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A Polyphony of Stories from 17th and 18th-century Southeastern Europe*

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to present a selected ensemble of narrative and documentary sources – diaries, memoirs, chronicles, travelogues, business letters, and one confidential report – in order to pursue a sort of polyphonic path in historical research. Connecting these histories, i.e. personal stories from different, at times confronting, yet overlapping Kulturkreisen, shows a less visible web of liaisons between people. They belonged to different social strata – bellatores, oratores, nobility and the emerging third class of entrepreneurs, and stemmed from Catholic, Orthodox and Muslim religious and cultural environments. Differences in their educational, professional or cultural backgrounds seem to diminish while their interconnectedness, in the space of Southeastern Europe, comes to the fore.

Key words: narrative sources, late Renaissance and early Baroque, social and cultural environments, polyphonic approach, the Balkans.

While reading various narrative sources with no exact plan in my mind other than to follow my own curiosity *pro remedio animae*, here and there I came across personal testimonies which made me smile for a whole day, making me feel connected to that

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person in some way. So, here is a chorus of persons I picked out to try a polyphonic¹ approach: a Croatian lieutenant, an Ottoman *aga* turned *chef de cuisine* in Vienna, a Venetian envoy, an archbishop acting as a not-so-anonymous Dalmatian 'reporter' to the Habsburg court, another Ottoman 'man of the world', a couple of Franciscan friars from Bosnia with an Italian education, a Serbian 'encyclopedist' from the Habsburg Empire. The web of their stories, the pieces I selected for this paper, spreads over two hundred years during the late Renaissance and early Baroque and spatially – from Vienna and Split, via central Bosnia, to Istanbul. It is partly an *homage* to early travelogues of European adventurers full of 'wonders of the world', and partly because these testimonies are really wondrous. This is what, in my opinion, makes them 'unexpected' – many of them were acting outside their professions, and they had enjoyed living and not just performing their duties, whether military or clerical, making 'official notes' sprinkled with more intimate details, or just making notes on various 'ordinary' things. These narratives are now part of my bigger endeavor, but I hope to instigate further studies into garden and landscape history, food and spices, manners and rituals; however – most of all – I hope for connected stories and histories, which transcend the 'blurred borders' of epochs and cultural regions. I started this 'unveiling' of the story and creating my own, with a diary of a military man, who, to my surprise, planted saffron in the garden of his new manor house. After that, the story broke down into many threads and many new voices...

Lieutenant Petar Keglević (b. 1603 – d. 1665) was a nobleman from Zagorje (Croatia), and a famous vice-general of the Slavonian border, defending against the Ottoman empire, who also participated also in The Thirty Years' War. In-between conducting his troops and returning home, he recorded in his diary around 1661–65, in a language mixed with Latin and Croatian, all the investments and improvements of his land estates. These records show how busy he was introducing new technology (wine press and mills), planting new vineyards, making fish ponds, and new economic facilities built with hard materials: *velika polača* – *grand palazzo*, as grain storage, stable, and carriage house (*hintovnica*). He abandoned the old family castle – hence the name *Pusti Labor* (*desertus*), a small fortress on Ivanščica mountain, a type of a hilltop castle (at c.520 meters elevation), overseeing a road to Krapina Castle, and descended some six kilometers south and into the valley. The construction of the new manor house – *marof* (< Germ. *Meierhof*) of Labor, now Loborgrad, in the

¹ Both *polyphony* and *polyphonic* I use here more in an adjectival manner, because I am tired of single-line inquires, while, of course, this also refers to a more fundamental, multi-layered analysis and "orchestration" à la Bakhtin of narratology studies – see only a miniscule selection of literature: Brandist, Craig, "The Bakhtin Circle", in: *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* – <http://www.iep.utm.edu/bakhtin/> (accessed on November 16, 2015); Bakhtin, M. Mikhail, *The Dialogic Imagination. Four essays*, ed. M. Holquist, University of Texas Press 1981. The most comprehensive edition, and the most expensive, is a 4-volume edition of collected essays edited by Michael E. Gardiner, SAGE Publication, 2003 – <https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/mikhail-bakhtin/book224857>.

