

The personnel of royal and noble chanceries as diplomats in late medieval Bosnia*

Neven Isailović**

Although the sources for the history of medieval Bosnia, even in the late medieval period, are scarce, unsystematic and not particularly informative, some knowledge of the role played by the chancery personnel in the diplomatic service of the kings of Bosnia and other magnates may still be obtained. Most of the data is extant in diplomatic sources, issued by the rulers themselves or by the countries which had diplomatic relations with them. The largest number of such documents can be found today in the archives of the maritime city communes of the Adriatic, such as Dubrovnik (Ragusa) or Venice, and of some other, mainly Italian states (Milan, Florence, Naples). Few narrative sources, whose data usually also derived from the official registers of the public authorities, shed some light on this particular issue (as is the case of the Ragusan chronicles). Many of these sources have already been published, but new findings are still possible, as shown particularly in the works of Sima Ćirković, Veljan Atanasovski, Esad Kurtović and Arandjel Smiljanić.¹

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** Neven Isailović is research fellow at the Institute of History, Belgrade, Serbia.

¹ Sima M. Ćirković, *Herceg Stefan Vukčić Kosača i njegovo doba* [Duke Stephen Vukčić Kosača and his age], Beograd, 1964; Veljan Atanasovski, *Pad Hercegovine* [Fall of Herzegovina], Beograd, 1979; Esad Kurtović, *Iz historije bankarstva Bosne i Dubrovnika u srednjem vijeku: ulaganje novca na dobit* [From the history of banking in Bosnia and

In historiography there are just a few broader studies about both diplomacy and chanceries in medieval Bosnia. Among them, only three deal with the topic of chancery clerks (scribes) as diplomats. The first one is Anto Babić's article on diplomatic service, the second is Arandžel Smiljanić's book on the diplomats of the magnates, and finally, Neven Isailović's unpublished doctoral dissertation on the chanceries of rulers in medieval Bosnia. While Babić's work treats diplomacy in general, focusing only on the most prominent personalities who acted as diplomats, the other two studies give more detailed information. While Smiljanić was concerned with the representatives of the magnates regardless of their primary profession, Isailović sought to show the diversity of duties of the personnel in both royal and noble chanceries in medieval Bosnia.² Some useful data can also be found in a series of monographs and articles in scholarly journals, published primarily in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia.³

Dubrovnik in the Middle Ages: investing money for profit], Beograd, 2010; Arandžel Smiljanić, *Diplomatija oblasnih gospodara u Bosni* [Diplomacy of the territorial lords in Bosnia], unpublished doctoral thesis, Banja Luka, 2012; Arandžel Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke – diplomati oblasnih gospodara u Bosni* [Men from the shadow – diplomats of regional lords in Bosnia], Banja Luka, 2015.

² Anto Babić, "Diplomatska služba u srednjovjekovnoj Bosni" [Diplomatic service in medieval Bosnia], *Radovi Naučnog društva NR BiH* 13 (1960) 5, pp. 11-70; reprinted in collection of Babić's articles *Iz istorije srednjovjekovne Bosne* [From the history of medieval Bosnia] in 1972, as a monograph in 1995 and as an audio book in 1996 and 2009; Neven Isailović, *Vladarske kancelarije u srednjovjekovnoj Bosni* [Chanceries of rulers in medieval Bosnia], unpublished doctoral thesis, Beograd, 2014; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke, passim*.

³ Nicolae Iorga, *Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisades au XV siècle*, vol. 2, Paris, 1899; Anto Babić, "Kancelarija bosanskih vladara" [The chancery of Bosnian rulers], *Napredak. Hrvatski narodni kalendar* 22 (1933), pp. 156-160; Mihailo Dinić, "Dubrovački tributi. Mogoriš, Svetodmitarski i Konavoski dohodak, Provižium braće Vlatkovića" [The tributes of Dubrovnik. The mogoriš, tribute of St. Demetrius and Konavle, 'provision' of Vlatković brothers], *Glas Srpske kraljevske akademije* 168 (1935), pp. 203-257; Mihailo Dinić, *Iz dubrovačkog arhiva*, vol. 3, Beograd, 1967; Tomislav Anđelić, "Dijaci u srednjovjekovnoj Bosni i Humu" [Scribes in medieval Bosnia and Hum], *Tribunia* 7 (1983), pp. 81-100; Pavo Živković, *Utjecaj primorskih gradova na promjene u bosanskom društvu u 14. i 15. stoljeću: Pojava građanske klase i novog plemstva*

Scribal and diplomatic service in medieval Bosnia

Though indirectly, the existence of the scribal offices of Bosnian rulers can be verified for a longer period of time than their diplomatic service. Since the end of the twelfth century, the bans of Bosnia had at least one scribe at a time who wrote their official documents.⁴ The international treaties that were concluded prove that diplomacy was also conducted in the same period. However, what is not known is who conducted the negotiations leading to these contracts – the ruler himself, his trusted men or some professional diplomats. It is more likely that, in the early period of the development of the Bosnian state, most of the negotiations were led by the narrowest circle of people in the ruler's entourage. As Bosnia was gradually rising as a state and expanding its territory, the need to hire a larger number of professionals grew stronger. Their availability also grew, because the educational level slowly, but undeniably increased. Almost to the end of the existence of medieval Bosnia, the nobility had primacy and played an indispensable role in politics, administration and diplomacy.⁵

People from the lower classes of society became involved in diplomacy rather late, at the end of the fourteenth and in the fifteenth century. Many of them became professionals in these affairs and rose to wealth or influence by additional economic activity. Clerics were sporadically mentioned as diplomats or envoys, but their role in diplomacy should not be ignored. In the group of ecclesiastical representatives, who occasionally appeared as participants in diplomatic missions, there were members of all the Christian confessions present in

[The influence of coastal cities on the changes in Bosnian society in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: the emergence of citizenry and new nobility], Tuzla, 1986.

⁴ Stanoje Stanojević, "Studije o srpskoj diplomaciji XIV. Dijak, gramatik, notar, kancelar, nomik, logotet" [Essays on Serbian diplomatics. Diach, grammaticus, notary, chancellor, nomikos, logothete], *Glas SKA* 106 (1923), pp. 65-66; Stanoje Stanojević, "Studije o srpskoj diplomaciji. XVIII. Kancelarije" [Essays on Serbian Diplomatics. Chanceries], *Glas SKA* 156 (1933), pp. 53-56; Babić, "Kancelarija bosanskih vladara," pp. 156-160; Vojislav Bogićević, *Pismenost u Bosni i Hercegovini* [Literacy in Bosnia and Herzegovina], Sarajevo, 1975, pp. 36-42.

⁵ Babić, "Diplomatska služba," pp. 11-24; Sima Ćirković, *Istorija srednjovekovne bosanske države* [A history of medieval Bosnian state], Beograd, 1964, pp. 44-250.

medieval Bosnia – Bosnian Christians (*Krstjani*), Catholics and Orthodox Christians.⁶ The scribes and the officials of the chanceries also started conducting diplomatic service in the late medieval period, at least judging from the available sources. After Tvrtko Kotromanić proclaimed himself king of the Serbs and Bosnia, his *logothete* Vladoje appeared as the king's representative in Dubrovnik, being, at the same time, the first scribe sent on a diplomatic mission by the state. However, such practices may have existed before, since we know of similar errands performed by Mileta, the scribe of the noble family of Sanković, though only a few years before Vladoje.⁷

In medieval Bosnia, chanceries were not elaborately organized courtly institutions, but rather more or less developed scribal services. Their officials and staff had no judicial or administrative authority. They were primarily focused on writing the official documents, and, to a much lesser extent, diplomatic missions, usually minor, but sometimes important (as were the cases of *logothete* Stephen Dobrinović, *diach* Radivoj Šiglica and a few other high-ranking officials). Although it was their unofficial, supplementary activity, in some cases, the clerks of the chanceries rose to prominence by their service, eventually becoming proper diplomats. It was never the other way round, although, at times, a lesser noble, acting as envoy, did write certain documents of minor importance, such as receipts (the differences in their qualifications and writing skills were quite noticeable).⁸

The magnates' chanceries did not differ significantly from the royal chancery in terms of their organization, although they probably were of smaller scale and of later date. However, the scribes from the scribal offices of nobility acted as delegates (deputies) or negotiators much more often. The unevenness of extant data prevents us from

⁶ Babić, "Diplomatska služba," pp. 11-70; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke, passim*.

⁷ Babić, "Diplomatska služba," pp. 30-31, 45-46 (see footnotes 20 and 28).

⁸ Stanojević, "Studije," pp. 65-81; Stanojević, "Kancelarije," pp. 53-56; Babić, "Diplomatska služba," pp. 45-47, 49-51, 56-60; Ćirković, *Herceg Stefan*, pp. 158-159, 172, 187, 213; Anđelić, "Dijaci," pp. 81-100; Milko Brković, *Isprave hrvatskih narodnih vladara i latinske isprave bosansko-humskih vladara i velmoža* [Documents of Croatian national rulers and Latin documents of rulers and magnates of Bosnia and Hum], Zadar – Mostar, 1998, pp. 23-37; Isailović, *Vladarske kancelarije*, pp. 83-105.

making an adequate comparison. Data about the magnate Pavlovići family in Eastern Bosnia is relatively scarce, but it is certain that they frequently employed their “chancellors,” who were fewer in number than in the other higher noble families and who used to remain in their service for a long period, for diplomatic missions, including those of particular importance. One of them, Mitoš Curić, was mentioned as both *diach* (scribe) and *knez* (comes/count), even simultaneously. Information concerning the Sankovići and Vlatkovići families from Hum is even scarcer, and when it comes to the Hrvatinić family from Western Bosnia – there was no scribe in their service mentioned to have carried out diplomatic errands or missions.⁹

By far the most substantial data is available for the Kosača family from Hum (South Eastern Bosnia), who were the immediate neighbours of the city of Dubrovnik in the period from which most extant sources come from, and who had a very large number of scribes in their service. For them, it was almost a regular practice for scribes to be the members of delegations, though they rarely acted independently and carried out mostly, albeit not exclusively, minor missions such as conveying messages, levying taxes, investing and raising money, delivering requests or pleas. There is enough evidence that some of the scribes in the service of this particular family were promoted from being servants or scribes to the category of *homo, familiaris* or *miles* (knight) and even to the rank of lesser nobility, usually in that consecutive order. Both the clerks of the chancery and the lesser nobles in the service of the Kosača family performed diplomatic missions. On the other hand, the scribes working in royal bureaucratic system had only a secondary role in diplomacy, probably due to a greater number of employees in the kings’ administration and to more considerable resources for hiring professionals and not just more literate representatives of the scribal

⁹ Stanojević, “Studije,” pp. 72-81; Gregor Čremošnik, “Bosanske i humske povelje srednjega vijeka III” [Medieval charters from Bosnia and Hum], *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja Bosne i Hercegovine*, n.s. 6 (1951), pp. 81-119; Stanoje Stanojević, “Bosanske i humske povelje srednjega vijeka IV” [Medieval charters from Bosnia and Hum], *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja Bosne i Hercegovine*, n.s. 7 (1952), pp. 273-336; Isailović, *Vladarske kancelarije*, pp. 86-89; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 156-158.

