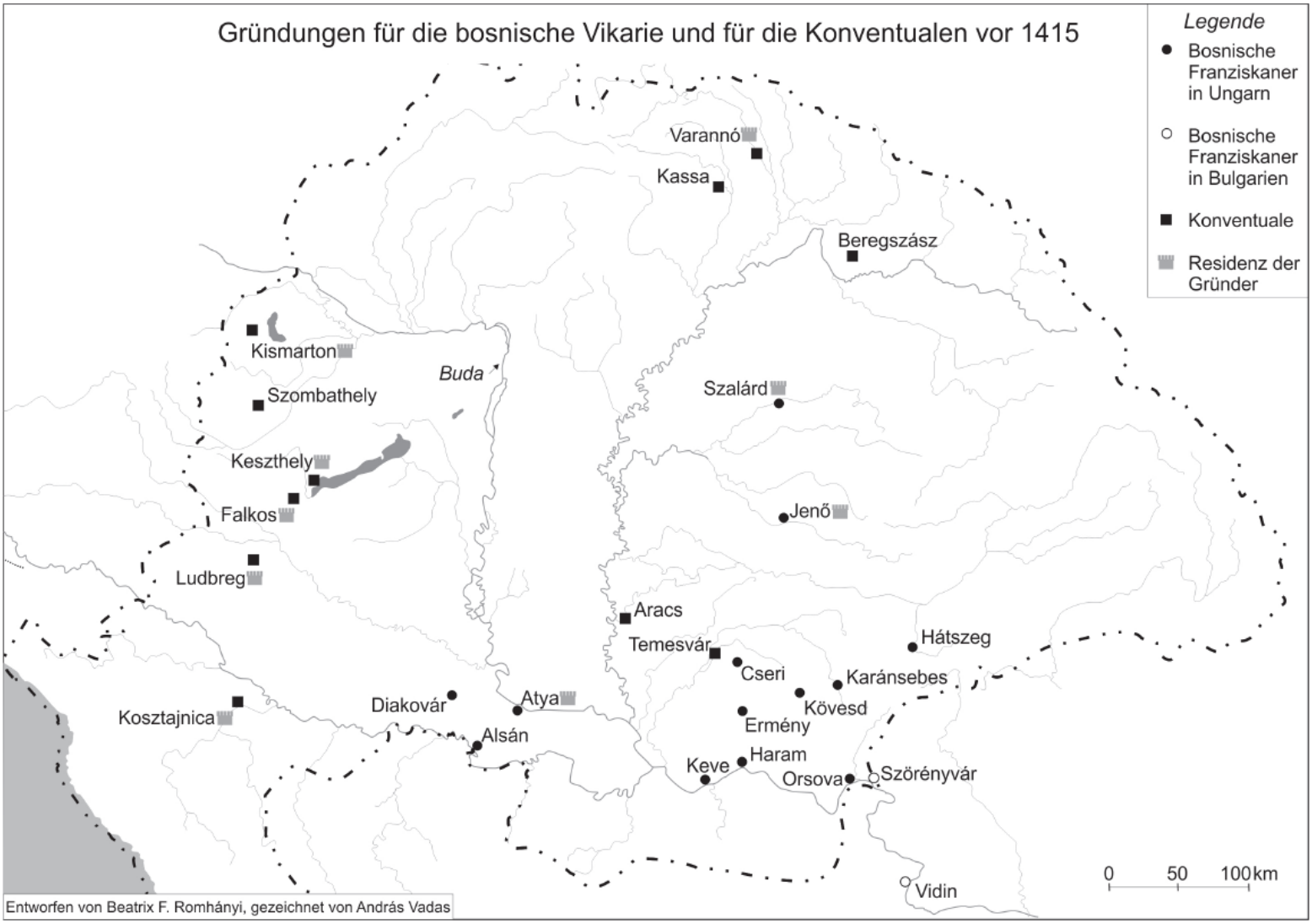



Fig. 4. Foundations for the Bosnian vicariate and the Conventuals by 1415, from: Romhányi, 'Das Konstanzer Konzil', p. 248.

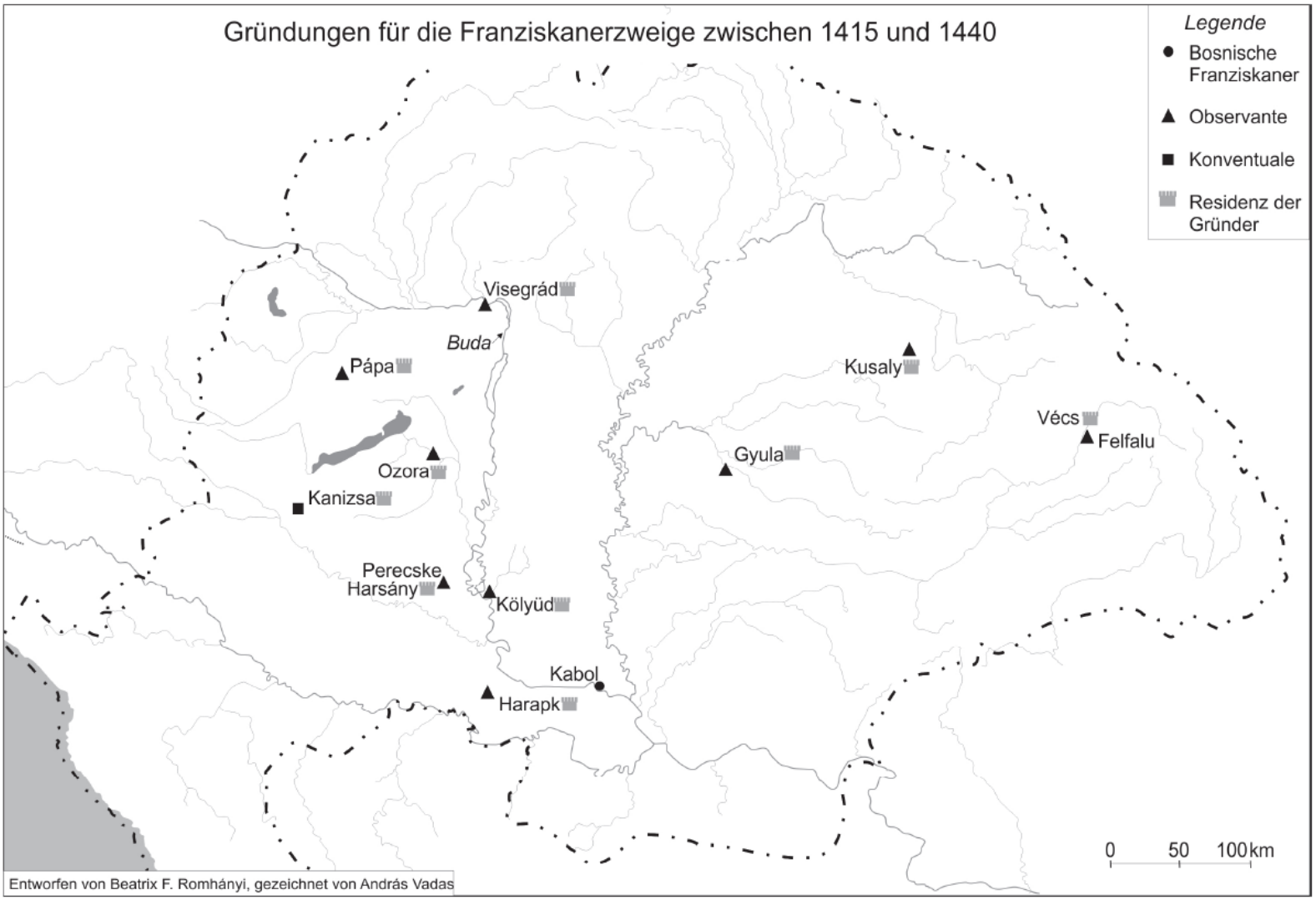



Fig. 5. Foundations for the Franciscan branches between 1415-40. From: Romhányi, 'Das Konstanzer Konzil', p. 249.[490]

The Observants of these new friaries were preoccupied with a variety of tasks, starting with satisfying the spiritual needs of the families of their patrons, as the new friaries were often founded in their residences. This did not exclude pastoral care over the lower-status laity, conversion of non-Catholic serfs, policing religious dissent (the Hussites in particular) as well as curbing social discontent.[491] However, unlike the older vicariate's friaries of Banat, the new foundations were less focused on the conversion of the Orthodox, although this task

[490] The distinction between the Observants and the Bosnian Franciscans used by an author and present on this map I criticised in chapter four (I.4.2): both the 'Observants' and the 'Bosnian Franciscans' represented the same structure at the time: the Bosnian vicariate.
[491] Galamb, 'A ferences obszervancia', p. 170; de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 33-34.

did not disappear entirely. Such purpose certainly underlined the foundation of Felfalu (rom. *Suseni*) completed in 1431.[492] It is worth noting that most of the fifteenth-century founders were also the royal officials responsible for the defence of the southern border, so some anti-Ottoman activity was to be expected from the Observants.[493] Hunyadi notably also included them as army chaplains. Spiritual assistance to Hungarian armies definitely kindled a form of Hungarian 'patriotism' in the Observant family.

Such developments speak of the elevation of the social status of the Observants in Hungary, gaining a lot of support from the royal court, but also reaching beyond it. Before the Hungarian-Bosnian split, the Observants gained control of friaries in some of the major Hungarian towns and centres of power, including Visegrád, Buda and Pest.[494] While until the mid-1440s, the vicariate expanded in Hungary only through new foundations, the friaries in Buda and Pest mark the first transfers from the province to the Observants (made by the decision of the Papal Legate Julian Cesarini on 20 February 1444).[495] János Hunyadi as governor of the kingdom, having consulted the royal assembly, in 1448 (so after the split) ordered the hand over the former Conventual friaries of Esztergom, Győr, Debrecen and Satu Mare (hun. *Szatmár*) to the Observants, which further provides evidence for the weakening of this branch.[496] Ultimately, hardly any new house was built for the Conventuals in Hungary in the first half of the fifteenth century.[497] Such a power shift would definitely embolden the Hungarian Observants to break bonds with Bosnia, as they knew they could rely on very powerful patronage in internally Franciscan quarrels.

The Hungarian friaries of the Bosnian vicariate, by the mid-fifteenth century, formed a very different structure than in the fourteenth century. Back then, their mission was a relatively peripheral affair at the southern frontier of the kingdom, synergising with some ambitious yet ultimately fruitless expansion aspirations. The friaries of the fourteenth century were founded on the very frontline, and were preoccupied with proselytising activity among the Orthodox subjects of the kingdom and beyond it. The Ottoman empire, however, put an end to Hungarian expansionism in the south, and the friaries of Banat found themselves at the

[492] AB, p. 136; Romhányi, 'Das Konstanzer Konzil', pp. 243, 246.
[493] Romhányi, 'Das Konstanzer Konzil' p. 246.
[494] AB p. 124, 191.
[495] Karácsonyi, *Szent Ferencz*, vol. 1, p. 326.
[496] Karácsonyi, *Szent Ferencz*, vol. 1, pp. 331-32.
[497] Romhányi, 'Das Konstanzer Konzil', p. 240.

frontier of clashing powers, and most of them fell victim to the Turkish raids. By the mid-fifteenth century, with the new foundations and the acquisition of some formerly Conventual friaries, the vicariate's centre of gravity moved closer to the Hungarian heartland, occupying some key centres of power and urbanisation. The vicariate's friars secured the backing not only of the royal court, but of a number of major baronial houses, and they aspired to face the major challenges experienced by Hungary, which were the Ottoman expansion and spread of the Hussite heresy. Such ambitions lead their members to exposure to hardships, like participation in military campaigns, sermon giving and an inquisition, redefining the character of the family, which would help it to attract the attention of the nobles and the common folk. These changes were simultaneous with the assumption of an Observant identity by the vicariate, illustrating that the Hungarian friaries under the Bosnian vicariate went through a ground-breaking transformation in both name and character. Such was the formative phase of the Hungarian Franciscan Observance in the Bosnian vicariate's ambit.

One may easily see why it was easier to integrate the Hungarian friaries of the fourteenth century than those of the fifteenth: the former were not quite involved in mainstream religious challenges in Hungary. What they did however, that is proselytization of non-Catholics, was similar to what the Franciscans were doing in Bosnia. Despite gaining so much support, there was no sign of any attempts to create their own vicariate by the Hungarian Observants until 1444. The Codex of Gyöngyös suggests that the Bosnian-Hungarian quarrels started earlier than that, yet we should acknowledge that it is not a contemporary source.[498] Perhaps until the second quarter of the fifteenth century, the Hungarian Observant friaries were still too few and too geographically disconnected for such aspiration. However, sharing the vicariate with the Bosnian and other Slavic Franciscans meant that the Hungarian friars needed to find a common ground with them regarding the election of vicars as well as in all other decision-making taking place at chapters. Furthermore, the friaries north of the Sava were used by the Bosnian friars to help them to run the mission in Bosnia. Đakovo allowed the Bosnian friars to keep in touch with the canonical Bosnian bishop. They were permitted to collect alms in Hungary by *Excolentes* (1369), although there is actually no confirmation that Hungarian friaries played any role in helping to economically sustain the Bosnian houses (unlike the Bosnian friaries in Dalmatia).[499] At the same time, we do know that some Hungarian friaries served as shelters

[498] Molnár, *Die Formelsammlungen*, p. 96.
[499] MH, vol. 2, p. 92.

for the friars escaping Bosnia.[500] Such an instrumental use of the Hungarian friaries by the friars from Bosnia would definitely increase tensions between two families, as the Hungarians would prefer to be 'host in their own house', and not be burdened by the affairs of others.[501] News about the reunification mandated by *Etsi ex debito* would be indeed met with disappointment in Hungary, despite having their candidate favoured by the pope and themselves being actually in power in the Bosnian vicariate.[502] This concludes the analysis of the transformation of the Observant family in Hungary over the first half of the fifteenth century, which should explain why it would see a shared structure with Bosnia as obsolete. However, nothing has yet been said about the reaction in Bosnia to these developments. What was the position in Bosnia regarding these developments, especially the appropriation of the vicar's office by the Hungarians?

### II.6.3. Reaction in Bosnia

It is clear that neither side was satisfied with the decisions of *Etsi ex debito*. The Hungarian Observants had to remain in a structure they thought obsolete. Although the Bosnian friars might have appreciated the confirmation of the vicariate's territorial integrity, they were obviously upset that the other party's candidate was approved for the office. Furthermore, the process of solidifying of the Hungarian agenda in the Bosnian vicariate was neither favoured in Bosnia nor by the friaries of the vicariate in Venetian Dalmatia, with the Ragusan houses likely maintaining a neutral position.

The vicars of Bosnia since the 1420s had become strongly involved in Hungarian matters. The vicariate of James of the Marches, with its strong relationship with Sigismund of Luxemburg is a good demonstration of that, but the pattern also applies to other vicars appointed before and after him.[503] The vicars of Bosnia had a lot of rights regarding the organisation of pastoral care and the administration of the sacraments in places distant from the dioceses or lacking parish infrastructure.[504] However, with their attention focused on matters of religious life in Hungary, or the pursuit of the Hussites to Moldavia, the vicariate's recent re-orientation took place at the expense of Bosnian issues, because the vicars were

[500] AB pp. 114-15, 122.
[501] Karácsonyi, *Szent Ferencz*, vol. 1, pp. 322-23.
[502] Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, pp. 36-37.
[503] Cholewicki, 'Travels by St James of the Marches in East Central Europe, 1432– 1440', pp. 105-13.
[504] See I.1.3.

needed in Bosnia, where there was no bishop. Although we know that they used deputies, their re-orientation to Hungary obviously affected their priorities, management of resources and manpower.[505]

Before the friars in Bosnia made the first attempts, to our knowledge, to regain control of the vicariate's office, an attempt was made to establish a bishopric in Bosnia, conventionally referred to as the 'Visoko-Srebrenica bishopric'. [506] Very little is known about it, even the location of its seat is unclear, and therefore it attracted a great deal of speculation.[507] We know about it from four documents of Eugenius IV, a record from the papal 'Book of Obligations', and a notarial note made in Trogir and used by Daniele Farlati in his *Illyricum sacrum* (vol. IV). Based on these sources, we can roughly estimate that it emerged around the mid-1430s, maybe a bit earlier, and ceased to exist around a decade later. When explaining the reasons for its foundation, scholarship usually points to the necessity for the establishment of a diocesan structure in Bosnia and breaking bonds with the Bosnian bishop in Đakovo, as well as the necessity to administer the sacraments in Ragusan colonies and to other Catholics. There is no doubt that the bishopric had a close relationship with the Franciscans, and its only known two bishops were Franciscan friars.[508] It is very likely that its foundation was also related to the struggles over the leadership of the vicariate. The bishopric might have been established to help the Bosnian friars to run the religious life and the administration of sacraments with much less reliance on an indifferent or even antagonised vicar, especially considering that the bishopric was not subjected to Kalocsa (like Đakovo), but to Dubrovnik, a more friendly metropolis.

Furthermore, the bishopric might have been used to allow the friars to collect tithes from the Bosnian Catholics. The challenges to the economic stability of the friaries in Bosnia have already been discussed. Furthermore, the measures of sustenance used, such as those presented in *Status locorum vicariae Bosnae,* sparked controversies over the rule. Setting up

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505 MSM, vol. 1, p. 394; Celestino Piana, 'Scritti polemici fra Conventuali e Osservanti a metà del '400 con la partecipazione dei giuristi secolari: II. Scritti da parte degli Osservanti', *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum*, 72 (1979), 37-105 (p. 43).

506 Lovrenović, 'Krist i donator' pt. 2, p. 21.

507 Dominik Mandić, *Bosna i Hercegovina*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Croatian Historical Institute, 1960), pp. 405-21; John Van Antwerp Fine, 'Mysteries about newly discovered Srebrenica-Visoko Bishopric in Bosnia (1434-41)', *East European Quaterly*, 8/1 (1974), 29-43; Juraj Kujundžić, 'Visočka biskupija: prilog crkvenoj povijesti Bosne i Hercegovine u XV stoljeću', *Dobri pastir*, 25 (1975) 133-40; Lovrenović, 'Krist i donator' pt. 2, pp. 21-24.

508 Lovrenović, 'Krist i donator', pt. 2, p. 22.

a bishopric would have allowed it to collect tithes for the use of the Catholic Church in Bosnia, which was entirely run by the Franciscans anyway. Such a solution may seem odd and contrary to the rule, but actually, the friars collected tithes in Bosnia shortly after the vicariate's foundation. There is a bull from 13 June 1344 which responded to a complaint from the Bosnian bishop.[509] Apparently, the Vicar Peregrinus of Saxony aided by the ban, started to collect tithes for the restoration of churches. However, he not only collected the tithe from new converts, which he was allowed by the pope, but also from other faithful who owed their tithe to Đakovo. Therefore, the pope forbade the vicar to do so, and we do not hear of any controversy over Bosnian tithes afterwards.

A bull from 15 October 1446 mentions that the voivode of Donji Kraji, Petar Vojisalić supported the friars in his domain with 'tithes and other goods'.[510] This is the only other mention I found of the tithe collection in medieval Bosnia for use by the Franciscans. It might have been collected using the rights of the Visoko-Srebrenica bishopric.

Remarkably, this source introduces another key problem for this subchapter: the problem of the jurisdiction of the Bosnian friaries. This bull lifted the jurisdiction of the friaries in Vojsalić's territory from the Bosnian Vicar Fabian, and transferred it to the Papal Legate Tomassini. We know from the Codex of Gyöngyös that after being re-elected, the Vicar Fabian travelled through the vicariate all the way to Dalmatia, so he had to made his way to Bosnia as well, where apparently, he got involved in the matters of the local Franciscans.[511] The pope recounted the complaints that Vojsalić made in his petition against the vicar in this way:

> However, these friars for such abundant favours paid you back with mistreatment and did a lot of damage, and they do not cease to do it today, and also, likewise, the vicar of the Bosnian province had the impudence to place friars mistrusting you and plotting against your position, to dwell in the said friaries.[512]

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509 MSM, vol. 1 p. 211

510 *De decimis ac aliis bonis tuis abundanter administraveris.* BF ns vol. 1, p. 511.

511 *Perlustravit vicariam Bozne ferme usque ad Dalmaciam*. Molnár, *Die Formelsammlungen*, p. 97.

512 *Tamen fratres ipsi pro tantum beneficiorum impensione tibi contumeliam reddiderint ac damna intulerint et in dies inferre non cessant, necnon etiam vicarius Provinciae Bosnae iuxta morem dicti ordinis fratres tibi suspectos necnon statui tuo insidiantes ad habitandum in dictis domibus* […] *ponere non veretur*. BF ns vol. 1, p. 511.

This shows an escalation of tensions between the vicar and the voivode. The text unfortunately does not clarify them any further. I think we should not interpret the tension in focus to mean that Vojsalić became an opponent of the vicariate as such, but of the Vicar Fabian, himself representing the Hungarian agenda in the Bosnian vicariate. New individuals showing up in the friaries in question is an important hint because they, hypothetically, should be following their vicar's line, apparently colliding with the voivode. Having travelled further south to Dalmatia, Fabian tried to place the Hungarians in friaries of the custody of St. Jerome, which alerted the Venetians, as we read in a Venetian source from March 1447.[513] This demonstrates that the purpose of Fabian's travel south was to ensure the obedience of the South Slavic (Bosnian and Dalmatian) parts of the vicariate to his leadership, and that his measures involved some 'Magyarization' of these friaries.

Therefore, the rise of the Hungarian leadership in the vicariate clearly brought tensions and resistance in the South Slavic parts. The role that the legate Tomassini played for the Bosnians should not be overlooked. He was allowed by the pope to take over the jurisdiction of the problematic friaries, implicitly in order to quell problems of the voivode. Tomassini had indeed become a somewhat indispensable advocate of the Bosnian cause at the curia. His appointment as the friaries' superior happened at the cost of the Hungarian leadership of the Bosnian vicariate, otherwise having a lot of support from the popes, as we have seen. Therefore, the Bosnian royal court, nobility as well as the Bosnian Observants, themselves upset with the new leadership of the vicariate, counted on Tomassini's mediation and aid. This will be discussed further in this section.

### II.6.4. The ultimate Bosnian/Hungarian breakup

Both the Hungarian and South Slavic parts of the vicariate did not favour the re-unification brought by *Etsi ex debito*. Although the Vicar Fabian of Bács seems to have been determined to preserve the vicariate's integrity, his measures were highly antagonising. With the friaries in Donji Kraji exempted from Fabian's rule, was the Bosnian vicariate's integrity anything more than a claim on paper already? The following chapter of the vicariate was supposed to have taken place by mid-1447, which was supposed to summon the friars representing both sides, who should agree about the vicar.[514] However, the appointment of

513 Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 56.
514 Karácsonyi, *Szent Ferencz*, vol 1, p. 329.

the new Cismontane vicar general, James Primadizzi, at the chapter of Rome, in the church of Ara Coeli in 1446, as well as the change on the papal throne in March of 1447, opened a window of opportunity to undermine the decisions of *Etsi ex debito*.[515] As we shall see, by early 1448 the Bosnian vicariate permanently contracted to a much smaller entity. One could argue that the new pope, Nicholas V, played a key role in planning this curtailment, because ultimately, he authorised it; however, Eugenius IV actually separated Galatina from the vicariate in August of 1446, as will be discussed in the next chapter. The key architect of the Bosnian vicariate's structural collapse was in my view the new Cismontane Vicar General, James Primadizzi.[516] He was a very prominent Observant friar, and he became part of the movement's leadership of the mid-*Quattrocento*. In 1437 he had been appointed the vicar in the Orient, and mediated in the negotiations between the Roman curia and the Armenian church about the union in Caffa. From there, he accompanied the Armenian envoys to Florence. He had indeed earned a great trust at the Roman curia. Eugenius IV confirmed his authority as the vicar general twice, on 6 May 1446 and 9 February 1447.[517]

As the Cismontane vicar general, Primadizzi was the ultimate superior of the Bosnian vicariate, as control of the minister general became purely nominal after the bull *Etsi ex debito.* From what we can tell from the papal sources, James Primadizzi developed a rather poor opinion of the religious discipline in the Bosnian vicariate. The bull *Ad hoc circa Regularis* confirming his authority over the Bosnian vicariate from 26 September 1447, starts by declaring that:

> Several houses, friaries and convents of the Bosnian vicariate, of the aforesaid order and the Observance, and individuals belonging to them are deformed and they are known to require a lot of service of correction and reform and also work regarding the statutes established in that place, and were these and any other houses, friaries and convents of the said vicariate subjected to the jurisdiction of yours and your successors the Cismontane vicars general, the divine cult and the regular observance would be strengthened and increase in them daily.[518]

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[515] BF, ns vol. 1, pp. 488-89. The friary of Ara Coeli was handed over from the Conventuals to the Observants on 6 January 1445. Robson, *The Franciscans*, p. 209.

[516] On James Primadizzi, see: Pietro Delcorno, 'Primadizzi, Giacomo', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 85 (2016), avaliable at: https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giacomo-primadizzi_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/ [Accessed 20.12.2022]

[517] BF, ns vol. 1, p. 488, 526.

[518] *Nonnulla domus, loca et conventus vicariae Bosnae, ordinis et observantiae praedictorum, ipsorumque personae deformata sint et correctionis ac reformationis officio etiam super statuta inibi facienda et alias*

This strikes a familiar chord with what we have heard from James of the Marches, and the bull called Primadizzi to undertake a reform endeavour on the spot. The bull furthermore demonstrated the relationship between the problem of an Observant discipline and that of the vicariate's jurisdiction and integrity, in that poor discipline could justify some unfavourable decisions for Bosnian friars. The bull *Apostolicae Nobis* issued a day later declared that:

> The said Eugenius, our predecessor, by his letters, among other things perpetually subjected as well as united, annexed and incorporated all houses, convents and friaries of the said order to the Bosnian vicariate, which exist from the Adriatic to the Black Sea, and because of this subjugation, unification, annexation and incorporation, just as to us was reported, many difficulties ensued and are ensuing still.[519]

Although the bull regarded the five friaries in Dalmatia, the sound of this hints at some larger problem with the vicariate's integrity, the solution to which was, implicitly, breakup. Because Primaidizzi was likely consulted beforehand by the curia, both bulls must be somewhat reflective of his views. In this way, they are giving insight into the premises of Primadizzi's triennium, when the disintegration of the Bosnian vicariate took place. His role is least visible in the Bosnian/Hungarian breakup, while in the cases of Apulia and Dalmatia we see him actively lobbying for the removal of friaries from the Bosnian jurisdiction. However, his negative attitude should not be ignored when analysing the case of the Bosnian-Hungarian breakup either.

It should come as no surprise that the friars of the Bosnian part of the vicariate were trying to limit Primadizzi's control over their vicariate. During his triennium, they managed to detach themselves from the Cismontane chain of command on two occasions, which will be explained later.[520] In their endeavours, they had the powerful support of Tomassini, confirmed as a papal legate by Eugenius's successor on 18 June 1447.[521] In Bosnian matters,

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*quamplurimum indigere noscantur, et si illa ac quaecumque alia domus, conventus et loca dictae vicariae et illi subiecta ubilibet consistentia tibia c successoribus tuis vicariis generalibus fratrum dicti ordinis in citramontanis partibus commorantium iurisdictioni et potestati perpetuo subiicerentur, in eis divinus cultus et regularis observantia conservarentur ac in illis dietim susciperent augmentum.* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 569.

519 *Dictus Eugenius praedecessor per suas litteras inter cetera perpetuo subiecerit vel subiecta esse decrevit necnon unierit, annexuierit et incorporaverit dictae vicariae Bosnae omnia et singula domos, conventus et loca diccti ordinis quae a mari Adriatico usque ad mare Tartarorum consistebant et consistunt, ac ex subiectione, decreto, unione, annexione et incoroporatione praedictis, sicut nobis innotuit, quamplures inconvenientiae subsecutae fuerint ac dietim subsequantur.* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 571.

520 See II.8.1.

521 AB, p. 205.

Primadizzi and Tomassini clearly rivalled each other at the curia, almost like ambassadors of two states at war with each other.

The Codex of Gyöngyös states that having returned from his travel, the Vicar Fabian of Bács summoned the chapter in Pest in 1447.[522] Although the Bosnian and other Slavs arrived, they could not find a common ground with the Hungarians, and broke ties with them for good. It is a paradox that the Bosnian Franciscans received their 'independence' bull before the Hungarians. On 14 May 1447 Nicholas V published the bull *Cupientes,* issued for the 'custodians, guardians and other Franciscans established in the Bosnian kingdom'.[523] The bull allowed them to elect a vicar, whose authority should stretch from the Adriatic up to the Drava. Furthermore, only he should be allowed to use any of the privileges issued for the Bosnian vicariate, and he should be confirmed by, and obey, the minister general. This bull effectively cut the ties between the Bosnian and Hungarian Observants on favourable terms for the former. They expanded their border up to the Drava, claimed all 'Bosnian privileges' for themselves and were exempted from the Cismontane chain of command. I have already argued that the exemption should not be interpreted as a rejection of an Observant identity as such.[524] Although we do not know who was elected as vicar based on *Cupientes,* bulls issued on 18 and 19 June 1447 for Vojsalić and Sladoje Semković mention the Bosnian vicar as playing the role of spiritual patron of the two.[525] This vicar must have been trusted by both noblemen, and therefore was most unlikely to be Fabian of Bács, who strongly antagonised Vojsalić.

It is very unlikely that the Hungarian Observants stood idle following the chapter of Pest, but that they lobbied for their own bull. However, while the first triennium of Fabian of Bács was supposed to end in 1447, the bull establishing their vicariate independently from the South Slavic friars, *Ineffabilis*, came about only on 10 February 1448, which arrived in

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522 *Eodem tempore existente in Hungaria vicario antelato fratre Fabiano de Kenyeres idem post eleccionem suam in capitulo in loco Yenew celebrato factam, perlustravit vicariam Bozne ferme usque ad Dalmaciam. Demum rediit ad Hungariam et fecit capitulum in iamfato conventu Pesthiensi iam reformato, ubi Boznensibus et Sclavis dissencientibus ab Hungaris et non bene concordantibus, iidem divisi fuere ab Hungaris et nunquam reuniti, et ex tunc tandem sequuta est omnimoda separacio.* Molnár, *Die Formelsammlungen,* p. 97. The chapter of Pest is yet another chapter mentioned in the Codex of Gyöngyös the that cannot otherwise be confirmed by contemporary sources.

523 Čremošnik, 'Ostaci arhiva', pp. 40-41; BF ns vol. 1, p. 534.

524 See I.2.2.

525 *Rex Bosne tradiderit ad manus dilecti filii Vicarii Bosne ordinis fratrum minorum dilectum filium nobilem virum Sladoe Voivodam, dominum de Requi, ponens eundem sub Romane ecclesie protectione, ipsumque prefatus Vicarius acceptaverit: nos eundem Sladoe* […] *sub nostra et beati Petri, ac sedis apostolice protectione et tutela* […] *suscipimus*. MH, ns vol. 2, pp. 235-36.

Hungary by 12 May.[526] This delay is quite strange, and Mandić argued that some 'transitional' bull was issued between late 1446 and early 1447, based on a hint from the Hungarian Observant chronicle, crediting Eugenius IV and not Nicholas V for the foundation of the Hungarian Observant vicariate.[527] However, Nicholas V referred to his predecessor only as keeping the Bosnian vicariate intact 'between the Adriatic and the Black sea'.

Between *Cupientes* and *Ineffabilis*, the pope restored the jurisdiction of James Primadizzi and his successors, the Cismontane vicars, over the Bosnian vicariate as justified by its poor religious discipline, with the bull *Ad hoc circa Regularis* from 26 September 1447. It declared that no apostolic letter issued for the minister general or the Bosnian vicar should be understood as invalidating *Ad hoc circa Regularis*, which seems like an implicit reference to *Cupientes*.[528] Thus, *Ad hoc circa Regularis* is something restoring the *status quo ante* regarding Primadizzi's jurisdiction, which was defined as stretching over 'all friaries of the said vicariate and others subjected however, existing from the Adriatic sea to the borders of Tatary'.[529] A vague reference to friaries beyond the Bosnian vicariate's jurisdiction demonstrates that at the time the Bosnian-Hungarian breakup was still in the transition period.

The bull *Ineffabilis* from 10 February 1448 finally provided an underlying basis for the Franciscan Observant vicariate of Hungary (lat. *Vicaria Hungariae*), which was to be separated from Bosnia.[530] The friars of the new vicariate were allowed to use the privileges issued for the Bosnian vicariate regarding pastoral care. In particular, the bulls *Romanus pontifex* from 30 September 1433 and *Sacrae religionis* from 29 January of 1445, which were abundant bestowals of pastoral rights for the Bosnian vicariate, and which the Hungarian Observants used by this point, were incorporated into *Ineffabilis*.[531] Like *Romanus pontifex*, *Ineffabilis* made a disclaimer, allowing the use of these rights only in places more than two days distant from a diocese. The borders of the new vicariate were to extend all the way

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526 BF ns vol. 1, pp. 591-92; de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 40.

527 Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, p. 114.

528 *Volumus autem, quod per quascumque etiam apostolicas generali ministro dicti ordinis aut ipsius vicariae vicario seu fratribus vel quibusvis aliis quoquo modo per Nos aut Sedem Apostolicam concessas vel in posterum concedendas litteras ipsae praesentes litterae seu in eis contenta nullatenus intelligantur seu censeri debeant invalida seu alias revocata*. BF, ns vol. 1, p. 570.

529 *Omnia et singula domus, conventus et loca dictae vicariae et illi quomodolibet subiecta ubilibet, etiam a mari Adriatico usque ad fines Tatariae consistentia.* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 569.

530 BF, ns vol. 1, pp. 591-92.

531 BF, ns vol. 1, pp. 57, 416.

between the Sava and the Black Sea. The Hungarian friars had the right to elect their own vicar, who would be subject to the Cismontane vicar general, and no minister provincial. The last clause is likely a reminiscence of the earlier problems caused by the Hungarian province, discussed in the first section. Ten years later, the Hungarian vicariate switched obedience to the minister general, as was already discussed.

*Ineffabilis* was incompatible with *Cupientes* regarding the use of privileges issued for the Bosnian vicariate before the division, as well as regarding the border, demonstrating tensions between the Bosnian and Hungarian Observants regarding the terms of their breakup. We know that the Hungarians got their way following the split by setting up the border on the Sava, claiming the friaries of Đakovo, Varoš, Atya and Harapk between the two rivers. We do not see any immediate Bosnian counteroffensive to re-claim any of these houses, after *Ineffabilis*, unlike to what happened in Dalmatia, as will be shown in the later chapters. Furthermore, the bull *Ad Romani pontificis providentiam* from 24 October 1448 responding to Bosnian complaints against James Primadizzi, mentioned that he took away friaries in Italy and Dalmatia from the vicariate, yet without mentioning their losses beyond the Sava, suggesting perhaps that these friaries were less of a priority from the Bosnian point of view.[532] We definitely lack evidence that these friaries economically helped the houses in Bosnia, unlike what we see in Dalmatia.