early baroque style, and all his 'interventions into Nature', were intellectual as well as economic endeavors, in the sense of the emerging Natural Philosophy and the new aesthetics of manorial gentry. How he came to shape his own *landscapes of power* in the valley could be understood when one takes further notice of his life course, travels and experience. Keglević had finished legal studies in Bologna (1618–1621), though more in fear of his father depriving him of money than of his own desire, since he had wanted to 'savor the world' by travelling and gaining first-hand experience of the world. However, his family friend, the bishop of Zagreb had warned him in a letter of August 1619 that:

"ne ante finem studiorum, ... dominatio tua se ulli peregrinationi aut videndorum regnorum et provinciarum labori et studio tradat: sed in loco sibi assignato sese contieat, studiis literalibus operam diligentem impendat... Studiam peregrinationis suum habebit tempus occasione commodiori."²

And this was true, because immediately after his father had died, Keglević travelled 'throughout Italy and Germany', before returning home, only to pursue a military career which took him on numerous voyages and onto battlefields: to upper Slavonia, western Hungary, Lower Austria, and Silesia. All of this has certainly exposed him to the contemporary artistic and philosophical trends, not just in landscaping and gardening. The philosophy behind the creation of *locus amoenus* was to provide a therapeutic site in which to enjoy the power of Nature, wherein the owner could retreat in safety and seclusion, to this partially-domesticated place. The full frenzy of the French park design had not yet begun, and the process of shaping the imperial landscapes of Schönbrunn had just started to unfold.³

Vineyards and garden, the quiet and *tranquillità* thereof, provided a much-needed rest for an army general, and it was enhanced in the Lopor Estate when, as Keglević had noted, *eremitorium* in the garden was finished by a 'capucinus laicus' in September 1660. A decade before, to enhance the enjoyment of his *vrtograd*, he added a 'Lusthaus iliti čardak' on an elevated place. Since he used a Turkish term,

² The letter and the history of the noble family of Keglević was presented in a study of V. Klaić, as an introduction to the edited documents of the family archive – *Acta Keglevichiana, Annorum 1322–1527*, Monumenta Spectantia Historiam Slavorum meridionalium, Zagrabiae 1917, pp. I-LXXXIV. Keglević's diary was published in: Šišić, Ferdo, „Dva ljetopisa XVII. vijeka – II. Ljetopis Petra Keglevića”, *Starine*, JAZU, 36, 1918, pp. 368–389. (further: Ljetopis Petra Keglevića...) On different approaches to reading a landscape, see: Mrgić, Jelena, *Zemlja i ljudi – iz istorije životne sredine zapadnog Balkana*, Beograd 2013, chapter 4, pp. 42–48.

³ Andrews, Malcolm, *Landscape and Western Art*, p. 53ff; <http://www.schoenbrunn.at/en/things-to-know/gardens/history.html>; Bezemer Sellers, Vanessa, "Gardens of Western Europe, 1600–1800", in: *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*, New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000; and ead., "From Italy to France: Gardens in the Court of Louis XIV and After", l.c. – at: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/gard_1/hd_gard_1.htm, and http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/gard_2/hd_gard_2.htm. (accessed on Dec. 9, 2015)

this wooden pavilion may had been overgrown with vines (*vitis vinifera*), known by the name *čardaklija* (*odrina/odrinja*) which was ordinarily used for the purpose of providing shade. Among oak woods, Keglević had also planted some quince trees – *kutine* (*Cydonia oblonga, dunja, gunja*), though he had expressed uncertainty about their longevity.⁴ This strong aromatic fruit is frost resistant and can grow even in full shade of deep woodland, in the moist soil, but it is not known how long they survived on the Estate.⁵

Keglević might have found inspiration for his building activity and garden landscaping in the Italian manors he had seen in his youth.⁶ He had also created a place of spiritual retreat on his estate, recording on 21 October 21 1645 that, 'positum fundamentum meae capellae in horto in Lobar'. On 20 November, the altar in the new chapel was consecrated.⁷ His care of *hortus* did not end there.