services for this particular activity. Furthermore, minor courier missions were more often carried out by regular royal servants.¹⁰

It is necessary, at this point, to briefly review the terms, i.e. the titles, which were used to denote scribes in medieval Bosnia. The oldest, most typical and most common title was *diach* or *dyach* (Latinized from the Slavonic term *dijak*). It comes from a Greek word *διάκονος*, which originally meant “a person who does errands” and later a deacon, but also a student. It is not clear whether the use of this term should be interpreted as a sign of connections between early scribal services and the church, but it would not be surprising, because literacy was usually acquired in monasteries at that time. It does not seem that the term *diach* had the general meaning of a literate person, unlike the Latin term *litteratus*, which was present in some parts of late medieval Europe. It was only used for a person who was professionally engaged in writing (as a scribe, not as a writer), though not necessarily only within the context of a formal chancery. In Bosnia *diachs* could only be encountered as writers of documents or books and in diplomacy, which was linked with both reading and writing skills, while the *litterati* of the Kingdom of Hungary-Croatia were mentioned much more often, in a broader range of situations. There is a general impression that more numerous groups of people were assigned this epithet. However, it is difficult to make a comparison, because of the differences, in both terminology and society, between Bosnia and Hungary. The different qualities and handwriting styles of various clerks have shown that there was no uniform level of education and skill. In Bosnia, the largest number of *diachs* knew only the Slavonic (Slavic) language and the Cyrillic script, and only several highest officials of the royal chancery were acquainted with both Slavonic and Latin. The style of these officials also stood out in terms of palaeographical elegance and literary skills.¹¹

¹⁰ Čremošnik, “Bosanske i humske povelje IV,” pp. 273-336; Kurtović, *Iz historije bankarstva*, pp. 71-80; Isailović, *Vladarske kancelarije*, pp. 89, 104-150; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke, passim*.

¹¹ Stanojević, “Studije,” pp. 65-81; Bogićević, *Pismenost u BiH*, pp. 38-49; Isailović, *Vladarske kancelarije*, pp. 93-102.

The word “chancellor” was never adopted in the Slavonic language. Instead, after the proclamation of the kingdom, King Tvrtko I of Bosnia imported the term *logothete* from Serbia. This term, of Greek origin (λογοθέτης), denoted the head of the chancery. In Latin, however, the terms *logothete* (or, in corrupted form, *logofete*) and chancellor coexisted. The term secretary occurs only in one authentic Latin document of the Kosača family. In Latin and Old Italian documents, clerks were mainly addressed in a more or less original form (*diach*), but replacement terms also occurred (*scribanus*, *scriba*, *scriptor*). The term *logothete* was not in use for a long period of time and had virtually disappeared by 1420s. It was very rarely used in the chanceries of the higher nobility, even though they were developing along with the emancipation of the Bosnian magnates. Instead, some unusual terms were used in chanceries, such as “*diach* of the court” or “internal *diach*,” which may have signified the head of the chancery, but this assumption cannot be completely confirmed. In this period, the hierarchy inside the chancery could no longer be clearly differentiated and it appears that the meaning of main terms denoting scribes did not substantially change over the time.¹²

Who were the scribes, and where were they recruited from? Data on their lives and their origin is very scarce. Everything that we know about them comes either from the documents they wrote or from notes in other documents and chancery or notary books of the Adriatic city communes. They came from the ranks of commoners (perhaps artisans and traders), but sometimes also from the lower strata of the nobility and the church circles. Based on the available source material, we have been able to determine that these clerks had mostly Slavic (domestic) and, rarely, Christian or foreign names. It is not clear where they had acquired their education, but due to the dominance of Slavophony, it is quite likely that they had studied in Bosnia, rather than abroad. The dialects they used also suggest that they originated from Bosnia itself, a few coming perhaps from Dalmatia or Serbia. Only those skilled in Latin

¹² Stanojević, “Studije,” pp. 65-81; Ljubomir Stojanović, *Stare srpske povelje i pisma* [Old Serbian charters and letters] (henceforth *SSPP*), vol. 1/1, Beograd – Sremski Karlovci, 1929; Isailović, *Vladarske kancelarije*, pp. 93-102.

or those who had the title of master (*magister*), which was extremely rare, undoubtedly attended some school of higher quality (these were mostly *logothetes* or royal scribes who were later elevated to the position of leading administrative officials, such as Restoje Milohna). The careers of individual scribes will be discussed in the second part of the paper.¹³

Finally, it is important to say something about the types of diplomatic missions which were carried out by the officials and employees of royal and noble chanceries. While the instructions for the delegations of the city commune of Dubrovnik (which were usually made up of representatives of the prominent noble families in the city) are still extant, there is no similar data for Bosnia. Based on sources mainly originating from the acts issued by the city communes of both Adriatic coasts, we can see the established patterns. Diplomatic missions could be minor (of a courier type) or serious interstate negotiations (proper diplomacy). It is certain that there were also serious negotiations between the political players in Bosnia itself, but there is not much data on that issue or on the personalities of the delegates who participated in such missions. International negotiations were proportionately rare, while minor missions were more common, being carried out on an almost daily basis. Envoys, as confidential messengers, conveyed oral messages, written documents, valuables, gifts. All couriers and diplomatic representatives were supposed to have had a letter of credentials, testifying that they were authorized to speak in their lord's name and that they were trustworthy.¹⁴ Unfortunately, there is almost no data left concerning the protocol and the procedure of diplomatic conduct and negotiations. According to the *sindicatus* letters kept in Venice, envoys usually read out or handed the list of their masters' wishes, requests or answers to the authorities of the state they visited, and then waited for the other party to reply to the list. They were not authorized to make any decisions by themselves.

One of the possible duties of an emissary was composing various documents, drafts, or receipts. Maybe that is why there was an increased

¹³ Stanojević, "Studije," pp. 65-81; Anđelić, "Dijaci," pp. 81-100; Isailović, *Vladarske kancelarije*, pp. 106-150.

¹⁴ Babić, "Diplomatska služba," pp. 11-70; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 21-41.

presence of scribes in delegations. It should be once again noted that *diachs* and even royal *logothetes* rarely acted independently as diplomats. They usually accompanied other trustworthy people, whether they were representatives of the nobility with widely recognized authority, or trained diplomats of non-noble or knightly ranks. Exceptions to this rule did exist (e.g. some delegations consisted only of one or two *diach*), but they were fewer in number. The scribes' participation in important international negotiations was also most likely the result of the need for their skills. Drafts always preceded the final treaties, and someone needed to read, translate, transcribe or copy them. Clerks who showed particular skill in these duties and affairs, as well as loyalty to their master, were able to advance their careers, obtaining court offices, honorary distinctions, and even the status of nobility (Restoje Milohna, Grupko Dobričević, perhaps Pribisav Pohvalić, etc.).¹⁵

It is interesting to note one more detail suggesting that, at least in principle, the scribes who were part of a larger delegation were not considered the most important of the emissaries. This is indicated by the fact that they were mostly rewarded equally or less in comparison with the other members of the same delegation who were not scribes, which probably means that their role and capacities of negotiation were not considered primary and crucial. A reward or a gift was the usual way in which a state or a commune expressed their gratitude to the foreign envoys. This practice can be attested even in the case of the emissaries Rauf (Raup) and *logothete* Stephen Dobrinović, during their mission to

¹⁵ Stanoje Stanojević, "Studije o srpskoj diplomaciji. XIX. Naredba za pisanje povelja" [Essays on Serbian diplomatics. Issuing orders for writing charters], *Glas SKA* 156 (1933), pp. 61-75; Stanoje Stanojević, "Studije o srpskoj diplomaciji. XX. Sastavljanje povelja. XXI. Pisanje povelja" [Essays on Serbian diplomatics. Composing charters. Writing charters], *Glas SKA* 157 (1933), pp. 155-249; Stanoje Stanojević, "Studije o srpskoj diplomaciji. XXII. Nazivi povelja. XXIII. Odnosi pojedinih momenata pri stvaranju i izvršivanju povelja" [Essays on Serbian diplomatics. Names of the charters. Links between individual moments concerning the making and executing of charters], *Glas SKA* 161 (1934), pp. 1-53; Stanoje Stanojević, "Studije o srpskoj diplomaciji. XXIV. Utvrđivanje autentičnosti povelja" [Essays on Serbian diplomatics. Authentication of charters], *Glas SKA* 169 (1936), pp. 1-14; Babić, "Diplomatska služba," pp. 49-51, 56-60; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 101-120, 190-208.

Dubrovnik in February 1399. The former person – Rauf – represented the powerful magnate Hrvoje Vukčić, while the latter was the emissary of King Ostoja. However, only Rauf received an additional amount of money from the Ragusans as a reward for his role. Even if this was partly a reflection of the political reality of that moment, in which Hrvoje was virtually the kingmaker and initiator of the sale of the Bosnian littoral to Dubrovnik, this was not the case with other examples of similar practices.¹⁶ It is also not clear how much *diachs* were paid by their masters for their diplomatic or courier service, and whether they were paid for it at all, leaving aside their travel expenses. The only reference about the salary of a *diach* was in a document of the Kosača family, but what is not indicated is for which service exactly (and for which period) a certain Gal, interestingly though a Latin scribe, received the amount of twenty ducats from the deposit of Duke Vlatko Kosača in Dubrovnik. It may have been the fee for his scribal or diplomatic service.¹⁷

Finally, it is worth mentioning that, according to extant sources, the scribes' diplomatic activity was overwhelmingly focused on the neighbouring Slavophonic (Dubrovnik, Kotor, Serbia, Croatia) and, to a lesser extent, Italian states and cities (Venice, Naples, Milan). The impression that the missions directed to Hungary were less frequent may very well be the result of lack of sources. However, it does seem that these missions were rarer, for numerous reasons. For Bosnia, the Kingdom of Hungary-Croatia was an important country, often hostile, whose political centre was relatively far away, and most of the locally educated *diachs* would have had to face serious linguistic barriers. Economic relations with the communes of the Adriatic were much more developed than those with Hungary. In fact, almost all known Bosnian

¹⁶ Gregor Čremošnik, "Prodaja bosanskog Primorja Dubrovniku god. 1399. i kralj Ostoja" [The sale of Bosnian littoral to Dubrovnik in 1399 and King Ostoja], *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja Bosne i Hercegovine* 40 (1928), pp. 119-122; Josip Lučić, "Stjecanje, dioba i borba za očuvanje Dubrovačkog primorja 1399-1405." [Acquiring, division and struggle to keep the littoral of Dubrovnik 1399-1405], *Arhivski vjesnik* 11-12 (1968-1969), pp. 125-126, 134; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, p. 250.

¹⁷ *SSPP* 1/2, p. 187; Isailović, *Vladarske kancelarije*, pp. 89-102, 146.

diplomatic delegations directed to Hungary were led by the most important political players – the king and the magnates themselves.