Some controversies resurfaced during the pontificate of Sixtus IV. He issued a bull on 12 August 1473, allowing the Bosnian friars to receive new friaries in Croatia and Slavonia, up to the Drava, and to do pastoral work in these areas.[533] The bull demonstrates that the Bosnian vicariate still attracted support from some nobles, willing to fund friaries for them beyond the Sava, but this has not been seen favourably by the Hungarian Observants. On 30 April 1476, the pope issued another bull, this time at the request of the titular king of Bosnia, Nicholas of Ilok, confirming the extension of all Bosnian privileges to the Hungarian Observants as well as the border as set up by Nicholas V.[534] This implies that tensions kept re-emerging regarding an overlapping border, but the Hungarians indeed made sure that the terms of the division were maintained. In the following years, they quelled any attempts of the friars from Bosnia to take refuge north of the Sava or to found any new friary for

[532] BF, ns vol. 1, p. 643.
[533] BF, ns vol. 3, pp. 193-94.
[534] BF, ns vol. 3, p. 428.

themselves.[535] This points to the importance of Hungary as a refuge destination in times of upheaval, mentioned by some sources as a reason for the Bosnian vicariate's expansion to Hungary which has been discussed in chapter one. Setting up a border on the Sava between the Hungarian and the Bosnian Observants was clearly to the detriment of the latter. In the sixteenth century, the Bosnians were only allowed to keep a house in an unidentifiable locality of *Giletincz* (probably around Požega).[536] The Hungarian Observants also avoided any contact with them. Whenever travelling to Italy via Croatia, where the Bosnian friars had their friaries, the Hungarian Observants would prefer to stay with the lay people, for which they were rebuked by the vicar general in 1514. These indeed remind us the circumstances of a family after a stormy divorce. In such discord, the Hungarian and Bosnian Observants parted ways.

**Conclusions**

The underlying factors responsible for the build-up of tensions and ultimately the divorce were numerous. Their common denominator lay in the transformations of the Hungarian part of the Bosnian vicariate. The activities of the Bosnian friaries on (and beyond) the southern Hungarian border in the fourteenth century were primarily missionary. Therefore, in the fourteenth century it was easier to integrate the Hungarian houses with the rest of the vicariate. However, the Hungarian kingdom faced some major challenges from the Turks and the Hussites in the next century. The friars of the Bosnian friaries in Hungary proved to be indispensable allies against such foes. The Hungarian monarchy and the baronial elite invested a lot in them. In this way, the priorities of the Bosnian friaries in Hungary, as well as their spatial distribution changed to better suit current challenges. With the friars in Bosnia still focused on its Catholicisation from the 'Manichaean errors', the collective experience of the Franciscans on both sides of the Sava differentiated, leading to the development of varying ambitions. Another key problem must have been the leadership of the vicariate. Sigismund of Luxemburg secured Hungarian leadership over the Bosnian vicariate, making sure its resources and manpower were allocated to face Hungary's most burning issues. Such reconfigurations were however unacceptable for the South Slavic part of the vicariate, causing internal friction. This explains why the sources describe the Hungarian/Bosnian rifts along national lines; yet clearly, their nature was much more

[535] de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 41.
[536] de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 39.

multifaceted, stemming from the varying experience, aspirations and tensions over the leadership as well as the meddling of the secular powers.

The factors integrating both sides should not be ignored, as they did not fade entirely. Support for the vicariate's integrity had become something of a default approach of the papacy under Eugenius IV, hence the initial re-unification of the vicariate in 1445. The Bosnian friars benefited from having a refuge destination in Hungary, which proved very problematic following the break-up. The Hungarians meanwhile were in a position of power, which meant that they were going to be giving up power with the split of the vicariate. Fabian of Bács even undertook a journey throughout the vicariate to strengthen his grip over the friaries in Bosnia and Dalmatia, suggesting some re-integration effort. His approach however was taken as unwanted meddling, angering local secular powers and likely friars. Ultimately, the Hungarian and Bosnian friars broke away with one another.

It is important to note that the dialectics of the Bosnian-Hungarian break-up lacked the weaponization of religious conduct, otherwise conspicuous in Observant discourse. James Primadizzi used such argumentation when removing the Dalmatian and Apulian friaries from the vicariate, but we do not see the same thing in the Hungarian case. Although he used such arguments when restoring his jurisdiction over the vicariate, but it did not directly relate to the breakup itself. If we take into account only sources relating strictly to the Bosnian-Hungarian breakup, at no point was either side called out for its lax conduct. How should this be understood?

An explanation may lie in the actual similarity of religious conduct of the Bosnian and Hungarian Observants. A decade after *Ineffabilis*, the Hungarians successfully petitioned to be removed from the Cismontane jurisdiction and placed under the minister general, just like what the Bosnians were trying to achieve with *Cupientes*. Wanting to avoid the disciplinary measures of the Cismontane vicars was clearly the reason in both cases.[537] That the Hungarian and the Bosnian Observants stemmed from the same entity, worked for the eradication of heresy and became strongly involved in the political affairs of their patrons speak in favour of such a hypothesis. Furthermore, at that point in time they had a quite similar model of the spatial distribution of their friaries, founded in centres of power or rural settlements/small towns, but neither in big urban centres, nor in desolate areas like

[537] de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, p. 67.

Brugliano.[538] The lack of religious conduct in the dialectics does not mean we should not consider the role of the Observance in the Hungarian case. Sigismund's campaign promoted the Observance as the dominant force in the Bosnian vicariate, yet clearly along the Hungarian agenda, leading up to transformations and rifts that differentiated the Hungarian and South Slavic parts of the vicariate. However, whatever we make of the stormy break-up, we should not forget that the Hungarian Observants presented their Bosnian roots with pride in the Hungarian Observant chronicle, implying that perhaps not everything about their shared past was a calamity.

[538] de Cevins, *Les franciscains*, pp. 51-52.

# Ch. 7: The dismantling of the Bosnian Custody of St. Catharine in Apulia

Before the decisive split of the Bosnian vicariate into two new entities, and somewhat independently of that, the vicariate lost all its houses in southern Italy, concentrated in the region of Apulia (it. *Puglia*). An expansion of the vicariate across the Adriatic may seem odd, yet we know that this part of Italy was having a strong maritime trade relationship with the Eastern Adriatic, allowing for good networking between the two. Unfortunately, the evidence relating to the vicariate's activity in Apulia is scanty.[539] This limits our ability to adequately investigate the relationship of this part of the vicariate with Bosnia. However, the nature of my research, bringing into account also the Hungarian and Dalmatian parts of the vicariate, provides me with the potential to approach the problem more holistically. This will help to examine this chapter's questions about the purpose of the Apulian expansion of the vicariate, namely, who supported it and to what ends? Why did the vicariate lose the friaries in Apulia? Did the rise of the Observance have anything to do with it? This discussion is going to reveal an unambiguous relationship between the expansion and the centralisation of the Franciscan Observance and the suppression of the Bosnian custody.

### II.7.1. Reasons for the expansion to Southern Italy

Italian scholarship associates the following South-Italian friaries with the Bosnian vicariate: Galatina (St. Catharine), Crotone (in Calabria), Gallipolli, Altamura, Minervino, Bitetto, Lecce (Santa Maria del Tempio) and perhaps Venosa and Racale.[540] The presence of the Bosnian vicariate in Apulia can be tracked back to 1 September 1391, when the bull *Pia vota* was issued for the Vicar Bartholomew of La Verna, allowing him to take over the newly founded convent of Galatina.[541] The disappearance of the Bosnian vicariate from the region is usually associated with the bull *Ex iniuncto Nobis* from 31 August 1446, which detached that convent from the vicariate's control, which, as we know from a source issued a year earlier, became the headquarter of the custody of St. Catharine, organising the Bosnian vicariate's

539 See introduction.

540 Rosabla di Meglio, 'Origini e caratteri dell'Osservanza francescana nel Mezzogiorno. Il regno e la capitale' in *Fratres de familia: Gli insediamenti dell'Osservanza minoritica nell penisola italiana (sec. XIV-XV),* ed. by Letizia Pellegrini and Gian M. Varanini (Verona: Cierre/Caselle di Sommacampagna, 2011), pp. 295-338 (pp. 299-300); Perrone, *La regolare Osservanza*, vol. 1, p. 23. Venosa is uncertain. In case of Racale we know that a friary was offered to the friars by the bishop of Nardò, but not whether it was ultimately allowed to be established by Nardò's archdeacon. BF, ns vol. 1, 446.

541 Coco, 'La vicaria di Bosnia', pp. 258-59.

friaries in South Italy.[542] This means that the Bosnian vicariate was present in Apulia for fifty-five years.

Galatina is a town at the centre of Salento peninsula. The convent was founded by Raimondo Orsini (c. 1350 - 1406), a powerful nobleman of the kingdom of Naples, having estates in Salento, married to Maria d'Enghien (1369 - 1446), countess of Lecce.[543] The convent and the church were built in the years 1369-91. A bull from 25 March 1385 shows that the friary was initially intended for the province of Calabria. It was to be adjoined with a hospital 'for the use of the poor'.[544] However, *Pia vota,* at the request of Raimondo, handed the recently completed church and the convent to the Bosnian vicariate. The hospital was completed by April 1403, when Raimondo and his successors were granted *ius patronatus* over it.[545] How did Galatina end up in the vicariate, and not in the Calabrian province, as was initially intended?

Italian scholarship often associated the shift with the necessity of conversion or 'Latinisation' of the Greek population of Salento peninsula.[546] The bull from 25 March 1385 says that 'the Greek and the Latin Christians cohabit that land, and thus far the divine offices were celebrated in the Greek language, which the Latins do not understand at all'.[547] While this only points out the necessity of providing the local Catholics with masses in Latin, but provided the vocation of the vicariate in the Balkans, the problem is relevant. However, there is no evidence for the actual proselytization of the Greeks in Salento by the friars of the vicariate.[548]

Ulrike Ritzerfeld has suggested that Galatina was founded primarily to consolidate the Orsini as a ruling dynasty to the local population by hosting their funeral chapel, numerous relics of saints and a cycle of frescoes, instead of it being some 'Latinising' centre, hostile to

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542 The papal letter from 18 May 1445 refers to a petition made on behalf 'of the custodian and the friars of the house of St. Catharine'. BF, ns I, pp. 446, 506-07.

543 Perrone, *La regolare Osservanza,* vol. 1, p. 21.

544 *Ad usum pauperum.* Margit Mersch and Ulrike Ritzerfeld (eds.), ''Lateinisch-griechische' Begegnungen in Apulien, Zur Kunstpraxis der Mendikanten im Kontaktbereich zum orthodoxen Christentum' in *Lateinisch-griechisch-arabische Begegnungen*: *kulturelle Diversität im Mittelmeerraum des Spätmittelalters* (Berlin: Akademie-Verl, 2009) pp. 219-84 (p. 264).

545 Corsi, 'I francescani', p. 242-43.

546 Perrone, *La regolare Osservanza,* vol. 1, pp. 26-27; Ritzerfeld, 'Santa Caterina', pp. 142-57.

547 *In qua quidem Terra homines Graeci et Latini Christiani cohabitant, divina officia dumtaxat in Graeca lingua, quam Latini minime intelligunt, celebrantur.* From: Ritzerfeld, 'Santa Caterina a Galatina', p. 144.

548 Ritzerfeld, 'Santa Caterina a Galatina', p. 148, 155.

the Greek rite.[549] The cycle of frescoes clearly promotes the orthodoxy of the Catholic faith and carries some allusions against the unfaithful, i.e. by depicting the triumph of the Church as the Franciscan pope (likely Alexander V) in the central nave as well as St. Catharine's disputation with pagan philosophers in the presbytery. At the same time, the church has an inscription in Greek on its entrance portal and has a clear Byzantine-influenced Marian cycle in the Orsini family chapel, suggesting an effort of integration of the Greek cultural heritage rather than its Latinisation.[550] Some elements of the pictorial program were interpreted even as alluding to the heretics of Bosnia, but this was debunked by more recent scholarship quite convincingly.[551] Galatina's paintings as well as architecture distinguish it as a medieval masterpiece of art, a rare example in the context of the churches of the Bosnian vicariate. So if we are to accept that Galatina was not a 'Latinising' enterprise, or that this role is strongly debatable, how else should we understand the Bosnian takeover?

549 Ritzerfeld, 'Santa Caterina a Galatina', p. 148.

550 Ritzerfeld, 'Santa Caterina a Galatina', pp. 148, 154.

551 The prayer cord held by the devil from the temptation of Christ scene was interpreted in this light, see: Margit Mersch, Ulrike Ritzerfeld and Juliane Schiel, 'Zum Problem von Wahrnehmung im interkulturellen Kontakt. Texte, Bauten und Bilder aus dem Umfeld der Mendikanten', in *Mittelalter im Labor. Die Mediävistik testet Wege zu einer transkulturellen Europawissenschaft* ed. by Michael Borgolte, Juliane Schiel, Bernd Schneidmüller (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2008), pp. 29-85 (p. 71, 79).



Fig. 6. Galatina, central nave, Temptation of Christ, from: Mersch, Ritzerfeld and Schiel 'Zur Wahrnehmung von Differenz', p. 70.

Another factor often cited by scholars is that Raimondo might have met Bartholomew of La Verna in the Holy Land in 1376/77.[552] The role of the latter in the Holy Land has already been discussed in chapter two.[553] Furthermore, there is indeed an account of Raimondo's pilgrimage to the Holy Land, but it is essentially a legendary story, involving a *furta sacra* of a finger of Saint Catharine by Raimondo from the monastery on Mount Sinai, so it is not entirely credible.[554] That does not mean we should exclude the personal religiosity of Raimondo from the picture. He was indeed otherwise known for his commitment to the Catholic cause, and therefore might have given his preference to the Bosnian vicariate,

552 Perrone, *La regolare Osservanza*, vol. 1, p. 22; Corsi, 'I francescani', pp. 240, 244.
553 See II.2.4.
554 Corsi, 'I francescani', pp. 245-46; Ritzerfeld, 'Santa Caterina a Galatina', p. 149.

working at the frontier of faith.[555] Having said that, what interest might Bartholomew of La Verna have in expansion to Salento?

The only factor explicitly present in the sources is that such friaries intended to provide something of a bridge for the missionaries from the Western Latin Christian lands intending to go to the Balkans. The bull *Pia vota* as well as a bull from 1 November 1400, allowing Bartholomew to take over a friary in Crotone, both state that friars from any convent of the order 'who may want to travel to the said vicariate' could come to these friaries, and vicars of Bosnia were allowed to pick any of them and take them there.[556] Such travel 'to the vicariate' must mean in this context a journey across the Adriatic to the Balkans. This clarifies that the aim of these foundations was to help to supply the vicariate with manpower, which was struggling with that so badly. Vicar Bartholomew of La Verna was engaged in finding a remedy to this problem, so it does not surprise to find him expanding the vicariate to Italy, in order to open a gateway to the Balkans.

In similar vein, the expansion to Apulia may be interpreted as an attempt to enlarge the vicariate's sustenance base. Apulia is obviously at a further distance than Dalmatia, but it was also the key region in providing the Eastern Adriatic with grain, and we know that grain was collected by the Bosnian friars in Zadar, as discussed in the first chapter.[557] Furthermore, we see some remarkable hints in the bull *Ex iniuncto Nobis* (dismantling Galatina from the vicariate), pointing at the resource accumulation in that friary.

Mandić suggested that the hospital adjoining the friary in Galatina was intended to be used by old or infirm Bosnian missionaries for convalescence.[558] However, that was not mentioned in *Pia vota*. In fact, the hospital was not mentioned in the bull explicitly at all. Furthermore, back in 1385 the hospital was described as being built 'for the use of the poor' (meaning locals in need), and works on it commenced when the friary was still intended for the Calabrian province, which speaks further against such an interpretation.[559] Having clarified that, the problem of allocation of vulnerable individuals is worth consideration.

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555 Corsi, 'I francescani', p. 240.

556 *Ad praedictum Vicariatum transire voluerint*. AM vol. 9 (1400), p. 569; Coco, 'La vicaria di Bosnia', p. 259. The friary of Cortone was founded by Nicholas Ruffo di Calabria, count of Catanzaro, who intended it for the Bosnian vicariate.

557 See I.1.3.

558 Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, p. 75.

559 Mersch and Ritzerfeld, 'Lateinisch-griechische', p. 264.

Chapter one has demonstrated that the allocation of the sick and elderly friars of the Bosnian vicariate was an issue, especially at times of upheaval. The Bosnian friaries in Dalmatia and Hungary were used to allocate such vulnerable individuals, so perhaps we should not exclude entirely those in Southern Italy as potentially being used in a similar manner. We know that a certain Hungarian 'master of theology' instructed young Roberto Caracciolo around the mid-1440s, evidencing the presence of some experienced friars of the Bosnian vicariate in Apulia.

### II.7.2. Suppression of the custody

After fifty-five years of an uninterrupted presence in Galatina, without any earlier signs of tensions with the neighbouring friars of the Apulian province or the local authorities, Bosnian vicariate's management and possession of Galatina came under criticism, with the compound nature of the hospital, in particular, becoming a source of controversy. On 31 August 1446 Pope Eugenius IV, in response to a petition of Raimondo's son and successor, Giovanni Antonio Orsini, issued the bull *Ex iniuncto Nobis.* It stated that:

> Meanwhile, these friars of the Bosnian province indeed held the said church and the place with many donations left for them and that church and the hospital by the pious bestowal of the faithful for fifty years and more, against their rule carelessly and irresponsibly, while part of these goods and of the said hospital were supposed to be converted in their use only with the permission of the rector.[560]

This gives us some remarkable insight into the affairs of the friary in Galatina. Apparently, the Bosnian friars appropriated some of the donations intended for the hospital, which they were not supposed to do. Therefore, two decisions were made: that the friary should be removed from the Bosnian jurisdiction and join the Apulian province and that it must be institutionally divided from the hospital.[561] This was quite a decisive way to deal with the problem.

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[560] *Qui quidem fratres provinciae Bosnae dictam ecclesiam et locum cum multis interim eis et eidem ecclesiae ac hospitali pia fidelium largitione relictis spoliis per quinquaginta annos et ultra contra eorum regulam incaute et indebite tenuerunt, partem bonorum eorumdem et dicti hospitalis, de consensu tantum rectoris eiusdem, in suos usus interim convertendo.* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 506.

[561] *Nos* […] *ecclesiam praedictam S. Catharinae cum officinis propriis* […] *ab hospitali, et bona praedicta relicta omnia et singula ab ecclesia et domo* […] *segregamus ac perpetuo dimembramus eademque sic dimembrata bona hospitali praedicto libere ac perpetuo concedimus ac pariter ecclesiam* […] *ad perpetuos usus et habitationem et divinum cultum ipsorum fratrum ordinis Minorum de observantia nuncupatorum absque alia obligatione concedentes volentesque, quod ecclesia, domus et locus praedicti omnibus et singulis aliis privilegiis* […] *quibus aliae ecclesiae, domus et loca Italiae* […] *utuntur et gaudent, uti et gaudere possint et valeant in futuro*. BF, ns vol. 1, p. 506.

References to 'careless', 'irresponsible' and not least 'against the rule' handling of donations suggest that the criticism came from Franciscan circles. Furthermore, the bull declared that the friary of Galatina was from now on to receive alms only 'according to the rule and papal declarations, particularly of Clement V and Nicholas III'.[562] This must refer to *Exivi de paradiso* and *Exiit qui seminat*, which were already juxtaposed with the conduct of the Bosnian friars in the third chapter, although mainly in Bosnia.[563] This demonstrates that the Bosnian friars also ran into trouble with regard to these constitutions in Galatina, and that they constituted a 'particular' standard to which the religious conduct of the Bosnian friars was upheld by their superiors, which should not surprise given all earlier discussion of the first section, what further confirms and expands the conclusions of chapter three of my thesis in particular. Such criticism was coming most likely from James Primadizzi, the recently appointed vicar general, because the bull tells us that he has recently established his authority over Galatina and 'restored' it to the province of Apulia. Given that the friary was to remain in the Observant family, it would have to be subject to the Apulian provincial vicar, which was an office confirmed as existing already around 1433.[564]

Breaking these constitutions by appropriating part of the donations intended for the hospital was obviously a serious offence. The compound nature of the convent/hospital in Galatina clearly allowed for an intermingling of alms intended for either of these. Furthermore, the friars of Galatina seem to have obtained some level of control over the hospital's management, as the bull reaffirms the *ius patronatus* to the Orsini family, who were declared to be from now on the only individuals allowed to replace the hospital's *rector,* and not the 'guardians or friars' of St. Catharine.[565] That friars Bonaventure of Bergamo and John of Hungary were listed among those voting for the hospital's rector in July 1449, perhaps giving us a glimpse of the former Franciscan influence over the hospital.[566] The

562 *Secundum formam regulae et declarationis summorum pontificum, praesertim bonae mem. Clementis V et Nicolai III.* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 506.
563 See I.3.2.
564 Some older scholarship argued that the friaries of the former Bosnian custody composed the new Observant entity in the Apulian province rather than joined the already existing Observant entity, but this is clearly not the case. Coco, 'La vicaria di Bosnia', p. 258; Corsi, 'I francescani', p. 244.
565 *Insuper praefato Iohanni Antonio principi et eius haeredibus et successoribus de consilio dumtaxat et non aliter guardiani et fratrum in dictis ecclesia et loco et domo S. Catharinae pro tempore exsistentium* […] *ut rectorem pro tempore exsistentem praefati hospitali ab illius gubernatione et administratione realiter amovere.* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 506.
566 Perrone, *La regolare Osservanza*, vol. 1, p. 24.

separation of the friary and the hospital was intended to prevent any further meddling of the friars in the hospital's internal affairs and funds.

Furthermore, we know that Galatina was endowed with some landed estates by the Orsini.[567] This opened yet another problem with the rule, as such estates were obviously intended to provide regular income. With such donations and access to part of the hospital's funds, it seems that Galatina was overall very well off. Should we perhaps then just accept that the friary under the Bosnian management became very negligent of religious discipline?

We need to acknowledge that the bull is a very one-sided source and partly based on a report from a rather prejudiced vicar general. Th accumulation of resources suggests that they might have been gathered to support the economically struggling mission in the Balkans. While this is my extrapolation based on my observations in other parts the vicariate expanded to, it allows us to cast a different light on the problem of religious discipline. Furthermore, we should also acknowledge the instrumental role of the accusations. They were used not only to separate the hospital from the friary but also to justify the transfer of the convent to the Apulian province. This case presents an example of a larger campaign launched by Primadizzi against the Bosnian vicariate, as he attacked it in Dalmatia as well, accusing its friars of lax discipline, as will be demonstrated. Finally, the timing of the dismantling should also be considered. It happened not long after the Observant chapter of Ara Coeli and the issuing of the bull *Ut Sacra*, both marking important thresholds of the Observant expansion. Turning on the Bosnian vicariate, having a somewhat exceptional standing in Italy, and the Bosnian family's differentiation from the Cismontane mainstream in approach to poverty and religious conduct, may hint at reaching a further stage of centralisation of the Observance, both structurally and in terms of standards of discipline, and this advancement would be manifested in an agenda of the new vicar general. This is suggested by the said reformatory rhetoric as well as the line saying that the friars of Galatina were 'restored to their proper province of Apulia'.[568]

The bull also mentions that the friary was 'restored' not only by the decision of the vicar general, but also 'by the will of the friars of the said Bosnian province'.[569] This strikes me as rather unexpected. Furthermore, the bull *Ad Romani pontificis* from 24 October 1448

[567] Corsi, 'I francescani', p. 246.
[568] […] *reducti fuerint, ad propriam eorum provinciam Apuliae.* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 506.
[569] *De voluntate fratrum dictae provinciae Bosnae.* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 506.

tells us that the Bosnian friars complained about losing their houses in Italy to the decision of Primadizzi.[570] This provides us with rather contradictory information within two years span and clearly relates to the same case. Should we accept that the Bosnian friars made a decision which they regretted later on?

My hypothesis is that the custody of St. Catharine was separated from the vicariate in exchange for confirmation of the vicariate's expansion in Dalmatia, namely to five friaries, including Dubrovnik and Daksa. I would argue that at the chapter of Ara Coeli in Rome in March 1446, such an exchange was agreed upon, likely with the permission of the Bosnian vicar Fabian of Bács. Although this is not an explanation found explicitly in the sources, it makes sense contextually and seems to be in fact to be the only plausible explanation for why the Bosnian side agreed to Galatina's removal. I am going to explore further details of this expansion in Dalmatia in the next chapter; however, it is important to mention it here to demonstrate how it correlates with what happened to the custody of St. Catherine. We know that the chapter issued an order on 17 March to form the custody of Dubrovnik under the Bosnian vicariate, and this was confirmed by a bull from 3 July that year, what will be clarified in the next chapter.[571] Meanwhile, in August, from *Ex iniuncto Nobis*, we learned that the vicar general has already 'restored' Galatina to the Apulian province. The proximity between these two developments, as well as to the Observant chapter (of Ara Coeli), which was the body having a right to decide about 'borders' between the provinces, and finally their gain/loss relationship lead me to think that we are dealing with an exchange. Finally, this would clarify why the Bosnians would complain in October 1448; by this point, they had lost both Galatina as well as those five Dalmatian friaries, as we shall see.

The last factor worth considering in Galatina's removal is the death of Maria d'Enghien on 9 May 1446. As the wife of Galatina's founder, Raimondo, she developed a particular devotion to this church by commissioning the cycle of frescoes, as well as that it held a funerary chapel for her family.[572] Having such a high level of engagement with the church's pictorial program suggests that she must have kept in touch with the Bosnian friars. If still alive, she might have used her influence to try to stop the transfer. However, son of Raimondo and Maria as well as the supplicant of *Ex iniuncto Nobis*, Giovanni Antonio, might

[570] *Quinimo nonnullas domos dictae vicariae ab eorum praesidio et adiumento subtraxit et regimini fratrum Italiae aggregavit.* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 643.
[571] See II.8.1.
[572] Ritzerfeld, 'Santa Caterina a Galatina', p. 146, 152.

have simply not shared his parents' attachment to the Bosnian vicariate, especially once its handling of the hospital's funds came under criticism.

The final problem to consider in this chapter is what happened to the rest of the vicariate's possession in South Italy, as we have discussed only the case of Galatina. This was the case simply due to a lack of sources allowing us to track the fate of other friaries. However, it is clear that the Bosnian custody of St Catharine, with its headquarters in Galatina, could not endure. The bull *Ad Romani pontificis* spoke of the Bosnian vicariate as having lost not one, but *nonnullas domos* to the Italian friars, most likely confirming what is a general consensus of scholarship, namely that other foundations shared Galatina's fate, with *Ex iniuncto Nobis* marking the Bosnian vicariate's disappearance from Apulian soil.[573]

**Conclusions**

This chapter provided us with a good demonstration of the connection between the expansion of the Franciscan Observance and the Bosnian vicariate's disintegration. Although the Bosnian Italian expansion is strongly obscured by the lack of sources, this association is conveyed very well. The separation of Galatina took place following the chapter of Ara Coeli in Rome in 1446, which was the pivotal moment for the reform branch of the order. With that, the centralisation became part of the movement's agenda, structurally, but also in terms of religious discipline. Given the vicariate's somewhat exceptional standing in Italy and its friars not following the key constitutions, it became the immediate 'victim' of this centralisation. While the accusation of religious laxity was very explicit in *Ex iniuncto Nobis*, it also illustrated how much it was instrumentalised.

The wave of criticism put the Bosnian family at a disadvantage. However, I have argued that in fact it was allowed to expand in Dalmatia in compensation for giving up Galatina, and presumably other Italian convents. Dalmatia was obviously a destination of more priority than Italy. Seizing Dubrovnik seems to have became a priority agenda for the vicariate. At the same time, this chapter has already stated that within two years, the vicariate ended up losing the Italian friaries and these five convents in Dalmatia as well. Why did this affair end up so badly for the Bosnian family?

[573] Coco, 'La vicaria di Bosnia', pp. 257-58; Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, 114; Pandžić, 'Djelovanje Franjevaca', 255-56; Perrone, *La regolare Osservanza*, vol. 1, p. 28.

## Ch. 8: The controversy over five friaries in Dalmatia: expansion and withdrawal

The final thing to consider in this section is the problem of five Dalmatian friaries, namely St. Francis in Dubrovnik, St. Sabina on the rocky island of Daksa, near Dubrovnik, Holy Cross in Zadar, St. Nicholas in Dobrota (mon. *Доброта*) near Kotor and St. Euphemia in Kampor on the island of Rab. The vicariate expanded to these five in 1446, following the decision of the Observant chapter in Rome, yet already the next year it lost control over them. Unlike in cases of the Hungarian and Apulian parts of the vicariate, the controversy over the five Dalmatian friaries was not resolved. It was in fact opening a longer story of controversies and fights between the Bosnian and the Dalmatian Observants. The controversy over these five friaries should be contextualised as the first stage of a three-stage process of the Bosnian vicariate's withdrawal from Dalmatia; the second was the downfall of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province in 1469, which will be discussed in the next section, and the final was the division of the Bosnian vicariate into the provinces of *Bosna Croatia* and *Bosna Argentina* in 1514, dividing the friars living in Ottoman-controlled Bosnia from those in the Christian lands. The Bosnian Observants fought to maintain their jurisdiction over the friaries in Dalmatia, because of their importance as an economic base, as well as refuge destinations. With this reliance examined in the first section, the chapter will focus on the political 'back and forth' of the decision-making with regard to these five friaries in the context of the pivotal momentum for the Franciscan Observance. The friars of the Bosnian vicariate faced a range of powerful adversaries to their presence at the Adriatic coast, who used their political influence as much as allegations of lax religious conduct against them.

### II.8.1. The circumstances of the removal of the five friaries

The bull *Apostolicae Nobis* from 27 September 1447 removed the jurisdiction of the Bosnian vicariate over the five friaries and handed them over to the control of James Primadizzi.[574] These houses were not some long-standing Bosnian landmarks on the coast but were all recent additions made by the decision of the Observant chapter of Ara Coeli in Rome of 1446, which issued a document on 17 March ordering the formation of a Bosnian custody

[574] BF, ns vol. 1, pp. 570-71; Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, pp. 194-96.

of Dubrovnik, governing the five friaries.[575] This directive was confirmed by a bull of Eugenius IV dated 3 July 1446.[576] Historiography provides two interpretations concerning this bull: Hüntemann argued that it was *Dum Salubria,* confirming the vicariate's jurisdiction of all friaries subject to it 'by whatever apostolic or other privilege or letter', yet not naming the said five friaries explicitly.[577] Mandić however thought it to be a non-preserved bull from the same day.[578] A letter by Nicholas V from 5 December 1447 says that his predecessor indeed issued a bull on 3 July 1446, handing over these five friaries to the vicariate, mentioning each by name, suggesting that they should have been mentioned in the bull explicitly.[579] However, it is perhaps best to leave this problem open. This expansion has already been argued to be a result of compensation for the dismantling of the custody of St. Catharine in Apulia, as decided by the Observant fathers at the chapter of Ara Coeli as well as the newly elected vicar general, James Primadizzi.[580]

From this perspective, *Apostolicae nobis* seems a rather unfair withdrawal from an earlier agreement with the Bosnian friars. However, we must also consider a twofold reconfiguration of jurisdiction which was called for by the bull *Cupientes* from May 1447, issued between the chapter and *Apostolicae nobis*. It demonstrated that the Bosnian friars were not interested in being ruled by the Hungarian-oriented vicar Fabian of Bács, for whom the expansion was permitted, nor to have the Cismontane vicar general as their ultimate superior. Such attitudes have clearly antagonised Primadizzi and the Cismontane leadership, perhaps interpreting it as making the previous arrangement invalid.

According to *Apostolicae Nobis*, the vicariate was from now on obliged to maintain its presence in Dalmatia only in 'the houses, convents and friaries which have been united and subject for a long time to the vicariate', implying the four friaries on the Ragusan territories and those forming the custody of St. Jerome, centred around Zadar.[581] The Bosnian vicariate was banned from expanding any further than that in Dalmatia. Having said that, the bull is not entirely indifferent to the fate of the Bosnian vicariate. It recognised the relevance of Dalmatia for its economic stability, and thus commands that part of the annual income of

[575] Although there was a bull issued on 11 April 1435 to join Daksa to the vicariate, it was not implemented for some reason. A Ragusan source from 8 December 1436 clearly marks Daksa as a non-Bosnian friary. BF, ns vol. 1, p. 897; Rode, 'Documenti francescani' 14, p. 120.
[576] LDL, vol. 13, fol. 223 r.; Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, p. 173.
[577] BF ns vol. 1, pp. 496, 579.
[578] Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, p. 113.
[579] BF ns vol. 1, p. 579.
[580] Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, p. 173.
[581] *Domus, conventus et loca quae ipsi vicariae antiquitus unita et subiecta fuerunt.* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 571.

the Ragusan friary of St. Francis must be handed to the Bosnian vicariate.[582] Furthermore, it confirmed the right of the friars of the vicariate to come for alms begging to any place they used to, which must be a reference to some earlier attempts to ban it in Dubrovnik and Zadar, already discussed in the first section.[583] This was a rather doomed-to-fail appeasement attempt.

The removal was partly justified by the lax religious conduct of the Bosnian vicariate. In *Apostolicae Nobis*, the pope stated that:

> Perhaps because of this subjugation, incorporation and union the scandals emerge among some Christian faithful of these parts, and in these houses, convents and friaries the divine cult diminishes and this Observance may become lukewarm and cease entirely.[584]

This is a rather explicit demonstration of how an allegation of lax religious conduct justified a transfer of jurisdiction, even if we take it to be only a pretext driven by the political agenda. Furthermore, the bull *Ad hoc circa regularis observantiae* re-establishing the authority of James Primadizzi over the Bosnian vicariate was issued a day before (26 July 1447). That bull likewise carried some very critical language against the religious conduct of the Bosnian vicariate, as was shown in the sixth chapter. The proximity of dates suggests that Primadizzi was involved in this process, and I have already explained his bias to the Bosnian vicariate and its religious conduct.

The letter from 5 December 1447 tells us that the Bosnian friars appealed against the verdict of *Apostolicae Nobis,* and so the pope appointed Tomassini to reconsider the case. We know that around this time, the legate was in Italy, so he might have delivered the complaint to the curia himself.[585] However, another letter for him, from 12 January 1448 shows that the task was ultimately entrusted to Primadizzi, about whom we learn that he had been

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582 *Fratres domus Ragusin., cupientes sub paupertate iuxta ipsius regulae puritatem vivere et quosdam annuos fructus, redditus et proventus ad ipsam domum Ragusin. pertinentes a se penitus abdicare, illos in manibus dilectorum filiorum civium Ragusin. resignaverint* […] *in usum et utilitatem domorum dictae vicariae ac fratrum eorumdem* […] *convertendam fratribus vicariae huiusmodi seu ad id per eos deputatis annis singulis realiter et cum effectu tradere et assignare debeant ac teneantur.* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 571.

583 BF, ns vol. 1, p. 571.

584 *Propter subiectionem, incorporationem, et unionem huiusmodi verisimiliter apud quosdam christifideles illarum partium exoriri scandala et in ipsis domibus, conventibus atque locis divinus cultus minui ac observantia huiusmodi tepescere et penitus cessare possent*. BF, ns vol. 1, p. 570.

585 Raynaldus, *Annales Ecclesiastici*, pp. 537-38.

commanded to depart to the 'aforesaid kingdom' to make up his mind, while Tomassini was to withhold from any activity.[586]

It is unfortunately not known whether Primadizzi travelled across the Adriatic or not. *Ad Romani pontificis providentiam* from 24 October 1448 states that the Bosnians complained that he 'established a new vicariate in Dalmatia' as well as having sent 'some friars excelling in the doctrine of the word equally as in the example they set' to other parts, suggesting perhaps that he indeed might have done it on the spot rather than from across the sea.[587] A Ragusan letter from 10 November 1448 to the pope might have cast some further light on the problem. The Ragusans clearly sent it in order to make sure that the friaries in the city and on Daksa would not end up in the Bosnian vicariate, and it mentions Primadizzi. Unfortunately, the folio of the cartulary is badly damaged at the bottom right corner, where the relevant part was.[588] Nonetheless, it is clear that the outcome of Primadizzi's intervention was unfavourable for the Bosnian vicariate.[589]

The Bosnian Observant family had accumulated a great deal of resentment against the vicar general. They had lost friaries in the north and in the south, and he clearly was not reluctant to criticise their religious conduct as failing to uphold the Observant standard, based on 'reformed' constitutions. Primadizzi re-asserted his authority over the Bosnian vicariate on 26 September 1447, contrarily to what the Bosnian friars wanted. The friars wrote a petition against him, and the pope on 24 October 1448 authorised the legate Tomassini to allow the Bosnian friars to elect a new vicar who would be subject to the minister general.[590] In this way, the second precedent for breaking with the Cismontane chain of command took place. Upset Bosnian friars were also not idle 'on the ground', and decided to act in Ragusa to seize the convent of St. Francis, but this episode will not be evaluated further here, but will be a starting point of the discussion in the tenth chapter, in the next section. Here instead, I will examine the circumstances of the controversy about the five friaries.