The penultimate entry in Keglević's diary in the year 1660 concerned the planting of seven rows of saffron in the garden.⁸ It took place on 26 August and Keglević reported that it was 'during a very dry season', quite correctly in the month when bulbs are planted even today. Although the saffron (*Crocus sativus*) prefers a Mediterranean climate, with hot and dry summers and cold winters, it is important to appreciate the ambition of this endeavor in the moderate continental climate. Saffron was cultivated by Romans in Sicily, but its revival and spread to Tuscany and Lombardy occurred during the high Middle Ages. Spices' reputation originated in their great expensive, colour, taste and reputation. The yellow colour of saffron spiced dishes and referenced gold, happiness and immortality.⁹ By the time saffron was planted at Lobar, it was 'out of fashion' in the French court and in French cuisine; however, the spice continued to be used for rice dishes and with poultry.¹⁰

⁴ *Ljetopis Petra Keglevića...*, p. 379–380, 388. *Kutina*, u: *Rječnik JAZU*, t. V, Zagreb 1898–1903, p. 838; *Čardak, čardaklija – Skok*, Petar, *Etimologijski rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskoga jezika*, t. I, Zagreb 1971, str. 296; *odrinja* – ib., o.c., t. II, Zagreb 1988, str. 543.

⁵ *Plants For a Future*, <http://www.pfaf.org/user/Plant.aspx?LatinName=Cydonia+oblonga>. (accessed on Nov. 19, 2015)

⁶ Milić, Bruno, „Talijanski maniristički i rani barokni vrt”, *Prostor*, 15, 2007, str. 96–107.

⁷ *Ljetopis Petra Keglevića...*, p. 378.

⁸ He omitted, in his diary, the gruesome murder of his niece, Baroness Catharine Keglević on 7 January 1659, ordered by her husband Franjo Petričević: Vukušić, Luka, „Ubojstvo barunice Katarine Keglević počinjeno 1659. godine”, *Arhivski vjesnik*, 51, 2008, str. 303–311.

⁹ Capatti, Alberto – Montanari, Massimo, *Italian Cuisine – A Cultural History*, New York 2003, pp. 91–93.

¹⁰ *Ljetopis Petra Keglevića...*, p. 388; *Cultural History of Plants*, ed. Ghilleen Prance, 2005, p. 168; *The Cambridge history of Food*, vol. 2, 2008, pp. 1143, 1207, 1540, 1846; *The White Book of Saffron in Europe*, at: <http://www.europeansaffron.eu/archivos/White%20book%20english.pdf>. (accessed on Dec. 7, 2015)



Keglević Manor today – Loborgrad¹¹

It would be of interest to know if in the 17th century the Ottoman/Turkish garden art and cuisine could have exerted an influence on the northern parts of the Balkan border, reaching Keglević perhaps, and even further. In the far south of Zagorje and in another *Kulturkreis*, a contemporary of count Keglević was Andrija Zmajević (1628–1694), the Archbishop of Bar, who erected as his new administrative seat a lavishing *palazzo* in Perast in the Gulfo di Cataro. It was an opulent display of late Italian Renaissance philosophy, of post-Tridentine Christianity, and a grand legacy to his heirs.¹²

Yet, more importantly, the famous Evliya Çelebi (1611–c.1682) had in person met Keglević's superior commander – the Ban Nikola (VII) Zrinjski (1620–1664). Evliya enjoyed his hospitality in the city of Čakovec (but alas, had not seen the library), as well as in Legrad, where he was invited to join a hunt in the mountains of the borderland. Two things I find interesting here: while Keglević made an entry in his diary that he had, on 12 October 1650, seen a live female elephant in the town of Sopron (*videl sam u Šopronu živoga elefanta; bila je samica*), Evliya recorded in 1660 that the stags the Croatian ban had hunted were as big as elephants. So, what was a marvel to the former, the latter used by way of comparison with an animal with which he was quite familiar; though Evliya was also astonished by the size of the game (he also noted that bears with red fur reminded him of the lions of Bagh-

¹¹ The manor had a very sad history since the last of the family member sold it – <http://loborgrad.hr> (accessed on Dec. 7, 2015). And, of course, there is a famous novel “Around Lobor” (*Oko Lobora*, 1908) by Antun Gustav Matoš (available on-line: <https://agmatos.wordpress.com/2014/03/11/oko-lobora-1908/>), who painted it in a manner of Poe's *The House of Usher*, but see further analysis in: Jukić, Tatjana, „Matošev laboratorij: rad, goli život i tumačenje snova”, in: *Prostori snova. Oniričko kao poetološki i antropološki problem*, ed. Ž. Benčić – D. Fališevac, Zagreb 2012, str. 339–361.