The royal scribes of the Kotromanići as diplomats

Sources do not mention the participation of chancery personnel in diplomacy during the period of the Banate of Bosnia. After the state transformed itself into a kingdom, the royal chancery was formed with substantial organizational changes in comparison with the previous practice. Of the roughly twenty royal scribes mentioned by name from 1377 to 1463, only six were explicitly involved in diplomacy, i.e. they were members of the embassies sent by the kings of Bosnia.

Name	Title(s)	Mentions in diplomatic service (years)	Lord(s)
Vladoje from Raška	<i>logothete, aule logophet</i>	1382, 1383, 1390	King Tvrtko I
Stephen Dobrinović	<i>logothete, diach of the realm, aule cancellarius, magister</i>	1399, 1403	King Ostoja
Tomaš Bućanin	<i>logothete, knez</i>	1409, 1410	King Ostoja
Radosav	<i>logothete</i>	1419	King Stephen Ostojić
Restoje Milohna from Livno	<i>cancellarius, camerarius, protovestiarius, spectabilis vir dominus, miles, knez</i>	1422, 1428, 1435, 1436, 1441, 1442, 1444, 1448, 1449, 1451	King Tvrtko II King Thomas
Radosav ¹⁸	<i>diach</i>	1438	King Tvrtko II
Paul from Jajce	<i>cancellarius et orator</i>	1445	King Thomas

Table 1. The royal scribes as diplomats

¹⁸ Perhaps identical with Radosav mentioned in 1419.

Vladoje was not only the first *logothete* and the first head of a more formalized royal chancery, but also the first scribe of the Kotromanić family who was recorded as a participant in diplomatic missions. In December 1382, he went to Dubrovnik alone to collect the tribute and was listed as *logofetus et ambassiator*. On this occasion, the Ragusans, referring to their privileges, intended to show him the *poviliam magnam* (great charter) written in his own hand in 1378. The tribute was not paid at that moment, but the *logothete* was rewarded with 25 *perpers*.¹⁹ Vladoje received another gift as an envoy to Dubrovnik in September 1383, but this time he was not the only envoy and he received a smaller amount than his colleague *knez* Vukašin (12, instead of 20 pieces of cloth). As the king's ambassador, he was also in Split during the summer of 1390, participating in activities which led to the conclusion of the contract with the city commune of Split and the *reambulatio* of its borders.²⁰

It is established that Master Stephen Dobrinović was the first *logothete* after Vladoje to be sent in diplomatic missions. Some sources suggest that he may have been a lesser noble from the region of Livno. Like Vladoje, he also wrote charters in both Slavonic and Latin. During January and February 1399 he was in Dubrovnik as the king's envoy, together with Rauf, retainer of Hrvoje Vukčić, to conduct negotiations concerning the renewal of Tvrtko's privilege from 1378 and to collect the tribute. Satisfied with the outcome of the negotiations, the Ragusans rewarded him repeatedly (first with 300 *perpers* and then the sum was raised to 500 *perpers*), and on February 22 they decided that his nephew (or grandson) should be received in their school and given financial support. However, it must be mentioned that Stephen's colleague, Rauf, received an additional amount of 150 *perpers*, secretly. Due to this

¹⁹ *Perper* (*yperpera*) – a Greek term (orig. ὑπέρπερον) denoting a currency unit (i.e. money of account) in the Balkans which, in the late medieval period, consisted of 12 groats. One ducat was the equivalent of two *perpers*.

²⁰ Šime Ljubić, *Listine o odnošajih između južnoga Slavenstva i Mletačke republike* [Documents on relations between the South Slavs and the Republic of Venice], vol. 4, *Monumenta spectancia historiam Slavorum meridionalium*, vol. 4, Zagreb, 1874, pp. 281, 283; Dinić, "Dubrovački tributi," p. 233; Šime Ljubić, *Odluke veća Dubrovačke republike* [Deliberations of the councils of Dubrovnik], vol. 1, Beograd, 1951, pp. 277, 348; Babić, "Diplomatska služba," pp. 31, 45-46; Isailović, *Vladarske kancelarije*, p. 98.

mission, a solemn charter issued by King Ostoja to Dubrovnik on February 5, 1399, was not written by Stephen, but by a lesser clerk of the king's chancery – *diach* Hrvatin. The same Stephen, again mentioned as *logothete*, also came to Dubrovnik on the eve of the outbreak of the war between the city and King Ostoja in June 1403. This time he did not come to bring pleasant news, but to convey the unfeasible demands of his master. This mission, which brought no solutions to the troublesome relations between the two states, was the last occasion on which he was mentioned. Stephen probably retired from service after Ostoja's overthrow in the first half of 1404.²¹

After his return to the throne in 1409, King Ostoja had a new scribe by the name of Thomas Bućanin. The same person was, on two occasions, recorded in the Ragusan documents as *knez* Thomas Bućanić, which suggests that he was also a nobleman. He went on diplomatic missions to Dubrovnik in November 1409 and December 1410.²²

The case of Restoje Milohna, protovestiary of Kings Tvrtko II and Thomas, is an interesting one. This chancellor, courtier and diplomat

²¹ Državni arhiv u Dubrovniku [State Archive in Dubrovnik], *Reformationes* 31, f. 129v, February 22, 1399; Franz Miklosich, *Monumenta Serbica spectantia historiam Serbiae, Bosnae, Ragusii, Vindobonae*, 1858, p. 249; Konstantin Jireček, "Spomenici srpski" [Serbian documents], *Spomenik Srpske kraljevske akademije* 11 (1892), p. 103; Natko Nodilo, *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii (ab origine urbis usque ad annum 1451) item Joannis Gundulae (1451-1484)*, Zagreb, 1893, pp. 185, 195; József Gelcich – Lajos Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium relationum respublicae Ragusanae cum regno Hungariae*, Budapest, 1887, p. 117; Iorga, *Notes et extraits* 2, pp. 76, 92; Čremošnik, "Prodaja bosanskog Primorja," pp. 119-122; Dinić, "Dubrovački tributi," p. 235, footnote 61; Gregor Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje srednjega vijeka II" [Medieval charters from Bosnia and Hum], *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja Bosne i Hercegovine*, n.s. 4-5 (1949-1950), pp. 148-152; Babić, "Diplomatska služba," pp. 31, 46-47; Lučić, "Stjecanje, dioba i borba," pp. 125-126, 134.

²² Iorga, *Notes et extraits* 2, p. 123; *SSPP* 1/1, pp. 439-440; Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje II," pp. 161-163; Babić, "Diplomatska služba," p. 49; Rade Mihaljčić, "Povelja kralja Ostoje kojom ponovo potvrđuje povlastice Dubrovčanima" [The charter of King Ostoja by which he renewed the privileges of the Ragusans], *Grada o prošlosti Bosne* (henceforth *GPB*) 3 (2010), pp. 125, 128-129, 133-134; Radoje Mihaljčić, "Isprava kojom Dubrovčani kralju Ostoji vraćaju zemlju i kuću i primaju ga za svog vlastelina" [Document by which the Ragusans are returning land and house to King Ostoja and accepting him as their lord], *GPB* 6 (2013), pp. 26, 28, 30.

with a long-lasting career, originally from Livno, was one of the most prominent figures of fifteenth-century Bosnian history, and there are a few articles dedicated solely to him.²³ Although only four known documents in Slavonic, issued in the Bosnian royal chancery, were written by him (1422, 1423, 1444, 1451), he was first mentioned as a chancery clerk. Namely, in surviving Italian versions of the documents from 1422 and 1423 he was referred to as chancellor (*manu viri sapientis Restoe cancellarii prefati serenissimi domini regis*). Later, he was engaged in diplomatic activities, but also in the financial service at the Bosnian royal court. Hence, he was made protovestiary of King Tvrtko II and his successor Thomas. He was also mentioned as knight (*miles*) and subsequently as *knez*, meaning that he reached the rank of a nobleman. Restoje was most probably a well-educated man. He wrote in both minuscule and majuscule Slavonic script and most certainly understood Latin, too. Being the effective caretaker of royal finances and a person of the kings' highest confidence, his skills had to be, proportionally, most accomplished. On the stone fragment found in the old cemetery in Livno, there is the drawing of a hand, with an accompanying Slavonic Cyrillic graffiti attributed to Restoje, reading: "this is the live hand of Restoje M." We can just assume that he acquired his reading and writing skills while studying in his own hometown, probably in the Franciscan monastery.²⁴

²³ Babić, "Diplomatska služba," pp. 49-51; Živković, *Utjecaj primorskih gradova*, pp. 172-176; Pavo Živković, "Počteni vitez Restoje Milohna, komornik, knez i protovestijar na dvoru bosanskih kraljeva" [Well-respected knight Restoje Milohna, chamberlain, *knez* and protovestiary at the court of Bosnian kings], in *Iz srednjovjekovne povijesti Bosne i Huma* [From medieval history of Bosnia and Hum], Osijek, 2002, pp. 183-197; Srđan Rudić, "Nekoliko novih podataka o Restoju Milohni" [Some new data on Restoje Milohna], *Istorijski časopis* 58 (2009), pp. 173-180; Srđan Rudić – Jelena Todorović, "Povelja ugarskog kralja Žigmunda Restoju Milohni (18. januar 1436. godine)" [The charter of King Sigismund of Hungary issued to Restoje Milohna on 18 January 1436], *Initial. A Review of Medieval Studies* 3 (2015), pp. 211-224.

²⁴ Ljubić, *Listine* 8, pp. 206, 217; Iorga, *Notes et extraits* 2, p. 242; Stanojević, "Studije," p. 71, footnote 3; *SSPP* 1/1, pp. 518-519; *SSPP* 1/2, pp. 117, 120; Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje II," pp. 183-185, 189-191; Babić, "Diplomatska služba," pp. 49-50; Živković, *Utjecaj primorskih gradova, passim*; Marko Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija: odnosi u*

In March 1438, in the legation of King Tvrtko II to Dubrovnik there was a certain scribe named *diach* Radosav. He could, indeed, be identical with a better-known diplomat Radosav Codespa, but it is not certain whether he was also identical with the *diach* who was mentioned in 1424 and 1426 in the service of the same king.²⁵

Tvrtko II also had a scribe (*diach*) called Paul. He was mentioned as the writer of king's document confirming the peace treaty between Dubrovnik and Voivode Radosav Pavlović in 1433. We cannot confidently establish if this Paul was identical with the royal "chancellor" from Jajce (*Paulus de Yayce, cancellarius et orator*), who was ambassador of King Thomas to Venice twelve years later, in February and March 1445. According to the research of Dubravko Lovrenović, the latter Paul was placed under the protection of the Catholic Church in 1450.²⁶

It should, finally, be noted once again that the royal Bosnian family of the Kotromanići sent only a small number of their clerks on diplomatic missions. In such missions we could virtually find only the most important figures – the *logothetes* and "the *diachs* of the Realm," as well as those people whose activity was not (or ceased to be) primarily scribal (e.g. protovestiary Restoje). These findings could, however, be

XIV. i XV. st. [Bosnia and Venice: relations in the fourteenth and fifteenth century], Sarajevo, 1996, pp. 183, 192-193, 327; Bono M. Vrdoljak, "Srednjovjekovni spomenici s natpisom na Groblju Sv. Ive u Livnu" [Medieval monuments with inscriptions on the cemetery of St. John in Livno], *Starohrvatska prosvjeta*, ser. 3, 30 (2003), p. 242; Dubravko Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti: sveta kruna ugarska i sveta kruna bosanska 1387-1463* [On the landslide of history: the Holy Crown of Hungary and the Holy Crown of Bosnia 1387-1463], Zagreb – Sarajevo, 2006, pp. 263, 294, 486; Rudić, "Nekoliko novih podataka," pp. 173-180.