It is clear that the vicar general was not an initiator of the campaign to reverse the decision about the Bosnian expansion, because he supported the takeover of five friaries at least at the beginning; not because he favoured the Bosnian friars, but my hypothesis is that

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586 *Ad partes dicti regni destinaverimus dilectum filium Iacobum de Primaditiis* […] *eidemque commiserimus, quatenus de controversiis, quae inter dictos fratres vertuntur, se diligenter informaret.* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 584.
587 *Aliam in Dalmatia* […] *novam constituit vicariam* […] *fratres quoque nonnullos doctrina verbi pariter et exemplo pollentes* […] *ad alias partes pro voto transmisit.* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 643.
588 LDL, vol. 14, fol 1 v.
589 Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 57.
590 BF, ns vol. 1, p. 643.

he did so in exchange for getting friaries in Apulia. However, the Ragusan government became very anxious about the prospect of the Bosnian expansion to the friaries in their city and on Daksa. They first expressed their discontent in a short letter to the pope on 15 December 1446.[591] They invoked the excellent standing of the friars of these two places as an argument against the expansion, yet again demonstrating an intertwining of matters of jurisdiction and religious conduct. With the new year, the Ragusans undertook a much larger diplomatic campaign, which needs to be examined, because it explains withholding of the Bosnian expansion. The campaign is illustrated by some Ragusan letters which were badly edited by Benventus Rode, but I had a chance to verify them in Dubrovnik state archive.[592] The issues of the edition should be first disentangled before moving on, because these letters were already used by historians.[593]

I will first summarise what the relevant part of the register of *Lettere, e commissioni di Levante* (vol. XIII) contains. It has a long vernacular commission for Nicholas de Gondola, Ragusan ambassador to the pope and the vicar general, from 18 January 1447 (LDL, vol. 13, 223 v. – 225 v.), a shorter letter in Latin to Cardinal Corano from the same day (LDL, vol. 13, 225 r.) and another short Latin letter to the Bishop of Kotor, Marino Contareno, from 18 July 1447 (LDL vol. 13, 237 r.).

The three documents got unintentionally merged with one another by Benventus Rode. Most of the commission for Nicholas de Gondola erroneously ended up in the edition as a letter to Marino Contareno from 18 July, which in reality is a much shorter letter in Latin. The edition of this letter starts with the right source, but soon switches to the document for Nicholas of Gondola: it is clearly visible with an odd change of language, which is obviously not happening in the original.

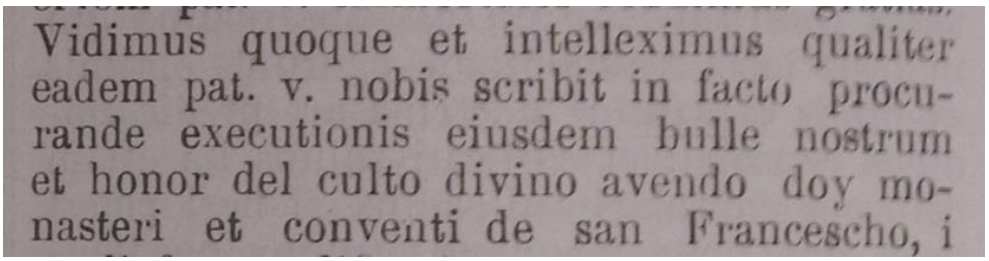

Vidimus quoque et intelleximus qualiter
eadem pat. v. nobis scribit in facto procu-
rande executionis eiusdem bulle nostrum
et honor del culto divino avendo doy mo-
nasteri et conventi de san Francescho, i

Fig. 7. The edition of the letter 'to the bishop of Kotor', from: Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, p. 172.

591 LDL, vol. 13, fol. 219 r.; Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, pp. 171.
592 Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, pp. 171-75.
593 Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, pp. 55-56.

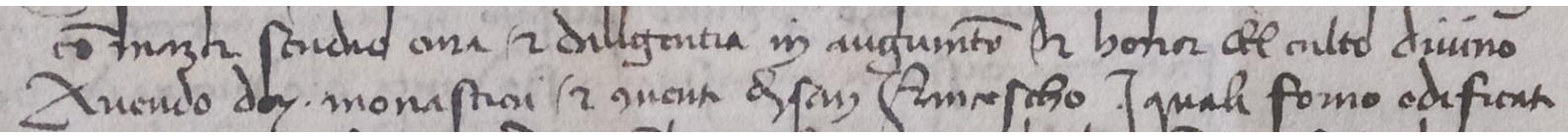


Fig. 8. The original commission for Nicholas de Gondola, from: LDL vol. 13, fol. 223 v.

The other part of the letter to the bishop of Kotor ended up in the edited later part of a letter to Cardinal Corano from 18 January.[594] The part of the letter for the bishop of Kotor starts with the words 'aut sindicum', at the 20th line of the second column in the edition. The letter for Cardinal Corano, albeit merged with the letter for the bishop of Kotor, is for the most part in the right place in the edition, but its ending was erroneously attached to the commission for Nicholas de Gondola, cutting it even though the text continued, which is again clearly visible due to the change of language.[595]

The cartulary also contains a letter to the pope from 18 January 1447 and a letter to the bishop of Kotor from 9 July 1447 (likely not sent, as it is just a shorter version of what they issued for him on 18 July), which were edited well by Rode. All these letters allow us to track the Ragusan diplomatic campaign.

The Ragusan government firstly dispatched its envoy Nicholas de Gondola, for whom they issued the vernacular commission on 18 January 1447. It contained two different messages he was to deliver, one for the vicar general and the other for the pope. We learn from it that at the feast of the Nativity 1446, the vicar of Bosnia came to Ragusa with a papal bull (from 3 July 1446) ordering to subject the friaries of St. Francis and on Daksa to him. The Ragusan government did not want this to happen, and it was the purpose of the mission of Nicholas to convince the pope and the vicar general to prevent it. Nicholas was firstly to persuade the vicar general of the Ragusan case. Afterwards, his task was to obtain a papal audience, for which he was allocated some funds, and to petition a bull that would exempt the two friaries from the Bosnian jurisdiction. At the papal audience he was also to broach some other matters beyond the Franciscan issues.

The letter to the pope from 18 January 1447 is just a letter of recommendation of the messenger. On the same day, the Ragusans also issued a letter to Cardinal Corano, asking for

[594] Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, p. 171.
[595] Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, p. 172.

his support for their petitions. Furthermore, the register tells us that letters similar to the last one were issued for three other cardinals, the Vicar General James Primadizzi, John of Capistrano and Magister Johannes Gasulo.[596] This is revealing of the background of various appellations to papal decisions, that is they required involvement of the cardinals and other prominent individuals. This problem will be given further consideration in the context of the Bosnian vicariate in the next section. All of these letters were likely taken by Nicholas when he travelled to Italy.

The Ragusan campaign was successful. Although they did not manage to obtain a bull exempting their two friaries from the Bosnian expansion immediately, Nicholas V ordered the bishop of Kotor to investigate their complaint. We know that the Ragusan government contacted the bishop with a letter from 18 July 1447, where they thanked him for his benevolence to their state, and responded that friars Nicholas of Ragusa and Anthony of Naples should suffice as Ragusan guarantors for an execution of some unidentifiable bull, presumably the same one which handed over the case to Contareno for an investigation. From the papal letter from 5 December 1447 to Tomassini we know that Contareno indeed decided in favour of the Ragusans. His verdict was then given papal confirmation with the bull *Apostolicae nobis*, which was then protested by the Bosnian friars, as we already know. From this letter to Tomassini we also learn that 'the friars of the said [five] places' appealed against becoming part of the Bosnian vicariate.[597]

This marks up two major sources of discontent with the Bosnian expansion, the Ragusan government and the friars of the friaries in question. Besides the two friaries on the Ragusan territory, the other three were in Venetian Dalmatia. It is therefore worth considering these two sources of opposition.

### II.8.2. The problem of the friaries in Venetian-controlled Dalmatia

The Franciscan Observants in Venice controlled Dalmatia found a prominent leader in Nicholas of Trogir. In the previous section, the last reference to him was that he was sent to Donji Kraj to combat heresy, presumably so that he would no longer undermine the vicariate's integrity. However, on 3 July 1442 Nicholas of Trogir was mentioned in a bull as the guardian of the friary in Ugljan, so he must have returned from Donji Kraji by that time -

[596] LDL, vol. 13, fol. 226 v.
[597] *Praedictorumque locorum fratres ab ipsis litteris et mandato subiectionis* […] *appellarint.* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 579.

if he ever really went there in the first place.[598] The Observant Franciscans continued to attract attention and support in Venetian Dalmatia. The bull permitted Nicholas to take over the friary of the Holy Cross, being built near the walls of Zadar, for the Observants once it was finished.[599] On 13 July 1443, the pope gave permission to him and Nicholas of Pollisano to receive two unspecified friaries for the Observants, which were most likely the other two localities we know from *Apostolicae nobis*: Dobrota and Kampor.[600] Nicholas of Trogir died in 1445, but his followers continued to thrive. But why were they working for secession from the Bosnian vicariate?

The Hungarian leadership of the Bosnian vicariate had clearly become burdensome for the followers of Nicholas of Trogir and their political patron, *La Serenissima*. On 2 March 1447 the doge commanded the *comes* of Zadar, to prevent the replacement of Observant friars 'of good condition and loyal to us' residing in friaries around Zadar, which presumably refers to the places of the custody of St. Jerome, with 'foreigners, mainly Hungarians' by the vicar.[601] It was a measure of the Vicar Fabian of Bács undertaken during his travel, to assure the Hungarian dominance in the custody, and it is remarkable to see that something similar happened in Donji Kraji, as was already discussed. The doge was certainly upset with that, as Hungary used to be the main rival of Venice in the Eastern Adriatic, with the town of Zadar being central to the contention, so it is understandable he would become a political patron for the followers of Nicholas of Trogir. That is not to say that the Bosnian leadership was any more desirable for the Venetians. In 1447 the doge ordered to expel all Hungarian, Croatian and Bosnian Franciscans alike from Venetian-controlled Dalmatia.[602] This was quite a radical step.

Furthermore, we can say that the approach of the followers of Nicholas of Trogir was aligned to Venetian policy, because we have already seen evidence that the Dalmatian Observants wanted to cut their ties to the Bosnian vicariate. James of the Marches wrote a report against 'some debauched and lax friars' who 'under the pretext of sanctity' plotted a

[598] Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 53.
[599] BF, ns vol. 1 p. 281.
[600] BF, ns vol. 1, p. 328; Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 53.
[601] Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 56.
[602] Ivan Pederin, *Mletačka uprava, privreda i politika u Dalmaciji (1409-1797)* (Dubrovnik: Časopis ''Dubrovnik'', 1990), p. 33. The directive of the doge comes from the source *Ducali e terminazioni* kept at the archive in Zadar, which was unfortunately unavailable to me.

secession already in the previous decade.[603] What factors led to such a build-up of tensions, beyond the problem of Hungarian leadership?

One undoubtedly important factor was the complementary role that the vicariate's coastal friaries played for those in the Balkan heartland. I have discussed in the first chapter how that functioned, and what kind of response it triggered in Dubrovnik and Zadar. Instrumentalising the friaries of the custody of St. Jerome in this way had become burdensome for its friars. I should perhaps remind the reader here that a lot of the sources I examined in the first chapter were from around the mid-fifteenth century. Perhaps it should not surprise us that the economic reliance of the Bosnian vicariate on Dalmatia became conspicuous with all clashes between the Bosnian and Dalmatian Franciscans, suggesting that it was indeed a source of tensions.

Another problem were matters of jurisdiction and religious discipline. The Observants of Bosnia wanted to adhere to the minister general, while *Apostolicae nobis* pointed out that the Dalmatian Observants preferred to remain under the vicar general. While I have argued that Bosnian manoeuvring to leave the Cismontane jurisdiction should not be interpreted as a rejection of an Observant identity, this might have not been so clear for the Dalmatian or Italian Observants. In Italy, *Ut Sacra* divided the order effectively in a binary manner between the Observants of the vicar general and the Conventuals of the minister general. Thus, it has become something of a default standpoint for the Italian Observants that they should recognise the vicar general. I think it is fair to argue that the opinion might have been shared by the Dalmatian Observants, and so they would be anxious about becoming alienated from the Cismontane jurisdiction by the activities of the Bosnian vicar. Furthermore, the Dalmatian Observants kept in touch with their Italian brothers quite closely in the course of the fifteenth century, with some prominent Italians coming to Dalmatian towns to give sermons. The Italian language was also spoken in Dalmatian towns, which had a lot of trade and cultural exchange with Italy.

Such proximity clearly found its reflection in approaches to religious discipline. While the friars in Bosnia or Hungary tried to get away from the Cismontane jurisdiction in order to avoid disciplinary measures, we do not see the same activities among the Dalmatian Observants, quite the contrary. Bernardino of Aquila was already quoted in this work for

[603] AB, p. 160.

writing that 'the [Observant] Dalmatians, who were educated in the Italian customs', contrary to the Bosnians.[604] In the commission for Nicholas de Gondola, the Ragusans said that they were anxious that they may be deprived of the excellent Italian preachers once the Bosnian vicariate takes over the friary of St. Francis, 'because of the different customs and various languages', striking a rather familiar chord to what we have read in Bernardino's chronicle.[605] Even though the source is Ragusan, I think it is justified to extrapolate that the religious conduct of the Observants in Venice controlled Dalmatia, likewise, was closer to the pattern established in Italy. Finally, this would explain why we find critical remarks about the religious conduct of the Bosnian friars in *Apostolicae nobis*. Namely, the Dalmatian Observants exploited the differentiation of religious conduct in Bosnia from the Cismontane standard to their own advantage.

The final problem of this subchapter is in what kind of entity the five friaries ultimately ended up. *Apostolicae nobis* states that they must not be ruled by the Bosnian vicariate.[606] *Ad Romani pontificis* from 24 October 1448 mentioned that Primadizzi 'has set up another vicariate in Dalmatia'.[607] This suggests a solution similar to the one we have encountered in Hungary, which is the establishment of an independent Dalmatian Observant vicariate. However, we cannot detect its existence later on. Part of the problem may lie in the fact that while *Ineffabilis* ended the discord between the Hungarian and Bosnian friars, *Apostolicae nobis* marks more of an opening stage of a much longer quarrel over the coastal friaries. Dubrovnik, which we can suppose was to become the headquarter of the new entity, became an object of strong discord soon after, illustrating the instability of the settlement.

Another explanation may be that the solution intended for the five friaries was more reminiscent of the settlement we know from Apulia, that is subjecting these five friaries to the provincial vicar of Dalmatia, who would have to be established from now on. Such is the hypothesis of Škunca.[608] The titling of Gaspar Longin from 1457 as 'the vicar or custodian of the Observant friars of the reverend father minister of the Dalmatian province' indeed speaks in favour of such an explanation.[609] This however comes from a significantly later source,

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604 Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 260.
605 *Si per lo diverso costume de viva, si per la variietade e diversitade de le lengue.* LDL, vol. 13, fol. 223 r.
606 BF, ns vol. 1, p. 571.
607 *Aliam in Dalmatia* […] *novam constituit vicariam.* BF, ns vol. 1, p. 643.
608 Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, pp. 51-52, 57.
609 *Fr. Gaspar de Venetiis Reverendi Patris Ministri Provincie Dalmatie immeritus Vicarius sive Custos fratrum de Observantia nuncupatorum.* After: Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 52.

and it is not clear whether such a settlement was intended a decade earlier. Perhaps it is more helpful just to see *Apostolicae nobis* as opening an avenue to autonomy for the Dalmatian Observants, with the ultimate settlement of their status being a matter of a process, especially given all efforts of the Bosnian side to re-assert its control. Finally, a single settlement concerning the five friaries in question was unlikely to be accepted by both Venice and Ragusa, which were rival maritime powers.

### II.8.3. The evolution of the Ragusan approach

The change of the Ragusan approach to the Bosnian vicariate as illustrated by their campaign to stop the Bosnian expansion may seem surprising. The emergence of the Observant reform has been seen in Ragusa as an opportunity, because it helped to break ties of their friaries with the Dalmatian provincial, who was seen as representing Venetian agenda.[610] An office of an Observant vicar, responsible for the reform of the friary of St. Francis was created in 1428, nominally subject to the province yet largely autonomous. The vicars were usually some prominent Italian Observants, such as James of the Marches, himself appointed in autumn 1432.[611] The Bosnian vicariate, which controlled the four remaining Franciscan friaries (Ston, Slano, Rožat, Konavli) on the Ragusan territories, was seen generally favourably by the government, because it was a jurisdiction alternative to the province.[612] The religious conduct of the friars of these four friaries was often presented as exemplary in the government's correspondence.[613] The Italian humanist Filip de Diversis described that he witnessed the reverence paid to the Bosnian vicar by the inhabitants of Dubrovnik.[614] The Ragusan government even intervened on behalf of the friars of the Bosnian vicariate when some of the vicars of St. Francis forbade them to beg for alms in the city.[615] Although that controversy might had demonstrated that the friars of St. Francis and Daksa were not interested in joining the vicariate, it cannot explain the shift in the government's position.

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610 Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, pp. 62-63, 66.
611 Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, p. 14, 26.
612 Anđelko Badurina, *Uloga franjevačkih samostana u urbanizaciji dubrovačkog područja* (Zagreb: Institut za povijesne znanosti Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 1990) pp. 127-39; Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 66.
613 Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 13, pp. 151-52; 14, p. 60.
614 Džambo, *Franjevci*, p. 168.
615 Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, pp. 62-63, 65-66.

In a letter from 8 December 1436 the Ragusans made a petition, asking that a custodian should be appointed who 'should be subject to the vicar of Bosnia and should govern the Ragusan convent and the other five friaries existing under our jurisdiction and built by us, namely of Daksa, Ston, Slano, Rožat and Konavle, of which last four being of the vicariate of Bosnia'.[616] Such a solution would have solved the problems stemming from two separate Franciscan jurisdictions in their state, and the ties to the Dalmatian province would be cut off.[617] The Bosnian expansion following the chapter in Ara Coeli 1446 may therefore seem like a fulfilment of the Ragusan aspirations from the previous decade. However, the Ragusan government commenced a campaign to stop it instead. What had changed in the Ragusan approach, and why?

We can observe an evolution of the Ragusan relationship with the Bosnian vicariate since the early 1440s. Their first sign of tensions can be seen in a Ragusan letter from 15 July 1441 to the Minister General William of Casale.[618] In it, the Ragusans denied an allegation by the Bosnian Vicar John of Baja, claiming that the Ragusan government acted to subject the convent of St. Francis under the jurisdiction of the 'minister', which must mean the Dalmatian provincial minister. This is indeed quite a puzzle, given that the Ragusan convent was technically under the Dalmatian province anyway, but the allegation may imply an effort to establish his real rather than nominal control of the convent.[619] Although the Ragusans, having expressed their surprise, denied that, the letter demonstrated the emergence of tensions with the Bosnian vicar in regard to the jurisdiction of St. Francis.[620]

While the letter is the first indication of the relationship's deterioration, it does not explain it very well. Although it points at the convent of St. Francis as an object of tensions, we have seen the Ragusans willing to subject it to the Bosnian vicariate in December 1436, as we have seen, making them look internally contradictory. At the same time, it was very important for

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616 *Supponat domino vicario Bosne et curam gerat ac regat hunc Ragusinum conventum et alia quinque monasteria ordinis minorum existentia in iurisdictione nostra et per nos constituta et hedificata, videlicet monasterii Daxe, Stagni, Slani, Umble et Canalis quorum quatuor ultima sunt vicarie Bosne.* Rode, 'Documenti francescani' 14, p. 120.

617 Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 69; Justin Velnić (ed.), 'Samostan male braće – povijesni prikaz života i djelatnosti' in *Samostan Male braće u Dubrovniku* (Zagreb: Kršćanska sadašnjost, 1985), pp. 95-184 (p. 136).

618 LDL, vol. 13, fol. 30 v. Erroneously dated by Rode for 2 July 1444: Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, pp. 125-26.

619 Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 53.

620 *Secundarie mirari cogimur non parum quod praefatus dominus vicarius Bosne dicat nos fore de permutatione ipsius conventus contentos, cum nullum verbum superinde per nos factum extiterit, neque talis nostra fuit unque intentio.* LDL, vol. 13, fol. 30 v; Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 54.

the Ragusans that the convent should continue to attract prominent Italian Observants, and the convent's vicar should be an Italian. The government often recalled that their sermons attracted a lot of popular attention.[621] This shows that they played an important role in accommodating the spiritual needs of the Ragusan citizens. Furthermore, the government recognised the religious importance of the Observance beyond the Franciscan order: on 17 October 1449 they sent a letter asking to make sure that the Dominican convent of the Holy cross would always be governed by the Observants.[622]

The commission for Nicholas de Gondola from January 1447 becomes in this light quite revealing, because it tells us that the Ragusans were anxious about the consequences of the Bosnian expansion:

> For this reason, these two convents will be completely abandoned by those Observant friars from Italy, and consequently we will be deprived of the solemn preachers. Because they would neither like to nor be able to come to the vast provinces of the vicariate of Bosnia, because of the different customs and various languages.[623]

Although this is obviously a part of the diplomatic rhetoric aimed at attracting the vicar general's favour, it is remarkable to hear that the Italian Observant preachers would no longer be coming to Ragusa, which used to be a rather popular destination. The passage seems to hint that the Italian Observants would actually become almost *personae non gratae* in the town, once the Bosnian vicariate would take over St. Francis. A Ragusan letter to the pope from 16 April 1450 further clarifies that the government was anxious of losing touch with 'the good and best religious men from Italy', if the Bosnian vicariate takes over the two friaries.[624] This perhaps should not surprise us given all the tensions between these two families, and given that we hear about this around the time when the Bosnian vicariate kept trying to get itself out of the Cismontane Observant jurisdiction. This allows us to hypothesise that the change in the Ragusan approach to the Bosnian takeover of St. Francis

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621 Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, p. 24, 178.

622 LDL, vol. 14, fol. 22 v. The letter attracted my attention, because it is erroneously addressed to the Franciscan minister general in the register. It must have been intended for the Dominican master general.

623 *La qual cosa se cusi fosse essi doy monasterii predicta vegneriano ad esser totalmente abandonati da li detti fratri de Italia de observantia e con prosequente noy seriamo privati de li predicatori solemni. Per che non voriamo andari ne sono atti a cominsar ne le provintie longinque de la vicaria de bosina si per lo diverso costume de viva, si per la variietade e diversitade de le lengue.* LDL, vol. 13, fol. 223 r.

624 […] *ex Italia bonos et optimos religiososque viros* […] LDL, vol. 14, fol. 32 r; Rode, 'Documenti francescani' 14, p. 177.

was related to escalation of tensions between the Bosnian and Italian Observants, and that they became anxious about losing an opportunity to attract Italian preachers because of the Bosnian expansion. Thus, we can demonstrate that the Observant fights over the religious discipline and jurisdiction in Ragusan case created repercussions felt beyond the order, triggering a response unfavourable for the Bosnians.

While the Ragusan letters issued in late 1446 and in 1447 illustrate a cooling of relations with the Bosnian vicariate, they do not yet mark their full reversal from cordial to hostile. Rather, the campaign to stop the Bosnian expansion demonstrated a stage in the evolution of their approach, firstly to a somewhat moderate position. While they opposed the Bosnian expansion, they did not yet attack the Bosnian friars on moral grounds. The relationship between the Ragusan government and the Bosnian vicariate indeed deteriorated to that degree, but later on. Furthermore, the commission for Nicholas de Gondola reveals that although opposing the expansion to Ragusa and Daksa, the government wanted to live in harmony with the friars of the remaining four Bosnian friaries on its territories, and asked the vicar general to confirm that that they should be allowed to come to these two convents, and beg for alms in the city.[625] This means that the economic support guaranteed by *Apostolicae nobis* from the convent of St. Francis in fact finds its source in the petition of the Ragusan government. This obviously did not appease the Bosnian side, and fights escalated to an extent unseen before, which I will evaluate in the next section. What it does strongly suggests though, in conjunction with earlier interventions in defence of rights of the Bosnian friars to beg for alms in Dubrovnik, is that the economic reliance of the vicariate on its coastal friaries was not the real source of tensions with the government, which seems to be found in the clashes between the Bosnian and Italian Observants, as well as attempts of the former to break away from the Cismontane chain of command.

## Conclusions

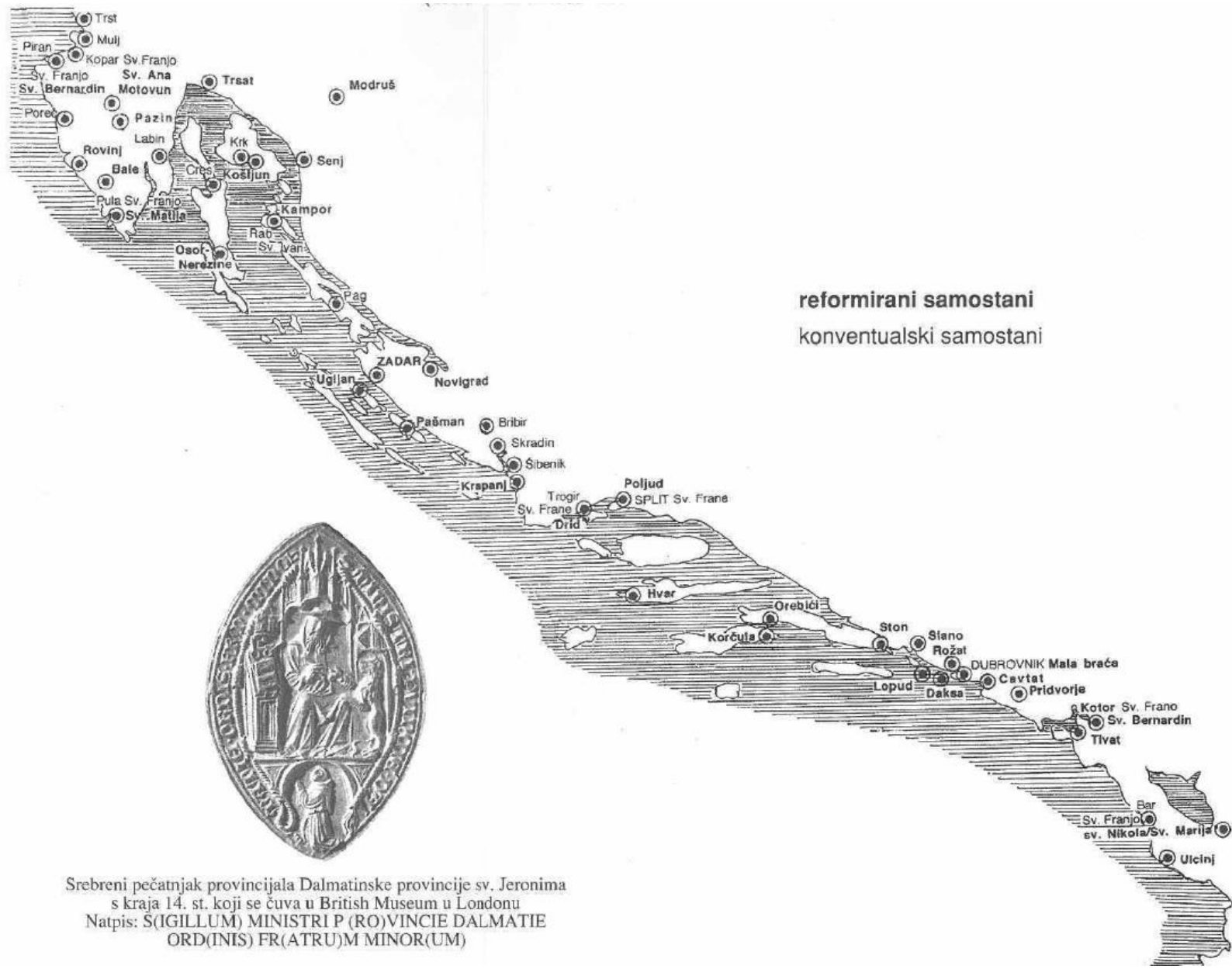
This chapter examined arguably the case study demonstrating the clearest relationship between the expansion and centralisation of the Franciscan Observance with the disintegration of the Bosnian vicariate of the 1440s. It started with a directive of the pivotal chapter of Ara Coeli in Rome, which set up a major restructuring of the Observance. However, the initial permission for Bosnian expansion was withheld after protests from the

[625] LDL, vol. 13, fol. 223 r.

Ragusan government and the Dalmatian friars, and Vicar General James Primadizzi got involved, ordering to separate the five friaries from the Bosnian vicariate.

The policy of the Cismontane leadership blended with the internal struggles of the Bosnian vicariate in Dalmatia. Nicholas of Trogir campaigned to cut the ties of the Observant Dalmatian friaries from the Bosnian jurisdiction. Friars of his group differed from the Bosnian family by their religious conduct, and they desired to keep their allegiance to the vicar general. Inconsistencies with Italian standards made the Bosnian vicariate vulnerable to attacks from the Cismontane leadership, contesting its integrity 'between the Adriatic and the Black Sea'. Meanwhile, the followers of Nicholas of Trogir, with their proximity to Italian 'customs', attracted more favourable treatment. This demonstrates that the controversy and its outcome were integral manifestations of the Observance's progress and centralisation.

The controversy involved a great deal of political interference by the two maritime powers, Venice and Ragusa. Both worked to stop the expansion of the Bosnian vicariate, yet for different reasons. The former can be said to have been primarily alarmed by the rise of the Hungarian leadership in the Bosnian vicariate. For this reason, cutting the ties of friaries on their territories with the Bosnian vicar became its agenda. Ragusa was clearly more indifferent to the Hungarian leadership given its vassalage to Hungary. Its key problem was the growing mistrust between the Bosnian family and the Italian Observants. It found itself in an awkward position, having petitioned to set up a custody under the Bosnian vicar in Dubrovnik in the previous decade on the one hand, yet working to attract the famous Italians to their town on the other. This shows that these controversies, although internal to the vicariate and the order, were not contained, but created wider repercussions, requiring secular government to intervene.






Srebreni pečatnjak provincijala Dalmatinske provincije sv. Jeronima s kraja 14. st. koji se čuva u British Museum u Londonu
Natpis: S(IGILLUM) MINISTRI P (RO)VINCIE DALMATIE ORD(INIS) FR(ATRU)M MINOR(UM)

Fig. 9. Franciscan friaries of the province of St. Jerome by 1517 (from 1484 also of the Ragusan vicariate), from: Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa,* p. 209.

# Section III: The emergence and downfall of the Bosnian-Dalmatian Franciscan province (1464-1469)

This section deals with the emergence and downfall of the Bosnian Dalmatian Franciscan Observant province. It will begin with a chapter laying out the historical context of the province's creation, taking the increasing political role of the Franciscans into focus. Then it will resume where we left the discussion of the discord between the Bosnian and Dalmatian Observants, to reflect on the backstory of the province's creation and clarify why it happened. Finally, it will discuss the history of the province, and the problem of its downfall. The purpose of this section is not going to be an exploration of everything about the province as such, but rather a reflection about the role of the Franciscan Observance in its conception and dismantling. The problem of the religious conduct of the Bosnian Observant family will once again resurface, as juxtaposed with that of the Dalmatian Observants. The intrinsic problems of jurisdiction and obedience will also come into play. While source wise, the previous chapters were centred on papal and Ragusan registers, the set of sources of this section will include so far only fragmentarily discussed chronicle of Bernardino of Aquila, who was the vicar of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province in the triennium of 1464-67, as well as the register of the Cismontane vicar generals (1464-88), referred to as the *Regestum*.

# Ch. 9: Times of upheaval: the historical background of the Bosnian-Dalmatian union

The period immediately preceding the creation of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province was a time of upheaval for the Bosnian kingdom. It was filled with war and other disasters. Finally, in May 1463, the sultan launched a major campaign, conquered the Bosnian kingdom and executed the king, Stjepan Tomašević. The Bosnian court tried in various ways to save the collapsing kingdom, but none of its measures succeeded. In such a context, the Franciscans of the Bosnian vicariate emerged as individuals of great political prominence. We find them at the royal court, as political mediators and as crusade preachers. The friar Marino of Korčula emerged as a particularly important character, and he will be shown in various parts of this section. He became one of the most trusted advisors and diplomats of the Bosnian king, and after the kingdom's fall to the Ottomans, a prominent advocate of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province. Arguably, he was a very clear emanation of the environment that produced him, that is the Bosnian Observant family.

This chapter will focus on a historical recapitulation of the process leading up to the conquest of Bosnia, the conquest itself and its immediate aftermath. It is not going to provide a very detailed analysis, because it is not really relevant to my discussion, and furthermore, I believe the historiography has dealt with it extensively and effectively.[626] Notably, there are plenty of deeply rooted historiographical controversies surrounding some of the events of these last years of the Bosnian kingdom, which I will signal, but not explore them in depth nor engage with them. I will start with the historical overview of the unfolding of events following the marriage of Tomaš with Katarina Kosača, the point I stopped at in chapter five, until the collapse of the kingdom in 1463, as well as its immediate aftermath, focusing primarily on Bosnia.

The peace ending the civil war in Bosnia, sealed by the marriage of King Stjepan Tomaš and Katarina Kosača was short-lived. In March 1448 the Turks attacked the lands of Stjepan Kosača and burned the market town of Drijeva, most likely in order to affirm compliance of their protegee and to force him to break his treaty with Tomaš.[627] Kosača

[626] For a detailed analysis of the last two decades of the Bosnian kingdom and its immediate aftermath, see: Lovrenović, *Na klizištu*, pp. 283-393. For a fairly concise overview in English, see: Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans*, pp. 577-590.
[627] Filipović, 'Exurge igitur', p. 223.

conducted his international affairs independently from the Bosnian king, as was already discussed, and it involved a greater level of oscillation between different powers, including the sultan. Kosača tried to improve his relations with the Serbian Despot Đurađ Branković, likely in hopes of normalising his relations with the Turks in this way, because Đurađ was also an Ottoman vassal. The Bosnian-Serbian relations meanwhile were hostile because both claimed the town of Srebrenica.[628] Given its rich deposits of silver, this town had frequently been passing from hand to hand since the era of Sigismund of Luxemburg.[629] Soon after the marriage of 1446, the Bosnian king attacked Serbia to take control over Srebrenica. By the end of 1446, the king and the despot agreed to divide the incomes from its mines. Neither side was content with that, so the war broke out again in 1448, and this time Serbia was supported by Stjepan Kosača, who in this way re-opened the civil war in Bosnia. Notably, Radivoj Ostojić, once a pretender to the throne, had dropped his claim on Bosnia by this point, and figured as an ally rather than an opponent of his brother.

Tomaš continued his interest in expanding to Serbia, given that the Serbian despotate was collapsing, but ultimately, perhaps more harm than good came out of this 'eastern ambition', as will be shown. The king of Bosnia also tried to expand to Croatia and Dalmatia on some occasions, but these attempts were fruitless.[630] Other than that however, Bosnia of the mid-fifteenth century was itself the victim of Ottoman expansionism. Although it was an Ottoman tributary, it still faced their regular military incursions, devastating the country and enslaving the population. By 1453, the Ottomans set up the administrative unit centred in the stronghold of Hodidjed for the area of Vrhbosna (central Bosnia) which they controlled, which in 1455 they referred to as *Vilayet Hodided* and *Vilayet Saray-ovasi.*[631]

[628] Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans*, pp. 578-79.
[629] Cholewicki, *The role of the Franciscans*, p. 55.
[630] Lovrenović, *Na klizištu*, pp. 296-301.
[631] Lovrenović, *Na klizištu*, pp. 319-20.