¹² Brajović, Saša, „Palata Andrije Zmajevića u Perastu – nadbiskupski dvor i locus amoenus”, in: *Privatni život u srpskim zemljama u osvjet modernog doba*, ed. A. Fotić, Beograd 2005, str. 581–616.

dad). On departure, ban Zrinjski had presented Evliya with a *hintov-koči*, 'with glass [windows], covered inside with various Frankish silks' drawn by six horses, and since Keglević on his estate in Lobor had erected the 'hintovnica', this building probably served to store such luxurious carriages, another sign of his gentry class.¹³ The library in Čakovec, the *Bibliotheca Zriniana*, contained several hundred manuscripts and printed books, as well as the ones written by Nikola Zrinjski, and there was also an Italian manual on agricultural works with the Ban's marginal notes on grafting various fruits (apples, cherries, pears, grapes).¹⁴

Returning to the garden onwards into the history of food, there is an excellent report from a Venetian *bailo* in Constantinople, Ottaviano Bon (b. 1552–1623) on life and food ceremonials, *manières de table*, at the Sultan's court – *Saray*, which he had witnessed in the period 1606–1609. Bon begins his description with the lyrical picture of the Sultan enjoying the blossoms of 'all sorts of flowers and fruits' in his gardens, the colours and smells, and the walk through the paths 'enclosed with high Cypress-trees on each side', with so many marble fountains. In Chapter IX, Bon dedicated the reader's attention to the dining rituals of the Grand-Signor, and stipulates that he, as every Turk, preferred freshly baked bread, but the Sultan's was the whitest, was very savory, and came in three or four sorts. The best corn for bread came from Bursa in Bithynia, and also from Volos in Greece. The Sultan's meal was accompanied with *sherbet* – a sweet beverage made of sugar syrup and fruits, which was highly popular throughout the entire Empire. Bon reported that, huge amounts of sugar, which came from Egypt with other spices, were used in the making of sherbet and also 'Boclava' (*baklava*).¹⁵ However, the Sultan and the Ottoman elite

¹³ *Ljetopis Petra Keglevića...*, str. 380; Evlija Čelebi, *Putopis*, ed. and trans. H. Šabanović, vol. 1, Sarajevo 1957, p. 279. (further: Evlija Č., *Putopis...*) Ban Nikola Zrinjski was killed by a wild boar in a hunt near Čakovec, in November 1664. Gift exchange as an essential part of diplomatic practises had various levels of meanings, among others, to exert the giver's economic or political or ideological might – for example, see the interesting analysis in: Cutler, Andrew, *Gifts and Gift Exchange as Aspects of the Byzantine, Arab, and Related Economies*, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 55 (2001), 247–278. It would be of interest to make some additional research of the ones which Evliya had received in the Balkans, an atlas – *Mapa Mundi*, from the Venetian governor of Split, p. 226. The same community was heavily burdened with too frequent hospitality for Ottoman envoys in 1570, as shown in: Schmitt, Jens Oliver, «Des melons pour la cour du sancak beg»: Split et son arrière-pays ottoman à travers les registres de compte de l'administration vénitienne dans les années 1570, in: *Living in the Ottoman Ecumenical Community – Essays in Honor of Suriya Faroqi*, eds. V. Constantini – M. Koller, Brill / Leiden – Boston 2008, pp. 437–452.

¹⁴ Bartolić, Zvonimir, „Čakovečka knjižnica Nikole Zrinskog”, *Podravina*, 1/1, 2002, str. 137–162.