²⁵ SSPP 1/1, pp. 514-515; Dinić, "Dubrovački tributi," p. 238; Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje II," pp. 176-178; Živković, *Utjecaj primorskih gradova*, pp. 32, 178; Brković, *Isprave*, p. 339; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, p. 180. *Logothete* Radosav is mentioned as a member of the diplomatic mission sent by King Stephen Ostojić of Bosnia to Dubrovnik in November 1419. This person was probably identical with scribe of King Tvrtko II mentioned in 1424 and 1426.

²⁶ Ljubić, *Listine* 9, p. 215; SSPP 1/1, p. 513; Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje II," pp. 179-181; Babić, "Diplomatska služba," p. 51; Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, p. 294.

deceptive, as a consequence of the lack of sources. If, however, they happen to be true, that would testify to the fact that the royal chancery in Bosnia was not, as was the case with the scribal services of some regional magnates, merged (or at least strongly associated) with diplomatic service. More specifically, this would mean that the Kotromanići had a “deeper well” from which they could draw diplomats than their competitors among magnates.

The scribes of the Sankovići as diplomats

The Sanković family was influential in the region of Hum in the second half of the fourteenth century. There are relatively few sources on this noble kindred, and they are even fewer about their scribal office.

Name	Title(s)	Mentions in diplomatic service (years)	Lord(s)
Mileta	<i>scriptor sclavicus</i>	1366	<i>kaznac</i> Sanko Miltenović <i>župan</i> Bjeljak Sanković
Mileta Popović ²⁷	<i>logothete</i>	1398	Voivode Radič Sanković

Table 2. The scribes of the Sankovići as diplomats

Data on Mileta, the scribe of *kaznac* Sanko (*Miletta, scriptor sclavicus quondam Semchi*), do not come from the documents of the Sanković family, but from the Ragusan chancery books. In fact, only his secondary activities (diplomatic and private) were recorded. In September 1366 he collected the tribute (so-called *mogoriš*) for his master, while in 1374 he was mentioned in connection with the letter of Radič, *kephale* of Konavle, concerning the theft of horses. In 1386, he was also a witness in a similar case of horse theft. The same Mileta may have written Sanko’s letter to

²⁷ Perhaps identical with Mileta mentioned in 1366.

Dubrovnik dating from the period between 1359 and 1361.²⁸ A man called Mileta Popović, acted as the *ambassador* of Voivode Radič Sanković, son of Sanko, in late 1398 and also as the scribe (styled as *logothete*), who wrote his charter in 1399, but it is not certain if he should be identified as the same person as Mileta who served Sanko many years before.²⁹

The scribes of the Pavlovići as diplomats

Out of six known *diachs* in the chancery of the Pavlović family from Eastern Bosnia, the last three were engaged in diplomatic activity.

Name	Title(s)	Mentions in diplomatic service (years)	Lord(s)
Ostoja	<i>čeljadinić, kućanin, diach, logothete</i> (once 1426)	1426, 1432	Voivode Radosav Pavlović
John	<i>diach, kućanin</i>	1442	Voivode Radosav Pavlović Voivode John Pavlović
Miotoš Curić (Čurić)	<i>diach, knez</i>	1445, 1447, 1450, 1456, 1457, 1459	Voivode John Pavlović Voivode Petar Pavlović <i>knez</i> Nicholas Pavlović

Table 3. The scribes of the Pavlovići as diplomats

The first one was Ostoja, once called a *logothete*, the writer of at least five extant documents of Voivode Radosav Pavlović. Since Ostoja was called in vernacular *čeljadinić* in a few documents, some historians thought that it was his surname (Čeljadinić or Čeljadinović). However, this was most probably not the case. He was actually a court clerk and

²⁸ Jireček, "Spomenici srpski," p. 37; Dinić, "Dubrovački tributi," p. 216; Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje III," pp. 81-83; Esad Kurtović, *Konj u srednjovjekovnoj Bosni* [Horse in medieval Bosnia], Sarajevo, 2014, p. 330.

²⁹ SSPP 1/1, p. 133; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, p. 156.

member of the voivode's entourage, who may have been considered a proper retainer (*familiaris*), too. That is why he is called *čeljadin/čeljadinić*, and also *kućanin* (household member), in some other charters in Slavonic. Both words have virtually the same meaning. As trustee of Radosav Pavlović, he was a member of the diplomatic delegations sent to Dubrovnik in December 1426 and October 1432. The Ragusans rewarded him for his efforts during these missions. Thus, in 1432 he received cloth worth 30 ducats. Stanoje Stanojević probably correctly assumed that Ostoja participated in the creation of the forged Ragusan charter, which was commissioned by Duke Radosav in 1430, in his attempt to deny the rights of Dubrovnik before the Ottoman Sultan.³⁰

Diach John, who wrote four documents for the Pavlovići from 1437 to 1442, was referred to as their *kućanin*, and he himself called them "his lords," so we can assume that he was a part of their courtly retinue. Like Ostoja in 1426 and 1432, John also acted as an envoy during the negotiations between Dubrovnik and the heirs of Voivode Radosav concerning the renewal of old treaties in December 1442.³¹ The *diachs* of the Pavlovići were, therefore, directly involved in the talks that ultimately resulted in the issuing of formal charters. Many charters of the Pavlovići issued to the Ragusans have expressions and formal elements similar to those issued by the city of Dubrovnik to the Bosnian rulers and nobles. That leads to the conclusion that the drafts of treaties were mostly based on forms frequently used in Ragusa. The role of *diachs* from Bosnia was to modify those drafts, editing them according to their chancery's rules.

³⁰ *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, p. 230; Iorga, *Notes et extraits* 2, p. 309; Stanojević, "Studije," p. 74, footnote 5; *SSPP* 1/1, pp. 591, 606, 613-615, 619, 627-628, 632; Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje III," pp. 95-105; *Leksikon srpskog srednjeg veka* [Lexicon of Serbian Middle Ages], ed. by Rade Mihaljčić – Sima Ćirković, Beograd, 1999, pp. 814-815; Pejo Ćošković, *Crkva bosanska u XV. stoljeću* [The Bosnian Church in the fifteenth century], Sarajevo, 2005, p. 165; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, p. 174.

³¹ Stanojević, "Studije," pp. 74-75; *SSPP* 1/1, pp. 635, 637, 641-642; *SSPP* 1/2, pp. 103-104; Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje III," pp. 105-115; Rade Popović, "Povelja vojvode Ivaniša R. Pavlovića Dubrovčanima" [The charter of voivode John R. Pavlović to the Ragusans], *GPB* 4 (2011), pp. 137, 141, 144, 147; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 132-133.

The last known scribe of the Pavlovići family was Mitoš Curić or Čurić. He served the sons of Radosav Pavlović at least in the period 1445-1457, although probably somewhat longer. Despite the fact that he was mostly mentioned as a *diach*, while being his masters' representative (1454), he was also, though less frequently, referred to as a *knez*, which probably means that he derived from a noble family. It is also possible that he rose to the rank of nobility thanks to his scribal service. He was the envoy to Dubrovnik in June and July 1445, December 1447, October 1450, June and July 1454, the autumn of 1456, October 1457 and November 1459. He wrote a solemn charter in Dubrovnik in July 1454, after participating, like his predecessors, in the negotiations that preceded the agreement on the final draft.³²

The chancery of the Pavlovići shows a high degree of orderliness and organization, but it is quite clear that it was not a large institution. The duty of a scribe was performed by only a few personalities, undoubtedly educated and experienced in scribal work. They had an important role in the negotiations, participating in the creation of the text and form of solemn charters, i.e. contracts, which they would eventually write in the name of their masters. Their efforts in this regard were immense, because in terms of their form, length, decorations and dimensions, these charters stand out among the documents issued in the same period by other South Slavic rulers and nobles.

There are no other mentions of the scribes of the Pavlović family, and we believe that in any case, there could not have been many more employees in this chancery. A certain Sanko was a deputy of Radosav Pavlović in Dubrovnik in January 1428, March 1429 and September 1433, but it seems that in historiography, he was thought to be a scribe. In all the Ragusan documents, Sanko was referred to only as emissary, and not as a *diach* or chancellor.³³

³² SSPP 1/2, pp. 109-110, 146-147, 149, 151; Dinić, "Dubrovački tributi," pp. 249-250; Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje III," pp. 115-118; Živković, *Utjecaj primorskih gradova*, pp. 52, 170; Kurtović, *Iz historije bankarstva*, pp. 93, 97-98, 126; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 80, 156-158.

³³ Kurtović, *Iz historije bankarstva*, pp. 84, 86, 110; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, p. 254.

The scribes of the Kosače as diplomats

The activities of the personnel employed by the chancery of the magnate Kosača family are very well documented in the Ragusan and Venetian archives. This aristocratic family, who rose to power in late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, became virtually independent from the king's authority, at least in all practical matters concerning the region of their influence. Although the amount of data can be deceitful, since the Kosače were immediate neighbours of Dubrovnik, it is certain that their administration was highly developed, positioning itself (in organizational terms) just below the royal court's administration. Out of almost 30 known scribes and servants who wrote documents for this family, as many as 85% of them also acted as envoys and diplomats.