Fig. 10. Political map, c. 1460, from: Špoljarić, 'The Renaissance papacy', p. 158.

The geopolitical position of Tomaš was rather grim. Although his policy was not entirely confrontational towards the Turks, it was not completely submissive either. The proposed (but not signed) peace treaty between Hungary and the Ottomans from 21 May 1449 suggests that the king of Bosnia did not pay his tribute regularly.[632] At the same time, he was seeking allies in the Latin Christian powers. Tomaš was trying to improve Bosnian relations with Hungary. However, until the fall of Bosnia in 1463, the two kingdoms have not managed to establish a successful anti-Turkish cooperation, albeit their treaties from 1440, 1444 and 1449 were intended to set up their alliance. As far as we know, Tomaš did not aid Hunyadi's campaigns in 1443/44, in 1448, nor in the battle of Belgrade in 1456.[633]

632 Lovrenović, *Na kliništu*, p. 317.

633 Although the Bosnian noble Petar Kovačević took part in the 'long campaign' of Warneńczyk with his 600-700 troops, this obviously cannot be equated with the participation of the Bosnian kingdom as such. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu*, pp. 314-16.

Meanwhile, Hungary fully removed its military presence from Bosnia by the 1440s, and it was not interested in the crusade preparation by Tomaš in 1457, which will be described later. Both parties perceive each other with mistrust.[634] Tomaš's real hopes seemed to lie in the creation of a joined Christian front involving the Italian states and the papal patronage. There he kept sending his envoys, and had some particular hopes in Venice.[635] In November 1451 the Hungarians concluded a peace treaty with the Ottomans, which decided that Bosnia, as well as other 'buffer states' had to pay their regular tribute to the Sultan. This peace was interrupted by the Second war of Konavle, which also happens to be an important point for the discussion about the role of the Franciscans.

### III.9.1. The royal chaplain Marino

The Second war for Konavle took place in the years 1451-54. It started as a military aggression of Herceg Stjepan Kosača against Ragusa. It was caused by the trade war between the two players, as well as an ambition of Kosača to seize Konavle, the coastal region adjacent to Dubrovnik from the south-east.[636] In late June 1451 Herceg attacked Konavle, and Ragusa sought help via its diplomatic channels. It launched a campaign undermining Herceg's reputation.[637] Although the war started as a conflict between Herceg and Ragusa, it actually involved a number of other players. It is not the purpose of this chapter to thoroughly examine each stage of the war, but some treaties signed over this period were very significant in that they reflected the growing role of the Franciscans in the political life of Bosnia.

It is in this context that a certain Franciscan friar Marino emerged, who came to play a very prominent role in Bosnian political life. He emerged for the first time in the sources in the autumn of 1451, as a person involved in alliance negotiations between the Bosnian king and Ragusa, against Kosača. While Marino is an individual known to Bosnian historians, I believe he has not yet earned the comprehensive evaluation that he deserves.[638] The

634 Lovrenović, *Na kliništu*, p. 318-19; Filipović, *Exurge igitur*, p. 213.
635 Tomaš offered his kingdom to Venice in early 1444, and in November 1460, but both requests were rejected. Filipović, 'Ardet ante oculos' pp. 139-40; Filipović, 'Exurge igitur', p. 232-33.
636 Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans*, pp. 579-80.
637 It is at this time that the papacy became disillusioned about Herceg's 'Catholicism'. Fine, *The Bosnian Church*, p. 253; Lovrenović, *Na kliništu,* p. 294.
638 Ančić, *Na rubu Zapada* pp. 46, 173; Babić, *Iz istorije*, p. 114; Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, pp. 89–90; Lovrenović, *Na kliništu,* p. 295; Midhat Spahić, *Bosanska kraljevina sredinom XV vijeka-kralj Stjepan Tomaš* (Zagreb: Bošnjačka nacionalna zajednica za Grad Zagreb i Zagrebačku županiju, 2016), p. 225.

systematic examination of evidence I have conducted is a contribution to the further research on this remarkable character.

The Ragusan register of *Acta Consili Rogatorum* under 15 November 1451 mentions friar Marino as one of the two ambassadors of the Bosnian king.[639] In a letter for their envoy to Bosnia, Aloysius de Gozze, from 17 November 1451, the Ragusans reported indeed that two Bosnian ambassadors, the Franciscan friar and custodian Marino and Nicholas Testa (a laymen), had already arrived.[640] It is clear that these two took part in the negotiations between the Ragusans and Tomaš concerning an alliance between the king and the republic against Herceg Stjepan, because the Ragusans agreed to certain conditions of the Bosnian king, in order secure his involvement in the war.[641] A month later, on 18 December in Bobovac, the Bosnian king issued a Slavonic charter sealing the alliance agreed upon in November, swearing together with his son to enter the war without hesitation and to claim territorial concessions from Stjepan Kosača, making an oath 'in the presence of father legate bishop of Hvar [Tomassini] and father custodian and chaplain Marino'.[642] Finally, there is an undated Ragusan source, which can be contextually dated for 1451, which contains instructions for a certain friar Michael who was to go to Bosnia as an Ragusan agent. He was to discreetly inquire about Tomaš's position on Herceg, and to try to indirectly influence him according to Ragusan agenda. He was told to seek acquaintance with Marino 'Pribasnović', if he were to find him at the court.[643]

It can be hypothesised that the last discussed source is the earliest one, and that all of them point out to the same individual. This would mean that the Ragusans, seeking to involve Bosnia in their war with the Herceg, tried to influence the king by using the mediation of Marino, known to them by that time as an influential figure at the court. He was then the royal envoy in Ragusa in November in negotiations about the alliance. An agreement was likely struck there, and finally, after returning to Bosnia, Marino became the guarantor, likely

639 ACR, vol. 12, fol. 170 v. The register also mentions some arrangements as to clothing Marino was allowed to use.
640 LDL, vol. 14, fols. 98 r. – 99 r. Ančić erroneously dated this source for 12 February 1453. Ančić, *Na rubu Zapada* p. 46
641 This included payment of money by Ragusa to Bosnia and support of the Bosnian king with Ragusan soldiers.
642 *Zavezasmo se i rotismo prid' otcem' ligatom' biškupom' hvar'skim' i prid' ot'cem' kuštodom' i kapelanom' Marinom'.* MS, pp. 447-50; Cholewicki, *The role of the Franciscans*, pp. 81-82.
643 *Et se dela sera frate Marino Pribasnovich, parando a voi, revelate a lui questa; e poi cum lui pratichate questa tal facenda, come e detto sopra*. LDL vol. 15, fols. 172 v.-r.; Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, pp. 178-79; Babić, *Iz istorije*, p. 114

upon Ragusan request, of the alliance charter issued in Bobovac by the Bosnian side. The fact that he was the royal chaplain, as well as that he arrived in Dubrovnik alongside Nicholas Testa, probably the most famous medieval Bosnian diplomat, suggests that Marino was one of the Bosnian king's most trusted advisors and ambassadors.[644] He was mentioned in the Ragusan registers on 20 September 1455 and 25 June 1460 again as the royal ambassador and chaplain, demonstrating his steady significance in the entire decade.[645] Interestingly, he was also an individual highly trusted by Ragusa. On 22 June 1452, the Ragusan government ordered to write a credential letter for friar Marino.[646]

On 12 February 1456 the Ragusan government issued instructions for their envoy to Bosnia, Elias Bogišić, who was to express condolences for king's recent sickness and congratulate him on his recovery in the name of the Ragusan state and to plead for the Voivode Ivaniš Vlatković and his brothers, who took part in the Second war for Konavle on the side of Tomaš, and who were expelled from their domains in Hum, and finally, to convince the king to share what was known to him about the recent moves of the Turks, Hungarians and the Serbs.[647] Elias was to seek the council and mediation of the 'royal chaplain' Marino in his mission. He was to recommend Marino to take particular care of the Vlatkovići.[648] The instructions for Elias are very similar to those given to friar Michael from 1451, in regard to how to approach Marino and how to convince him to aid the Ragusan cause. It seems Ivaniš Vlatković ultimately entered the entourage of Tomaš, as according to the Ragusan instructions from 11 September 1459, their envoys to Bosnia were instructed to approach him, as well as Friar Marino at the court, in order that they might indirectly remind the king to respect some earlier arrangements with Ragusa.[649] Friar Marino also emerges in October 1458 as one of three Bosnian ambassadors to Mathias Corvinus, namely king's brother Radivoj and Nicholas Testa, likely taking part in the negotiations concerning Tomašević's takeover of Smederevo (ser. *Смедерево*), which will be discussed later.[650]

644 On Nicholas Testa, see: Babić, *Iz istorije*, pp. 141-47.
645 ACR, vol. 14, fol. 208, vol. 16, fol. 152.
646 ACR, vol. 13, fol. 38.
647 LDL, vol. 16, fols. 158 v.-r., 161 r.; Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, pp. 185-86.
648 *Et quando inde recedetis hoc negocium recomendabitis dicto venerabili fratri Marino, eum rogando quod apud dictam Maiestatem sit fautor et adiutor dictorum voivode Ioanis et fratrum.* LDL, vol. 16, fol. 161 r.
649 LDL, vol. 16, fol. 52. v.
650 AB, p. 237.

This summarises all the data I was able to collect about the royal chaplain Marino until the Ottoman conquest, as I could not find any reference to him from the short reign of Tomašević. Potentially, the story of this individual could have ended here. However, I would argue that this is not the case. Following the Ottoman conquest, a certain Franciscan friar Marino of Korčula emerged as a very prominent figure in the Bosnian Franciscan family. He was mentioned by Wadding as 'Marino of Korčula, custodian of Ston', among the Bosnian custodians, based on various documents issued by the vicariate's chapter, apparently assembled in 1462.[651] There is a charter issued by Marino of Korčula in Zadar on 6 April 1464, where he titles himself 'Marino of Korčula, the vicar of Bosnia of the Franciscan order of the Observance, and a commissary of the crusade in Dalmatia, Bosnia and Croatia of […] the lord Bessarion, patriarch of Constantinople'.[652] We learn that later on, together with the Ragusan friar Francis Zlatarić, he indeed preached the crusade in the Venetian Dalmatia. Furthermore, Marino of Korčula was a particularly active character in the history of the united province of Bosnia and Dalmatia. He is often mentioned in the *Regestum*, and also, he is featured in the penultimate chapter of the chronicle of Bernardino of Aquila as a particularly deceptive character, although he is not mentioned by name.[653] The role of Marino of Korčula in the history of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province will be elaborated upon in chapter eleven.

Mladen Ančić presumed that both Marino 'the chaplain' and Marino 'of Korčula' are the same individual, and while I also think that this is correct identification, we need to first acknowledge that the identity of the friar in question is a genuine problem. In the sources which I managed to access, 'chaplain' Marino is never called 'of Korčula', while at the same time we cannot confirm that Marino of Korčula has ever been a royal chaplain, or called 'Pribasnović'. The variety of names is notable, but the fact that we are talking about a very prominent friar of the same name is the first hint that we may be dealing with the same person. However, the name Marino is a very popular Dalmatian name, and by the mid-fifteenth century, the Dalmatians dominated the leadership of the Bosnian vicariate.[654]

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651 AM, vol. 13 (1462), p. 289.
652 *Marinus de Corzola, ordinis minorum de observantia, vicarius Bosnae, ac* […] *domini Bessarionis* […] *patriarchae Constantinopolitani,* […] *commissarius in Dalmatia, Bosna et Chroaccia super cruciatam.* AB, p. 259.
653 Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano,* p. 260.
654 Džambo, *Franjevci,* p. 168.

The papal bull from 1 July 1452 further problematizes the identity issue. The bull confirms the peace treaty between the Bosnian king and Petar Vojsalić, which was mediated by the legate Tomassini, as well as friars Nicholas of Apulia and Marino of Konavle, who were mentioned as the custodians of the Bosnian vicariate.[655] We learn that Vojsalić has made those three as guarantors (lat. *fideiussores*) of his oath.[656] Marino 'of Konavle' adds to the confusion regarding the identity problem. He may be the same friar as Marino the 'chaplain', but he may as well be a different friar. Involvement in the political mediation strikes a chord to what Marino the 'chaplain' was doing. I also thought that we may be dealing with some chancery or editorial mistake (*Canali* and *Corzola* may perhaps look quite similar on the manuscript), but this is highly speculative. This means that the possibility that we are dealing with two, or even three different friars cannot be excluded. This problem strikes an analogy with the other one, of whether we are dealing with one, two or three different Ottoman 'puppet king(s)' of Bosnia named Matija, which is going to be discussed at the end of this chapter.

The main argument speaking in favour of the hypothesis that we are dealing with the same individual before and after the Ottoman conquest of Bosnia is that Marino of Korčula in the early 1480s was active in the lands of Krajina and Hum, that is the lands controlled at that time by the Vlatkovići, the noble family on whose behalf 'Chaplain' Marino acted in the 1450s.[657] Together with Francis Zlatarić, a companion in crusade preaching in Dalmatia, what got them in trouble with the Venetian government, they obtained the bull issued on 8 June 1482, allowing them to establish the custody of Krajina and Hum, independent of the structures of the vicariate existing under the Turks.[658] This hints at a friendly relationship between Marino of Korčula and Vlatkovići, which was perhaps rooted in the mediation requested by Elias Bogišić back in 1456.

It was worth bringing forth this character, because he represents a Franciscan friar particularly involved in matters of the Bosnian kingdom. The problem of his identity must be recognised, but my conclusion is that 'chaplain' Marino of the 1450s, and Marino 'of Korčula' of the later period are the same friar. Ultimately, for my thesis, the problem of

655 *Et dilectis Nicolao de Apulia ac Marino de Canali ordinis minorum professoribus, custodibus Vicarie Bosne iuxta morem dicti ordinis*. MH, vol. 2, pp. 265.
656 MH, vol. 2, pp. 266.
657 Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans*, p. 588; Ančić, *Na rubu Zapada*, p. 173.
658 Ančić, *Na rubu Zapada*, p. 173.

identity of the individual is of less importance than that for what he stands for, which is an increasing prominence of the Bosnian family in the affairs of the royal court, in particular those relating to political mediation, and the Cismontane Observants, as well as standing up for the Bosnian kingdom by the friars of the vicariate at the time of great need.

### III.9.2. The balance of power between the Roman and Bosnian faith in light of the Second war for Konavle

Following the initial success, fortune has turned away from the herceg. Ragusa had managed to negotiate an alliance with the Bosnian king by the end of 1451, and furthermore, Stjepan Kosača also faced a family drama which significantly undermined his initial success. He made his son Vladislav's Sienese bride his own mistress, causing a major rift between himself and his son and wife.[659] This was obviously seen in Dubrovnik as an opportunity, and so the republic on 15 August 1451 allied itself with Vladislav, who at the end of March of the next year rose in the rebellion against his father. He was backed by Ivaniš Vlatković, and took control over almost the entire western part of Hum, including the family headquarter of Blagaj.

Meanwhile, some disagreement occurred in the king's camp. Two of his major subjects, Vladislav Klesić and Petar Vojsalić apparently were in conflict with Tomaš for reasons explained differently by scholars. However, major Catholic figures of Bosnia stepped in as mediators, and peace between them was confirmed by two papal bulls from 1 July 1452, what was already discussed.[660]

Reconciled with their king, the two noblemen joined Tomaš in his campaign against the herceg. Kosača's situation has become very precarious, but he was saved by the Ottomans, who considered him to be their protégé, as well as by the later conflict of interest between Tomaš with Vladislav over Blagaj, and finally the mediatory role of *Gost* Radin Butković.[661] Stjepan Kosača reconciled with his family by issuing two charters, one on 19 July 1453, and the other on 10 April 1454, which proclaimed peace with Ragusa, thus ending the war. All sides seem to agree to restore the *ante bellum* conditions. Even though politically speaking, the Second war for Konavle did not really change anything, besides bringing all sorts of

659 Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans*, p. 580.
660 MH, vol. 2, pp. 265-66.
661 Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans*, pp. 580-81.

devastation usually associated with an armed conflict, it is interesting in that it was symptomatic of the balance of power between the Roman and the Bosnian faith.

While we have seen the Legate Tomassini and some of the prominent Franciscan friars of the Bosnian vicariate emerging as political mediators and guarantors of the treaties signed, an analogical role was played by the hierarchs of the Bosnian church on the side of Stjepan Kosača.[662] A charter from 19 July 1453 which pardons herceg's wife and son, was guaranteed by 'Lord *Djed* of the Bosnian Church and the twelfth *stroinici*, among whom will be *Gost* Radin for his lifetime'.[663] This suggests involvement of the *Krstjani* in the negotiations. Furthermore, Radin also worked on the herceg's behalf in Dubrovnik for peace. In August of 1453 Radin was rewarded with 400 ducats by the Ragusans, and in November 1455 he was given a house in Dubrovnik as well as the right of freedom of faith in this city.[664] Ragusan generosity made some historians even question Radin's loyalty to the herceg.[665]

It is quite notable that the mediators working with Tomaš and the herceg represented two different faiths. While it was not the case that the Bosnian church had already been expelled from the royal domains, as some historians suggested, nevertheless, it undoubtedly marks a Catholic progress in political life.[666] The extent of the Catholic progress - not only politically but more generally speaking – around the late 1440s and during the 1450s has actually become one of the historiographical controversies. The letter from 19 February 1451 to John of Capistrano from Tomassini speaks of heretics as fading 'like wax in the sun' (a paraphrase of Psalm 68:2). There is some more evidence of the Catholic progress in a letter of John of Capistrano to the pope from 4 July 1455, containing a list of complaints against and errors of the Serbian Orthodox church, likely reported to him by the friars of the Bosnian vicariate, who apparently complained that although many 'Patarens' converted to Catholicism, the Serbian Metropolitan (of Mileševa) successfully hindered those conversions.[667] Provided that this account also finds confirmation in the letter of Patriarch Gennadius II to Stjepan Kosača,

662 Babić, *Iz istorije*, p. 285; Cholewicki, *The role of the Franciscans*, pp. 82-83.
663 MS, p. 459. Translation according to: Fine, *The Bosnian Church*, p. 254.
664 Михаило Динић, *Из Дубровачког архива*, ed. by Jopjo Тадић, vols. 3, (Belgrade: Naučno delo, 1967) vol. 3, pp. 208-09; MS, pp. 472-73.
665 Aleksandar Solovjev, 'Gost Radin i niegov testament', *Pregled*, 2 (1947), 310-18.
666 Babić, *Iz istorije*, p. 284.
667 *Multis ex illis haereticis Bosnensibus, qui fidem tenerunt Patharenorum, audientes verbum Dei, convertuntur ad fidem romanam, sed a metropolitano Rascianorum et aliis non permittuntur reconciliari; de quibus multi moriuntur extra fidem, magis volentes extra fidem mori, quam eorum Rascianorum fidem suscipere.* Šanjeik, *Bosansko-humski krstjani*, pp. 110-113.

Džaja has argued that the progress of Catholic proselytization was not mere rhetoric, but some other scholars remained sceptical.[668] Undoubtedly the Franciscan Bosnian vicariate and the Serbian Orthodox church capitalised on the fading of the Bosnian church, leading both to a clash for converts in the land of Hum, and possibly also in the areas around Srebrenica, contested between Bosnia and the Serbian Despotate.[669]

### III.9.3. The role of the Franciscans in the projected crusade of King Tomaš

The attempt of King Stjepan Tomaš to organise an anti-Ottoman crusade has attracted scholarly attention, especially given the long-standing significance of the crusades in Medieval Studies. The best examination of this initiative so far has been published by Emir Filipović.[670] At the same time, I think it is important to point out at the start that there is no evidence that this crusade took place, and that the scholarship is in fact unanimous that it never materialised.[671] Nevertheless, I would like to bring it to our attention, to take a look at the role of the Franciscans in the initiative.

It is fair to say that throughout his entire reign Tomaš was positioned at the forefront of Catholic Christendom. He struggled against the Turks, the Serbian 'schismatics' and Stjepan Kosača who backed the 'Manichaeans'. This very fact definitely contributed to Tomaš's positive image in the Roman curia.[672] However, he had never seriously aimed to organise his military endeavours under the crusading banner until the spring of 1457. It seems that by that time, Tomaš saw an opportunity to organise a major anti-Ottoman campaign, for which he got a very positive response from Callixtus III, the pope particularly enthusiastic for crusades.[673]

Following the conquest of Constantinople, Sultan Mehmed II further engaged in expanding the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans. In 1455 he conquered substantial parts of Serbia, and he was preparing a major campaign to capture Smederevo and Belgrade in 1456.

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668 Džaja, 'Katoličanstvo u Bosni', p. 165; Spoljarić, 'The Renaissance Papacy', p. 156.
669 For an evaluation of these Catholic-Orthodox fracted relations, see: Andrić, 'Saint John Capistran and Despote George', pp. 215-18.
670 Filipović, 'Exurge igitur', pp. 229-42.
671 Lovrenović has actually suggested the whole initiative to be unworthy of attention it had earned. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu*, pp. 326-27.
672 MH, vol. 2, p. 255.
673 Norman Housley (ed.), 'Introduction' in *Crusading and the Ottoman threat* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 5; Filipović, 'Exurge igitur', p. 228.

As we learn from the letter of the ban of Mačva to John of Capistrano from 8 February 1456, the ban knew from the Bosnian king that the Sultan demanded that Tomaš, Stjepan Kosača and Petar Pavlović must join the Ottoman armies, but all three excused themselves from participation by saying they would continue to pay the tribute.[674] From a later letter to Venice, we also learn that Tomaš was at the time obliged by the Sultan to hand down four towns of strategic location, but it seems he gave up none.[675] Tomaš also wrote a short letter to John of Capistrano on 3 May 1456, which recommended him his messengers, friar Elias of Požega and some nobles, who were sent most likely – although the source is not explicit - to discuss the matters of the Turkish danger with John of Capistrano.[676]

It is noteworthy that John of Capistrano's contacts with the Bosnian court as well as with the friars of the Bosnian vicariate, as we have seen from his letter to Calixtus III, evidences the surprisingly good relationship he enjoyed with Bosnian political and religious circles for a high-ranking Cismontane Franciscan Observant. It is clear that the same thing cannot be said about James of the Marches or James Primadizzi.

While in May 1456 Tomaš had excused himself from an anti-Ottoman activity to the papal emissary Nicholas Barbucci, it seems that the Christian victory in the battle of Belgrade in July emboldened him to act.[677] From a papal letter from 23 April 1457 we learn that Tomaš asked for papal support of a crusade against the Turks as well as the crusading banner. The king's letter was brought by a Franciscan friar Nicholas of Šibenik, otherwise known as the first guardian of the friary of Kampor (by that time no longer a part of the Bosnian vicariate), working for the curia at the time, likely himself supporting the king's petition.[678] Papal response to Tomaš was very enthusiastic, and on that same day the pope wrote to his legate in Hungary, Cardinal Juan Carvajal, ordering him to come to Bosnia to oversee the crusade's

674 Béla Pettkó, 'Kapisztrán János levelezése a magyarokkal', *Történelmi Tár*, 2.2 (1901), 161-222 (pp. 193-94).
675 Сима М. Ћирковић, *Херцег Стефан Вукчић-Косача и његово доба* (Belgrade: Naučno delo, 1964) p. 229; Lovrenović, *Na klizištu,* p. 323.
676 AB, pp. 227-28.
677 Thallóczy, *Studien zur Geschichte*, pp. 415-16; Filipović, 'Exurge igitur', p. 230.
678 *Rediit ad nos dilectus filius frater Nicolaus de Sibinico ordinis minorum, quem superiori anno ad partes illas pro certis negotiis nostris miseramus, et litteras tuas nobis reddidit, per quas, et ipso etiam plenius referente, plane intelleximus sanctum, pium et devotum propositum tuum, quod habere videris pro sancta fide catholica, ad procedendum adversus Turcorum impetus eandem fidem supprimere satagentes*. MH, vol. 2, p. 291. Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 132.

preparations.[679] We know that Tomaš indeed met with the legate in Dobor in June, whom he indeed ensured about his intentions to launch the crusade.[680]

Callixtus III issued another letter to Carvajal on 22 June 1457. We learn from it that the pope was visited by another two Franciscan friars sent by Tomaš, Bryce of Pannonia and Demetrius of Albania, and their role as advocates of the Bosnian king at the curia is emphasised explicitly.[681] They reported that the king stopped paying the tribute to the Sultan, and was ready to wage war against the Turks, and was asking to be granted the 'sign of the life-giving cross' and the 'banner of the apostolic see'. It is a bit confusing as to why the request for the banner was reiterated, but it is possible that Tomaš wanted to be on the safe side had his talks with Carvajal in Dobor went wrong, but for all we know, they did not. It is important to highlight that not everyone was optimistic about the crusade initiative, as the Cardinal of Pavia expressed some rather realistic doubts about the whole enterprise in a letter to the duke of Milan.[682]

The crusade preparations had to be quite intense in the summer of 1457, as by the end of the July the pope was again contacted by two Observant friars, Marino of Siena and Paul of Ragusa, requesting the pope to take further steps to help to set the crusade in motion. On 28 July the pope appointed Marino of Siena as responsible for organising a preaching campaign in Hungary, Bosnia and Serbia to attract recruitment as well as collection of money.[683] He was allowed to appoint others to help him in this task from his own order, and in particular, he was to be assisted by Paul of Ragusa and Nicholas of Šibenik. Marino and other friars were then supposed to join the crusading army, and were given the right to absolve from the sins reserved for the Holy See. Two days earlier the pope also wrote to the doge of Venice, Francesco Foscari, telling him to allow to recruit the crusaders in Dalmatia and to collect money for the crusade of the Bosnian king. Finally, doge himself was pushed to get involved in the crusade himself. These letters demonstrate the papal conviction about the sincerity of

679 MH, vol. 2, p. 292.
680 Vilim Frankói, 'Kardinal Karvajal u Bosni 1457', *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Sarajevu*, 1 (1890), 9-12 (p. 11).
681 *Venere ad nos diebus dilecti filii Britius de Pannonia et Demetrius de Albania fratres ordinis minorum, missi a carissimo in Christo filio nostro Rege Bosne Illustri, et multa a nobis retulerunt de fide et devotione ipsius Regis erga nos et religionem christianam, et de optimo ac laudabili proposito sue Serenitatis prodeundi viriliter in Turcos, et expugnationem eorum pessime nationis, et quo iam ipse Rex desiit pendere tributum, quod hactenus ipsi tyranno Turcorum dare consuevit.* MH, vol. 2, pp. 296-97.
682 MSM, vol. 1, p. 199.
683 MH, vol. 2, p. 298.

the Bosnian king. The papal letter from 29 July to the Bosnian king demonstrates that Marino of Siena and Paul of Ragusa promoted the Bosnian king's case at the curia, reporting about the king's readiness to start war in September.[684] The letter encourages Tomaš to prevail in his task, and he is called *miles Christi*.[685] Since then it seems that the preparations stalled, and the crusade never materialised.

Emir Filipović has argued that the main factor underlying the failure of the initiative was of financial nature. In September the pope decided to divide the funds collected in Dalmatia for the crusade into three parts, between the king of Hungary, king of Bosnia and Skanderbeg, given that the last one was attacked by the Ottomans in August.[686] Furthermore, it has become clear that both Venice and Ragusa never took the idea of sharing their resources with Bosnia seriously.

Another factor which I consider as underlying the failure of the enterprise was indifference of the Latin Christian powers to take up the cross.[687] My hypothesis is that Tomaš, aware of his weakness, launched the entire campaign in spring of 1457 under papal patronage and following the famous victory of Belgrade, in order to attract 'international' support in the first place. This finds confirmation in the clear papal pressure on the doge, as well as in the mission of the Bosnian envoy Nicholas Testa, dispatched in July of 1457, to the pope, king of Aragon, doge of Venice, duke of Milan and duke of Burgundy, clearly in order to attract them to the crusade's cause.[688] Furthermore, on 25 October 1457 Callixtus III wrote to James of the Marches, who travelled to Hungary that year to collect materials for the canonization of his companion, John of Capistrano, so that he should urge the emperor and the electors, as well as the kings of Hungary, Poland, Bosnia and Denmark to send their envoys to Rome to discuss the plans for the crusade, demonstrating that the idea of a joint crusade was not yet completely extinguished.[689] The letter shows that the pope was upset with the reluctance of the secular princes to undertake the cross. Assuming that Tomaš hoped to form a wider anti-Ottoman coalition, the reluctance or indifference of the Latin powers

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[684] *Referentibus nobis dilectis filiis Mariano de Senis et Paulo de Ragusio fratribus ordinis beati Francisci de observantia nuncupatis, intelleximus, tuam Celesitudinem adversus perfidos Christi hostes Turchos continuo bellum gerere, ac dispositam esse ad principium mensis Septembirs proxime futuri in Campum et Castra contra predictos exire*. MH, vol. 2, pp. 298-99.
[685] MH, vol. 2, p. 299.
[686] Filipović, 'Exurge igitur', pp. 235-36.
[687] Cholewicki, 'The role of the Franciscans', p. 117.
[688] Thallocy, *Studien zur Geschichte*, p. 413.
[689] AB, pp. 233-34; Andrić, *The Miracles*, pp. 85-86.

would have to be a factor underlying his withdrawal from the crusade plan. A report of the Venetian envoy Peter Thomasi from 21 April 1458 stated that Tomaš made a treaty with the Turks and paid the required tribute, demonstrating his resignation from plans to war.[690] We have no evidence that he undertook any military activity under the crusading banner.

This was not the only nor the last attempt to organise the crusade to save Bosnia. Informed of the further calamities befalling on Bosnia, in May of 1459 Pope Pius II confirmed the letter of his predecessor to Marino of Siena, which put him in charge of organising crusade preaching, collection and recruitment.[691] We do not know anything about Marino's undertaking, but this time around it does seem that the idea was backed only by the papacy. We also know that the papal legate to Bosnia, Natale Zorzi, in November 1461 was given rights to organise a crusade, but he did not manage to arrive in Bosnia.[692] Furthermore, following the conquest of Bosnia, we also learn that Franciscans Marino of Korčula and Francis Zlatarić tried to organise a crusade in Dalmatia, but both were expelled by Venice.[693] Albeit seeing all of these attempts as going up in smoke, I should emphasise that the Franciscans were conspicuous as crusade's greatest enthusiasts and promoters.

Considering all of this, I think it is plausible that it might have been the Franciscans who came up with the whole idea to organise the crusade under the Bosnian banner at some point following the victory of Belgrade. Their advocating role on behalf of Tomaš during the crusade preparations is clearly noteworthy. We have to remember that the Bosnian king was a Catholic neophyte, and that a good number of prelates constantly undermined his allegiance to Rome by contesting his faith. Although the Franciscan support might not have been decisive to win the papal sympathy to the initiative, as Callixtus III himself was already a great crusade enthusiast, but their efforts to present the Bosnian king as most serious about the crusade are quite remarkable, and they certainly must have influenced the glorifying language used by the pope.

### III.9.4. The fall of Smederevo and the purge of the Bosnian church

The events unfolding at the end of the reign of Tomaš demonstrate the significance of the advocating role played by the Franciscans for the Bosnian king. Although the battle of

690 MSM, vol. 1, p. 114.
691 AB, p. 239-40.
692 MH, vol. 2, pp. 366-69.
693 AB, p. 277.

Belgrade was a significant victory over the Ottoman forces, it did not put an end to the expansion of the empire in the Balkans even in the short term. Serbia ultimately fell to their power within a few years. An elderly Serbian Despot Đurađ Branković died in December 1456, and his successor Lazarus died early in 1458, further weakening the despotate. Tomaš made a treaty with Lazarus's widow, Helena Palaiologina, agreeing to a marriage between Stjepan Tomašević and Lazar's daughter, also named Helena.[694] In this way, Tomašević assumed the title of despot and gained control over the stronghold of Smederevo. This expansion of the Bosnian dynasty was supported by the Hungarians, who saw a chance to establish a buffer zone between themselves and the Turks.[695] Tomašević arrived in Smederevo in March 1459, but his reign in Serbia was short-lived, because the Ottomans, angered by the turn of events, launched an attack. It has also been argued that Tomašević, as a 'Catholic despot' was not particularly popular with the Orthodox population, further undermining any chances of holding the ground in Serbia.[696] On 20 June 1459 the fortress surrendered, and the remaining Serbian territories were annexed to the Ottoman Empire. Tomašević and his wife, now a Catholic known as Maria, fled to Bosnia, bringing with them the relics of St. Luke the Evangelist, which were taken to Jajce.[697] The loss of Smederevo was a significant blow, for which the Hungarians quickly blamed the Bosnians.

While this was happening, Pius II held the council of Mantua with the purpose to launch a crusade, and it was attended by the Bosnian and Hungarian envoys. According to the account of Farlati, finding some basis in the contemporary *Commentaries*, the Hungarian envoys accused Tomaš of striking a treaty with the Turks and betraying the Christian cause by selling Smederevo to them.[698] Farlati's work, although not being a contemporary account, points out important circumstances of that accusation, namely that it was used against Tomaš's requests for the papal crown and establishing bishoprics in Bosnia. In that King Matthias saw an attack on his suzerain rights over Bosnia, which finds circumstantial grounds in later correspondence between him and Pius II. According to the *Commentaries*, the

694 Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans*, p. 581.
695 Filipović, 'Exurge igitur', p. 237.
696 Filipović, 'Exurge igitur', p. 238.
697 On the backstory of the relics and their miraculous discovery and translation to Smederevo, see: Marija Vasiljević, 'Translations of Saints' Relics in the Late Medieval Central Balkans', *Balcanica* (2020), 23-43 (pp. 31-35).
698 Grey and Faulkner, *Commentaries*, vol. 3, pp. 200-01; IS, vol. 4, p. 73; Tomo Vukšić, 'Papa Pio II. i kralj Stjepan Tomaš', in *Fenomen "Krstjani" u srednjovjekovnoj Bosni i Humu* ed. by Franjo Šanjek (Sarajevo/Zagreb: Institut za istoriju, Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2005), pp. 269-308 (pp. 279-80).

Bosnian envoys were supposed to have left Mantua by the time the accusation was levelled.[699]

Pope Pius II was initially convinced about the guilt of the Bosnian king, but it seems that in time, doubts about the Hungarian accusation surfaced in the curia.[700] On 18 January 1460 Tomassini was called to investigate the case, and told to excommunicate Tomaš, should he find him guilty of conspiring with the Turks.[701] However, no excommunication took place, and the papal letter from 7 June 1460 to Matthias hinted that the pope was in the meantime visited by the Bosnian envoys, saying that surrender of Smederevo was not a consequence of ill will but necessity.[702] However the 'surrender agreement' looked like, Tomaš must have been seen as powerless enough at the papal curia to accept the defensive line of the Bosnian envoys. The Bosnian historians are quite unanimous in concurring with this defensive line, namely that Smederevo was surrendered in face of an overwhelming enemy rather than on account of some Bosnian-Ottoman conspiracy. Nevertheless, the accusation tarnished the Bosnian king's reputation to a degree that he needed to re-assert his position in the Christian front. As the letter from 7 June 1460 implies, this has led him to expel the *Krstjani* from his domains in order to rectify his image, which was the major breakaway from the religious tolerance of all his predecessors.