¹⁵ Bon, Ottaviano, *A description of the grand signor's seraglio or Turkish emperours court, [edited] by John Greaves*, Withers, Robert. London: Printed for Jo. Ridley 1653 (text available on-line: <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A66798.0001.001?view=toc>, accessed on Dec. 3, 2015); Ottaviano Bon, in: *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, Volume 11 (1969), Margherita Pasdera, at: http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/ottaviano-bon_%28Dizionario_Biografico%29/ (accessed on Nov. 18, 2015). On

were preceded in their love of fresh-baked, light white baguettes by the Byzantines. The white colour, symbolizing purity, was in stark contrast to the 'grayish' shades of mixed flour of rye or millet consumed by the commoners and the paupers.¹⁶ As Braudel remarked, in times of plenty, there were four varieties of bread, the best being from the sieved wheat flour (*le plain choyne salé ou sans sel*). Nothing showed social inequality more than the quality of bread, adding that *le pain n'a parfois de pain que le nom*, and in times of scarcity, the bread was anything but white.¹⁷

The varieties of bread, fruit, special dishes and pastries are essentially part of each detailed description in Evliya's travelogue; when and wherever he had an opportunity to stay a while because, in his opinion, dishes and beverages provided great evidence that the local population had the culture; in the same manner he recorded the number of *hammams* and all other signs of aqua-culture, of ablutions and of good hygiene.¹⁸ He recorded that a specialty in Belgrade and Sarajevo was 'the white Latin bread – *somun*', while in Banja Luka, it was '*pogača* (*focaccia*) baked in ash'; he also praised the *kajmak-baklava*. However, the most impressive food in Banja Luka were sweet cherries (*Prunus avium* L.), as he claimed they were the most juicy and tasteful and beyond comparison to any in the whole of Rumelia, Arabia and Persia – top, world quality consumable. One cherry put on the scales weighted as as much as one ducat of eight *dirhems* (25.656 grams). Evliya and another Ottoman 'novelist', who will soon be dealt with, insisted on using 'cherry season' as a chronological marker for the month of June when the fruits are ripe to eat, which was a time for big fairs – *panayirs* in Doljani (Strumica, Macedonia), and Mitrovica (Srem). There will be more about sweet and sour cherries further in this text, but also worth mentioning is

John Greaves (1602–1652), who, among all the achievements in astronomy and antiquarianism, was one of the earliest orientalisists in England, see: Mercier, Raymond, "English Orientalists and Mathematical Astronomy", in: *The 'Arabic' Interest of the Natural Philosophers in Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. G. A. Russell, Leiden – Brill 1993, pp. 161–177; Shalev, Zur, "The Travel Notebooks of John Greaves", in: *The Republic of Letters and the Levant*, eds. A. Hamilton – M. H. van den Boogert – B. Westerweel, Leiden – Brill 2005, pp. 77–102.

¹⁶ Koder, Johannes, "Everyday Food in the Middle Byzantine Period", in: *Flavours and Delights – Tastes and Pleasures of Ancient and Byzantine Cuisine*, ed. I. Anagnostakis, Armos Publications – Athens, p. 143 ff.

¹⁷ Braudel, Fernand, *Les Structures du Quotidien: le Possible et l'impossible – Civilisation matérielle, économie et capitalisme, XVe–XVIIIe siècle*, t. I, Paris 1979, p. 110 (= *Strukture svakodnevice: moguće i nemoguće*, I, Beograd 2007, p. 119); on the varieties of bread grains in Central Balkans, see: Mrgić, Jelena, *Severna Bosna (13–16. vek)*, Beograd 2008, str. 276–291.

¹⁸ Water and garden culture which was an essential mark of being 'civilized', not only to Evliya, but to all Islamic thinkers, scientists, novelists etc, is greatly undervalued by those who still use the term "the Turkish yoke" or "Turkokratia". Not only is this anachronistic, but it indicates a complete misunderstanding of a world empire and ignorance of the value of legacies which were transferred to Europe. One should look at comments of another Muslim traveler – *Travels of Mirza Abu Taleb Khan in Asia, Africa, and Europe, during the years 1799, 1800, 1801, 1802, and 1803*, London 1814, on the hygiene of the Europeans! For this reference, I'm thankful to Prof. O'Reilly.