Name	Title(s)	Mentions in diplomatic service (years)	Lord(s)
Pribisav Pohvalić (Pohvalica)	<i>knez</i> , knight	1406-1408, 1410, 1411, 1413, 1419-1422, 1424-1426, 1428-1436	Grand Voivode Sandalj Hranić Grand Voivode Stephen Vukčić
Grupko Dobričević or Popović	<i>diach</i> , "house youth", <i>logothete</i> , <i>scribanus</i> , <i>spectabilis dominus</i>	1412, 1413, 1415, 1420, 1423, 1426-1430, 1432-1436, 1438-1446, 1448, 1450, 1451	Grand Voivode Sandalj Hranić Grand Voivode (and duke, as of 1448) Stephen Vukčić
Brajan	<i>diach</i> , <i>cancellarius</i> [<i>notarius</i> , uncertain]	1421, 1423, 1424, [1436, uncertain]	Grand Voivode Sandalj Hranić Helen, wife of Sandalj Hranić
Bogavče Radosalić	none	1424	Grand Voivode Sandalj Hranić
Vlatko Pohvalić	none	1430, 1438, 1439, 1445, 1449	Grand Voivode Sandalj Hranić Grand Voivode (and duke, as of 1448) Stephen Vukčić

Pribisav, son of priest Miloje	<i>diach</i>	1435, 1437, 1438, [1447, uncertain]	Helen, wife of Sandalj Hranić Grand Voivode Stephen Vukčić
Sladoje Račić	<i>diach</i>	1436-1438	Helen, wife of Sandalj Hranić
Vukman Jugović	<i>knez</i>	1438-1448, 1451, 1454-1456	Grand Voivode (and duke, as of 1448) Stephen Vukčić
Doberko Marinić	<i>cancellarius, camerarius</i>	1439-1442	Helen, wife of Sandalj Hranić [later in the service of King Tvrtko II of Bosnia, 1448–1450]
Nikandar of Jerusalem	monk, “the old man of Jerusalem”	1441	Helen, wife of Sandalj Hranić
Radivoj Šiglica	<i>diach</i>	1443, 1445, 1447, 1449, 1451-1454	Grand Voivode (and duke, as of 1448) Stephen Vukčić
Vukša	<i>diach</i>	1443, 1444, 1448, [1462, uncertain]	Grand Voivode (and duke, as of 1448) Stephen Vukčić
Radič Grupković	<i>knez</i>	1443, 1447, 1450, 1455, 1457, 1461, 1463, 1467-1471	Grand Voivode (and duke, as of 1448) Stephen Vukčić Duke Vlatko Hercegović
Radivoj Dobrišević	“internal <i>diach</i> ”	1454, 1466	Duke Stephen Vukčić Duke Vlatko Hercegović
Ružir	<i>diach</i>	1454, 1456	Duke Stephen Vukčić
Božidar	<i>diach</i>	1456, 1459	Duke Stephen Vukčić
Sanko Dobrušković	<i>diach</i>	1457, 1460, 1464-1466, 1470	Duke Stephen Vukčić Duke Vlatko Hercegović
Nicholas	<i>cancellarius et secretarius</i> [<i>diach</i> , uncertain]	1458, [1462, uncertain]	Duke Stephen Vukčić

Pribisav (Popović?)	<i>diach</i>	1461	Duke Stephen Vukčić
Radovan	<i>diach</i>	1462 [1472, 1476 uncertain]	Duke Stephen Vukčić [Duke Vlatko Hercegović, uncertain]
Radoje Dobrišević	none	1465	Duke Stephen Vukčić
Vladisav	<i>diach</i>	1465, 1466	Duke Vladisav Hercegović Duke Vlatko Hercegović
Ivko	<i>diach,</i> <i>kućanin</i>	1467–1470, 1474	Duke Vlatko Hercegović
Radivoj Bogdinović	<i>diach, knez</i>	1469, 1470, 1472	Duke Vlatko Hercegović
Gal (Gallus)	<i>diach,</i> <i>cancellarius,</i> <i>nobilis</i> <i>magister</i>	1469, 1470	Duke Vlatko Hercegović
David	metropolitan of Mileševa	1470	Duke Vlatko Hercegović
John Radičević	none	1481, 1482	Duke Vlatko Hercegović

Table 4. The scribes of the Kosače as diplomats

The first known scribe of the Kosače was the famous Pribisav Pohvalić or Pohvalica, who was mentioned in the service of this magnate family from 1406 until 1438. In the period from 1407 to 1429 he wrote two surviving solemn charters, a letter and 19 notes for Grand Voivode Sandalj Hranić and various members of his family, but he was more widely known as an agent of his masters in various errands. It is not clear whether he began his career as a clerk, and then became *knez* and knight (*miles*) through his service, or whether, as a learned diplomat, he was also entrusted with writing charters and letters. It is certain, however, that he was never called *diach* in any document that he wrote, but his rather elegant writing style suggests that he may have been educated to become a chancery clerk. At first he was styled as a servant (Slavonic *sluga*). He was mentioned with the noble title of *knez* in

as early as 1413 and as *počteni vitez* ("well-respected knight") from 1429 on. He participated in numerous diplomatic missions to Bosnia, Dalmatia and Italy, conducted business in all these areas, and died some time before February 24, 1438. Members of his family continued to serve the Kosača family.³⁴

Besides Pribisav, some other emissaries of Voivode Sandalj also wrote documents. Their less appealing handwriting suggests that they were not primarily clerks of the chancery. Among them we should mention a nobleman, *knez Vukac Vardić*.³⁵

There are still disputes in historiography whether *diach* Grubač, the scribe of Sandalj Hranić's charter from 1420 was identical with Grupko Dobričević (also known as Grupko Popović), a long-term official of the Kosače and a clerk who wrote four receipts from 1423 to 1436.

³⁴ Iorga, *Notes et extraits* 2, p. 351, footnote 1, 363, footnote 2; Stanojević, "Studije," p. 80, footnote 2; *SSPP* 1/1, 1/2, according to the index; Dinić, "Dubrovački tributi," pp. 240-241; Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje IV," pp. 274, 276-277; Babić, "Diplomatska služba," pp. 56-58; Ćirković, *Herceg Stefan*, pp. 14, 16, 18-19, 23-24, 276; Živković, *Utjecaj primorskih gradova, passim*; Esad Kurtović, "O vremenu smrti Pribisava Pohvalića i njegovim nasljednicima" [On the time of death of Pribisav Pohvalić and his heirs], *Radovi Filozofskog fakulteta u Sarajevu* 13 (2004), pp. 301-310; Pavo Živković, *Veliki vojvoda bosanski Sandalj Hranić Kosača* [Grand Voivode Sandalj Hranić Kosača of Bosnia], Sarajevo, 2009, according to the index; Živković, *Iz historije bankarstva*, according to the index; Rade Popović, "Povelja vojvode Sandalja i braće mu Vukca i Vuka kojom ustupaju Dubrovčanima svoj deo Konavala" [Charter of Voivode Sandalj and his brothers Vukac and Vuk by which they cede their part of Konavle to the Ragusans], *GPB* 4 (2011), pp. 97, 101, 104, 107-108; Pavle Dragičević, "Prvi, drugi i treći list depozita vojvode Sandalja sa pripadajućim potvrdama" [The first, second and third documents concerning the deposit of Voivode Sandalj with belonging receipts], *GPB* 5 (2012), pp. 63-80; Pavle Dragičević, "Dva pisma Dubrovačke opštine vojvodi Sandalju povodom njegovog depozita i odlaska u Bosnu na stanak" [Two letters of the commune of Dubrovnik to Voivode Sandalj concerning his deposit and departure for the Bosnian assembly], *GPB* 5 (2012), pp. 84-87; Pavle Dragičević, "Četvrti, peti i šesti list depozita vojvode Sandalja sa pripadajućim potvrdama" [The fourth, fifth and sixth documents concerning the deposit of Voivode Sandalj with belonging receipts], *GPB* 6 (2013), pp. 45-63; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 190-206.

³⁵ *SSPP* 1/1, pp. 351-356; Kurtović, *Sandalj Hranić*, pp. 262-263, 341, 379, 411, 443; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 71-72, 233-234.

Stanoje Stanojević thought that they represented just one person, but Gregor Čremošnik claimed that Grubač's handwriting, although similar to Grupko's, differed in some respects. However, Esad Kurtović and Arandjel Smiljanić have recently suggested that Grubač, Grupko Dobričević and Grupko Popović may have been one and the same person. Be that as it may, there are numerous mentions of these names, sometimes in the form of Grubač (*Grubacius*), and more frequently in the form of Grupko (*Grupcho*). The ambivalent data is from 1412 to 1420. And after that only Grupko Dobričević/Popović is mentioned. Voivode Sandalj designated him in vernacular as *dijete ukućno* ("house youth"), which meant that he was the member of the voivode's court. If we adopt the single person theory, Grupko could have been the son of a priest (Slavonic *pop*) and acted in the service of the Kosača family from 1412 to 1451. It is not known whether he started as a scribe and then rose in the hierarchy or his clerical duty was a supplementary and occasional activity. It is only certain that he was only mentioned as *diach* and chancellor at the beginning of his career and that there is much more information on his diplomatic activity. Almost every year, he travelled as an emissary to Dubrovnik, Bar, Kotor, and Venice. He was also Sandalj's tax collector, and was involved in various aspects of business. In sources he was called *spectabilis dominus, ambassiator, logoffetto Grubissa, scribanus, gabelotus, zarinich, factor* of Voivode Sandalj. He went on his missions alone or with other companions, often with Pribisav Pohvalić or his son Vlatko Pohvalić. He also led the negotiations, raised incomes and tributes, supplied the court and the chancery with materials and provisions. It was noted that in 1430 he bought ink from Dubrovnik. He was mentioned for the last time in 1451, in the aforementioned city. It is not known with any certainty whether some members of the Grupković and Popović families, also prominent officials of the Kosače, were his descendants, but it is very likely that they were.³⁶

³⁶ Ljubić, *Listine* 7, pp. 24, 26, 31, 68; *Listine* 9, pp. 88, 122-123, 310-311; *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, pp. 220-222, 293; Iorga, *Notes et extraits* 2, pp. 137, 148, 189, 191, 211, 363, 368-369, 379, 389, 391, 409, 417, 423, 434, 437, 444; Stanojević, "Studije," pp. 75-77; Aleksandar Solovjev, *Odabrani spomenici srpskog prava od XII do kraja XV veka*

Diach Brajan was one of the first scribes of the Kosače referred to by this scribal title. He wrote three receipt notes when he was on a diplomatic mission to Dubrovnik on behalf of Sandalj and his wife Helen in 1423, in order to invest some money to gain profit and collect a part of an earlier deposit. The same Brajan was mentioned only as an emissary in November 1421, and then, in the same capacity, as scribe and chancellor (*diach et cancellarius*) in a Ragusan note from February 1423. In May and July of the same year he was again mentioned just as an envoy, and in May 1424 the Ragusans once more called him Sandalj's chancellor. In these diplomatic missions he represented Sandalj and his wife, and was rewarded with goods worth 7 *perpers* (May 1423) and with 30 *perpers* (May 1424). Maybe the same person was *Brianus caloierus*, the notary of Sandalj's wife, mentioned much later, in late 1436. If this is the case, Brajan was probably an Orthodox monk. It seems that like Pribisav Pohvalić, he also had his own seal.³⁷

Vlatko Pohvalić, the eldest son of *knez* Pribisav Pohvalić, was, like his father, better known as a diplomat than as a scribe. He wrote only one still preserved document, in 1429. On the other hand, he served as a

[Selected documents of Serbian law from the twelfth century to the end of the fifteenth century], Beograd, 1926, p. 203; *SSPP* 1/1, pp. 309, 313, 368, 374-375, 391; Dinić, "Dubrovački tributi," pp. 240-241; Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje IV," pp. 278-280; Babić, "Diplomatska služba," pp. 57-60; Ćirković, *Herceg Stefan*, pp. 25, 60-62, 73, 78, 95; Živković, *Utjecaj primorskih gradova*, pp. 62-64, 111, 117, 119-128, 204; Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, pp. 205, 212, 217, 240, 248; Đuro Tošić, "Sandaljeva udovica Jelena Hranić" [Sandalj's widow Helen Hranić], *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 41 (2004), pp. 432-433; Srđan V. Rudić, *Bosanska vlastela u XV veku* [Bosnian nobility in the fifteenth century], unpublished doctoral thesis, Beograd, 2004, pp. 244-245; Kurtović, *Sandalj Hranić*, pp. 228, 241, 319, 358, 378-379, 383-387, 390-391, 411, 448; Dragičević, "Četvrti, peti i šesti list," pp. 55-56, 62; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 101-116.