In his *Commentaries* Pius II wrote:

> The King of Bosnia to atone for having surrendered Senderovia [Smederevo] to the Turks and to give proof to his religious faith (or, as many thought, to cloak his avarice), forced the Manichaeans, who were very numerous in his kingdom, to be baptised or to emigrate leaving their property behind them. About 12,000 were baptised, forty, or a few more, persisted in their heresy, and fled to their comrade in perfidy, Stephan, Duke of Bosnia, three of the leaders of this heresy, men prominent at court, were sent in chains to the Pope by the bishop of Nona [Nin].[703]

This fragment demonstrates the relationship between the surrender of Smederevo and the expulsion of the Bosnian church from the royal domains, an event which has attracted a

699 Grey and Faulkner, *Commentaries*, vol. 3, p. 201.
700 MH, vol. 2, p. 330.
701 AB, pp. 240-41.
702 Vukšić, 'Papa Pio II', pp. 284-85.
703 Translation from: Grey and Faulkner, *Commentaries*, vol. 5, p. 366.

lot of attention in the scholarship.[704] The discussions concerned things such as Bosnian king's real agenda, the exact dating of the persecution, its scale and character as well as the numbers provided by Pius II. It is fair to say that the purge was an effective blow against the Bosnian church in the royal domains. Unrepentant *Krstjani*, likely representing the hierarchy of the religious order, fled firstly to the land of Hum, and as we learn from a Venetian charter from 1466, *Gost* Radin was later allowed to stay in the Venetian Dalmatia with 'fifty or sixty members of his sect'.[705] There is very little and very questionable evidence about the existence of the *Krstjani* beyond the Middle Ages.

Two papal bulls recently published by Špoljarić demonstrate that we should not limit the persecution of heresy in Bosnia to a one off royal execution, as it may seem at the first sight from Pius's somewhat conflated account, but also as a process planned at the Roman curia to unfold for some time.[706] The bishop of Nin who brought the three individuals to Rome was Natale Zorzi, who had replaced elderly Tomassini as the papal legate to Bosnia in 1460. On 14 May 1461, in a public ceremony at St. Peter, all three renounced the heresy by accepting fifty articles of the Catholic faith, juxtaposed against the fifty 'Manichean errors', composed by the Cardinal Juan Torquemada base on reports coming from the Franciscan Bosnian vicariate.[707] As we learn from the bull from 8 April 1462, this abjuration formula was to be brought by the papal nuncio Luka Tolentić - who translated it for those three, apparently ignorant of Latin, in Rome - to Bosnia to be presented to all others recently converted from the Bosnian heresy.[708] Furthermore, Luka was tasked to appoint an inquisitor in Bosnia, and to ensure that convents and churches are built in places were the heretics used to assemble, and to place there the friars to confirm the converts in faith and to eliminate potential for relapsing. The permission was issued on 23 March 1462 to an Observant friar Peter of Mile and four other Bosnian friars to study in any 'Cismontane or Ultramontane' convent for up to seven years because there was a 'great insufficiency of men skilled in philosophy, canon law and theology' in Bosnia, where the 'sect of the Manichaeans and

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704 Babić, *Iz istorije*, pp. 287-95; Сима М. Ћирковић, *Историја средњовековне босанске државе* (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1964), p. 320; Pejo Ćošković, ,'Tomašev progon sljedbenika Crkve bosanske 1459', in *Migracije i Bosna i Hercegovina* (Sarajevo: Institut za istoriju u Sarajevu/Institut za proučavanje nacionalnih odnosa Sarajevo, 1990), pp. 43-50; Dubravko Lovrenović 'Krist i Donator' pt. 2, pp. 36-39; Vukšić, 'Papa Pio II', p. 282; Špoljarić, 'The Renaissance Papacy', pp. 153-67.

705 Šanjek, *Bosansko-humski krstjani*, pp. 118-19; Špoljarić, 'The Renaissance Papacy', p. 157.

706 Špoljarić, 'The Renaissance Papacy', pp. 164-67.

707 Šanjek, *Bosansko-humski krstjani*, pp. 114-17, 294-99.

708 Špoljarić, 'The Renaissance Papacy', p. 166.

heretics' still lurked.[709] The permission was given clearly in order to allow for the formation of the friars of the native background to oversee the completion of the Catholicization of Bosnia, as both preachers and inquisitors.[710]

This demonstrates quite a prominent involvement of the Franciscans in the entire campaign for the eradication of the heresy. Decision of the Bosnian king to face the *Krstjani* with a prospect of either leaving his domains or being baptised strikes a remarkable chord with the letter of the vicar Bartholomew of La Verna to the friars of the vicariate, undated but likely written in 1379.[711] The vicar clarified that the friars were allowed to rely on help of the secular lords in coercing the schismatics and heretics to faith, euphemised as *inducendi*. The letter provided a commentary on the bull of Urban VI from 22 December 1378, allowing the friars to ask the secular lords to use corporal punishments and pecuniary fines to compel their subjects in the matters of the salvation of the soul or augmentation of the faith.[712]

Bartholomew wrote that:

> But some are saying against such reasoning that compelled servitudes are not pleasing to God […]. To this I answer that violence is twofold, some is absolute while other conditional. The absolute violence is, for example, in a case when a Jew or a Saracen is captured by a Christian, and bonded, not agreeing but struggling, is violently baptised. Such an individual does not receive the sacrament nor the sacrament's essence. Thus he is not baptised, nor such obedience pleases God, neither acknowledged nor practised. And all arguments and authorities of the masters can be set forth against such violence, because no one ought to be baptised forcibly. Another thing is the conditional violence, for example, as when such a condition is given to someone: If you do not want to accept my faith and baptism, you must depart from my kingdom, or if you do not do that, I am going to have you beheaded. And such an individual, thus compelled, changes his mind, doing a good thing by necessity, choosing spontaneously to be baptised, saying: 'I want with my whole heart to accept [the baptism]', wishing to escape the bad fate. Such an individual, even if baptised

[709] BF ns vol. 2, p. 523-24; AM, vol. 13 (1462), p. 289.
[710] Any inquisition in Bosnia could have really taken place only since 1459, when it became part of the royal commitment. Although the vicars of Bosnia held the office of inquisitor earlier, it clearly concerned an activity in Hungary and Moldavia and not Bosnia.
[711] Lasić, 'Fr. Bartholomaei de Alverna scripta', p. 62. See I.1.2.
[712] Lasić, 'Fr. Bartholomaei de Alverna scripta', p. 68.

fictively, and although he may not receive the essence of the sacrament, which is Christ's grace, but accepts the sacrament, when living with Christians, for a short time he will agree to faith and will be delighted in receiving sacraments. In this way not only the schismatics could be compelled, of whom there is no doubt, but also the Saracens and the pagans. In this way the Hungarians and the Germans were converted, as it will be explained. Even if their servitude is not pleasing to God at the moment, it will please thereafter; and salutary obedience always pleases.[713]

The letter mostly escaped the attention of the historiography, even though similarity between its logic and the steps undertaken by Tomaš is highly unlikely to be coincidental. The letter seems to be almost laying out an underlying justification for the purge which happened almost a century later. Perhaps it demonstrates that the writings of the Vicar Bartholomew continued to be authoritative in the Bosnian vicariate in the fifteenth century, and that they had been consulted by the royal court when considering expulsion of the *Krstjani*.

### III.9.5. The Ottoman conquest of Bosnia and conflicted visions of restoration

The correspondence between Pius II and the Hungarian King Matthias Corvinus from the early 1460s illustrate that the surrender of Smederevo was not the only factor underlying the Hungarian-Bosnian tensions, as the requests for the papal crown and the institution of the bishoprics resurfaced around that time. In spite of having reassured Matthias that his suzerain rights over Bosnia would be respected in the letter from 7 June 1460, Pius II actually dispatched the papal crown to Tomaš's son and successor, Stjepan Tomašević, ascending to the throne in late 1461. The circumstances of the death of King Tomaš have promptly

[713] *Sed contra hanc rationem obiciunt quidam, quod Deo non placent coacta servitia* […]. *Ad hoc respondeo, quod duplex est violentia: quaedam absoluta, quaedam condicionalis. [Violentia absoluta est], verbi gratia, in proposito: Aliquis Iudaeus vel Saracenus a christianis capitur, ligatur et non consentiens, sed renitens et contradicens baptizatus violenter. Talis nec recipit sacramentum nec rem sacramenti, Ideo nec est baptismus, nec tale obsequium Deo placet, non solum suscipientium, sed neque facientium. Et de hac violentia exponi possunt omnes rationes e auctoritates magistrorum dicentium, quod nullus violenter debet baptizari. Alio modo dicitur violentia condicionalis, verbi gratia, et cum alicui proponitur talis condicio: Si non vis recipere meam fidem et baptismum, exceas [de] regno meo vel solvas tantum; et quod plus est, te decapitabo. Talis etiam, sic coactus, mutat voluntatem; de necessitate facit virtutem; eligit sponte baptizari, cupiens librerari a malo; dicit; Volo, toto corde recipio. Talis, etsi ficte baptizatur: licet non recipiat rem sacramenti, scilicet Christi gratiam, sed tamen sacramentum recipit, et cum christianis vivens in brevi consentiet fidei et delectabitur in sacramentorum [receptione]. Isto modo non solum schismatici, de quibus non dubium est, sed etiam Sarraceni et gentiles compelli possunt. Isto modo Hungari et Alamani conversi sunt, ut dicetur. Etsi non placet Deo eorum servitium pro modo, placet postea: sed saltem obsequium facientium semper placet.* Lasić, 'Fr. Bartholomaei de Alverna scripta', pp. 69-70.

become an object of suspicion, developing in time into a historiographical controversy. A story spread that Tomašević and his uncle Radivoj plotted and killed King Tomaš. This has supposedly angered the Turks, who decided to conquer Bosnia to punish the patricide.[714] Interestingly enough, James of the Marches provides us with one few known contemporary accounts of such events.[715] The Bosnian scholarship has by now become fairly unanimous in refusing to accept the story of the assassination, arguing in favour of death by natural causes.[716]

Tomašević was crowned in Jajce by the papal legate Nicholas of Modruš. It was the first coronation of the Bosnian king in a Catholic rite. On 7 November 1461 Gregory the Miracle-Worker (gr. *Γρηγόριος ὁ Θαυματουργός,* c. 213 - 270) was proclaimed the patron of Bosnia by the pope.[717] This had to be an adaptation of an earlier cult practised by the *Krstjani*, although coins issued by Tvrtko II suggested that 'Gregory' venerated in Bosnia was in fact Gregory of Nazianzus (gr. *Γρηγόριος ὁ Ναζιανζηνός,* c. 329- 390) who is a different saint. This is likely a result of the confusion of both saints, and Filipović has demonstrated that problem very well.[718] Whatever we make of it, this proclamation represents perhaps the only known integration of an element of the 'Bosnian faith' into the new Bosnian Catholic identity.

Closing ties with the papacy, as well as the refusal to pay the tribute clearly influenced Sultan Mehmet II to set plans for the final reckoning with Bosnia. In the spring of 1463, he assembled a large army, and conquered the Bosnian royal domains during May. The Ottoman conquest unfolded very smoothly. The Turks pursued the king and caught him in Ključ. The king was brought to Jajce, where the sultan ordered his execution on 25 May, marking the end of the kingdom. During that campaign the Ottomans concentrated on what we would refer to as the Bosnian royal domains, but they attacked the lands of herceg as well, and seized some of them.[719]

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[714] For evaluation of this historiographical controversy see: Amer Maslo, 'Historiografske interpretacije o smrti bosanskog kralja Stjepana Tomaša', *Radovi* 5 (2018), 189-207.
[715] Lasić, *De vita et operibus*, p. 251.
[716] Maslo, 'Historiografske interpretacije', pp. 206-07.
[717] MH, vol. 2, p. 371.
[718] Emir Filipović,'St. Gregory, the Patron Saint of Bosnia' in *Specimina Nova Pars Prima Sectio Mediaevalis,* vol. 11, ed. by Gérgély B. Kiss and Gabor Baling (Pécs: Történeti Tanszékének Történeti közleményei, 2021), pp. 77-96.
[719] Lovrenović, *Na klizištu,* p. 355.

The conquest of Bosnia has obviously remained in focus of historians for many years, with one problem standing out as particularly controversial, which is the alleged role of the 'crypto-Manicheans' in the Ottoman conquest. We know that Nicholas of Modruš blamed recent converts from 'Manichaeism', resentful for what has happened to them, as collaborating with the Turks. The *Commentaries* tell a story of a certain 'Radak', formerly a heretic, as well as the leader of the garrison defending Bobovac, who, bribed by the Turks, surrender the fortress.[720] There is a deeply rooted view in the historiography that the religious persecution started in 1459 has antagonised much of Bosnia's population against its ruling dynasty, which has not only undermined chances of defence against the Turks, but also attracted many to Islam. Other scholars are sceptical of this interpretation.[721]

Tomašević's half-brother and sister-in-law, Sigismund and Catharine, were taken into the Ottoman captivity and converted to Islam. Sigismund, later known as Ishak Bey Kraloğlu, actually became a very high ranked Ottoman official and commander. Queen Maria fled to Dubrovnik, losing the relics of St. Luke on her escape. They ultimately ended up being bought by Venice. Pius II ordered Cardinal Bessarion to verify their authenticity, as the relics of St. Luke were also known to be in Padua.[722] Wadding provides a remarkable account about the agenda of the Bosnian Franciscans. He noted that they brought the relics to the doge in order to secure their dwelling in the Dalmatian friaries of the Bosnian vicariate, and perhaps even to be offered some new dwellings in his domain.[723] The friars of the Bosnian vicariate indeed faced growing attempts of expulsion from the custody of St. Jerome at the time, as will be discussed later, but it is unclear where this information came from.

Tomašević's stepmother, Queen Katarina, fled firstly to Dubrovnik, from where she travelled and settled in Rome in 1467, where she lived on a papal pension.[724] During her exile, Katarina saw herself as having a rightful claim to the kingdom. She demanded the Ragusans to pay her the annual tribute that they used to pay to the Bosnian kings, but her request was refused.[725] She tried to contact her children in Ottoman captivity and have them

[720] Pius II, *Commentaries*, p. 769.
[721] Lovrenović, *Na kliništu,* pp. 356-7.
[722] BF, ns vol. 2, p. 592; AM, vol. 13 (1463), p. 312.
[723] AM vol. 13 (1463), p. 312.
[724] On the queen's exile in Rome, see: Krešimir Regan, *Bosanska Kraljica Katarina* (Zagreb: Breza, 2010) pp. 65-76.
[725] Regan, *Bosanska Kraljica*, pp. 52-53.

released, but her attempts clearly failed.[726] She made a pilgrimage to L'Aquila in 1475 for the translation of the relics of St. Bernardino of Siena to a new church.[727] She has likely entered the third order of St. Francis, although there is no contemporary evidence for that.[728] She died in 1478, and in her famous testament from 20 October, she bestowed the kingdom under the patronage of pope Sixtus IV and his successors, and she called for its restoration, and enthronement of one of her children, had either returned to Catholicism. She was buried in the friary of Santa Maria in Ara Coeli in Rome, next to the altar, and noteworthy, six out of seven witnesses of her testaments were the friars of the convent. Her last years in Rome illustrate her devotion to the Franciscan order. She has undoubtedly become one of the most famous and romanticised characters of the Bosnian Middle Ages.

Although the Hungarian armies were rallied and special tax was issued, King Matthias did not intervene during Mehmet II's campaign in Bosnia. It has been debated why he did not get involved. Perhaps the outbreak of Bosnian-Hungarian tensions during the final years of the Kotromanići rule in Bosnia could explain his attitude.[729] Having said that, Matthias recognised the strategic importance of Bosnia, and decided to recover some of the key fortresses, to secure his southern frontier. He signed an anti-Ottoman treaty with Venice on 12 September 1463, and then invaded Ottoman-occupied Bosnia. By the end of the year Matthias took Jajce, Zvečaj, Srebrenik as well as the Usora region. By that time Stjepan Kosača with his son Vladislav recovered much of their duchy that was lost in the summer, and they joined forces with the Hungarian king as allies in the siege of Jajce, which was taken on 25 December. On that occasion, Herceg Stjepan as well as his courtier, *Gost* Radin, received fur coats as gifts from Mathias.[730]

We have no evidence for support of Mathias's *Reconquista* by other Bosnian nobles. This was likely having something to do with the anti-Hungarian sentiments in Bosnia, as well as Mathias's indifference to Bosnian dynasty in his restoration efforts.[731] In the summer of 1463, so before the Hungarian campaign, some Bosnian nobles actually asked Venice to

[726] Regan, *Bosanska Kraljica,* p. 68.
[727] Regan, *Bosanska Kraljica,* p. 67.
[728] On the problem, see: Emir Filipović, 'Was Bosnian Queen Catherine a member of the Third Order of St. Francis?', *Radovi*, 47/1 (2015), 165-82.
[729] Davor Salihović, *An interesting episode: Nicolas of Ilok's kingship in Bosnia, 1471-1477* (Budapest: MA thesis in Medieval Studies, 2016), p. 22; Lovrenović, *Na kliništu,* pp. 358-60.
[730] Lovrenović, *Na kliništu,* p. 369, 393.
[731] Lovrenović, *Na kliništu,*, pp. 378, 388.

restore the Bosnian kingdom under its patronage. This initiative however did not come to fruition, because according to the Hungarian-Venetian 'alliance' of 12 September 1463, the Bosnian hinterland has been defined as the Hungarian sphere of influence.[732] From a Venetian source from December 1466 we also learn that some Bosnian nobles visited the former Bosnian Queen Mary in a monastery in Split, and although their purpose is unknown (and as far as we know, Mary never actively pressed her claim for Bosnia), this alerted Venice as highly undesirable.[733] Mehmed II had tried to recover parts of Bosnia lost to Mathias, but his siege of Jajce in the summer 1464 failed, as he needed to withdraw fearing Mathias's relief force. There is a papal bull from 9 August 1467 responding to reports of the Bosnian friars about that period, telling of their efforts to encourage resistance of the population of Jajce against the Turks 'and that they should accept the dearest son in Christ, the illustrious king of Hungary Mathias as their lord'.[734] This is very remarkable, given the Bosnian-Hungarian tensions, demonstrating the role of the Franciscans as supporters of a common Christian anti-Ottoman front, overcoming national animosities. This clearly synergised with their crusading initiatives.

Mathias' *Reconquista* brought about something of a *status quo*, dividing Bosnia between Hungary – controlling parts centred around Jajce and parts of Usora and Soli – and the Ottomans – who held central and eastern Bosnia - until the sixteenth century. Mathias initially entrusted acquired territories to one of his prominent commanders, Emeric Zapolya, now named the governor of Bosnia, and later to others.[735] Meanwhile, the Sultan has set up his own 'puppet king' of Bosnia, Matija Radivojević – a son of the former pretendent Radivoj – who ruled until 1471, but it seems that his 'kingship' was largely titular and limited just to Lašva Valley. It is remarkable that when picking his 'puppet king', the sultan acknowledged the royal dynasty.[736] In spring of 1476, the Sultan seems to have established yet another 'puppet king', Matija Vojsalić, who ruled the northmost part of the Ottoman-occupied Bosnia.[737] For what we know about him, he remained faithful to the strong Catholic orientation of his family. He rebelled against the sultan, and we lose track of him in the

732 Lovrenović, *Na kliništu,* pp. 372-74.
733 Lovrenović, *Na kliništu,*, p. 382.
734 *Et carissimum in Christo filium Matthiam Hungariae regem illustrem in eorum dominum reciperent.* BF, ns vol. 2, p. 720. The bull also says that many friars apparently perished in fights, with four being given to the most cruel martyrdom.
735 Salihović, *An interesting episode*, pp. 23-27.
736 Lovrenović, *Na kliništu*, p. 379.
737 Lovrenović, *Na kliništu*, p. 387.

sources ever since. However, everything we know about these 'puppet kings' comes from very few and very puzzling references in the sources, and that they were sharing the same name, some scholars put forth questions about their identity, asking whether we are not talking about one, or two, or perhaps even three individuals called 'Matija'.[738]




Fig. 11. Territorial division of Bosnia after 1463, from: Lovrenović, *Na klizištu*, p. 392-93.

[738] Stanko Andrić, 'O obitelji bosanskog protukralja Radivoja Ostojića (prilog rasvjetljavanju bračnih veza posljednjih Kotromanića s plemstvom iz dravsko-savskog međurječja)' in *Stjepan Tomašević (1461.-1463.): slom srednjovjekovnog Bosanskog Kraljevstva*, ed. by Ante Birin (Jajce: Hrvatski institut za povijest/Katolički bogoslovni fakultet u Sarajevu, 2011) pp. 109-132 (pp. 124-26).

The Hungarian king Mathias was meanwhile indifferent to Kotromanići bloodline, and finally 'restored' the kingdom of Bosnia by appointing Nicholas of Ilok (hun. *Újlaki Miklós*), a powerful Hungarian magnate and his onetime political rival, as the king of Bosnia in 1471, effectively ruling over parts of Bosnia controlled by Hungary.[739] This Hungary-restored 'kingdom of Bosnia' did not survive Nicholas, because after his death in 1477, his son did not inherit the title.[740] The prime purpose of Mathias's intervention in Bosnia was to secure his southern frontier by garrisoning key fortresses placed in strategic locations, what was a manoeuvre very much in line with the southern policy set up since Sigismund of Luxemburg.[741] The restoration of Bosnia was also used by Mathias to appease Nicholas, who used to be his major internal opponent.[742]

The Duchy of St. Sava continued to exist after the Ottoman conquest of the Bosnian kingdom, but not for long. The Ottoman takeover of the duchy was more of a gradual process rather than a one-off campaign like we saw in 1463. Stjepan Kosača died in May 1466 and the title of herceg passed to his second son, Vlatko, because tensions between Stjepan and Vladislav were still out there. Effectively since 1465 the Ottomans started to gradually annex parts of the duchy to the empire, with 1481 being the year marking the surrender of the last point of defence in Novi. Finally, we also hear about the family of Vlatkovići, whom we have encountered when discussing friar Marino, as keeping up some possessions in westmost Hum.[743] It seems that they were granted Livno by Vladislav Kosača by mid-1466.[744] However, the Vlatkovići lost all of their domains by the early 1480s.

**Conclusions**

This chapter has demonstrated an increasing evidence for investment and involvement of the friars of the Bosnian vicariate in the matters of the Bosnian kingdom, at the time of a great upheaval. This sets the stage for the other two chapters of this section. These troublesome times clarify much of desperate measures taken by the Franciscans in Bosnia,

739 On the kingship of Nicholas of Ilok, see the MA thesis by Davor Salihović (already referenced in this chapter), which provides a very good revision of the topic.
740 Lovrenović, *Na klizištu*, p. 383.
741 Engel, *The realm of St. Stephen*, pp. 231-43.
742 Salihović, *An interesting episode*, pp. 46-47.
743 On Vlatkovići, see: Невен Исаиловић and Александар Јаковљевић, 'Нека разматрања о Влатковићима, Крајини и Заострогу' in *Споменица академику Ђури Тошићу*, ed. by Рајко Кузмановић, Драго Бранковић, and Снежана Савић (Banja Luka: Akademija nauka i umjetnosti Republike Srpske, 2021) pp. 139-77.
744 Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans*, p. 586. Regan, *Bosanska Kraljica*, p. 58.

and their increasing reliance on help from the outside, mainly Dalmatia. On the Adriatic coast, despite all the problems and controversies discussed in the previous section, the Bosnian vicariate continued to have a significant presence. The Observant friars in Dalmatia continued their efforts to oust the Bosnian vicariate from its coastal friaries, because they did not want to keep being burdened with the affairs of the Balkan hinterland. We shall indeed encounter a lot of conflict between the Dalmatian and the Bosnian Franciscans over the jurisdiction of the coastal houses. We will also see that the Bosnian Franciscans have finally got some favourable treatment from the curia and their Cismontane superiors, because their fate was pitied, and their deeds 'against all odds' were also respected.

The religious transformation of the kingdom under Tomaš definitely incentivised such attitudes among the friars, who could identify acting in the interest of Bosnia as a form of support of Christendom's bulwark. Another factor was an increasing number of friars who were from Bosnia itself, but that was definitely not decisive. The leadership of the vicariate was dominated by the Franciscans coming from Dalmatia at the time, yet they clearly demonstrated orientation to Bosnian matters. Marino of Korčula is an excellent example, because although coming from Dalmatia, he was a royal chaplain as well as an individual strongly invested in the matters of the Bosnian kingdom and the Bosnian Observant family.

## Ch. 10: Discord between the Bosnian and Dalmatian families

This chapter will discuss the conflicts taking place between the Bosnian and Dalmatian Observant families for over a decade, between the disintegration of the 1440s and the foundation of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province in 1464. Before that happened, the Bosnian family of the Observants was conspicuous for its attempts to leave the Cismontane Observant chain of command, and restore the Bosnian vicar once more under the direct jurisdiction of the minister general. However, they did not succeed in doing that, which meant that they were held to the same standards as the Italian Observants. Matters of obedience and religious conduct continued to be a source of discord during the period I am going to discuss in the following two chapters. Another burning issue was the jurisdiction of the Bosnian friaries at the Eastern Adriatic, both in the Ragusan state and the Venetian Dalmatia. While the disintegration discussed in the previous section concluded the territorial losses of the vicariate in Hungary and Apulia, the Bosnian friaries in Dalmatia remained 'contested territories'. The document setting up the province from 1464 says that 'a certain contention and controversy emerged on account of intermingling of several places of the said families.'[745] The Bosnian vicariate wanted to keep control over its friaries in Dalmatia, and even to increase their number, because of their great economic importance, as well as because they offered a refuge destination, needed increasingly frequently.

### III.10.1. Restoration of the Cismontane jurisdiction over the Bosnian vicariate

Faced with the disintegration of their vicariate, the Bosnian friars asked the pope to be removed from the jurisdiction of the vicar general, and on 24 October 1448 Tomassini was allowed to pass his judgement in this case. In this way, the Bosnian Franciscans have escaped the Cismontane jurisdiction, but not for long. The Bosnian friars continued attempts to size the two Ragusan friaries (St. Francis and Daksa), despite the settlement of *Apostolicae Nobis*. The Ragusan government in four letters from 16 April 1450 defended their two friaries against the Bosnian expansion on the basis of a past bull (likely *Apostolicae Nobis*) subjecting them to the vicar general.[746] In the letter to the cardinal of Santa Maria Nova it asked him to use his influence at the curia, so that the pope 'should not permit such a change to happen, but he should allow the [convents] to be under care of John of Capistrano', who

[745] *Lis quaedam et controversia propter commixtionem nonnullorum locorum dictarum familiarum suborta fuerit.* Regestum, p. 69.
[746] LDL, vol. 14, fols. 32 r. - 33 v.

was the current vicar general.[747] The Bosnian vicar was meanwhile reported as having consulted the minister general about taking over the two friaries, suggesting that he must have recognised him as his immediate superior at the time. This allowed the Ragusans to base their defensive line on the necessity to recognise the jurisdiction of the vicar general. This further confirms the conclusion of chapter eight about the importance of Cismontane jurisdiction for the Ragusan government. Not long later however, the Bosnian vicariate returned to the Cismontane chain of command.

John of Capistrano replaced James Primadizzi as the vicar general for the triennium 1449-51, and afterwards he departed for his famous 'grand tour' of East Central Europe. It must have been during his triennium when Bosnia returned to the Cismontane family.[748] Wadding tells us for the year 1451 of his *Annales* that he had consulted the letter of the Bosnian vicar, whom he erroneously called Michael (the Ragusans called him *N. de Iadra*, which seems to stand for Nicholas of Zadar), who invited John of Capistrano to Bosnia so that he should come to visit the friars and to affirm the king and the Catholics of this kingdom.[749] Wadding did not copy the letter unfortunately, and it has not survived, so there is nothing more we can say about it. What Wadding does give us however, is the letter of Legate Tomassini to John of Capistrano from 19 February 1451, which is very valuable source, and has been discussed before already.[750] The letter reports the current situation in Bosnia, praising the role of the Franciscans in Bosnia in eradication of heresy, which was already discussed. It also emphasises the role of Dalmatia in sustenance of the Bosnian friaries. I am coming back to this letter because we also learn from it that apparently, the minister general has ordered the vicar of Bosnia to recognise John of Capistrano as his superior, implicitly because John was the vicar general.[751] This has to be interpreted that the minister general in fact refused the settlement opted in Bosnia, which was an exemption from the Cismontane Observant chain of command, thus explaining the reason for the ultimate failure of the Bosnian initiative. Perhaps in this case the Bosnian Franciscans preferred to

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747 *Ne permittat talem mutationis fieri, sed ea permittat sub cura Re. Fratres Johanni de Capistrano esse.* LDL, vol. 14, fol. 33 v.

748 See also III.9.2.

749 *Aliis etiam litteris Michael Jadrensis Vicarius Bosnae, Capistranum invitat, et vehementer rogat, ut ad visendos religiosos, et confirmandum Regem ac Catholicos illius regni, eo se velit transferre.* AM, vol. 12 (1451), p. 130; LDL, vol. 14, fol. 33 v.

750 See I.1.3.

751 *Intellexi a nonnullis fide dignis, quod R.P. Generalis Minister Vicario Bosne mandaverit, ut P.V. obediat et similiter dictae vicariae fratribus; ex quo videtur cura dictae vicariae V.P. commissa.* AM, vol. 12 (1451), p. 130.

channel their efforts on establishing a better relationship with the new vicar general, rather than continuing to seek exemption from him. Tomassini finishes his letter by expressing hope to see John of Capistrano after Easter, presumably in person in Bosnia, but we know that this has not happened.[752]

The election of the controversial friar, Roberto Caracciolo in 1454 as Bosnian vicar demonstrates that the Bosnian family did not forsake hope to escape the Cismontane chain of command for good. The Vicar General Marco of Bologna on 16 January 1455 wrote a letter stating that he could not confirm the election, because Roberto had abandoned the Observant family.[753] Roberto was a talented and ambitious individual, and made a swift career as an Observant preacher. In time however, he developed sceptical views about the Observant branch of the Franciscans, and in 1452 sided with the Conventuals and attacked the Observants very fiercely.[754] Most scholars follow Wadding in presuming that the friars from Bosnia simply did not know that Roberto had attacked the family, but my hypothesis is that perhaps this might have actually attracted them to him.[755] The Bosnian family might have found someone antagonised with the Cismontane leadership, and himself having an ambiguous position in the Order between the two branches, relatable. Furthermore, they wanted to use the ambiguous status of Roberto in order to escape the Cismontane chain of command, which is clearly reflected in the letter. Marco reported that the representatives of the Bosnian vicariate insisted that Roberto should not be confirmed by him, but the minister general instead.[756] The vicar general obviously did not approve this, and ordered that the Bosnian vicariate should be ruled by a vice-vicar until the next chapter, while Roberto's election was annulled, yet again demonstrating that the problem of obedience caused friction.

### III.10.2. Expansion of the Bosnian-Dalmatian discord into the 1450s

The bull *Apostolicae Nobis* from 27 September 1447 has been extensively commented on in the previous section, because it opened up a period of quarrels between the Bosnian and the Dalmatian Observants over the jurisdiction of the coastal friaries. It exempted five friaries

752 *Spero post Pascha videre P.V.* AM, vol. 12 (1451), p. 131.
753 AM, vol. 12 (1454), p. 249; Mariani, *Roberto Caracciolo*, p. 67.
754 Moorman, *A History*, p. 484; Mariani, *Roberto Caracciolo*, pp. 55-70.
755 *Horum nihil scientes Fratres Vicariae Bosnensis, sed putantes quiete cum Observantibus vixisse, in suum elegerunt Vicarium.* AM, vol. 12 (1454) p. 248.
756 *Vos fratrem Robertum de Licio in Vicariae vestrae capitulo nuper celebrato in vestrum Vicarium delegisse, quique a me vestro nomine efflagitabant, non ut illum ego ipse ad Vicariatus officium confirmationem, sed quod cum sollicitudine curare velim, ut a Reverendiss P. Ministro Generali confirmaretur.* AM, vol. 12 (1454) p. 249.

of the Bosnian jurisdiction, including St. Francis and Daksa in Ragusan domains, and forbade the vicariate to expand any further in Dalmatia. The bull for the first time provided the Dalmatian Observants with a prospect of autonomy, but at the same time, its terms were unacceptable for the Bosnians, who appealed to the curia. Ultimately, the case ended up handed over to James Primadizzi, which must have meant that the articles of *Apostolicae Nobis* remained valid. Further plans were also made to remove even more friaries from the Bosnian jurisdiction. During the following years, the Roman curia was receiving legations from the quarrelling sides, competing to win its favour. In this time, the Observant vicar generals travelled across the Adriatic a few times, in vein to strike a settlement between the fighting sides, but the problem remained unresolved until the early 1460s, when plans for the union were set in motion, but this will be discussed in the next chapter.

The Ragusan report from 10 November 1448 tells us that the Bosnian side continued to contest the decisions of *Apostolicae Nobis.*[757] The Ragusan government called out the Bosnian friars as 'usurping' the resources of the Ragusan convent of St. Francis, and even reported that they attracted favour of some Ragusan nobles and citizens for their cause. In their report, the Ragusans asked for papal protection for their Observants, describing them as living in an exemplary religious discipline, whose teaching and example made many citizens follow the ways of the Lord. While considering an accusation against the Bosnian Franciscans, it should be noted that *Apostolicae Nobis* actually guaranteed a part of the incomes from alms coming to the convent in Dubrovnik for the Bosnian vicariate. It is however not hard to imagine that the subsidy would become a source of disagreement.[758] Indeed, the Roman curia received contradictory reports, with the Ragusans claiming that the subsidy was being properly paid, while the Franciscans from Bosnia claimed that they had received nothing.[759]

On 16 April 1450 the Ragusan government issued four letters, complaining that the Bosnian Vicar Nicholas of Zadar petitioned at the curia and to the minister general in order to seize the two contested friaries, and that he managed to attract the help of the 'arm of the Bosnian king' for his efforts.[760] One letter was written to the pope, asking him to prevent that

[757] LDL, vol 14, fol. 1 v; Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, p. 176.
[758] BF, ns. vol. 1, pp. 570-71.
[759] Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, p. 183; BF, ns vol. 1, pp. 839-40.
[760] *Et cum nuper ad nostram pervenit noticiam, quod frater N. de Iadra vicarious Bosine cum brachio regis bosine apud sanctitatem Vestram aut apud ordinis generalem instat, et quaerit, quod ipsa duo monasteria sub bosine vicarium ponantur quod antea non fuit.* LDL, vol. 14, fol. 32 r.

from happening, and the other one, which was not edited by Rode, was addressed to the Cardinal of Santa Maria Nova, asking him to support their request at the curia. Furthermore, the register noted that there were two other letters *mutatis mutandis* sent to the archbishop of Dubrovnik, staying in Rome, and the Vicar General John of Capistrano, which means that the Ragusans hoped that these two might support their request at the curia as well.[761]

On 30 October 1451, the Doge of Venice sent a warning to the civil authorities of the Dalmatian towns under his rule about the 'expansionist' aspirations of the Bosnian vicar.[762] Such alarming reports were by not baseless, as indeed the Bosnian side continued its efforts to undermine *Apostolicae nobis,* and the Bosnian king apparently got involved as a supporter of the Bosnian vicariate. From a standpoint of the Dalmatian communes, the Bosnian vicariate seemed an expansionist entity. At the same time, the Bosnian side kept emphasising the economic vitality of Dalmatia, providing them with necessities otherwise impossible to acquire by the friars in Bosnia, as well as providing them with a place of refuge in the times of need. The reports coming to the curia even demonstrate that the Bosnian side suggested that an 'abundance in alms' received by the Dalmatian friaries spoiled their religious discipline.[763] Such a line of argumentation clearly earned a lot of papal sympathy, because it was mentioned by a few papal documents, but it was also something that the Ragusans kept trying to debunk.

While the previous section has shown us quite a few unfavourable decisions for the Bosnian vicariate, in this one we shall see that the pendulum swung back in Bosnian favour, with the papacy gradually reverting the *status quo* established by *Apostolicae nobis*. The reason underlying the change of papal position seems to lie chiefly in the progress of the Catholic transformation of Bosnia under King Tomaš, supported by the Franciscans, as well as the difficult situation they found themselves due to the Ottoman pressure. Bosnia has indeed attracted a lot of papal attention in the mid fifteenth century, as demonstrated in the previous chapter.

Upon the petition of the Bosnian king, on 9 July 1452, Pope Nicholas V issued a bull allowing Tomassini to permit the Bosnian vicar to receive up to three new friaries in

761 LDL, vol. 14, fol. 33 v.
762 An unpublished source, but referenced in: Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 75.
763 BF, ns vol. 1, pp. 839-40.