Evliya's record of 'proha' cultivation in Sarajevo, along with other grains and plants (barley, lentils, buckwheat, chick-pea/*naut/slanutak*). He added that the *maize bread* was honey sweet when warm, but hard as a rock when cold.¹⁹ *Proha* (*proja*) is just one of many names in the Balkans for maize (*Zéa mays*) and the *polenta* (*pura*) dish, and there is a plethora of terms in the botanical dictionary: *kukuruz/kuruz/koruza*, *turska pšenica*, *turščica* (*Türkische Weize*, *blé de Turquie*), *premantur*, *fermentun*, *furmetin*, *cezarica*, *carevka*, *brzak* and *skoroznik* (early crop), *postrnak* (late crop).²⁰ Entries in *The Serbian dictionary* (with German and Latin words inserted) published by Vuk Stefanović Karadžić in 1818 offer a wide range of possibilities into the food culture and anthropology, as masterly showed by Agata Kruszec. Maize was used in many varieties – roasted as popcorn (*jagla*, *kokica*), ground into flour and cooked as polenta, and baked into bread.²¹ In that respect, as one may see, in the Southeastern European space, the 'others' and their cuisine were barely distinguishable, except for items deemed taboo. And further, taste was and is both a social and a cultural construct, as evidenced in growing numbers of food related texts, studies and books.²²

Some ten years before Evliya visited Sarajevo, a merchant from Split, Marko Kavanjin (Marco Cauagnini) wrote two letters to his business companions in Venice, on 10 and 12 January 1649 – he had lacked the grain (i.e. in his storage units at Scala), and “the army is hard to convince to accede to maize bread”. These were Venetian troops engaged in the War of Candia with the Ottoman Empire (1645–1669), and this novelty in their provision had obviously not been welcomed. Marko though,

¹⁹ Evliya, p. 134. His is a real book of wonders, and there are many occasions in which he found himself 'enchanted' by the smell of flowers, bird singing, the beauty of the scenery of a *teferik* place etc. He praised the field of Kupres, as a lavish *yaylak* (pasture), rich in various grass and other plants, among which he mentioned *Mandragora*. My personal reminiscence was of Karlos Fuentes' great novel *Terra nostra*, superbly translated by Marica Josimčević, Beograd 1985, vol. 1, p. 215. Unlike its ominous symbolism in the Western Europe, I could not find anything similar in our folklore, but I might be wrong.

²⁰ Simonović, Dragutin, *Botanički rečnik naučnih i narodnih imena biljaka*, Beograd 1959, str. 505–506. (further: Simonović, D., *Botanički rečnik...*) Unfortunately, and in spite of the significance of food in cultural history, one still relies on the study of Traian Stoianovic, "Le maïs dans les Balkans", *Annales E.S.C.*, 21, 5, 1966, pp. 1026–1040. The patron of *kukuruz* was St Andrew, celebrated on 30 November (Julian Calender), when cooked corn on the cob was offered outside the household for the bear to eat, which represents a chthonic deity – Čajkanović, Veselin, *Rečnik srpskih narodnih verovanja o biljkama*, Beograd 1994, str. 129.

²¹ Kruszec Agata, „Vukova trpeza – kulinarska terminologija u prvom izdanju „Srpskog rječnika” Vuka Stefanovića Karadžića (1818)”, *Zbornik MS za filologiju i lingvistiku*, 47/1-2, 2004, str. 233–296. First choice for making *polenta/palenta* in Italy was millet (*Setaria italica*, *Panicum italica* L., *muhar*; *talijanska proha*), throughout history, from the Antiquity to the age of the maize conquest – Capetti – Montanary, *Italian Cuisine*, p. 44ff.