³⁷ Iorga, *Notes et extraits* 2, pp. 189-192; Stanojević, "Studije," p. 76; *SSPP* 1/1, pp. 369, 371, 373-374, 388-389; Tošić, "Sandaleva udovica," pp. 432-433, 435; Ćošković, *Crkva bosanska*, pp. 158, 298; Kurtović, *Sandalj Hranić*, pp. 243, 385, 447; Dragičević, "Četvrti, peti i šesti list," pp. 56-57, 62-63; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, p. 70. It is not clear if Iorga's note, taken from the minutes of Ragusan councils, that Brajan *cui absisse (!) fuerunt manus in Canali* really meant that this *diach* had lost his hands in Konavle or the expression suggested that was just away in Konavle.

deputy for the Kosače many times from the late 1420s until 1449. Most frequently he went on diplomatic missions to Dubrovnik (May 1430, February 1438, December 1439, June 1445) and Venice (August and September 1439, August 1445, January 1449), often accompanied by Grupko Dobričević. On one occasion, he went as Sandalj Hranić's emissary to King Tvrtko II (in September 1430).³⁸

Diach Pribisav, son of the priest (*pop*) Miloje, was one of the few chancery clerks from the time of Sandalj Hranić (he wrote a receipt in 1430 and another one in 1437, after Sandalj's death). Probably he was "chancellor Pribisav," mentioned as a member of the embassy led by Stephen Vukčić Kosača (Sandalj's nephew and heir), sent to Dubrovnik in May 1438. He went to the same city as the envoy of Helen, wife of Sandalj in November 1435 and perhaps in April 1437.³⁹

Two scribes were solely in the service of Sandalj's last wife, Helen Lazarević (previously the widow of the lord of Zeta – George II Stracimirović Balšić). First among them was *diach* Sladoje Račić. He went to Dubrovnik on her behalf in August and November 1436, February 1437 and February and April 1438. In May 1438 he went on a similar mission to Kotor.⁴⁰ Doberko Marinić was, on the other hand, first

³⁸ Ljubić, *Listine* 9, pp. 222, 225-229; Iorga, *Notes et extraits* 2, p. 434; Babić, "Diplomatska služba," pp. 58-59; Ćirković, *Herceg Stefan*, p. 16; Dinić, *Iz dubrovačkog arhiva* III, p. 190; Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, p. 240; Kurtović, *Sandalj Hranić*, pp. 293, 312-313, 379, 385, 451; Aleksandra Fostikov, "Potvrda velikog vojvode Sandalja o naplati drijevske carine" [The receipt of Grand Voivode Sandalj concerning the payment of the customs of Drijeva], *GPB* 5 (2012), pp. 92-95; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 206-208.

³⁹ Iorga, *Notes et extraits* 2, p. 351; *SSPP* 1/1, p. 332; *SSPP* 1/2, p. 96; Stanojević, "Studije," pp. 76-77; Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje IV," pp. 280, 283-284; Kurtović, *Sandalj Hranić*, pp. 379, 385-386, 451; Srđan Rudić, "Potvrde braće Dragišić da su podigli svoj deo od poklada Sandalja Hranića" [Receipts of the Dragišić brothers confirming that they received their part of Sandalj Hranić's deposit], *GPB* 6 (2013), pp. 106-107, 116; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, p. 208. *Diach* Pribisav, who went to Dubrovnik along with Grupko in 1447, may have been identical with this one, as well as (but much less likely) with the man of the same name mentioned in 1462, but it is also possible that he was a completely different person (*Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, p. 296).

⁴⁰ *SSPP* 1/1, pp. 392-393; Tošić, "Sandaljeva udovica," pp. 428-429, 432; Kurtović, *Iz historije bankarstva*, pp. 46-47; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, p. 255.

mentioned as Helen's scribe and chancellor, and then even as her chamberlain. He was her envoy to Dubrovnik in March and August 1439, March and August 1440, April and August/September 1441 and September 1442. In April 1441 he was on a mission in Kotor. He was also present when Helen's testament was written in November 1442 in Gorčani, although the document was not written by him, but by the Orthodox monk – Nikandar of Jerusalem (see below). After Helen's death, Doberko did not remain in the service of the Kosače, but he transferred to the service of the royal Kotromanić family. In the period 1448-1450 (or more precisely in November 1448, November 1449, and October/November 1450) he raised the *mogoriš* tribute and other incomes for King Thomas, and was mentioned as a royal scribe, although no document written by him is still extant.⁴¹

Nikandar of Jerusalem was an Orthodox monk and priest, also in the service of Helen, Sandalj's wife. Before receiving a greater monastic rank, he was called Nikon. After travelling through Palestine, he stayed for a long time in the monastery of St. Archangel of Jerusalem. After returning home, he became the abbot of the monastery of St. Nicholas in Vranjina. As her spiritual advisor he wrote down Helen's testament in 1442, but before that he also appeared in the role of her representative in Dubrovnik in February 1441. The same Nikandar was also mentioned in 1424, as the emissary of Despot Stephen Lazarević of Serbia, Helen's brother.⁴²

Knez Vukman Jugović was one of the "career diplomats" of the Kosače who, as an emissary, sometimes wrote their documents. As part of his mission, Vukman compiled four receipts between 1438 and 1440. Gregor Čremošnik assessed his handwriting as extremely inelegant and even ugly. Vukman often acted as an envoy, going to Dubrovnik and

⁴¹ *SSPP* 1/1, pp. 394, 396; Dinić, "Dubrovački tributi," pp. 223, 239; Tošić, "Sandaljeva udovica," pp. 427, 430-432; Kurtović, *Iz historije bankarstva*, pp. 47-48, 52; Esad Kurtović, "Doberko Marinić, poslanik bosanskog kralja Stjepana Tomaša" [Doberko Marinić, envoy of King Stephen Thomas of Bosnia], in *Stoljeća Kraljeve Sutjeske. Zbornik radova* [Centuries of Kraljeva Sutjeska. Volume of proceedings], Kraljeva Sutjeska – Sarajevo, 2010, pp. 91-104; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 126-127.

⁴² *SSPP* 1/1, p. 167, pp. 394-396; *SSPP* 1/2, p. 57; Tošić, "Sandalejeva udovica," pp. 429, 432, 435-439; Kurtović, *Iz historije bankarstva*, pp. 37, 48, 52.

Venice on behalf of his master from 1438 to 1456. He used to go there with proper *diachs* (for instance, in 1453 and 1454 he was in Naples with Radivoj Šiglica). One Ragusan chancery note reminds us of the permanent diplomatic procedure – namely, Vukman came to the city of Dubrovnik in February 1445, along with credentials written in the Slavic language. Vukman was also a witness in the charters of the Kosača family (e.g. in 1454).⁴³

Diach Radivoj Šiglica, mentioned also as servant of Voivode Stephen Vukčić Kosača, was a professional scribe, but we now have only two surviving documents he wrote, one from 1443 and the other from 1445 respectively. Interestingly, he was the first clerk to use red wax in the chancery of the Kosače, three years before the Stephen Vukčić became duke. Radivoj acted more frequently as a representative or as a collector of tribute – he was in Dubrovnik (with *diach* Vukša) in March/April, July and December 1443, then in February 1445, August 1447, August 1449, January, March and July 1451, and in January and April 1452. With Vukman Jugović he went to Naples to King Alfonso of Aragon in 1453 and 1454. It must be mentioned that Radivoj did not take part just in usual, minor missions such as delivering messages and collecting/investing valuables, but also in more elaborate negotiations concerning the fugitives from the Bosnian territory to Dubrovnik, relations between the Kosače and their neighbours, the release of the prisoners of war, peace efforts, or international treaties between Naples and lands of Duke Stephen Vukčić.⁴⁴

⁴³ *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, pp. 293, 296, 306; Stanojević, “Studije,” p. 80; *SSPP* 1/2, pp. 46, 48, 53-54, 57, 60-61, 63, 75, 97; Dinić, “Dubrovački tributi,” p. 241; Čremošnik, “Bosanske i humske povelje IV,” pp. 284-289; Ćirković, *Herceg Stefan*, pp. 69, 86, 98, 113, 213, 237; Dinić, *Iz dubrovačkog arhiva* III, pp. 193-194, 197-198, 201, 209, 225, 227-228; Živković, *Utjecaj primorskih gradova*, p. 200; Kurtović, *Iz historije bankarstva*, pp. 55-57; Rudić, “Potvrde braće Dragišić,” pp. 110-111, 113-114, 116; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 90-96.

⁴⁴ *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, pp. 312, 313, 325; Ludwig Thallóczy, *Studien zur Geschichte Bosniens und Serbiens im Mittelalter*, München – Leipzig, 1914, p. 394; Stanojević, “Studije,” pp. 77-78; *SSPP* 1/2, pp. 57, 59-61; Dinić, “Dubrovački tributi,” p. 241; Čremošnik, “Bosanske i humske povelje IV,” pp. 290-291; Ćirković, *Herceg Stefan*, pp. 158-159, 172, 187, 213; Ćošković, *Crkva bosanska*, pp. 302-303; Kurtović, *Iz historije bankarstva*, pp. 51-52, 55-59; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 253-254, 270-272. A

Diach Vukša, mentioned already, wrote a receipt which Voivode Stephen issued to the Ragusans in April 1443, but was better known as his envoy to Dubrovnik – in March/April 1443, in January 1444, June and October 1448. A certain *diach* Vukša also represented the ex-voivode, and at that moment in February 1462, Duke Stephen. He may be identified as the same person, but it is also possible that he was identical with Vukša Vuković, who wrote a receipt in the name of Duke Vlatko, Stephen's son, in August 1476.⁴⁵

Among the most prominent officials of the Kosača family was also Radič Grupković, probably a son of Grupko Dobričević/Popović. He began his career as a diplomat, but eventually rose to the position of *knez* in 1468. From the same year the Ragusans started referring to him with the honorary *ser*. He wrote at least six documents of the Kosače in the period 1447-1468, although he was never explicitly designated as a scribe. In extant documents he was mentioned from June 1443 to February 1471. In the beginning, he served Voivode and Duke Stephen Vukčić, and then his sons, Vlatko and Stephen Hercegović. The sources recorded a vast number of his diplomatic missions to Dubrovnik (1443-1471), Naples (October 1450 and July and August 1457) and Venice (January 1467). He was one of the trustees of the Hercegovići brothers and was sent to collect the last instalment of the inheritance their father had bequeathed to them, in July 1470. His son, John Radičević, also served Duke Vlatko Hercegović Kosača – he wrote a receipt for him in October 1478, and went on missions to Dubrovnik in December 1481 and, probably, January 1482. Perhaps he was identical with a certain

certain Radoje Šiglica was mentioned as an envoy along with Vukman Jugović in 1451 (*Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, p. 306), and Brajak Šiglica in November 1458 (Ćirković, *Herceg Stefan*, p. 233). In the first case, the noted person may have even been Radivoj, incorrectly written. Even if there is no mistake, all the above mentioned persons were most surely kinsmen. Stanoje Stanojević also mentioned a person called Nicholas Šiglica, but he did not specify the source he quoted.