Dalmatia, breaking with the prohibition of *Apostolicae nobis*.[764] Furthermore, it confirmed the vicar's control over the church in Poljud, next to Split, transferred to the Franciscans from the Benedictines on 7 February 1450, and apparently claimed by both the Bosnian and Dalmatian Observants.[765] Finally, the vicar was allowed to accept the friars of both Observant and Conventual allegiance to the vicariate. The reason for that was that although there were recently many new Franciscan foundations in Bosnia, these places 'suffered the maximal insufficiency of said friars'.[766] This provides us with an interesting contrast to the picture of the Catholic dominance in Bosnia of the period, in that one of the problems was still the lack of clerical manpower.

The ongoing Bosnian-Dalmatian dispute drew the attention not only of the papacy, but also of the order's superiors, and in early 1453 the Cismontane vicar general, Marco of Bologna, arrived at the convent of the Holy Cross in Zadar, in order to address and settle the problems of sustenance of the friaries in Bosnia as well the 'territorial disputes'.[767] He wrote a letter to the king of Bosnia from that convent on 26 January 1453, asking him not to compel his subjects to make provisions to the Franciscans in his kingdom, saying that this stands against the statutes of the order.[768] This has been discussed already as something practised in Bosnia for a long time rather than being a recent controversy. At the same time, economic problems of the Bosnian family remained conspicuous, pushing it to become ever more reliant on Dalmatia.[769]

While still in Zadar, the vicar general also had to address the question of the settlement of the Observants of the Holy Cross, as a couple of months before his arrival, a decision was made to demolish this convent for fear of its use by the Turks during the siege of the city, as the convent was located just outside of the city walls.[770] The Observants targeted the convent of St. Francis within the town as their intended new *locum*, but it was already inhabited by the Conventuals. The Conventuals were targeted by accusations of lax

[764] BF, ns vol. 1, pp. 799-800.
[765] The document from 1450 did not specify which entity, Bosnian or Dalmatian, had a claim to Poljud. BF, ns vol. 1 p. 687. Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 75.
[766] *Maximam dictorum fratrum penuriam patiantur*. BF, ns vol. 1, p. 800.
[767] Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, p. 120.
[768] *Maiestatem tuam pro sua singulari devotione provisionem fecisse, ut a suis populis vel voluntarie vel invite fratribus nostris victui necessaria tribuantur.* AB, pp. 217-18. More on this in I.3.2.
[769] Bull from 29 April 1458 states: *Adeo quod nisi fratres ipsi eamdem vicariam tenerent nullatenus se sustentare possent, cum exinde oleum, vestes et alia, quae in Bosnia commode haberi non possunt, necessaria eis in puram eleemosynam data percipiant*. BF, ns vol. 2, p. 225.
[770] Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa,* pp. 76-77, 105.

religious discipline. Furthermore, their recent provincial minister, Marino of Zadar, his whereabouts unknown, have been excommunicated for stealing the money, documents and the seal that belonged to the province.[771] This attracted a lot of favour for the Observant cause, and only the archbishop of Zadar took the Conventuals in his defence.[772] The reliability of the accusations against the Conventuals are obviously problematic to assess.[773] In 1454, during the Good Friday procession, the citizens of Zadar brought the Observants to the convent and held the Conventuals outside. Despite appeals of the Conventuals, the convent of St. Francis in Zadar ultimately became the permanent Observant headquarter in Dalmatia.[774] I am drawing attention to the story not only because it is related to Marco of Bologna's journey, but also because it is demonstrating the importance of religious discipline in similar settlement claims.

From Zadar, the vicar general travelled to Istria, but he was called back by the pope to return to Italy. As Marco had made plans to assemble a chapter in Daksa to deal with ardent issues between Bosnian and Dalmatian Observants - which Wadding claims concerned mainly the friaries in Dubrovnik and Daksa – the vicar general wrote a letter in Rovinj in February 1453, asking James of the Marches to preside over the chapter in his place.[775] We do not know whether the chapter in question took place, but it seems that James was actually unable to travel across the Adriatic, because he faced some health conditions as well as troubles stirred in the Marches.[776] In any case, we see the leadership of the order unable to make an effective decision at that point, and we have no evidence it got again involved in the Bosnian-Dalmatian dispute until the early 1460.

Over the summer of 1453 an embassy of the Bosnian vicariate must have been in Italy, dispatched with the objective to subject the friaries in Dubrovnik and Daksa to their vicariate. We know about it from an undated report of the Ragusan government to the vicar general, asking him again not to subject these two friaries to the Bosnian vicar, and they clarified that annual provision due to the vicariate from Dubrovnik was being paid

771 BF, ns vol. 1, p. 821.
772 BF, ns vol. 1, p. 818; Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa,* p. 78.
773 Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, pp. 76-77.
774 Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa,* pp. 78-79.
775 AM, vol. 12 (1453), pp. 194-95.
776 AM, vol. 12 (1453), pp. 194-95.

properly.[777] They even vowed to uphold the regular observance in their friary by working with 'their arms and legs', so they must have felt that the question of religious discipline was of key importance.[778] However, on 19 July 1453 the pope issued a bull *Apostolicae nobis* (not to be mistaken with the one of the same title from 1447) for Tomassini, which allowed him to subject the friaries of Dubrovnik and Daksa to the Bosnian vicariate.[779] The vital role those places played in economic stability of the friaries in Bosnia was emphasised as a reason for this decision, as well as that the vicariate - albeit the Ragusans claiming otherwise - was not receiving the annual subsidy.[780]

Interestingly enough, the petitioners of *Apostolicae Nobis* from 1453 were not just the friars of the vicariate, but also the 'Ragusan lords', some of whom apparently living in Bosnia and receiving the sacraments from the local friars, which must point to some wealthy merchants doing business in the hinterland.[781] This casts a remarkable contrast with what we have found in the letter to the vicar general, where it was claimed that the Ragusan citizens would not – or at least not unanimously - support the two friaries in question joining the Bosnian vicariate.[782] This suggests the Ragusans were quite well informed about the Bosnian embassy's line of argumentation. Furthermore, it shows that the Ragusan society, perhaps even its political elite, were themselves far from unanimous when it came to the question of the relation of their state with the Bosnian vicariate. Furthermore, the Ragusan fight against the vicariate's jurisdiction did not necessarily mean it held negative opinions of its friars.[783]

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[777] Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, p. 183. The government must have wrote it before the bull *Apostolicae nobis* from 19 July 1453 reached Dubrovnik. It also sent an earlier short report in March 1453, defending the religious discipline of the friary in Dubrovnik, perhaps expecting that the Bosnian side was going to try to undermine it. Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, pp. 182-83.

[778] *Sed potius manibus et pedibus euntes ut fratres ipsi de ragusio et daxa in regulari eorum observantia vivant et manuteneantur*. Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, p. 183.

[779] BF, ns vol. 1, pp. 839-40.

[780] *Ex huiusmodi unionum et incorporationum cassatione et annullatione grave scandalum et periculum oriri possit, cum ii, qui Bosnae sunt, et haereticis et Manichaeis fidem veram praedicant, vitae necessaria indigeant, maxime, ab iis domibus et conventibus Ragusii et Daxae existentibus, qui inter fideles sunt et eleemosynis abundant, debitum subsidium non recipiant*. BF, ns vol. 1, pp. 839-40.

[781] *Quare pro parte dictorum filiorum domini Ragusini, cum eorum nonnulli partibus Bosnae conversentur et a fratribus dicti ordinis, qui ibidem degunt, subsidia alia et ecclesiastica sacramenta percipiant, Nobis fuit humiliter supplicatum*. BF, ns vol. 1, p. 840. See also subchapter I.1.3.

[782] *Rogamusque paternitatem vestram ne verbis illis et suasionibus dictorum fratrum vicarie bosne fidem adhibeat. Nam quod aiunt fere cunctis civibus nostris placitum ut fratres de ragusio et daxa vicarie bosne subigantur penitus falsum est*. Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, p. 183.

[783] In early 1456 it aimed to allow the friars of Ston to administer the sacraments prohibited to them by the bishop of Korčula, apparently very unwilling to cooperate with them. Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, pp. 184-85; BF, ns vol. 2, p. 180.

Three bulls issued on 30 April 1455, 29 April 1458 and 4 April 1460 further affirmed the integrity of the Bosnian vicariate on the Eastern Adriatic, but they also hinted at continuous attempts by Dalmatian authorities to seize these friaries.[784] The first one was issued in response to the petition of the Bosnian king presented by Nicholas Testa at the curia. It concerned the Bosnian friaries in Venetian Dalmatia (Novigrad, Ugljan, Pašman, Krapanj and Poljud and Krk), which some Dalmatian Franciscans apparently were trying to secede from the Bosnian vicariate.[785] The bull spoke against any such attempts, emphasising the role of these houses as refuge destinations. The second bull was issued by Calixtus III on 29 April 1458, again at the petition of the king. It affirms the Bosnian vicariate's control of all its Dalmatian friaries. The pope encouraged the legate Tomassini, the bishop of Nin and James Martinis, the canon of Split, to speak in defence of the Bosnian vicariate publicly.

The third bull, from 4 April 1460, by Pope Pius II, is directed against any attempts made by the Dalmatian friars, but also potentially by any minister general or vicar general, to alienate friaries 'that have always been under the Bosnian vicariate of the said order, about whose beginnings there is no memory that would contradict this'.[786] Such wording points to the friaries of the custody of St. Jerome, and the four friaries on Ragusan territories – while obviously not the hotly contested friaries, such as Dubrovnik and Daksa and some newer foundation in Venetian Dalmatia. The bull suggests that the petitioners were anxious about some appeals made by the Dalmatian friars to the order's leadership, perhaps to the Vicar General Battista of Levanto, who was obliged to travel across the Adriatic in early 1460, in order to arrange a settlement of the dispute, or even planning to remove some places from the vicariate.[787] The bull asked the archbishops of Split, Zadar and Dubrovnik to take the friars of the Bosnian vicariate in their defence. It is worth mentioning that it was issued on the same day as three other bulls, very favourable to the vicariate. One of them allowed the friars to receive regular provisions of food and other necessities from peasants, as well as to keep horses, cows and donkeys, in spite of any contradictions to the rule, as well as two bulls granting indulgences for two different Franciscan churches.[788] Such goodwill of Pope Pius II must have been related to the grand Catholic progress in Bosnia, and the massive baptism

[784] BF, ns vol. 2, pp. 8-9; 225; 393-94.
[785] BF, ns vol. 2, p. 9.
[786] *Domos et loca in Dalmatia constituta, quae semper et a tanto tempore citra, cuius initii memoria hominum in contrarium non existit, sub vicaria Bosnae dicti ordinis fuerunt*. BF, ns vol. 2, p. 393.
[787] Petrus de Alva, *Indiculus bullarii seraphici,* vol. 2 (Rome: Typographia rev. Camerae Apostlicae, 1655) p. 42.
[788] BF, ns vol. 2, pp. 392-94; Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, p. 125. See I.3.2.

campaign of 1459-60, outlined in the previous chapter, because these bulls from 4 April 1460 praised the friars for the *fructus uberes* brought for the Church.[789]

### III.10.3. Pius II orders the foundation of one common province

The papal breve *Dudum litteras nostras* from 16 February 1463, addressed to those to be assembled at the general Observant chapter in Assisi the next year, ordered the final settlement of the discord by creating the Bosnian-Dalmatian province. The papal decision was preceded by a short but intensive phase of attempts to settle the discord by the Cismontane leadership, starting in early 1460. *Dudum litteras nostras* provides a good summary of these attempts:

> Not long ago we have ordered by our letter to our dear son, Friar Battista of Levanto, back then your vicar general, that he should go forth personally in order to arrange peace between the provinces of Bosnia and Dalmatia. Furthermore, we wrote to our dear sons the general and the provincial vicars, and to others having a voice in your order and the Observant family to be assembled in Osimo at the general chapter, so that they should be able to settle, decide and determine all about any single difference between your provinces, and especially of Dalmatia and Bosnia; and in spite of this, we have heard that nothing has been decided or determined, and instead shortly thereafter some friars of the Dalmatian province subtracted themselves from the obedience of that vicar against the apostolic order, with the patronage and favour of some secular lords; considering this to be most dangerous, we have finally commissioned and ordered to dear son, the Vicar General Friar Louis of Vicenza, so that forthwith he should travel in person, and call those rebel friars to himself, and he should restrain them by censorship from all rebellion and reckless occupation of friaries, and then finally it has come to our ears that the provinces in question do not yet cherish themselves mutually in cordial peace. Wishing therefore […] to finish this […] we order […] that of the two provinces, namely of Dalmatia and of Bosnia, one province shall be made, which will be called the province of Bosnia and Dalmatia.[790]

789 BF, ns vol. 2, p. 393.

790 *Dudum per litteras nostras mandavimus dilecto filio fratri Baptistae de Levanto, tunc generali vicario vestro, ut pro pace componenda inter provincias Bosnae et Dalmatiae personaliter illuc accederet. Scripsimusque insuper dilectis filiis generali et provincialibus vicariis ceterisque vocalibus ordinis vestri atque familiae de Observantia in generali capitulo apud Auximum congregatis, ut omnes et singulas differentias provinciarum vestrarum et praesertim Dalmatiae ac Bosnae, componere, decidere et determinare valerent; et tamen accepimus*

The fragment firstly mentions the inconclusive mission of Battista of Levanto, which is otherwise known to be commanded by the pope by a letter dated 4 January 1460, of which we have only a short excerpt.[791] On 26 January 1461, Pius II issued a bull addressed to those to be congregated that year at the Observant chapter in Osimo, asking them to address all conflicting issues between the Bosnian and Dalmatian Observants, especially concerning their 'territorial disputes'.[792] The chapter, as we have read, did not bring the desired results, and soon after some friaries were taken away from the Bosnian vicariate with the help of some 'secular lords'. This seems to be a reference to the move of the Ragusan government, which apparently, on 5 September 1462, issued a decree removing four traditionally Bosnian friaries (Ston, Slano, Rožat and Konavli) on their territories from the control of the vicariate.[793]

The only information about this decree comes from the edition of the Hungarian Observant chronicle compiled by Fermendžin, which seems to reproduce the original source to a significant degree. Unfortunately, I could not find this decree during my archival research in Dubrovnik in the registers I have consulted. The bit from Fermendžin's edition does not clarify the intended administrative unit those friaries should be forming, but it is clear they were intended to be in the same one with the friaries of Dubrovnik and Daksa. It is quite curious that these two are not referred to as subject to the vicariate, which contradicts the most up to date known papal decision, from 19 July 1453. They had to be either already removed from the Bosnian vicariate's jurisdiction, or what is more likely, the decision from 1453 was never implemented.

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*nihil per praedictos ex voluntate partium invicem non convenientium decisium aut determinatum fuisse, quin potius aliquos fratres provinnciae Dalmatiae ab obedientia vicarii illius contra apostolica indulta, quorumdam saecularium dominarum favore ac patrocinio, se postmodum substraxisse; quod periculosissimum decernentes, commissimus postremo ac mandavimus dilecto filio fratri Ludovico Vicentino generali vicario vestro, ut quamprimum commode posset personaliter accedens, fratres praedictos rebelles ad se vocaret, et per censuras eos compesceret a tali rebellione et temeraria locorum occupatione, unde tandem ad aures nostras pervenit, praefatas provincias nondum concordi pace mutuo se fovere. Volentes igitur* […] *finem imponere* […] *mandamus* […] *quod de duabus provinciis, scilicet Dalmatiae et Bosnae, fiat una provincia, quae vocetur provincia Bosnae et Dalmatiae.* BF, ns vol. 2, p. 562.

[791] BF, ns vol. 2, p. 381.

[792] BF, ns vol. 2, p. 458.

[793] *Senatus Republicae Ragusinae* […] *decernit: ut Fratres conventuum Racusii et Daxae curent impetrari loca eorum regulae: Stagni, Slani, Umble, et Canalis, et amoveri a regimine fratrum Bossine, et cum eorum locis uniri ; et in dicta impetratione animadvertant inseri, quod fratres, qui pro tempore erunt in dictis quatuor locis, possint et debeant ministrare curam animarum eo modo, quo habent fratres vicarie Bossine, et rector et consilium faveant eis pro dicta unione obtinenda.* Fermendžin, 'Chronicon', p. 22.

A later papal bull *Supernae dispositionis arbitrio* from 9 April 1464 sheds some further light on the situation in Ragusa.[794] It was issued as a response to the petition of the Ragusan government made in order to get the papal confirmation for the removal of these four friaries from the Bosnian vicariate, and to subject them to the Dalmatian provincial vicar. This demonstrates that the government's agenda was to unite all Franciscan friaries on its territories under the Observant authority of the Dalmatian province. The petitions show that they were opening the negotiations with the curia from the position of strength, because the four friars were already seized anyway.[795] The friaries of Dubrovnik and Daksa are clearly mentioned as already being subject to the Dalmatian provincial.[796] The bull *Supernae dispositionis arbitrio* indeed allowed to subject the four to the Dalmatian provincial vicar, but only for the time until the next Observant chapter; the same one which was already commanded to found the Bosnian-Dalmatian province. Interestingly, Bernardino has mentioned this bull as 'surreptitious' in his chronicle, and did not describe it as providing a mere temporal measure, but as *de facto* allowing the Ragusans to assume control over the friaries in question.[797]

The last attempt of the Cismontane leadership to find a solution to the dispute was the mission of the Vicar General Louis of Vicenza. The papal letter from 13 May 1462 commands him to go across the Adriatic and settle the dispute by either drawing permanent borders between the two 'provinces', or by uniting them into one.[798] The vicar general was also ordered to deal with the revolt in Ragusa as well as some revolt in the friaries of Trsat and Krk.[799] The latter revolt is quite curious, as both places were located on Frankopan domains, who were actually traditional allies to the Bosnian vicariate, unlike the maritime republics of the Adriatic. On 17 May 1463 a bull was issued instructing the vicar of Bosnia to

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[794] BF, ns vol. 2, pp. 629-30.

[795] A good example is the Ragusan handling of the problem of sacrament administration in Ston which occurred in early 1456. Namely, on 3 February 1456 the Ragusan government asked the local bishop to promptly permit the local friars to administer the sacraments without waiting for the papal bull to arrive, presuming the answer will be positive anyway. Rode, 'Documenti francescani', 14, p. 184.

[796] *Quorum unum videlicet infra et aliud extra muros praedictae civitatis sub obedientia vicarii provinciae Dalmatiae degunt.* BF, ns vol. 2, p. 230.

[797] Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, pp. 248-50.

[798] *Indulgemus* […] *ut* […] *possis de provinciarum illarum, Bosnae videlicet et Dalmatiae, locis vel conventibus factis aut fiendis, uni magis quam alteri parti per te adiudicandis vel attribuendis, sive de terminis provinciarum, et commodis, usibus, quaestis, vel auctoritatibus quibuscumque decidere et determinare, aut provincias illas dividere aut unire et ad unius capitis regimen adducere.* BF, ns vol. 2, p. 530. Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 83.

[799] […] *omnibus et singulis fratribus in loco Tersati et Vegale rebellibus commorantibus*. BF, ns vol. 2, p. 530; AB, pp. 134-35.

allocate in Trsat the friars loyal count Martin, so overall it seems that some form of unrest had to been sparked in the two friaries against both the Frankopans and the Bosnian rule, perhaps in order to add the two places to the Dalmatian province.[800]

Louis likely did not manage to achieve much on the ground, but he had likely concluded that the Dalmatian and Bosnian Observants should form one entity, as this was the next step undertaken by the papacy.[801] Bernardino of Aquila seems to confirm this by writing that the Observant fathers thought to unite the vicariate of Bosnia with the province of Dalmatia by using the papal letters.[802] At the same time, this has happened after a period of inconclusive commissions of the vicars general, while the papacy has actually suggested unification as a possible solution in the letter to the vicar Louis. The project to found the Bosnian-Dalmatian province must have therefore been the result of a deliberations and collaboration of both the Roman curia and the Cismontane Observant leadership, because while the vicar generals kept coming across the Adriatic, the papacy continued to consult them about the best way to move forward.

Resentment against the Bosnian vicariate seems to have been very strong in the coastal friaries, and maintenance of control over them must have seemed untenable. At the same time, the situation in Bosnia in the early 1460s was becoming ever more desperate, and it faced an overwhelming invasion in May 1463. This had a major impact on the state of affairs in the Bosnian vicariate. With the Turks about to conquer Bosnia and an unrest on the Adriatic coast, the family of friars in Bosnia must have perceived recent developments in somewhat apocalyptic categories, undermining all their efforts, as well as those of all of their predecessors for the Catholic restoration in Bosnia. At the times of upheaval, the Bosnian Franciscan family would have obviously grown to become more and more burdensome to their Dalmatian brothers, especially if we consider that many friars went into exile to the Bosnian coastal friaries after the conquest of 1463.[803] We know that some of such friars started to try to stir anti-Turkish feelings in vain to organise a crusading *Reconquista* of their

800 BF, ns vol. 2, p. 573.
801 Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 83.
802 *Cogitaverunt illas per litteras Summi Pontificis fratres unire.* Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 246.
803 *Quamplurimi fratres, qui in ills degebant, se ad alia eiusdem vicariatus in partibus maritimis vel illis vicinis consistentia loca sive domos vestri ordinis, quae iam diu et per ocutaginta annos et ultra possedistis*. BF, ns vol. 2, p. 720. Reference to houses controlled for eighty years or more seems to refer to the custody of St. Jerome

kingdom. That was not seen well by Ragusa and Venice, trying to avoid getting pulled into a war against their interest.

It seems that only papal legislation kept the Bosnian vicariate somewhat intact, at least on paper. The decision to found the united province was underlined by a dire necessity to support the vulnerable Bosnian Franciscan family, and any Catholic gains in Bosnia with it. For Pius II, the recent conversion of the 'Manichaeans' was something of a grand historical achievement on the battlefield for souls.[804] Perhaps for him in particular it was of emotional significance to make all efforts not to allow Bosnia to slip out the Catholic orbit. The decision to establish the province bestowed a lot of responsibility as well as pressure on the Dalmatian Observants, in this way making them to share burdens with their brothers of the Balkan hinterland, and it seems that at least the pope did so cautiously, as at the Roman curia the Catholic Slavic (or 'Illyrian', as they came to be called at that time) neighbours of the Bosnians were perceived as responsible for bringing them to the Church.[805] Pius II seemed genuinely concerned for the success of the province, and therefore he ordered that it should be governed by an Italian vicar 'as a neutral head to both parts', who would be elected at the next Observant chapter.[806] I do not doubt that the intent was to provide the province with someone of a neutral background, so that he might more easily tackle the discord from an 'objective' standpoint, yet as we will see in the next chapter, this did not quite work out. Considering this background for the conception of the new province, it should not surprise us that it found its strongest supporters in the Bosnian Observant family, while we would expect the Dalmatian friars, as well as Ragusan and Venetian governments to become antagonistic to it.

### Conclusions

The discord focused on in this chapter concerned two Franciscan families firmly rooted in the Observant branch of the order, and therefore we cannot really attribute any 'territorial' changes to the structural progress of the reform movement as such. However, the essence of the Observant movement, which were the matters of religious conduct and obedience, had become an object of contention. It seemed obvious to the fighting sides that

804 Špoljarić, 'The Renaissance Papacy', p. 160.
805 Špoljarić, 'The Renaissance Papacy', pp. 163, 172.
806 *Secundo ut huic provinciae praeficiatur unus vicarius italus, ut caput ambabus partibus indifferens, qui vicarius eligatur in singulis generalibus congregationibus vestris per generalem vicarium et definitores vestrae generalis congregationis*. BF, ns vol. 2, p. 562.

good religious conduct had the potential to strengthen one's claim to control over a certain friary or friaries, and so it was used by both sides in their the dialectics. The Bosnian vicariate actively criticised religious conduct in the two Ragusan friaries that they planned to expand to, and even went on to suggest that they were spoiled with the abundance of alms, which could presumably be put to better use by the struggling friars in the Balkan hinterland. The Ragusan government in response kept appealing to the good religious conduct of the current friars of the two places.

The problem of obedience has also been hinted as important in the early 1450s, but in time it stopped being a point of contention, because ultimately the Bosnian vicariate returned to the Cismontane jurisdiction. Nonetheless, it continued to be perceived as a burden by the Bosnian friars. We have seen the vicar general rebuking the king for providing them with mandatory contributions from subjects. At the same time however, there seems to have been no way to really escape the vicar general, especially given that the minister general has actually rejected to supervise the Bosnian vicar directly.

These Bosnian-Dalmatian 'territorial disputes' obviously went beyond that. The Bosnian vicariate's friaries in Dalmatia continued to play a key role as providing an opportunity for economic support as well as a refuge destination, so they could not be allowed to be simply taken away from the vicariate. The vicariate's presence at the same time remained burdensome for the growing Dalmatian Observant family and the local lay governments. While some bias against the Bosnian family from the 1440s had prevailed in Italian leadership circles, the Bosnian Franciscans achieved some important successes with Catholic progress in the kingdom, attracting the patronage of the curia. This made any attempts to dismantle the Bosnian jurisdiction in Dalmatia more difficult, but such attempts continued. Although the Bosnian-Dalmatian 'territorial dispute' has been looked at in Rome a few times, it remained inconclusive for over a decade. The foundation of a new province was intended as a remedy for discord. Did it succeed in doing that, though?

## Ch 11: The Bosnian-Dalmatian province (1464-69): a failed project

The last chapter of this section, and of this thesis, will examine the half decade of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province's history, from inception to fall. In particular, I am going to focus my attention on matters of obedience and leadership, as well as the discords dividing the Observant families and thus eroding the province from within. In addition to the material from the papal registers, this chapter will be centred strongly on the Chronicle of Bernardino of Aquila and the register of the Observant Cismontane vicars general (the *Regestum*), and both sources are described in the introduction. While thus far they have been used only occasionally, they provide very valuable and rich accounts of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province from the perspective of the Cismontane Observant leadership. This will allow me to structure a more multi-angled narrative of the affairs of the province. The chronicle is particularly noteworthy, as it provides us with a first-person account of Bernardino's whereabouts and deeds as the vicar of the province. In terms of the itinerary's reconstruction and events, the chronicle is relatively reliable, although selective and obviously subjective. I will however make some critical evaluation of Bernardino's assessment of the religious conduct of different Franciscan families constituting the province. The key purpose of this chapter is to examine the role of issues attributed to the Franciscan Observance, which are mainly the problems of religious conduct and obedience, in the province's downfall.

### III.11.1. The triennium of Bernardino of Aquila

The Observant chapter was assembled in Assisi, and celebrated on 20 May 1464 in the convent of Santa Maria degli Angeli. Marco of Bologna was elected vicar general for a second time. The *Regestum* indicates that the first decision of this chapter, perhaps demonstrating the importance of the case, was that the new vicar general should, in accordance with the papal bull *Dudum litteras nostras* from 16 February 1463, implement the unification of the Bosnian and Dalmatian Franciscan families with all the power of the congregation.[807] Bernardino of Aquila, by this point a prominent Italian Observant friar, was appointed to be vicar of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province.[808] The province was to govern the friaries of the Bosnian vicariate and all Observant friaries in Dalmatia, including those on the

[807] Regestum, p. 47.

[808] It is notable that the province was to be governed by the vicar and not provincial minister, perhaps in order to keep the integrity of the Observant chain of command.

Ragusan territories. Those unwilling to become a part of the new province would be cut off from the Observant family.

In his chronicle, Bernardino tells us he was deeply disturbed to hear that he was appointed as the province's vicar, considering that some of the prominent Observant fathers achieved no success in reconciling Bosnian and Dalmatian families. He wrote: 'Therefore if the fathers, in all ways better than myself, were barely able to do any good, what will I, a little worm, be able to achieve?'[809] He nonetheless accepted the new office compelled by holy obedience. In this way, Bernardino introduced a somewhat apologetic undertone to his narrative, and indeed in these last chapters of the chronicle, he remained very defensive about his triennium, as well as defeatist when giving his assessment of the chances of the union to endure.[810] The purpose of this operation is quite clear, by outlining internal tensions within the province, Bernardino aims to distance himself from responsibility for the failure to reconcile the quarrelling families to his readers. At another point in his work, he revealed that the Italian Observant family was his intended audience, apparently quite unnerved by constantly re-emerging Bosnian-Dalmatian disputes at their chapters.[811]

Bernardino travelled from Assisi to Mantua with some companions, where he encountered the crusaders preparing to depart, yet he also tells us that all hopes for the crusade died soon after, with the death of Pope Pius II (14 August 1464). From Mantua he embarked on a ship to Rijeka, intending to reach it by 24 June, yet he was caught by what seems to be the Bura wind, described here as *mala bestia borrea,* and his ship needed to land in Duga Luka in Istria.[812] Then he sailed to Zadar, where he was warmly welcomed by the Dalmatian provincial vicar, friar Christopher of Rab, who handed over his seal to Bernardino.[813] From Zadar, Bernardino, together with Christopher and other Dalmatian friars set sail for Dubrovnik, because he heard that the Ragusan friars would be unwilling to join the union.

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809 *Si ergo patres, ex omni meliores me parte, vix quidam boni facere potuerunt, quid ego vermiculus facere potero?* Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 246.

810 Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 82.

811 Bernardino reveals this in quite an important comment about the agenda of the last part of his chronicle, in the middle of the chapter thirty: *Si omnia que in illo nostro triennio in partibus illis contigerunt narrare vellem, sermo noster valde tenderetur in longum. Quedam tantummodo magis neccessaria narrare curavi, ut Ytalici fratres de gestis in partibus illis ex voluntate familie notitiam certam habeant, et quia communiter in Capitulis generalibus illorum fratrum altercatione vexantur.* Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 256.

812 Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 248.

813 'Christophorus de Arbo' was a signatory of the union's document. Regestum, p. 72.

Negotiations with the Ragusan friars indeed proved challenging. Bernardino noted they were anxious about the threat of excommunication of anyone unwilling to accept the papal decision, and that they asked him for pity and for more time to decide in this matter. Bernardino agreed to their request. He was thus leaving Dubrovnik without convincing the Ragusans to the union. It is clear that the Ragusan government was the main party standing in the way of integrating their friaries with the new province, even if that involved risking the souls of their Observant Franciscans. On his way back to Zadar, Bernardino went to Korčula, where he encountered the Bosnian friars, who agreed to the union enthusiastically, even if it was to materialise without the Ragusans.[814] In Zadar, Bernardino received the same answer from the Observants of Venetian Dalmatia, referred to as 'Dalmatian friars'.

In the meantime, the Vicar General Marco of Bologna arrived to Zadar; and his coming was considered by Bernardino as happening 'not without divine providence', yet perhaps Zadar was in Marco's itinerary anyway, because he was also travelling from Ancona.[815] A later papal bull also hints that Marco had indeed travelled across the Adriatic to check on the implementation of the union.[816] Bernardino convinced the vicar general to preside over the chapter sealing the union of both Observant families, which was to take place on the island of Pašman, which is very close to Zadar, where an important Bosnian friary was located. Apparently the vicar general had to abandon his original plan to travel further to Sicily, so that he could preside over the chapter's proceedings.[817] Firstly however, the vicar general and Bernardino sailed together to Dubrovnik to try again their luck at convincing the local friars to join the chapter. Both travellers were given an audience by the Ragusan senate, and Bernardino's narration of the events seems to imply that the Ragusan friars themselves might have been actually willing to go to Pašman, had they not been hindered by their government.[818]

Having achieved nothing, Bernardino and Marco went back to Pašman, and proceeded with the union chapter between 31 August to 7 September 1464.[819] As a result, on

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814 [Bosnenses] *addiderunt: 'Postquam capitulum vobis iniunxit, posito quod nullum locum haberet unio, nos te in nostrum patrem et pastorem acceptamus'*. Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 250.
815 Regestum, p. 15.
816 *Ex duabus provinciis unam constituerint, intelleximus ob hanc causam te ad regiones illas personaliter contulisse*. BF, ns vol. 2, pp. 654-55.
817 Regestum, p. 70. Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 250.
818 Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 252.
819 Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 86.

the last day the document of the union of the Bosnian vicariate and the Observants of the Dalmatian province was ratified, which contained several important articles. Its diffinitors were friars Filip of Ragusa and Marino of Korčula representing the Bosnian family, while Francis of Zadar and Masseus of Šibenik represented Dalmatian. A seal of the new province was to be made, in likeness of the existing seal of the Bosnian vicariate, but with an appropriate inscription. Existing custodies were reorganised under the new province. Two new custodies were formed of the friaries that used to form the Dalmatian province, namely the custody of Rab, having friaries in Rab, Krk, Rovinj and Piran, and of Kotor, with friaries in Kotor, Bar and Lješ (alb. *Lezhë*). The convent of Zadar was added to the existing formerly Bosnian custody of St. Jerome, and it became the headquarter of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province.[820] Its guardian and his adviser (lat. *discretus*) were given a right of vote at the provincial chapters, as had the custodians.[821] Friaries in Dubrovnik and Daksa joined the custody of Ston, and the friary of Hvar joined the custody of Cetina, and Trsat the custody of Krbava. Four friaries formerly of the Bosnian vicariate on the Ragusan territories (Ston, Slano, Rožat and Konavle) were explicitly declared to also belong to the new province 'because these places were built by the friars of the Bosnian vicariate and by them they were always possessed, ruled and governed.'[822]

Interestingly enough, plans were put in place in the event of the province 'by the devil's work' ever disintegrating. The four contested friaries on Ragusan territories should then join the Bosnian vicariate, a declaration perhaps aimed to discourage the resistance of the Ragusan government to the union. At the same time, it is specified that the convents of Zadar, Trsat and Hvar should in that case go to the Dalmatian province. This illustrates a sense of insecurity of the new construct by the assembled in Pašman, and so the foundation document already included an alternative strategy.

The Ragusan friars were obviously not present at the chapter, but clearly their case was addressed by the assembly. Still in Pašman, on 8 September, Marco of Bologna issued a warning letter to the Ragusan friars, telling them that should they not submit to the union, they would be excommunicated by the papal authority, as was indicated in the bull of Pius II,

820 Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 86.

821 *Item, quod guardianus conventus Hyadrensis cum suo discreto canonice et secundum consuetudinem Ordinis et Familiae electo habeant de cetero in Capitulis provincialibus vocem sicut custodes.* Regestum, p. 70.