⁴⁵ SSPP 1/2, pp. 58, 193; Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje IV," pp. 289-290; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 98-99.

John Grupković mentioned in 1505 as an envoy and chancellor of the Ottoman official of local origin – Sinan-paša Borovinić.⁴⁶

Diach Božidar was one of the few scribes of the Kosače whose elegant handwriting suggests that he was a well-trained professional. He wrote two charters of Duke Stephen, whom he called “his lord,” in 1453. He went to Dubrovnik as an envoy in February 1456 (along with *gost* Radin and Radič Grupković), and on this occasion was styled as the chancellor. Interestingly and similarly to the cases of royal *logothetes* Vladoje and Stephen Dobrinović, he was rewarded with only 30 *perpers*, while the other two received 100. As the representative of the Kosače, he also visited Dubrovnik in February 1459, but then he and his companions in the mission received presents in the form of cloth, whose estimated value was 56 *perpers*.⁴⁷

Radivoj Dobrišević was the only clerk of the chancery of the Kosače who was referred to with the additional title of “internal *diach*” of Duke Vlatko. Radivoj began his service in the times of Duke Stephen, certainly before 1454, when he composed the duke’s solemn charter containing the peace treaty with Dubrovnik. He later continued his career in the service of Vlatko Hercegović. Radivoj was the deputy in Dubrovnik in May 1454 and September 1466, acting as both diplomat and scribe. He may have also been the person who went to Dubrovnik in March 1456, along with *diach* Ružir. Some authors (primarily Stanoje Stanojević) believe that Radivoj was identical with another clerk – Radoje Dobrišević, but this is unlikely since both names were quite

⁴⁶ *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, p. 383; Thallóczy, *Studien*, pp. 385, 414; *SSPP* 1/2, pp. 58, 62, 64-65, 86, 180-182, 184, 190-191, 194; Dinić, “Dubrovački tributi,” p. 241; Dinić, *Iz dubrovačkog arhiva* III, pp. 218-219; Čremošnik, “Bosanske i humske povelje IV,” pp. 291-292, 309, 311, 313-314, 323; Babić, “Diplomatska služba,” p. 60; Atanasovski, *Pad Hercegovine*, pp. 40, 42, 51, 61-62, 68-69, 120, 145, 230; Živković, *Utjecaj primorskih gradova*, pp. 125-128, 200; Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, p. 290; Rudić, *Bosanska vlastela*, p. 245; Kurtović, *Sandalj Hranić*, pp. 384-385; Kurtović, *Iz historije bankarstva*, pp. 55, 58-61, 136; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 116-120, 135. Radin Grupković was mentioned in 1481. See: Ivan Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska u XIV i XV veku* [Dubrovnik and Turkey in the fourteenth and fifteenth century], Beograd, 1952, p. 214.

⁴⁷ *SSPP* 1/2, pp. 69, 72; Čremošnik, “Bosanske i humske povelje IV,” pp. 294-295; Dinić, *Iz dubrovačkog arhiva* III, p. 231; Kurtović, *Iz historije bankarstva*, pp. 101-102; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 53-54.

frequent in Bosnia, and palaeographer Gregor Čremošnik found differences in the manuscript of these two scribes. It is possible, however, that they were relatives, for instance, cousins. Radoje wrote two surviving documents for Duke Stephen – in 1465 and 1466. He went as an envoy to Dubrovnik in December 1465. Regarding the example of the Dobrišević family, it is clear that *diachs* usually wrote receipts when they also acted as envoys sent to Dubrovnik to collect the tribute or other valuables. There were cases, however, where a *diach* acted solely as deputy, while another scribe wrote receipts. As it was indicated earlier – some delegations were made of two *diachs* only.⁴⁸

Diach Ružir (Ruggiero), who did not leave any extant documents, also served Duke Stephen Vukčić. He was mentioned as the duke's representative in Dubrovnik in May 1454 and March 1456. The second time he came along with *diach* Radivoj (probably Radivoj Dobrišević). Lajos Thallóczy thought that Ružir was a Latin scribe, but it is uncertain why because there is no data which would suggest that. The duke's envoy Ružir, mentioned in 1465, was probably not the same *diach* Ružir, but nobleman Ružir Divčić, a former ally of the Pavlović family, who switched sides and joined the retinue of the Kosače before 1454.⁴⁹

Only a Latin document from September 1458 mentions Nicholas, chancellor and secretary of Duke Stephen (*nobilem virum Nicholaum cancelarium et secretarium nostrum, nobis fidelem*). If the transcription done by Vikentij Makušev is correct, this would be the only appearance of the title of the secretary in an authentic Bosnian document from the

⁴⁸ *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, p. 351; Stanojević, "Studije," pp. 78-79; Solovjev, *Odabrani spomenici*, p. 225; *SSPP* 1/2, pp. 75, 78, 174-175; Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje IV," pp. 295-296, 298, 305; Atanasovski, *Pad Hercegovine*, p. 30; Rudić, *Bosanska vlastela*, p. 248; Kurtović, *Iz historije bankarstva*, p. 62; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 127-128.

⁴⁹ *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, pp. 325, 343-344, 351, 372; Thallóczy, *Studien*, pp. 175, map. 1, 185; Stanojević, "Studije," p. 78; Srđan Rudić, "Potvrda da je Juraj Bogišić sinovac Braila Tezalovića" [The confirmation that George Bogišić is a nephew of Brailo Tezalović], *GPB* 4 (2011), p. 158; Emir O. Filipović, "Povelja hercega Stephena Vukčića Kosače Barbari od Lichtensteina: Ključ kod Gacka, 1. mart 1455. godine" [The charter of Duke Stephen Vukčić Kosača to Barbara of Lichtenstein: Ključ near Gacka, March 1, 1455], *Grada arhiva BiH* 5 (2013), p. 8; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 253-254.

medieval period. However, Nicholas is not mentioned as a writer of the aforementioned document, but only as the emissary of Stephen Vukčić Kosača. In the same capacity, he is also encountered in Milan's chancery books (in November 1458). Stanoje Stanojević thought that Nicholas was the head of the Latin chancery of the Kosače, but Sima Ćirković was more cautious and simply stated that he was a scribe. It is almost certain that this Nicholas was identical with *diach* Nicholas, who was the duke's envoy sent to Dubrovnik in March 1462. Another man also named Nicholas, but without any title, was Kosača's emissary to Venice in early 1454, but it is not known if he was the same person.⁵⁰

Diach Sanko Dobrušković was the last scribe to be employed by Duke Stephen Vukčić. He wrote three of his documents from the period 1464-1465. Sanko also acted as an envoy (named *diach Xancho*) in Dubrovnik – in April 1457, February 1464, September 1465 and February 1466 (collecting the tribute and interest money), in 1460 (inviting the Ragusans to the duke's wedding ceremony) and in April 1466 (requesting a doctor for the duke). He also found himself in Dubrovnik two days before the death of Stephen Vukčić on 19 May 1466. Afterwards, he remained in the service of Vukčić's sons – Duke Vlatko and *knez* Stephen. He was their representative in Dubrovnik in January and May 1470, where he was referred to as *diach* of the duke. In May 1470 the Ragusans asked him to suggest to Duke Vlatko that he should send a diplomatic mission to King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary. Sanko's further career was very interesting. As an educator or teacher (Turkish: *lala*) of young Stephen Hercegović, he accompanied his protégé even after he joined the Ottomans. Sanko did not convert to Islam like his pupil, but did receive a *timar* no later than in 1471, and was given six villages with the income of 3,350 Turkish *akça* coins, near the towns of Goražde and Čajniče. He held this *timar*, officially as the armed horseman, at least until 1477. Even in the Ottoman service, he

⁵⁰ Vikentij Makušev, *Istorijski spomenici južnih Slovena i okolnih naroda* [Historical documents of the South Slavs and surrounding peoples], vol. 2, Beograd, 1882, p. 116; Stanojević, "Studije," p. 78, footnote 6; Ćirković, *Herceg Stefan*, p. 235; Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, pp. 277-278; Kurtović, *Iz historije bankarstva*, p. 61; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, p. 169.

acted as an envoy and in that capacity he went to Dubrovnik in June 1475. Since his surname was Dobrušković, it is quite clear that the emissary of the Kosača family called Sanko Radičević, mentioned in March 1460, was not identical to *diach* Sanko.⁵¹

In the early 1460s two scribes raised the tribute of Konavle (Canali) for the Kosača family – *diach* Pribisav (in September 1461) and *diach* Radovan (in August 1462). This Pribisav could be identical with the envoy Pribisav Popović who was mentioned in the service of Duke Stephen from 1461 to 1464. On the other hand, it is hard to believe that it was the same Pribisav, son of priest (*pop*) Miloje from 1430 to 1437, but it cannot be excluded that he was a relative of Grupko Dobričević/Popović and Radič Grupković. As for *diach* Radovan, he may have been the same scribe Radovan who was one of the ambassadors sent to Hamza Bey in January/February 1472 by the Hercegović brothers. It is also possible that he was Duke Vlatko's envoy to Dubrovnik in April 1476.⁵²

Even before his father's death, Vladisav Hercegović had his own scribe. It was his namesake, a certain Vladisav, who was once referred to as *diach* Vladisav. However, it seems that, at the same time, he was working for the other Hercegović brother – Vlatko, because there are also documents which Vladisav wrote for him. Within a short two-year period, from 1465 to 1466, he compiled at least seven documents for the

⁵¹ *Diplomatarium relationum*, p. 774; *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, pp. 357, 374; *SSPP* 1/2, pp. 77, 79; Dinić, "Dubrovački tributi," p. 241; Nedim Filipović, "Pogled na osmanski feudalizam (sa naročitim obzirom na agrarne odnose)" [A view on Ottoman feudalism (with special regard to agrarian relations)], *Godišnjak Istorijskog društva BiH* 4 (1952), p. 105; Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje IV," pp. 297-299; Ćirković, *Herceg Stefan*, p. 267; Atanasovski, *Pad Hercegovine*, pp. 57, 60, 66, 190, 192; Ahmed S. Aličić, *Poimenični popis sandžaka vilajeta Hercegovina iz 1477. godine* [The detailed register of the Sanjak of Vilayet Hercegovina from 1477], Sarajevo, 1985, p. 278; Ahmed S. Aličić, *Sumarni popis sandžaka Bosna iz 1468/69. godine* [The summary register of the Sanjak of Bosnia from 1468/1469], Mostar, 2008, p. 127; Kurtović, *Sandalj Hranić*, p. 385; Kurtović, *Iz historije bankarstva*, pp. 59, 61-62; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 128-129, 239.