822 *Cum et ipsa loca per eosdem fratres vicariae Bosane fuerint aedificata et per eos semper possessa, recta et gubernata*. Regestum, p. 71.

and they would be severed from the Observant Franciscan family.[823] The vicar general reminded his addresses that the authority over the four 'contested' friaries was his. We are told by Bernardino that Marco of Bologna, having abandoned his original plan to go to Sicily (where he was able to travel only in mid-1466), returned to Italy to petition for a breve confirming the newly established province from Pius's successor, Pope Paul II, which was issued on 18 November 1464.[824] A day after the relevant breve was issued, Marco wrote again to the friars of the Ragusan convent, telling them to accept the union confirmed by the new pope.[825]

Bernardino's narrative following Pašman loses much of its previous itinerant and chronological character, perhaps because he was now firmly installed in the newly created province. He tells us that he was to preaching in Šibenik for Lent.[826] However, in Šibenik he received a letter from the vicar general telling him to promptly set sail to Dubrovnik. The letter in question must be the one issued on 5 February 1465, preserved in *Regestum.*[827] Marco tells of the papal confirmation of the union and because he could not cross the Adriatic due to his preoccupation in Italy as well as 'on account of distance to that province, tempest and dangers of the sea', he instituted Bernardino as his commissary and commanded him to ensure *sine dilatione* the acceptance of the union by the notorious Ragusan friars, or otherwise they must face excommunication and other penalties of the order.[828] However, upon arrival, Bernardino was not permitted to enter the city by its government, nor to converse with any of the Ragusan friars, themselves closed within the walls, and the guards kept an eye on him.[829] This suggests that the tensions between the Ragusan government and

[823] They were given the three months since the moment of reception of the letter, which would give them the deadline roughly speaking by the end of the year. Regestum, p. 68-69.
[824] BF, ns vol. 2, p. 650; Regestum, p. 16; Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 254.
[825] Content of the aforementioned breve of 18 November is unfortunately not provided by the editor of *Bullarium*, however, we learn a bit about it from a vicar general's note in *Regestum*; which is essentially that the union was confirmed as authoritative and that all the Observants of former Bosnian vicariate and the Dalmatian province were to accept it, perhaps under the penalty of excommunication *latae sententiae*, as did other similar documents, although the letter is not explicitly said. Regestum, p. 61.
[826] Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 254.
[827] Regestum, p. 74.
[828] *Propter distantiam provinciae ipisus, aeris intemperiem marisque pericula*. Regestum, p. 74.
[829] *Ragusium accessi et civitatem, in qua clausi erant fratres qui unioni resistebant, per medium secularium impeditus, intrare non potui. Imo amplius: nonnulli seculars me custodiebant in die ne quis fratrum illorum qui bonam voluntatem habebant, veniret ad me.* Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 254.

the Cismontane Observant leadership escalated to a degree yet unseen, with the former effectively boycotting the spiritual authority of the latter on its territories.[830]

Bernardino travelled from Dubrovnik to Kotor, from where he issued a letter to Dubrovnik's archbishop, declaring a few named Ragusan friars excommunicated. Interestingly enough, it was decreed in Dubrovnik that all the incoming Franciscan correspondence were to be controlled before reaching their intended recipients. The archbishop nonetheless apparently received the letter, which he read to the Senate, and some citizens, afraid of the excommunication declaration, ceased to go to the convent and the Franciscan friars.[831]

Thus far, we have not really got an opportunity to properly evaluate the agenda of the friars of Dubrovnik and Daksa or adjacent friaries under the Ragusan state. Earlier Ragusan source material was usually of little help when trying to clarify the problem, perhaps with the exception of episodes involving prohibition of alms begging to the Bosnian friars in 1430s.[832] We could not be generally certain whether the Ragusan friars actually lobbied any of the solutions proposed by the government in their correspondence with the pope or the vicar general, or whether everything was the government's initiative in the context of its power building, indifferent to what the friars wanted. In other words, I was often not able to conclusively establish whether the agenda of the Ragusan friars and the government aligned or was conflicted.

Bernardino's chronicle and fragments of the *Regestum* cast some light on this problem, at the same time hinting at its complexity and ambiguity. Bernardino, when naming a few friars in his letter to the archbishop, emphasised that he indeed knew for sure that these individuals rejected the union. Furthermore, in January 1466 an embassy of two Ragusan friars, Francis of Ragusa and Simon of Ragusa, encountered in Treviso by Marco of Bologna, returning from his own 'grand tour' in East Central Europe, presented views aligning with that of their government to the vicar general, because they tried to soften his position.[833]

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[830] By this point we have encountered three recorded serious attempts on behalf of the Cismontane leadership to bring the Ragusan friars into obedience: first by Bernardino accompanied by the former Dalmatian provincial vicar Christopher, then by Bernardino and Marco of Bologna, and finally by Marco's letter issued from Rome on 19 November 1464, having obtained the relevant papal breve.

[831] Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 254.

[832] See I.1.3.

[833] The encounter of the embassy was shortly described in *Regestum* with the date 7 January 1466, and it was further evaluated in vicar's general later letters. Regestum, pp. 90, 95.

However, in his account of the third arrival to Dubrovnik, Bernardino wrote that although he had to stay outside of the city during the day, 'yet by night almost all [Ragusan friars] have come, and they did it because, having a copy of the breve, they knew what I was about to do with them before me.'[834] Shortly thereafter, presumably on his way back from Kotor, Bernardino described another encounter with them. The friars approached him saying:

> Father, you are a shepherd, a prelate and our father, and we want only you as much as consigned by the fathers of our family, and we want to simply obey you: to this we are prepared. If it pleases, by the love of God, take us with you and place us where it would seem proper to your charity.[835]

Bernardino tells us furthermore that although he just instructed them to 'persevere in good', until a different arrangement is made, some of these friars in fact had left their places 'led by the goad of conscience', and flocked to him, and that he needed to allocate them in various places in Dalmatia.[836] It seems that such escapes had become a real problem to deal with for the Cismontane leadership, as *Regestum* provides two letters of Marco of Bologna, one issued on 14 June 1466 and the other undated. The former was addressed to three custodians of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province and the latter to Bernardino, permitting to allocate such 'exiles of conscience' to suitable places.[837] Interestingly enough, the letter to Bernardino hints at an earlier letter, not preserved in the *Regestum*, written by the vicar general shortly after meeting the envoys in Treviso, which forbade Bernardino from accepting such exiles.[838]

In this way, the sources demonstrate division across the Ragusan Franciscan family. Our Cismontane sources make it clear that although compelled by their government and the archbishop to align with Ragusan policy, at least some of the Ragusan friars feared excommunication and severance from the Observant family. The Cismontane leadership was clearly not indifferent to this ambiguity of obedience – in this light, it is interesting to observe

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834 *Tamen plerique de nocte venerunt. Et hoc totum agebant quia quidquid cum ipsis essem acturus, habita copia brevis, me priores noverunt.* Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano,* p. 254.

835 *Peter, tu es pastor, prelatus, et pater noster, et te solum volumus tamquam a nostris patribus familie consignatum; tibi volumus simpliciter obedire: ecce parati sumus. Si placet, amore Dei, nos tecum ducas, et ibi nos colloca ubi tue videbitur caritati*. Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 254.

836 *Stimulo conscientie ducti.* Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 256.

837 Regestum, pp. 96-7.

838 *Plures fratres, tam ex eis qui modo in Raguseorum dominio locis commorantur quam Dalmatinae Bosensisque provinciae tum nuntiis cum litteris instetisse apud me ut, qui tue paternitati mandaveram, ne quempiam ex Raguseis locis venientem susciperes.* Regestum, p. 97.

that Marco of Bologna made a point of asking the envoys he encountered in Treviso as to how representative of their family they really were.[839]

Such a situation was obviously untenable for the Ragusan government, and they faced a challenge as to what solution they should propose in the long run. Furthermore, if we keep in mind close ties of the Ragusan citizens with Bosnia, as well as what we have read in Bernardino's chronicle about the fear of excommunication among the citizens, perhaps a divided stance on the province went beyond the matters of the Franciscans in Dubrovnik, and therefore the controversy begged for some settlement by the Ragusan government. Policing the Cismontane superiors in ways described by Bernardino – by keeping the gates closed to him as we have seen, or by stationing an armed boat in their port to look out for him for 15 days on another occasion - was untenable as a permanent solution.[840]

The Ragusans appealed to the Roman curia. Although a lack of registers of the series *Lettere, e commissioni di Levante* for the 1460s hinders a comprehensive evaluation of the government's strategy and agenda to some degree, the papacy issued a bull *Inter curas multiplices* for the vicar of the Ragusan archbishop on 19 May 1465, which gives us a good enough insight into their request.[841] Namely, the Ragusan government wanted to set up an independent entity for all six friaries on its territories, subject to the vicar general. The bull ordered to separate all six friaries in question from the Bosnian-Dalmatian province, so that they should be under an immediate obedience to the vicar general, similarly to other bodies governed by him thus far.[842] This meant a creation of a distinct Observant Ragusan vicariate. Should the union collapse however, the friaries, including those four (Ston, Slano, Rožat and Konavle) which used to belong to the Bosnian vicariate for a long time, were to join the Dalmatian province. The Ragusan government once more pointed at the exemplary religious conduct of the Observants of Dubrovnik and Daksa 'by whose best example the citizens and other inhabitants of the city were being encouraged to good and right living', to strengthen the petition.[843]

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839 Regestum, p. 90.
840 Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 256.
841 BF, ns vol. 2, pp. 655-57.
842 *Sex loca praedicta, durante unione ipsarum duarum provinciarum, ab eisdem provinciis omnino separare, et illa vicario generale ad instar aliarum provinciarum, quae sunt sub eodem vicario generali dumtaxat, subiicere.* BF, ns vol. 2, p. 656.
843 *Quorum exemplis optimis cives et alii habitatores dictae civitatis ad bene recteque vivendum provocabantur*. BF, ns vol. 2, p. 656.

*Inter curas multiplices* indeed reflects hostile attitudes towards the Bosnian Observants, whilst being silent about the Dalmatians, which signalled a full turnaround from the stance demonstrated in the 1430s, when the Ragusan government expressed quite the opposite animosity. It is obviously reflective of development in their policy regarding the Franciscan friaries on their territories, which used to support the Bosnian Observant family in order to weaken the Dalmatian province, but now aimed to weaken Bosnian ties to these friaries. The bull prohibited the friars of the Bosnian family to visit or stay in any of the six houses under the penalty of excommunication *latae sententiae*, which is quite a radical solution considering the deep ties between the Bosnian Observants and the Ragusan republic. The reasons for that are apparently that the Bosnian friars sparked some unnamed controversies in Ragusan friaries, but it is also said that the government considered them suspicious because 'these friars of the province of Bosnia were repeatedly conversing with the Turks'.[844] Furthermore, Bernardino tells us that on another occasion the Venetian envoys in the Roman curia accused the Bosnian friars of 'constantly dealing with their enemies', which seem to allude to the Turks as well.[845] This accusation is particularly interesting in light of clear anti-Turkish activity of the Bosnian friars in both sieges of Jajce, or in their dedication to various crusading initiatives before and after the conquest of 1463, which we discussed in the chapter nine. The Ragusan government was obviously politically blackmailing the Bosnian Observants, because it wanted to sever their ties with the six friaries in question. How far was this accusation credible then?

### III.11.2. The Bosnian family adapts to the Ottoman rule

Bosnian historiography has dedicated a lot of attention to the problem of transformation of the Franciscan pastoral care in Bosnia following the Ottoman conquest. We obviously learn about the martyrdom and emigration of friars from various sources, as well as destruction and spoliation of their friaries. The papal bull from 1467 relating Franciscan participation in both sieges of Jajce mentions a cruel martyrdom of four captured friars, and perishing of many others, and destruction of over thirty friaries, while Bernardino mentions specifically thirty-eight.[846] A later breve of 11 July 1469 shows furthermore that the friars of the Bosnian family also lost a plenty of books, privileges, liturgical vestments and other

[844] *Ipsos fratres dictae provinciae Bosnae cum turcis saepenumero conversantes*. BF, ns vol. 2, p. 656.
[845] *Eo maxime quia Bosnenses cum inimicis Venetorum continuo practicabant.* Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 264.
[846] BF, ns vol. 2, p. 720; Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 266.

equipment to the spoliation of Bosnia. The fleeing friars brought some of these items to safer convents, mainly in Dalmatia and Hungary, but had difficulties in reclaiming them.[847] Given that the Dalmatian friars were mentioned specifically as refusing to return these objects, the whole controversy had to add to animosities between the Observant families. We also learn from the document that some Christian merchants obtained such items inexpensively, capitalising on the spoliation of Bosnia. The breve itself asked all the prelates for help in restoring such items to their rightful owners.[848] These sources present rather apocalyptic conditions for the Bosnian Franciscan family following the Ottoman conquest. At the same time however, historiography also established the phenomenon of the Franciscan integration into the Ottoman Empire in Bosnia against all odds, which although chronologically outside of this thesis's framework, deserves a brief consideration, especially because some of the later developments are clearly related to the issues of the family's integrity and division.

Any reports about the destruction of friaries from the mid fifteenth century must be contrasted with list of the Cismontane Observant convents we can find in Wadding's *Annales*, from the early sixteenth century, probably from 1509.[849] It demonstrates that at the time, the 'province' of Bosnia continued to have a plenty of friaries in the Ottoman-controlled territories. Most of these had roots before the Ottoman conquest, including such core convents like Kraljeva Sutjeska, Visoko, Mile, Srebernica, Fojnica or Olovo. This demonstrates the continuity of the Observant family in Bosnia.

The cornerstone of the relationship between the Franciscans of Bosnia with the Ottoman conquerors is seen in the famous charter *ahdnâme* of Milodraž, which is kept on display in the museum of the convent in Fojnica. It was issued by Mehmed II on 28 May 1463 (or possibly 1464) following his victorious campaign in Bosnia, and it guaranteed the friars the freedom of faith, as well as the integrity of their friaries and possessions, and it invited those who had gone to exile to return. Several historians have questioned its authenticity, but scholarship has never unanimously rejected it as a fabrication, nor questioned its content.[850] Noteworthily, there was an earlier, similar *ahdnâme* issued for the

847 See introduction.

848 BF, ns vol. 2, pp. 778-79.

849 AM, vol. 15 (1506), pp. 367, 396-98.

850 The document kept today in the museum of the convent in Fojnica is most likely not an original, but its copy. Dominik Mandić, 'Autentičnost ahd-name Mehmeda II. B. H. franjevcima', in *Radovi hrvatskoga povijesnog instituta u Rimu*, 3/4 (1971), 61-90; Vjeran Kursar, 'Monks in Kaftans. Bosnian Franciscans, Robes of Honour, and Ottoman Sumptuary Laws' in *Life on the Ottoman Border. Essays in Honour of Nenad Moačanin,* ed. by Vjeran Kursar, (Zagreb: FF Press, 2022), pp. 143-66 (pp. 143-44).

Franciscans of Srebrenica.[851] While in the present study it is not possible to reflect or summarise the intense process of scrutiny of this document, the *ahdnâme* of Milodraž demonstrates a prompt settlement between the Ottomans and the Franciscans living in Bosnia.

According to Franciscan tradition, the *ahdnâme* of Milodraž was received in person by a famous Bosnian friar, Anđeo Zvizdović, who on that occasion was also given a garment called *kaftân* or *hil'at*, which normally signalled a state-level recognition of a recipient by the gift giver.[852] In this way, Zvizdović himself has become perhaps the most famous 'medieval' friar of Bosnian origin, with his encounter with Mehmed II unsurprisingly paralleling with that of St. Francis with al-Kamil. However, Bosnian and Croatian literature describes his entire life mainly based on various accounts from the later narrative accounts.[853] Under the year 1498, when Anđeo died, Wadding noted in his *Annales* that he was born to the noble parents of 'Greek schismatic' faith, but at a very young age met James of the Marches, who converted him to Catholicism and accepted him into the Franciscan order.[854] He rose to great prominence in the order, and after the conquest of Bosnia was summoned by the 'Prince of the Turks', who granted him and the friars the freedom of faith.[855] Wadding's account seems to be some form of a condensed *vita* of Anđeo, as it contains references to his miracles in life and *post mortem*, and perhaps also rationalising events of the past, and therefore should be subject to historical scrutiny.[856]

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851 Džaja, 'Katoličanstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini', p. 167; Anđelko Barun, *Stazom Franje asiškog* (Zagreb/Sarajevo: Svjetlo Riječi, 2008) p. 185.

852 It is also preserved in the museum of the convent in Fojnica in the shape of a cloak. Miro Vrgoč, 'Fra Anđeo Zvizdović (1420-1498.) Duchowni lik', in *Zbornik radova sa znanstvenoga skupa u povodu 500. obljetnice smrti fra Anđela Zvizdovića* ed. by Marko Karamatić (Sarajevo/Fojnica: Franjevačka teologija Sarajevo/Franjevački samostan Fojnica, 2000), pp. 125-34 (p. 130); Kursar, 'Monks in Kaftans', p. 144.

853 These include mainly accounts from the chronicle of Mark of Lisbon and *Annales* of Luke Wadding, both of which seem to be based on the now lost *Compendium chronicorum fratrum minorum* of Mariano of Florence from the early 1520s. Vrgoč, 'Fra Anđeo Zvizdović', pp. 130-31.

854 AM, vol. 15 (1498) p. 176.

855 *Turcarum Princeps audita gentis commotione, vocatum Angelum fremens interrogavit, ut quid e suis sedibus populum evocaret? Respondit ut Dei mandatis alibi possit obtemperare. Eas deinde rationes interpide et gratiose subjunxit, ut sedato furore, Princeps imperarit, ne Bosnensibus sub ejus imperio vivendo impediret.* AM, vol. 15 (1498), p. 176.

856 The account seems to be chronologically convoluted; it seems unlikely (although not impossible) that an individual from Bosnia who died in 1498 would have received his Franciscan habit from James of the Marches, active there in the 1430s. Although chronologically unlikely, it was clearly convenient to include the famous James to the *vita* of Anđeo. It is very common in literature to date Anđeo's birth to 1420, but I admit that I do not know where does this information come from.

In contemporary sources Anđeo emerged as an individual of prominence only on a few occasions in the 1480s and 1490s. [857] He is not found among those who ratified the union of Pašman, nor listed in the documents from early 1460s consulted by Wadding, which represent two lists of prominent friars of the Bosnian family around the time of the Ottoman conquest.[858] I would argue that evidence for his meeting with Mehmed II in Milodraž may actually not have very strong historical basis.[859] It is quite evident that a comprehensive contextualization of this individual requires analysis of the period which goes beyond this thesis's chronological scope.[860] At the same time, I should emphasise that friar Anđeo's position as the mediator between the Franciscans and the Sultan is quite powerful in popular memory in Bosnia.

[857] Anđeo was present in Italy in 1493, likely to take part in the Observant chapter in Florence, but also to meet the minister general in Bologna and Pope Alexander VI, as we are told by Wadding. Some scholars assert that he also travelled to Italy in 1487 for the Observant chapter, based on the charter of İskender Pasha, but this is circumstantial rather than direct evidence. Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, p. 138; Pandžić, 'Djelovanje franjevaca', p. 264, 266.

[858] AM, vol. 13 (1462), p. 289. Many authors presumed that Anđeo was the custodian of Bosnia during the Ottoman takeover, but it seems unlikely, as Wadding mentions Louis 'Nemorellis' as the Bosnian custodian in 1462, while since the union of Pašman that was Marino of Korčula. Braun, *Stazom Franje asiškog*, p. 180-81.

[859] Džaja, 'Katoličanstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini', p. 167.

[860] Kursar, 'Monks in Kaftans', p. 144.



Fig. 12. The Franciscan museum in Fojnica. Left: the portrait of friar Anđeo by Gabriel Jurkić; Upper centre: *ahdnâme* of Milodraž; Centre bottom; *kaftân* given by the Sultan; Right: portrait of Mehmed II by Gentile Bellini. From: Džambo, *Franjevci*, p. 260.

Whatever we make of the account of his meeting with Mehmed, the attitude towards the Ottoman rule over Bosnia that Friar Anđeo represents in the Franciscan tradition finds grounds in the sources and should be taken into account in this discussion. Friar Anđeo emerges in the contemporary sources in the context of tensions between the friars of the Bosnian vicariate, led by the vicar of Bosnia, living in exile in Christian-controlled lands, and the Bosnian and Zvornik custodies made up of friars and houses remaining in the Ottoman-occupied territories. Tensions concerned the degree of autonomy of the custodies under the Ottomans from the authority of the vicar, but it seems that attitude towards the Ottoman government was also a source of tension. The friars remaining in Ottoman controlled Bosnia wanted to establish some *modus vivendi* with the new governors, while the émigré part was

uncompromisingly anti-Ottoman. Furthermore, Friar Anđeo, called a custodian, was also granted a charter by the Ottoman governor (Sanjak-bey) of Bosnia, İskender Pasha, dated for 20 August 1486, allowing him the freedom of movement abroad.[861] This suggests that Friar Anđeo was recognized by the Ottoman authority and that he was indeed a figure of leadership for the friars remaining under the Ottoman rule.[862] Considering his relationship with the Ottomans, the Franciscan tradition might have interpreted him as an individual actually striking an agreement with the Ottomans back in 1463, even though he is missing from the records contemporary of the Ottoman conquest.

In light of the problem of Franciscan relations with the new governors of Bosnia, another noteworthy individual was friar Francis Zlatarić, who together with Marino of Korčula got in trouble with the Venetian authorities for preaching the crusade in Dalmatia in 1468.[863] Later on he operated in Ottoman-held lands. He was granted a bull on 8 July 1482, which made him a 'governor, leader and administrator' of all the friaries and friars in the lands of Krajina and Hum. He was to be independent from the Bosnian vicar, and interestingly enough, subject to the minister general rather than the vicar general, striking a chord with some old controversies over obedience.[864] Zlatarić developed an ambition to become the leader of all the Bosnian friars under the Ottomans. He petitioned a bull appointing him 'the vicar of all the Bosnian province under the Turks' in 1487, an office that must have been independent from the émigré vicar of Bosnia Michael of Croatia.[865] Vicar Michael obviously complained and sent his envoys to the curia to assert his authority and recalling of the bull.[866] He was supported by the vicar general, who called Zlatarić an 'apostate', and it seems they were successful in keeping the vicariate formally in one piece, although the custodian of Bosnia in 1487 (and of Zvornik in 1493) gained the rights of the vicar's representative.[867] Evolution of Zlatarić's attitude from a determined crusade preacher to a figure of leadership of the friars under the Ottomans might be reflective of more general

[861] Mandić, 'Franjevačka Bosna', p. 138.
[862] Vrgoč, 'Fra Anđeo Zvizdović', p. 129.
[863] AB, p. 277.
[864] The document is unpublished in its full form, *Bullarium Franciscanum* (ns vol. 3) does not provide it, but a part of it is quoted in: Ančić, *Na rubu zapada*, p. 173.
[865] *Ut esset vicarius universe provincie Bosne sub Turcis.* AB, p. 300.
[866] AB, pp. 299-300.
[867] Mandić, 'Franjevačka Bosna', pp. 138-40.

dynamics and trends in the Bosnian Franciscan family, given Zlatarić's close relation to Marino of Korčula, who happened to be also a petitioner of the bull from 8 July 1482.[868]

The unity of the Bosnian vicariate did not last for very long, as the tensions between the friars in the Ottoman and Christian territories prevailed, and so early in the sixteenth century the Bosnian family was ultimately divided into two. The Observant chapter in Assisi of 1514 divided the Bosnian vicariate into two parts: the friaries in the Christian lands were to remain the 'province of Bosnia' and retained the old seal, despite having almost all their friaries in Croatia, while the friars actually living in Bosnia were to form a distinct province of *Bosna Argentina* with a new seal, until the political circumstances would allow to reunite both parts into one.[869] In 1517 both parts were confirmed as distinct provinces, and they never re-united. *Bosna Argentina* continued to have access to the flock of the Catholic Bosnian faithful ever since, and its friars eventually acculturated into the Ottoman Empire.[870] This Franciscan province governs the Bosnian friars until the present day as *Bosna Srebrena* (Bosnian for *Bosna Argentina*) while the vicariate in exile was integrated to Croatian structures in the modern period.[871]

868 Ančić, *Na rubu zapada*, pp. 46, 173.
869 AB, p. 307. Pandžić, 'Djelovanje franjevaca', p. 267.
870 Kursar, 'Monks in Kaftans', pp. 150-52.
871 Pandžić, 'Djelovanje franjevaca', p. 267.




Fig. 13. Seals of the provinces *Bosna Croatia* (left) and *Bosna Argentina* (right) – the former should resemble the seal of the medieval Bosnian vicariate, as well as that of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province. From: Francesco Gonzaga, *De origine Seraphicae Religionis Franciscanae*, (Rome: 1587), pp. 51-52.

From this perspective, the Ragusan accusation found in *Inter curas multiplices*, as well as perhaps the Venetian one concerning the contacts between the Bosnian friars and the Ottomans no longer sounds as completely absurd, but can be considered in the context of a very long and rich part of the regional history. These accusations were obviously politicised, as their point was to convince the Roman curia of the necessity to sever the ties of some coastal friaries with the Bosnian family. They may seem even somewhat hypocritical to anyone aware of Ragusan contacts with the Ottoman Empire and its Balkan officials. But perhaps they may also hint at the existence of an early settlement between the conquerors of Bosnia and the Franciscans demonstrated by the *ahdnâme* of Milodraž.

The decision of the bull *Inter curas multiplices* to remove the six Ragusan friaries from the Bosnian-Dalmatian province undoubtedly undermined the foundation of the union. We can presume with a good degree of probability that the Ragusan embassy which encountered the Vicar General Marco of Bologna in Treviso in January 1466 was sent to try to convince him to acknowledge the independent standing of the Ragusan Observants based

on *Inter curas multiplices*.[872] As we already know, Marco of Bologna wrote a letter immediately responding to this embassy, but it did not survive.[873] We know for sure however that he had forbidden Bernardino to accept the 'exiles of conscience' into other friaries, as has been discussed earlier in this chapter. By extrapolation, Marco's stance on the Ragusan case might have been more understanding, but unlikely to recognise their autonomy.[874] However, following that encounter in Treviso he consulted several high-ranking Observant fathers, and he changed his mind in the Ragusan case by becoming much more antagonistic. His letter from 26 May 1466 demonstrates that he absolutely opposed the independence of the Ragusan houses from the Bosnian-Dalmatian province.[875] The vicar general wrote that the Ragusan friars were acting against the entire Observant family and pondered that back in Treviso, the envoys had told him 'many false things'.[876] He also understood that they based their claim on the bull from 19 May 1465, so he attacked it as well, saying:

> I will tolerate as much as I will be able to, but if you are to persevere in the declaration, I will rise up to the family's defence, and I will find suitable remedies, and I will show that bull to be surreptitious and that many vile things have been done.[877]

We have already encountered the adjective 'surreptitious' as used against another bull, issued also for the Ragusans, on 9 April 1464. This adjective was indeed sporadically used in Franciscan medieval dialectics, and it was used sometimes to attack the papal bulls. Roberto Carraciollo for example described some of the bulls of Eugenius IV as surreptitious.[878] Friar Lope Salazar recollected that the regular Observants surreptitiously obtained a bull from Benedict XIII against the Villacrecians.[879] The adjective used against a bull implies primarily that it was based on some incomplete or clandestine information, and therefore it is invalid. This was indeed a well-established tactic, grounded in the Canon law,

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872 It is noted in *Regestum* that the third question of the vicar general to the envoys was whether they accepted 'the bull', to which they 'bowed down their heads'. It is not specified though which bull Marco had in mind. Regestum, p. 90.

873 Regestum, p. 95.

874 The vicar general hints that in the letter from 14 June to three custodians. Regestum, p. 96.

875 Regestum, pp. 95-96.

876 *Ipsi autem nuntii vestri quamplura falsa, ut audio, retulerunt*. Regestum, p. 95.

877 *Sustinebo quantum potero, sed si in proposito perseveraveritis, ad familiae defensionem insurgam remediaque inveniam opportuna, ostendamque et bullam ipsam surrepticiam esse multaque fuisse nequiter perpetrata.* Regestum, p. 96.

878 Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 176.

879 Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 564.

to invalidate ecclesiastical pronouncements and ask for a rescript, without undermining the authority of the pope.[880] The vicar general's use of the term suggests furthermore a purposeful misleading of the pope in the process of the bull's production, implying that it was based on not just incomplete, but maliciously false or manipulated information. On another occasion he described that bull 'to be in this way surreptitious and accomplished by many false means, which is easy to prove'.[881]

This controversial bull for the Ragusans overturned earlier papal decisions confirming the Bosnian-Dalmatian province's integrity, because as it says, back then the pope was not having a 'certain knowledge'.[882] This implies that the Ragusan government employed an analogous strategy, that is of undermining the validity of problematic decisions by demonstrating that the pope has made them based on incomplete or manipulated information. The government's report must have contained something revealing to the Roman curia, which made it revert the previous decision, and Marco of Bologna clearly wanted to achieve the same thing, that is to restore *status quo ante*.

Another factor to consider in this discussion was how the cardinals used their influence to back their proteges' agenda. A powerful cardinal, or a faction of cardinals at the curia had the potential to influence the process of a bull's production. While the bulls themselves normally do not bear visible marks of such underlying machinations, we know that at this period the Ragusans could count on support from the very prominent cardinal and the Latin Patriarch of Constantinople, Bessarion (1403-72), who had been appointed cardinal protector of the Franciscan order in 1458. They could also rely on help of the Ragusan friar Marino de Restis who become chaplain of Pope Pius II.[883] The Bosnian friars had favours of the cardinal of San Marco, Marco Barbo, so there was obviously room for a game of 'intrigue' at the Roman curia.[884] Some earlier Ragusan vernacular instructions for their envoys to be found in the series *Lettere, e commissioni di Levante* demonstrate that the government allocated resources for bribes for certain cardinals to make them support the

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880 (Decretalium Gregorii IX: I, iii, c. 20) Justus H. Boehmer, *Corporis iuris canonici tomus secundus Decretales iussu Gregorii IX: collectas cum libro sexto Clementinis et extravagantibus tum Ioannis XXII tum communibus continens et appendice varii argumenti auctus* (Halle an der Saale: Litteris Emanuelis Schneideri, 1747), pp. 19-20.

881 *Quam tamen surepticiam esse et multis falsis mediis impetratam esset facilimum comprobare.* Regestum, p. 97.

882 *Nos itaque de praemissis certam notitiam non habentes.* BF, ns vol. 2, p. 656.

883 Velnić, 'Samostan male braće', p. 137.

884 Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, pp. 262, 266, 294.

Ragusan case.[885] A bull bearing the heavy influence of a particular cardinal or a faction of cardinals might then be exposed to scrutiny as 'surreptitious', because it would overemphasise certain arguments over others, or at least give too much power to individual (or small groups of) cardinals. I did not encounter such an accusation against a particular cardinal in my sources, but this might be due to the attitude that challenging one in this way would not be considered wise.

While perhaps missing nuances of the dispute over the religious discipline and the Christian perfection, characteristic for some other Franciscan controversies, the friars in Ragusan houses undoubtedly faced a complex problem of obedience. It did emerge because of the varying agencies of the Cismontane leaders and the Ragusan government, and it was unlikely to be settled given that the papacy kept issuing bulls contradicting one another within a relatively short period of time, and the Ragusan family was clearly internally divided. The problem of obedience of the Ragusan friars undoubtedly undermined the integrity of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province, but it was not the only internal issue that the province faced, and the Ragusans were not the only 'troublemakers'. This will be more easily seen when analysing the proceedings of the council of Mantua, where Bernardino of Aquila was summoned to present a report from his triennium, and where indeed some other, accumulated tensions found their outlet.

### III.11.3. The Observant chapter of Mantua and its consequences

Bernardino was obliged to attend the Observant chapter of Mantua, which was celebrated on 24 May 1467. We know he was to be accompanied by the friars Francis of Zadar and Augustin of Zadar representing the Dalmatian family, and Marino of Korčula and Lucas of Cetina representing Bosnian.[886] The friars of Ragusa were apparently *personae non gratae* at Mantua, but their representatives made their way to the chapter anyway, and that included not only a few 'prominent' friars, but also some noblemen sent there as ambassadors.[887] Bernardino started his recollection of Mantua's proceedings in the following way:

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[885] LDL, vol 13, fol. 224 v.; Škunca, 'Franjevačka renesansa', p. 62.

[886] Regestum, p. 101.

[887] The Regestum notes: *Scribitur littera vicario Dalmatiae multa continens, sed praecipue quod Raguseos non vocabit ad Capitulum generale, nisi aliud sibi videatur*. Regestum, p. 101. Bernardino wrote however: *Ragusini*

> At the given time I was called and asked in detail how the union had worked. I said: 'Up to this point it had worked well, because the friars remain in it. However, your reverences should trust me, because I was among them, I was hammered many times: from one side the Bosnians, from the other the Dalmatians and from the other the Ragusans beaten me many times, more willing to disagree among themselves than to afflict me.' They asked me again: 'Is the union going to endure?', I answered: 'Truly no. In truth I tell you that I was barely able to maintain it until this chapter. It seems to me in no way possible to endure.'[888]

This demonstrates a rather clear pessimism of Bernardino. The source of the problem was not limited to the Ragusan issue with obedience, but involved animosities between all three families of the province, as well as the inability of its head to settle them. On another occasion Bernardino said 'and I for three years lived as an anvil between three hammers'.[889] The problem of integrating the Ragusan family was just evaluated, but what did Bernardino make of other constituent elements of the province, the Bosnian and the Dalmatian families?

Interestingly enough, Bernardino commented on the suitability of the two by juxtaposing them. He wrote:

> I may conclude that they [the Bosnians] are liars and suspicious men, therefore the family is not able to compose a good concord between them and the Dalmatians. The Dalmatians shine more simply, because they were more educated in good customs by the Italian friars: these Bosnians are more familiar with the secular people, as because they were compelled to have parish care by the Roman curia, and that's because in these parts there are no secular priests nor any other religious [of an order]. Therefore they could never get along: since they are discordant in customs they cannot agree in will.[890]

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*etiam principaliores fratres ad predictum Capitulum venerunt, insuper et cives Ragusini quosdam nobilioribus civibus pro ambassiatoribus ad Capitulum destinarunt.* Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano,* pp. 258-60.

888 *Data temporis opportunitate fui vocatus et qualiter unio facta transierit subtiliter inquisitus. Dixi, 'Usque modo bene transivit, quia in illa fratres durarunt. Sed, credant michy reverentie vestre, quia ego, qui fui medius inter ipsos, fui multipliciter malleatus: ex uno latere Bosnenses, ex alio Dalmatini et ex alio Ragusini me multipliciter percusserunt, potius inter se dissidentes quam me affligere volentes'. Dixerunt iterum: 'Estne unio ista duratura?' dixi: Vere non. In veritate dico vobis quod vix usque ad hoc Capitulum manutenere potui. Nullo michi modo videtur posse durare.* Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano,* p. 260.

889 *Ego vero tribus annis quasi incus inter tres malleatores vixi.* Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano,* p. 258.

890 *Faciam in his conclusionem quod sunt viri duplices et suspecti, ideo familia inter ipsos et Dalmatinos numquam bonam concordiam componere potuit. Dalmatini simplicius incendunt, utpote quia magis a fratribus*

He also makes another, very similar juxtaposition between the Bosnian and Dalmatian friars, which has already been used in this thesis.[891] While a reader of Bernardino's work might be getting an overall idea about the Bosnian friars' distinctive status - in that they operated in a politically restless territory, with lack of support from other ecclesiastical structures - Bernardino also made it clear he did see their religious model less favourably. I have comprehensively elaborated upon why was that the case in the chapter two. To summarise my earlier discussion, Bernardino saw the religious model of the Dalmatian friars as closer to the 'Italian customs', in particular regarding the their degree of involvement in secular matters. The Bosnian friars were all too 'familiar' with lay people for Bernardino's taste. The differences in the religious model obviously stemmed from the differences of environment and collective experience of both families. Bernardino understood that this underlined a lot of internal discord, eroding the province's integrity, and here I would agree with the chronicler, whatever we make of his arbitrary and moral assessments. Varying visions of the Franciscan vocation would remain a source of tensions between the two families, challenging the vicar's government. By juxtaposing the two families, Bernardino seems to have implied that most of the internal clashes in the province happened between them, with the Ragusans remaining somewhat isolated, for reasons outlined in the previous subchapter.

Tensions between the two families were not limited to differences in the interpretation of the Franciscan vocation, but also stemmed from the dispute over control of the contested friaries. Although quelling this controversy was one of the purposes for the province's foundation, it is clear that this has not been achieved. Bernardino's report from Mantua presented the Dalmatian family as very determined to sever all their ties to Bosnia:

> After this the Dalmatians came asking for separation or, if they [the fathers of the chapter] wanted to confirm the union, they would leave the province to the Bosnians and should lead them to Italy.[892]

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*Italicis in bonis moribus educati sunt; illi vero Bosnenses cum secularibus magis domestici sunt, utpote quia curam parrocchialem habere a Romana Curia compulsi sunt, eo quod in partibus illis nulli seculares sacerdotes neque alterius cuiusquam religionis habentur. Ideo invicem concordare numquam poterunt: quia in moribus discordant, nequeunt in voluntate esse concordes.* Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 258.

891 See I.2.4.

892 *Post hoc Dalmatini accesserunt separationem petentes aut, si volunt unionem confirmare, dimictant Bosniensibus Provinciam ipsosque ad Ytaliam ducant*. Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 260.

The Dalmatian Observants could undoubtably rely on the patronage of Venice. Bernardino tells us that during his triennium, the Venetian government kept trying to oust the Bosnian friars from the Dalmatian friaries, and that they sent envoys to the curia. The chronicler points to six friaries from which Venice wanted to remove the Bosnians: Ugljan, Novigrad, Pašman, Krapanj, Split and Korčula.[893]

Bernardino reported that just before the end of his triennium, the Bosnian friars grew suddenly anxious about losing friaries around Zadar to the Dalmatians. The Bosnian custodians and guardians assembled in Split and sent a messenger to Bernardino, asking the vicar to write a letter, declaring his disapproval of ousting any Bosnian friar from these friaries. The assembled were apparently themselves suspicious that Bernardino might be secretly cooperating with the Dalmatians. Bernardino was quite dismissive of this anxiety, but also felt very uncomfortable having to write such a letter, considering it might be used against him in the future. Reflecting on this request, he pondered the Bosnian family to be a 'perverse and crooked generation' (Deut.32:5).[894]

Earlier in the chronicle, when discussing proceedings of Pašman, Bernardino reported a disagreement over some 'trivial thing', for which the Bosnian friars argued, in Bernardino's view, disproportionally vigorously. The case might have regarded in some way the problem of the coastal convents, but even if not, it further demonstrates that the vicar was dismissive of the needs and anxieties of the Bosnian family. This casts a contrast to the intentions of the bull *Dudum litteras nostras* from 16 February 1463, which envisaged the province's head to be a neutral party.[895]

Such sudden outbreaks of anxiety is presented in the chronicle as absurd, but if we consider the sense of vulnerability of the province, they may became more understandable. It had to became clear for the Bosnian family that the Venetian government would follow in the footsteps of the Ragusans in trying to oust the Bosnians from the friaries on their territories. The agenda guiding the Bosnian family was the perseverance of the province, because it was the only thing keeping it in Dalmatia. Likely while assembled in Split, the Bosnian custodians issued a letter asking for a bull confirming the province, perhaps so that they might use it to defend it at the chapter of Mantua. The vicar general replied on 28 October 1466 that this was

893 Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano,* p. 264.
894 Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, pp. 256, 258.
895 See the previous chapter.

not possible, but a breve for recovery of books will be obtained.[896] Such a breve was issued eventually on 11 July 1469, which was already discussed.[897]

The proceedings of the chapter of Mantua went unfavourably for the Bosnian family, as the fathers decided to put an end to the union.[898] Furthermore, the assembled decided that a few friaries with all their belongings should be exchanged between the families, namely Pašman, Ugljan and Novigrad should be given to the Dalmatian province, while the Bosnian vicariate should get Krk, Košljun, Trsat and Hvar in compensation.[899] Any further attempts to reclaim any friary by either of the families was forbidden, with the new 'borders' between the Dalmatian province and Bosnian vicariate drawn in Mantua intended to be final. The Bosnians were to lose their long-held friaries of the custody of St. Jerome, focused around Zadar, in exchange for places that clearly could not play the same economic role for the vicariate. Košljun was essentially a solitary friary on a small rocky island inside the bay of Krk (Puntarska Draga), good for practice of *sequestratio*, but not to maintain economic stability. Hvar is relatively distant from Trsat and Krk, and the only non-island settlement, Trsat, could not match the economic prosperity of Zadar. It is curious to see Trsat as given in compensation, given it was part of the vicariate since 1431. The Bosnians must have lost their control of it at some point. Ultimately, the decision of the chapter seems to be taken to a great detriment of the Bosnian family. Perhaps we should consider Venetian influences on the fathers, because Venice was very keen to oust the Bosnian friars from places around Zadar, its Dalmatian 'headquarter'.[900] The choice of 'compensatory' friaries was determined by political constellation: the Frankopan family, who controlled Trsat and Krk, likely encouraged Bosnian settlement of these places, as they held a great devotion to the Observants of the Bosnian vicariate.[901]

The fathers of Mantua concluded that a breve of separation should be obtained from the pope, allowing both families to elect their own vicars and go their own ways, given that only the pope could reverse previous papal decisions about the union.[902] They bestowed the task of petitioning for the document to two individuals, Marino of Korčula and Francis of

[896] Regestum, p. 101.
[897] BF, ns vol. 2, pp. 778-79.
[898] Regestum, p. 106; Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 260.
[899] Regestum, pp. 108, 110.
[900] Škunca, p. 90.
[901] See I.3.2.
[902] BF, ns vol. 2, p. 718; Regestum, p. 106.

Zadar, each representing one family.[903] However, a note from the *Regestum* shows that the fathers of the chapter also allowed either of them, or even a completely different friar, to go to Rome on behalf of both parties. Bernardino actually tells us that only the Bosnian friar, which must mean Marino, made it to the curia, while the Dalmatian friar *se excusavit* and did not go.[904] The note in the *Regestum* is therefore quite curious, as it may hint to some struggles or misunderstandings between the representatives of two families about the procedure of the petition. For the time being, until a suitable breve should be obtained, Dominic of Leonessa was to succeed Bernardino as the vicar of Bosnian-Dalmatian province.[905] We know nothing about his vicariate, except that he quickly returned from the province, because it required him to spend a lot of time at sea, which his health did not endure very well.[906] Bernardino was meanwhile appointed a commissary at the curia.

Marino of Korčula accompanied by some other Bosnian friars had arrived in Rome to fulfil the task entrusted to him, but at the papal audience one of the more interesting reversals in the medieval history of the Bosnian Franciscan family took place. Bernardino reports this in the following way:

> At once he went to Rome, and having obtained an audience of the pontiff, he said: 'Blessed father, our fathers want that we should be separated from the Dalmatians, so it is necessary to do what they want. May it please your sanctity to grant the breve of separation'. Pope Paul, hearing and understanding the words set forth, recognized that the friars were petitioning with words for one thing and wished for another in mind. He said: 'Is this separation made to your detriment?' and a companion responded: 'It is, blessed father'. And it is in this way that one of them related it to me. The pope said: 'We do not want that the breve of separation to be issued, but rather of a confirmation of the union', and this has happened.[907]

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903 *Committitur fr. Marino de Corzula et fr. Francisco de Iadra ire Romam pro obtinendo Brevi quo vicaria Bosnae et provincia Dalmatiae utraque familia vicarium sibi possit eligere. vel alter ipsorum vice amborum id obtineat, vel alicui alii vice amborum id obtinendum committant.* Regestum, p. 106. Bernardino just reports that the fathers of the chapter entrusted the task to a single friar from each family, without giving their names.

904 Škunca, p. 90.

905 Regestum, p. 113; Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 284.

906 Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 264.

907 *Continuo Romam perrexit, obtentaque Pontificis audientia dixit: 'Beate pater, patres nostri volunt quod a fratribus Dalmatinis separemur, nos quod ipsi volunt facere oportet. Placeat Sanctitati Vestre breve separationis concedere.' Pontifex Paulus audiens et intelligens verba proposita, novit quod fratres unum vero petebant et aliud*

Indeed, on 25 June 1467 Paul II issued a breve for the Vicar Dominic, urging him to continue his government of the united province, and that the decision of the chapter of Mantua to dismantle it, and to exchange some friaries between families must not be implemented.[908] The case of this breve is interesting in light of my earlier discussion about strategies to undermine the validity of the papal decisions. While this breve has never been called surreptitious, we can see its potential vulnerability, because the procedure of its petition was dominated by a voice of one faction, effectively reverting the consensus of the chapter. Not long afterwards, on 9 August 1467, the Bosnian friars received another favourable bull, which I spoke about when discussing both sieges of Jajce, yet the purpose of its issuing was to prevent any attempts to oust them from the coastal friaries.[909]

Bernardino, who arrived in Rome to take up his new office, was infuriated to hear that a breve of confirmation rather than division had been issued. The Bosnian embassy was questioned and reprimanded by him and the newly elected vicar general, Battista of Levanto. On this note, the chronicle concludes this controversy, but my hypothesis is that the *Regestum* expands this remarkable episode. In early September 1467 the vicar general issued a letter to Marino of Korčula, commanding him to remain in the province of St. Anthony and wait for his arrival.[910] Unfortunately, we do not know whether the two met there nor for what reason, but it may be related to what happened next. The *Regestum* preserves two letters, from 4 October 1467 and 4 July 1468, of the vicar general, concerning an imprisonment of Marino of Korčula in Zadar by the local guardian, Augustin.[911] The link between the events narrated by the chronicle and subsequent imprisonment of Marino of Korčula in Zadar is not explicit, because the letters do not explain the reason for that imprisonment, but considering that Marino was expected to come back with a breve of separation of the province, and instead arrived with one of confirmation, he had to have upset some Dalmatian friars. The whole controversy may also have some relation to the unexplained excuse of Francis of Zadar back in Mantua from going to the curia, and leaving the mission entirely to Marino, keeping in

*mente volebant. Dixit: 'Estne ista separatio in preiudicium vestrum?' respondit socius dicens: 'Est in nostrum praeiudicium, beate Pater'. Et ita michi retulit unus ex ipsis. Dixit Papa: 'Nolumus quod fiat breve separationis, sed confirmativum unionis.' Et ita factum est.* Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 260.

908 BF, ns vol. 2, p. 718.

909 BF, ns vol. 2, pp. 720-21.

910 Regestum, p. 120-21.

911 The editor presumed that might have been Francis of Zadar, as the 'perpetrator' remains unnamed in the first letter, but the second one clarifies that it was Augustin, who was mentioned as the advisor of the Zadar's guardian in 1464.

mind that Augustin accompanied Francis to the chapter.[912] Marino might have perhaps promised to obtain the breve of separation at the curia, allowing Francis to return earlier to the province.

The letter from 4 October 1467 commands Augustin to immediately release his prisoner and to come to Rome for an interrogation.[913] It is remarkable to read that it was the cardinal protector of the order, Bessarion, who escalated the controversy to the vicar general, because earlier on he acted in favour of the Ragusan government, therefore to the detriment of the Bosnian family. The second letter pronounces the judgement of the vicar general. After consulting some prominent Franciscans, including Bernardino of Aquila, about the case, he decided that both Marino and Augustin were guilty. Marino is declared as having been deservedly imprisoned, while Augustin and his accomplices did wrong *in modo procedendi*.[914] Marino was obliged to expect some penalties from the vicar general, while Augustin was forbidden to undertake any office in the friary of Zadar for three years, and his three accomplices would not be able to dwell in it for the same amount of time. Augustin and his accomplices were also to receive *disciplinae* for the following three Lents. The vicar general intended to conclude the controversy in this way, and there is no evidence of its continuation.

The overall situation of the Bosnian family following Mantua, despite the perseverance of the province, was quite dreadful. When pondering its fate, even Bernardino felt sorry for it by saying:

> I call them miserable because the Ragusans took four and the Venetians six places away from them, and the Turk, according to what they reported to me, destroyed thirty-eight places, and now they have only a few places, which are badly arranged.[915]

Although we know from Bernardino which friaries the Venetians targeted, we do not know for sure when did they oust the Bosnian friars from them. This had likely happened already before the ultimate dismantling of the province, because the doge issued an order to

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912 Regestum, p. 101.

913 Regestum, p. 122.

914 *Sententio fr. Marinum de Corzula talia gessisse, ex quibus mertio potuit et debuit carcerari. Exinde ex post facto fr. Augustinum praedictum et consentaneos adeo deliquisse in modo procedendi, ut merito sint puniendi.* Regestum, p. 132.

915 *Miseros voco quia Ragusini quatuor loca et Veneti sex et illis abstulerunt, et Turcus, secundum quod michi retulerunt, 38 loca destruxit, iam pauca loca et male disposita tenent.* Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 266.

expel the Bosnian friars from the Dalmatian friaries already in December 1468.[916] On 21 April 1469, the doge forbade the convent in Zadar to receive any Bosnian friar.[917] Bernardino also mentioned a certain 'most dishonest' breve that the Venetians obtained against the friars from Bosnia, but I did not manage to find it.[918] All of this evidence demonstrates a rather high level of Venetian hostility to the Bosnian friars.

The Ragusan government successfully maintained control over the four contested friaries throughout the period of the existence of the province, although it got into some further trouble with the Cismontane fathers. In Mantua, the fathers decided that the four places in question should be returned to the Bosnian vicariate after the division of the province, and they severed the Ragusan friars from the Observant family for their 'rebellion'.[919] We know that at some point the Ragusans elected their own vicar, James of Esculo, perhaps based on the bull *Inter curas multiplices,* but the vicar general considered the election unlawful.[920] The Ragusan government tried its best to help their Franciscans at Mantua through their ambassadors, who managed to involve marquis Ludovico Gonzaga for their cause.[921] The fathers of the chapter remained adamant, but once more cardinal Bessarion acted as Ragusa's indispensable ally.[922] Apparently through his mediation, on 8 January 1468 the pope issued two bulls, commanding the vicar general to re-assume the pastoral care of the friars of all six Ragusan friaries, in spite of the sentence of Mantua.[923]

Battista of Levanto reluctantly accepted the papal decision, and on 31 March 1468 he issued several letters to implement it.[924] He acknowledged the Ragusan friars as his subjects, not sparing them some reprimands for their submissiveness to the secular government. He recalled their vicar, James of Esculo, to the Marches. At the same time, the vicar general appointed the friar James of Padua as his commissary in Ragusa, who was at the time preaching in Zadar. He was to dwell in the Ragusan territories as the vicar's representative

916 AB, p. 277.
917 Velnić, 'Samostan male braće', p. 138.
918 Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, p. 94. Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano,* p. 266.
919 *Item, quod loca Raguseorum a Familia sint praecisa curaque reverendi patris Vicarii generalis declarando quatuor loca a fratribus Bosnensibus olim possessa quantum in nobis est, apostolico rescripto aliud non decernente, eisdem Bosnensibus pertinere.* Regestum, p. 110.
920 He is sometimes confused with James of the Marches, but James of Esculo is clearly a different friar, apparently also rising to prominence in Ragusa, see: Lasić, *De vita et operibus,* p. 46; Regestum, p. 128.
921 Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano,* p. 262.
922 Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano,* p. 262.
923 BF, ns vol. 2, pp. 728-29; Velnić 'Samostan male braće', p. 138.
924 Regestum, p. 126-28.

and to lift some excommunications, perhaps imposed for disobedience to Bernardino. In this way, the Ragusans returned to the bosom of the Observant family, despite all the trouble they got into for disavowing the vicar of the province. Papal bulls and vicar general's letters did not even touch upon the question of the four contested friaries, so we can say that the Ragusan government was successful in maintaining its grip on them throughout the existence of the province.

Battista of Levanto suddenly declined in health while visiting Librunia in December 1468, and was brought from Gaeta to Rome by Bernardino and the provincial vicar of Rome, James of Corneto.[925] The Bosnian friars visited the dying vicar general in Rome, who handed their case to Bernardino, James of Corneto and Angelo of Bolsena. Bernardino noted that the Bosnian friars lied when presenting their case, but on this point the only surviving manuscript of the chronicle abruptly finishes. We do not know what the purpose of these envoys was, but surely it was related to the collapsing state of the province. Baptiso of Levanto died in February 1469. According to *Ut sacra*, in case of vicar general's death, the superior of the province he died in should undertake his duties. Thus James of Corneto took charge of the family until the next chapter.[926] In extraordinary circumstances, the chapter was celebrated on 11 June 1469 on the island Bisentina on Lake Bolsena. The chapter elected Marco of Bologna as the vicar general for the third time. It upheld the decision of Mantua to dismantle the province. The Ragusan convents were all together to join the Dalmatian province 'because that was the will of the pope'.[927] The friars of the Dalmatian province were obliged to receive their Bosnian brethren 'humanly, benevolently and lovingly', whenever they should come to the coastal places to acquire their necessities, which sound at this point as some lip service.[928] The friars of the Bosnian vicariate were to elect their vicar 'according to the old custom of the Bosnian vicariate'.[929]

The chapter of Bisentina concluded the story of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province. Although the dismantlement decided by the chapter does not seem to have been followed by a papal breve, this time it was an effective one. It did not however mark the final episode in the processes of division of the Bosnian vicariate nor of the Dalmatian province. In the

925 Regestum, p. 18; Pellegrini, *Bernardino Aquilano*, p. 266.
926 Regestum, p. 18.
927 *Cum hoc sit de mente SS. D.N*. Regestum, p. 146.
928 *Et si contigerit Fratres Vicariae Bosnae ad eos, et eorum loca pro suis necessitatibus declinare: humane, benigne, et charitative tractentur, in rebus licitis et honestis.* Regestum, p. 146.
929 *Iuxta antiquam cunsuetudinem vicariae Bosnae.* Regestum, p. 146.

Bosnian case further division was caused by tensions between the friars living in Ottoman-controlled Bosnia and those who fled to Christian lands and lived in Croatia. Some key moments and individuals of that story have already been outlined in this chapter, but a more thorough evaluation of these developments must be left to further research.[930]

Having been isolated from the 'notorious' friars from Bosnia, the Dalmatian province became an area of clashing Venetian and Ragusan influences. Its integrity was firstly eroded by the setting up of commissioners guaranteeing autonomy to either Dalmatian or Ragusan Observants; depending on who was the Dalmatian vicar at the given moment.[931] The Ragusan friars proved much more open to share the province with the Dalmatian friars, in this way again showing that their attitudes differed from those of their government, which worked intensively to finally establish a separate entity.[932] During the Observant chapter of La Verna in 1484, the Ragusan Franciscans were finally granted an autonomous vicariate with voting rights at the Observant chapters, until the Ragusan state would allow them to be reunited with the Dalmatians.[933] That did not happen, and at the general division of the order in 1517, the Ragusan vicariate became an Observant province, while the Dalmatian Observants formed the province of St. Jerome. Both were united into one Observant province of St. Jerome only in 1889, which continues to function until today.[934] It should not to be confused with the contemporary Croatian Franciscan Conventual province under the patronage of the same saint.[935]

**Conclusions**

The main challenges to the integrity of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province concerned animosities between its three constituent elements, the Bosnian, Dalmatian and Ragusan Observant families, as well as an inability of the Cismontane leadership to provide effective government for the province. The problem of obedience of the Ragusan friars undoubtedly undermined the integrity of the province, but religious conduct was not part of the discord. This controversy stemmed from the diverging agendas of the Ragusan government and Cismontane Observant leadership, as well as papal inconsistency when it came to issuing

930 Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, pp. 132-50.
931 Velnić, 'Samostan male braće ', pp. 138-379.
932 Škunca, *Franjevačka renesansa*, pp. 94-100.
933 Velnić, 'Samostan male braće ', p. 140.
934 https://www.ofm-sv-jeronim.hr/ [accessed 13.02.2023]
935 https://www.ofmconv.hr/ [accessed 13.02.2023]

bulls. Undoubtedly this problem of obedience had a religious dimension for the Ragusan friars, as many of them feared excommunications and expressed readiness to go into exile to be embraced by the provincial vicar, yet the matters of their religious conduct played a relatively negligible role in the entire controversy, as it was only really tackled by the Ragusan government whenever petitioning for a favourable breve. The Ragusan friars seem to have the least share in factional animosities, because they were effectively isolated by their government's measures.

Matters of religious conduct were much more prominent in the relationship between the Bosnian and the Dalmatian friars. Bernardino of Aquila pondered that because of their profoundly divergent understandings of the Franciscan life, it was not possible to govern the province effectively. Bernardino's presentation of differences in religious model between the two made it clear that the Dalmatian family was closer to his understanding of the Observance. Such an arbitrary value judgement necessarily made the vicar more sympathetic to the Dalmatians and mistrustful of the Bosnians, making his government imbalanced, contrary to the genuine intention of the bull of Pius II in founding the province. This shows that the key issues of the Franciscan Observance were clearly integral to the problem of province's loss of cohesion. The Bosnian-Dalmatian discord was further amplified by the dispute over coastal friaries, especially those surrounding the city of Zadar, which by this point have already lasted for decades.

The maritime republics, Venice and Ragusa, were notorious in their attempts to isolate friaries on their territories from any contact with Bosnia. They kept sending their envoys to the curia, and clearly constituted another key factor underlying the downfall of the province. The papacy had some understanding and sympathy for the Bosnian cause, not necessarily because of their religious conduct, but rather because of what the friars went through following the conquest of Bosnia. However, faced with petitions from various conflicting parties, it did not produce a consistent 'pro-Bosnian', which in this case could be equated to 'pro-province' policy. The papacy was rather inconsistent when it came to problem the province's integrity, and ultimately it did not save it from collapse. The Cismontane Observant fathers, although unlikely approving the religious conduct in Bosnia, for a time worked actively to keep the province intact. After the triennium of the first vicar however, they withdrew support from the project. The province served mostly to meet the needs of the Bosnian family, and some of its representatives ended up in a lot of trouble in

vain to preserve it. Had the Cismontane leadership been more sympathetic to the Bosnian cause, it might have been more willing to distribute more resources to preserve the province. However, it seems that dismissive views of religious conduct made the Cismontane fathers unsympathetic to the Bosnian cause, which further confirms the prominent role of Observance in the integrity problem of structures constituting the Bosnian Franciscan family.

# Conclusions

My work has demonstrated that the twofold problem of the structural integrity of the Bosnian vicariate and of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province was strongly related to the development of the Franciscan Observance. The Observance, as a reform movement, called for a thorough renewal of religious conduct, bringing a lot of internal discord to the order, leading to its restructuring and division. It had profound repercussions in the Bosnian vicariate because it dominated the Bosnian vicariate relatively quickly and completely. However, instead of dividing the vicariate across the Observant/Conventual clash, the Observance fractured the vicariate across various families representing different parts of the vicariate, and it differentiated the friars in Bosnia from their Italian superiors. My thesis has demonstrated that these discords had a clear background in the transformations brought about by the Observance. The problems of obedience and religious conduct, both central topics of the Observance, kept re-emerging in the vicariate. Other factors, beyond the Observance, have been also demonstrated by my analysis. The most important of them was the involvement of secular powers, often in conflict with one another, including Hungary, Bosnia, Ragusa, Venice, the Orsini, the Hrvatinići and the Frankopans, as patrons of particular Observant families. They capitalised on the existing discords among the friars for their own ends. Their machinations did not, however, rip the vicariate or the province apart on their own. Ultimately, political and religious realities were strongly intertwined, and should not be analysed separately from one another, and thus my thesis argues for multifaceted reasons for the twofold disintegration.

The Bosnian vicariate had expanded to quite an impressive size by the end of the fourteenth century, having houses across a large part of Europe, in Bosnia, southern Hungary, other parts of the Balkans, Dalmatia and southern Italy. The first chapter examined the process of expansion and explained how this aided the economically struggling friaries in Bosnia. This expansion helped to overcome a range of other issues, such as offering a safe refuge destination at the times of unrest, or channelling new missionaries to the Balkans. In this way, I have argued for an ‘organic’ organisation of the vicariate, with its different parts serving different purposes, yet united by the same vocation: the expansion of faith. By the mid-fifteenth century, however, it had lost its cohesion and eventually, due to the separation of the friaries in Hungary, was reduced to a much more limited entity between the Sava and the Adriatic. A controversy over the jurisdiction of the Dalmatian friaries continued

inconclusively for over a decade, leading up to the foundation of the Bosnian-Dalmatian province.

The fundamental challenge that the reform posed to the structural integrity of the vicariate lay in the varying interpretations of the Observance. A caveat put forth by Pellegrini that in the Franciscan context, it is 'impossible to speak in terms of "Observance" as a movement (or as a phenomenon or as a reform) in the singular form', not only strikes a chord with my research but offered an intellectual framework allowing us to tackle the key problem of the disintegration.[936] Furthermore, my research has provided new evidence for the relevance of Pellegrini's hypothesis by testing it on material she had not considered.

In Italy, the Franciscan Observance started as a fringe movement of rigorous hermits. Still in its formative period, although unclear when exactly, they established contacts with the Bosnian vicariate, as apparently the Umbrian hermits were interested in joining forces against the heretics. Furthermore, some missionaries who had spent time in Bosnia and then returned to Italy, were claimed by the later narrative sources as having become sources of inspiration for promising young friars. These young friars in time made up the new generation of the Observants who then oversaw the movement's transition from a marginal group to mainstream reformers. Such a claim developed in the Bosnian vicariate, and became a part of identity of the friars. In this way, the Franciscans of the Bosnian vicariate developed a sense of 'co-authorship', if not direct 'authorship' of the Observant branch, a claim based on their perceived contribution for the order's spiritual renewal and the 'battles' they fought for the salvation of the souls beyond the frontiers of Christendom. This distinctive storyline told among the friars of the Bosnian vicariate made them particularly linked to the fate of the Italian current of the reform. This allows us to expand Pellegrini's argument by claiming that not only were there multiple Observances, but that boundaries between some of them were blurred.

Whatever Paoluccio of Foligno made of Bosnia and its friars, the Bosnian claims were not supported by the Italian Observant leadership, formed by the mid-*Quattrocento*. This has been made apparent by the conflicting narratives about the Observance's origin as presented by the Hungarian Observant chronicle and the chronicle of Bernardino of Aquila, each being a product of their environment's collective experience. The Italian Observants traced their lineage to the family of Paoluccio, and it was their narrative that established the 'canon' not

[936] Pellegrini, 'An irreducible plural'.

only of the ‘universal’ Franciscan recollection but also of modern historiography up to this day. In conclusion to chapter two, I have called for a more balanced reconsideration of this historiographical framework. In this way, my thesis not only integrates the Bosnian problem with mainstream scholarship on the Observance, but also reflects critically on the paradigms.

I have argued that the conflict over history represented just a glimpse of a larger, multi-layered clash between the Italian and Bosnian Observants. An undoubted point of contention was the acceptable model of religious conduct. The mainstream Italian Observance based its reform programme on the implementation of the ‘reformed’ Franciscan constitutions, mainly *Exiit qui seminat* (1279) and *Exivi de paradiso* (1312). The Observants in Bosnia understood that given the economic austerity of Bosnia, in order to maintain the vicariate, they required a range of exceptions based on papal dispensations, which was a logic strongly resembling that of the Conventuals; yet as I have demonstrated in chapter two, the Bosnian Franciscans did not consider themselves to be part of that branch. As Observants, they fell under Cismontane jurisdiction and were expected to conform to the same standard as everyone else. This lay beneath the various outbreaks of tensions between the Bosnian friars and their Cismontane superiors, as well as the efforts of the former to break off the chain of command. This, however, did not immediately mean that the Cismontane leadership wanted to reduce the Bosnian vicariate to the smallest possible size: the problem was much more complex, as my thesis has demonstrated. While James Primadizzi indeed justified some reductions of the Bosnian vicariate with the lax religious conduct in Bosnia, James of the Marches and Bernardino of Aquila acted in favour of the vicariate’s and the province’s integrity, although not because they approved the religious conduct in Bosnia, but for other reasons, which were elaborated in chapters four and eleven.

Another layer to the problem is the internal fracturing of these entities. One might think that the Observance could have become a unifying factor, as an identity accepted across all parts of the vicariate, but at the same time, it developed along different trajectories, producing significant and irreconcilably different understanding of the Franciscan vocation. The discord between the Dalmatian and Bosnian Observants unfolded along the disagreements about religious conduct and obedience, reflecting the disagreements between the Bosnian Observants and their Italian superiors. The Franciscan family in Bosnia preferred the government of the minister general over the vicar general, which was not shared by the Franciscans of the group led by Nicholas of Trogir, formed in the vicariate, yet later constituting an autonomous unit. Nicholas was much more familiar to what Bernardino called

the ‘Italian customs’. This made the Bosnian Observants vulnerable to the allegations of lax religious conduct launched by their Dalmatian brothers. Such allegations were clearly used in justifying the removal of the five Dalmatian friaries (Dubrovnik, Daksa, Zadar, Dobrota and Kampor) by the bull *Apostolicae nobis* (1447), and the later dismantling of the province.

Another key problem in the Bosnian-Dalmatian Franciscan relationship was that of the reliance of the houses in Bosnia on the vicariate’s friaries in Dalmatia. This relationship was established by a necessity, especially given the economically austere and politically restless character of Bosnia. One can understand that the friars of the Bosnian friaries in Dalmatia might one day have perceived ties to the ‘motherland’ as burdensome. Such a sentiment cannot be explained as originating from the Observance directly, and indeed demonstrates the difficulty in defining the exact extent of the role of the reform movement. However, we should not forget that the Observance brought about a restructuring of the order. Therefore, it does not surprise that the Dalmatian Observants, seeing that the change was coming, recognised a chance to draw their border with Bosnia and to liberate themselves from sharing the burdens of the family from the Balkan hinterland. Their approach definitely found sympathy in Venice, uneasy about the Hungarian friars showing up in towns once governed by the Hungarian king, or about the Bosnian friars calling for a crusade, to which the Republic might have got pulled into against its interest. The such tensions can be demonstrated for the 1440s, 1450s and for what was happening in the Bosnian-Dalmatian province, with Bosnia wanting to maintain jurisdiction in Dalmatia, while the Observants in Dalmatia tried to secede from it.

The problem developed somewhat differently in the Ragusan territories. We know much more about the position of the Ragusan government than about that of the Ragusan friars, that is those dwelling in the convent in the city and on the island of Daksa. The analysis of the chronicle by Bernardino of Aquila has demonstrated that the agenda of the Ragusan Franciscans was not always identical with the line of the government. We have far more evidence for the close ties between the Bosnian vicariate and the Ragusan state than between the vicariate and the Venetian Dalmatia. The issue that the Ragusan government had with the Bosnian vicariate, however, accentuated the problem of obedience and leadership to a much greater degree than any ‘burdensome’ reliance of the Bosnian Franciscans on their coastal friaries. My thesis tracked an evolution in the approach of the government to the vicariate, from friendly to hostile. Over the 1430s, the government took strong measures to support the vicariate and called for the unification of all friaries on their territories under one

Bosnian custody. That position changed in time, as since 1446 they started to petition to prevent the Bosnian expansion to Dubrovnik and Daksa. Finally, the government became openly hostile to the vicariate in 1462, when it seized four friaries on the Ragusan territories from the vicariate. One might see this as the manifestation of a gradual power accumulation of the Ragusan state, but I argue that change of the government's position should not be reduced to that.

It was clear that although it took no issue with the Bosnian friars begging for alms in Dubrovnik, the government was consistently interested in inviting the prominent Italian Observants to give sermons in the town, to accommodate the religious needs of their citizens. However, by the 1440s, relations between the Italian and Bosnian Observants became strained. Faced with the prospect of no longer being able to invite Italian preachers due to the Bosnian expansion, the government changed its approach to the vicariate. Thus a rift between the government and the vicariate opened as a result of the discord dividing the Italian and the Bosnian Observants. The government's defensive line against the Bosnian takeover of the friaries of St. Francis and on Daksa pointed to the necessity of obedience to the vicar general, attracting the sympathy of the Italian Observant leadership, yet clearly marking an agenda in conflict with that of the Bosnian Franciscans. Archival research in Dubrovnik allowed me to revise some individual sources edited by Rode and gave me a better understanding of the Ragusan position and their diplomatic campaign against the Bosnian expansion.

I have argued that the problem of the dismantling of the Bosnian custody of St. Catharine in Apulia was strongly related to what was happening across the Adriatic. My hypothesis is that the Bosnian vicar agreed to hand over the custody in exchange for the Bosnian vicariate's expansion to five friaries in Dalmatia. This settlement was likely reached at the chapter in Rome, in the church of Ara Coeli (1446). Thus the custody fell 'victim' to the growing centralisation of the Observance, especially when considered in conjunction with the accusations levelled against religious conduct in Galatina. It was claimed that the vicariate's management of the convent in Galatina broke the rule, and the pope proclaimed that any further begging for alms must follow the directives of the constitutions, especially *Exiit qui seminat* and *Exivi de paradiso*. Remarkably, we do not see any evidence of any separatist tendency developing in the vicariate's south Italian friaries, in contrast to what was happening in Dalmatia and Hungary. Suppression of the custody represents chronologically the earliest papally confirmed reduction of the vicariate in size. The Bosnian expansion to Dalmatia meanwhile triggered an avalanche of events across the Adriatic. My study has also

reconsidered the issue of the Bosnian expansion to Apulia, debunking claims that the hospital of Galatina was primarily used for old and infirm missionaries, yet demonstrating its complementary importance for the vicariate's vocation, especially as a gateway for new friars to be trained and sent for missions against the heretics in the Balkans.

The division of the Bosnian and Hungarian Observants developed along very different lines. The differentiation of the Hungarian and Bosnian/South Slavic Observants happened due to a profound transformation of the Hungarian Observant family. In the course of the fourteenth century, the Bosnian friaries in Hungary prioritised the conversion of the Orthodox and acted in substitution of the underdeveloped parish network at the very southern and southeastern frontier of the kingdom. By the mid-fifteenth century, the Bosnian friaries in Hungary formed a very different religious family. Their centre of gravity moved more and more to the centre of the kingdom, and they shifted their focus to match the major challenges to Hungarian Catholicism, especially from the Ottomans and the Hussites. Beyond the royal court, they attracted wide support from the baronial elite, making them much more influential, but also attached to the agenda of their patrons. With their aspirations to respond to the challenges faced by Hungarian Catholicism, and their friaries physically more distant from Bosnia, the Hungarian Observants lost interest in the structure of the Bosnian vicariate.

Remarkably, neither religious conduct nor the problem of obedience to the vicar general were instrumentalised to justify the breakup. Both the Bosnian and Hungarian families strayed from Cismontane jurisdiction. Furthermore, the religious model of the Hungarian and Bosnian Observants was probably roughly similar, as determined by analogies in the nature of their pastoral work, anti-heretical vocation and a similar pattern of the spatial distribution of their convents. One might argue that therefore the Bosnian-Hungarian breakup finds an explanation in the transformation of the Hungarian political orientation, from the expansionism of the Angevins to the more defensive posture of their successors. While this is demonstrably the case, the Observance should not be written completely out of the picture. The Observant domination of the Bosnian vicariate was politically supported by Sigismund of Luxemburg. His campaign secured the vicariate for the Observant branch but also secured the dominance of the Hungarian leadership, which was the source of much discord. Furthermore, Sigismund and his entourage supported all the changes in the Hungarian family's character initiated in the fifteenth century, which were continued in the era of Hunyadi. In this light, the Observance cannot be separated from the ongoing political

developments that collectively formed the Hungarian Observant family, emancipated from Bosnia finally in 1448.

The case of Hungary was notably different because rather than conflict over the religious conduct or desired chain of command, it concerned the problem of the leadership of the Bosnian vicariate. The vicars fulfilling the Hungarian agenda were not seen favourably south of the Sava, in Bosnia and in Venetian Dalmatia. While Fabian of Bács tried to integrate the Bosnian vicariate under his authority, the secessionist tendencies among the Hungarian Observants seem to have been very strong by this point. The Bosnian friars, although definitely upset about losing a potential refuge destination, seem to have been less reliant on Hungary than they were on Dalmatia, and were definitely not happy with the vicariate of Fabian of Bács. Thus both sides broke ties with one another.

For my analysis of the twofold case of the Bosnian vicariate's disintegration and the Bosnian-Dalmatian province's downfall, I integrated various national historiographic traditions, that is former-Yugoslav/South Slavic, Hungarian and Italian. This allowed me to discover the relationship between the Bosnian expansion to and withdrawal from various places, as well as to reflect on similarities and differences in the pattern, and to reconsider the multifaceted role that the Observance played in the process. Finally, my research has further opened up the fascinating area of religious life in medieval Bosnia to Anglophone scholarship. Interest in its 'orthodox' side has usually been eclipsed by the 'heterodox' equivalent, but hopefully, my work has proved the former to be not less worthy of research. The medieval Franciscan family in Bosnia has already attracted varying historiographical frameworks and identity interpretations, with my thesis placing it in the irreducible plural of the Observance, and demonstrating that the history of the Franciscan Observance is not complete without Bosnia.

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