⁵² *SSPP* 1/2, pp. 77, 278, 280; Dinić, "Dubrovački tributi," p. 241; Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, p. 196; Atanasovski, *Pad Hercegovine*, pp. 76, 109; Kurtović, *Sandalj Hranić*, p. 385; Kurtović, *Iz historije bankarstva*, pp. 61-62; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 120, 239-240.

Kosače. His service to both of Duke Stephen's sons is confirmed by the fact that he acted as their envoy to Dubrovnik; in October 1465 he represented Vladisav, while in November 1466 he was Vlatko's deputy (Vlatko was on the nearby island of Lokrum at that moment). Arandjel Smiljanić suggests that *diach* Vladisav may have belonged to the noble family Komlinović, and furthermore, that he was Duke Vlatko's deputy in Dubrovnik in June 1473, who was rewarded with cloth worth 30 *perpers* for his mission. However, there is not enough evidence to conclude that it was the same person.⁵³

Duke Stephen Vukčić also had a dignitary of the Orthodox Church in his service – Metropolitan David of Mileševa. He was one of his spiritual guides and also the writer of the duke's testament in May 1466. After Vukčić's death, David appeared as an envoy to Dubrovnik on two occasions (January and May 1470) and once as the scribe of a receipt of Vlatko and Stephen Hercegović.⁵⁴

Most documents of the brothers Vlatko and Stephen Hercegović were written by their prominent *diach* Ivko, who is often referred to simply as Ivko, and sometimes as household member (*kućanin*) of Duke Stephen's sons. In addition to the information that he was a permanent member of their courtly retinue, we have no other reference to his primary position in the chancery of the Hercegovići. Either way, Ivko's handwriting and style are considered very elegant, so he was probably a learned scribe. He was entrusted with the writing of formal and final receipts issued by the Hercegovići to Dubrovnik after receiving the whole inheritance their father Stephen Vukčić had left them, in July 1470. In the period from 1467 to 1470 Ivko wrote as many as 14 documents still extant today, which effectively makes him the most prolific professional clerk in medieval Bosnia. However, all the documents written by him have the character of receipts. As a messenger of their masters, he went to Dubrovnik in July 1467, six times

⁵³ SSPP 1/2, pp. 128-130, 175-176; Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje IV," pp. 299-302, 305-307; Atanasovski, *Pad Hercegovine*, p. 33; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 75-76.

⁵⁴ SSPP 1/2, pp. 85, 87, 89-91, 188; Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje IV," pp. 318-320; Atanasovski, *Pad Hercegovine*, pp. 28-29, 59-60, 89-90, 150; Živković, *Utjecaj primorskih gradova*, p. 106.

in 1468 and three times in 1469. After Stephen Hercegović's departure to the Ottomans, Ivko remained in the service of Duke Vlatko. He acted as his envoy in November 1474, when he was mentioned for the last time.⁵⁵

The Hercegovići family also employed another *diach* – Radivoj Bogdinović or Bogdenović, the writer of two receipts from 1468 and 1469. From 1470, he bore the title of *knez*, which he may have gained through his faithful service, although it is also possible that he was originally of noble birth. He was the deputy in Dubrovnik in August 1469 and July 1470, when he raised the last instalment of the inheritance of Duke Stephen Vukčić, together with Radič Grupković. In January 1472 he was among the envoys sent to Hamza-Bey in Foča.⁵⁶

Diach Gal was mentioned in the service of the Kosače in 1469-1470. From other sources it can be established that he was from Hungary, possibly from Gorjani near Đakovo (in present-day Croatia), and that he was styled in various ways (*diach Gallus, Gallus cancellarius de Gara, nobilis magister Gallus de Gaara*). He was the representative of Duke Vlatko in Dubrovnik in May 1469 and 1470. In 1469 Vlatko asked the Ragusans to give 20 ducats from his deposit to Gal and Gregory of Szeged, respectively, since he owed them this amount of money for their service. This could be the only mention of clerical salaries in the medieval Bosnian sources, but it is unclear for which service Vlatko Hercegović was giving payment to his officials. In October 1472 the same Gal acted in the service of Nicholas of Ilok (Újlaki), Hungarian

⁵⁵ *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, p. 380; *SSPP* 1/2, pp. 85-87, 178, 181-188, 193, 196, 279; Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje IV," pp. 299, 307-308, 311-318, 320-321; Atanasovski, *Pad Hercegovine*, pp. 42, 54, 65, 77, 101; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 138-139.

⁵⁶ *SSPP* 1/2, pp. 180, 186, 190-191, 278, 280; Čremošnik, "Bosanske i humske povelje IV," pp. 308-309, 316; Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, p. 196; Atanasovski, *Pad Hercegovine*, pp. 54, 62, 76; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 49-50. *Knez* Radič Bogdanović, a nobleman and envoy mentioned from 1459 to 1477, was probably not Radivoj's kinsman, while that is less certain for Radoje Bogdanović mentioned in 1473 and 1482 (*SSPP* 1/2, pp. 179, 181; Atanasovski, *Pad Hercegovine*, pp. 42, 109; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, pp. 48-50).

king of Bosnia. It is almost certain that Gal was only Latin scribe and an educated man since he was carrying the title of master (*magister*).⁵⁷

In addition to the scribes-diplomats whose names are known, there are also many anonymous *diachs* of Sandalj Hranić, as well as his *nobilis secretarius and ambassiator* mentioned in 1420. It is possible that these unidentified persons were among the already mentioned servants of the Kosače, but this cannot be known reliably. A man called Bogavče Radosalić wrote Sandalj's Slavic charter to the Venetians in November 1423, and acted as one of his emissaries to Venice in February 1424. However, we do not know what was his main duty and profession. An anonymous secretary of Duke Stephen's (*quemdam eius secretarium*) was mentioned in 1452. Some unnamed *diachs* were also sent to Rajko Mrđenović in November 1450 and to the Herzegovinian clan of Riđani in April/May 1457. Unnamed chancellors (*cancellieri*) of Duke Vlatko were mentioned in Ragusan community records in 1467, 1469, 1470 and 1473. In the absence of the exact dates of their visits to Dubrovnik we cannot easily associate them with his known *diachs*, especially due to the fact that diplomatic missions in which the scribes took part were a regular occurrence.⁵⁸

In summarizing the presented data, we cannot avoid the impression that the chanceries of the Kosače were rather active and their personnel quite numerous. Whether such a conclusion is only a consequence of the large amount of available material in the archives of Dubrovnik – we cannot positively ascertain. However, it is quite clear that the Kosače simultaneously employed a number of *diachs* with different levels of knowledge and skill, who regularly performed diplomatic and message-carrying duties as well. Had the Kotromanići and the Pavlovići left dozens of receipts, like the Kosače, perhaps we would have traces of similar tendencies within their scribal services.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Stanojević, "Studije," p. 79, footnote 7; SSPP 1/2, pp. 87, 187; Thallóczy, *Studien*, pp. 433-434; Atanasovski, *Pad Hercegovine*, p. 151; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, p. 101.

⁵⁸ Ljubić, *Listine* 8, pp. 58, 257-263; Ljubić, *Listine* 9, p. 423; *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii*, pp. 378, 380, 382; Stanojević, "Studije," p. 75, footnote 6; Ćirković, *Herceg Stefan*, pp. 129, 234; Atanasovski, *Pad Hercegovine*, pp. 40, 88; Kurtović, *Sandalj Hranić*, pp. 385, 387, 447; Smiljanić, *Ljudi iz sjenke*, p. 47.

⁵⁹ This was also underlined by Stanoje Stanojević ("Studije," p. 81, footnote 7).

There is not enough evidence to conclude if some of the scribes of the Kosače were appointed to the position of head of their chancery. There is also no reliable information on most of their Latin scribes. The specificity of this magnate family was that it occasionally entrusted the role of the scribe to a *homo* or *familiaris*, whose main duties were not composition and writing of documents. In fact, each literate envoy could also act as a scribe, although he was not styled as such. As some representatives of the lesser nobility found themselves in the role of scribes, there are also indications that some *diachs* owed their progress in the social hierarchy to the clerical service they had originally performed, skilfully and loyally.

The scribes of the Vlatkovići as diplomats

The Vlatković family did not seem to have a proper chancery, since many of their documents of lesser importance were written by one of the family members – Žarko Vlatković. Only two of their receipt documents from 1482 were written by their emissary to Dubrovnik, Nenad Ivanović (or Udaić).⁶⁰ Some envoys of the same family were illiterate, so a Ragusan clerk, Vukašin Gizdavić wrote a tribute receipt for them (in 1493).⁶¹

Name	Title(s)	Mentions in diplomatic service (years)	Lord(s)
Nenad Ivanović (Udaić)	None	1482	Vlatković brothers

Table 5. The scribes of the Vlatkovići as diplomats

⁶⁰ *SSPP* 1/2, pp. 140-142; Čremošnik, “Bosanske i humske povelje IV,” pp. 325-326. Along with the signature of Ivanović, who wrote the entire receipt, the document also contains the signatures of the other two envoys – John Radojević and Thomas Petrović.

⁶¹ *SSPP* 1/2, pp. 132, 144; Čremošnik, “Bosanske i humske povelje IV,” pp. 304, 328-330; Atanasovski, *Pad Hercegovine*, p. 155.

Conclusion

Some of the present data may be somewhat deceptive since the absolute majority of sources on scribes and their activities derived from the well-preserved archives of the Adriatic communes, especially Dubrovnik and Venice. Diplomatic missions could have been equally directed to other neighbouring countries and were also conducted inside Bosnia, which was a highly decentralised state in the late medieval period. The magnates who were not immediate neighbours of the Ragusans and the Venetians probably had many more diplomats, including scribes-diplomats, than the few who were recorded in the archives of the aforementioned communes.

Generally speaking, the majority of the diplomats in the service of the Bosnian rulers and magnates did not come from the circle of professional scribes, especially those of domestic origin, but more than a few of them did participate in a variety of minor or major missions. On the other hand, with the spread of literacy, some *homines* and *familiares*, whose primary activities were to handle diplomacy and perform tasks and errands, engaged in a supplementary administrative activity by writing, when necessary, certain documents for their masters. Thus, scribal and diplomatic service began to overlap, which is especially evident in the case of the officials serving the magnate family of Kosača in the mid-fifteenth century. Under such circumstances, vertical mobility between the social classes was also achievable – e.g. a distinguished scribe/diplomat could become a lesser noble or a high-ranking courtier.

The primary reason for hiring scribes as couriers and diplomats was their literacy, which was crucial for any proper diplomatic relation between two or more political entities. Although the medieval period was very much a time of gesture, words – especially at a later time – became more powerful and trustworthy means of politics. The nobility may have continued to exercise greater authority in diplomacy than skilful clerks and non-noble officials, but certain experienced professionals among the latter proved to be essential towards the end of the period of medieval Bosnian statehood.