²² On the special themes within food history, see: Super, John C., “Food and History”, *Journal of Social History*, 36, 1, 2002, pp. 165–178; Ferguson, Priscilla, “Markets, Menus, Meals”, *The Journal of Modern History* 77, 3, 2005, pp. 679–700.

in an entrepreneurial spirit, suggested it could be a good thing to invest “100 *reals* in barley and maize, with a certain return of 150 *reals*; the maize is sold in Split at the price of 26 *liras per staio*”. Therefore, he asked his partner to send him 20 *staio* of maize and 2 *staio* of flour. The price of maize went even higher, at 40 *liras per quarta*, since these were times of war, with battles in the immediate vicinity of Split, and Marko was deeply concerned about food supply to the city.²³ Before the war in 1622, the price of maize in the Venetian Republic was half the price of wheat – 11 *liras per staio* for maize and 22 *liras* for wheat, so that the *grano saraceno*, *sorgoturco* soon became the staple food of the peasants throughout the *Terraferma*. Therefore, Marko Kavanjin had properly judged the ongoing process of conquest and control of the market in maize in Southeastern Europe.²⁴

Making bread served as an excellent, life-saving, skill for Osman-beg of Temeswar (c. 1670 – c. 1725), a cavalry officer in the Ottoman city of Arad, but more importantly a person leading a turbulent life during and even after the War of the Holy League (1683–1699), as he conveyed in his memoirs. Immediately before he fell captive to the Austrian army in Lipova castle in June 1688, he admired the abundance and the beauty of sweet cherry fruits, and together with his regiment, decided to stay another day to savour the fruit. His is a rather poetic description: “Lipova is famous for its vineyards and gardens, and since it was the season of cherries, there was an affluence of most beautiful and tasteful fruits. One *okka* was priced at less than an *akçe*, and yet nobody took any notice. Cherries were laid in heaps at the market. We all concurred that we should stay another day to indulge in those fruits.” His long imprisonment and torture failed to diminish his genuine *joie de vivre* and among his survival skills was bread-baking in ash, the way the Ottomans baked their famous unleavened white bread. Further, when he served for seven years in the household of count Schulenburg in Vienna, he boasted in his diary that his skills were so appreciated that he was sent to a famous French pastry chef, and afterwards to the Imperial

²³ Čičin-Šain, Ćiro, „Pisma Marka Kavanjina splitskog trgovca iz prve polovine XVII stoljeća”, *Starine JAZU*, 49, 1959, p. 216ff. The size of *staio*, as mentioned in the text above, was probably the Venetian *staio* of 83,3 litres, and *quarta* is valued at ca. 62 kg by the editor of the aforementioned letters. One of the first preserved letters referred to Marko’s asking to be sent *opium* from Venice, and I thought the drug would have been supplied the other way round, but I was under the influence of literature on the English opium wars; most recently a novel of Amitav Gosh, *The Sea of Poppies*, John Murray 2008. An extensive pre-history to the use and abuse of this plant brings the following book: Derks, Hans, *History of the Opium Problem: The Assault on the East ca. 1600–1950*, Brill – Leiden 2012, pp. 825. See shorter references in: *The Cultural History of Plants*, p. 167, 200, 212.

²⁴ Zannini, Andrea, „L’economia veneta nel Seicento. Oltre il paradigma della crisi generale”, in: *Società Italiana di Demografia Storica, La popolazione nel seicento*, CLUEB 1999, pp. 473–502, http://www.storiadivenezia.net/sito/saggi/zannini_economia.pdf; see further: Fornasin, Alessio, „Diffusione del mais e alimentazione nelle campagne friulane del Seicento”, in: o.c., http://www.storiadivenezia.net/sito/saggi/fornasin_mais.pdf. (both accessed on Dec. 4, 2015)

pastry chef, Hahnbeiß. Osman-aga was highly praised as his disciple, mastering the making of ice cream, biscuits and cakes.²⁵

One of the Bosnian Franciscan chroniclers, Fra Nikola Lašvanin (c. 1703– d. 1750) left behind a manuscript, composed of various authors on the history and calamities of the *fratres*, and he personally noted down a recipe of how to properly graft a fruit tree.²⁶ The procedure he described was the following: “Make the topworking when the full moon appears in March, and insert the scion after the new moon when the weather is nice, and be careful that the scions are cut from the lower branches. *Ashlam* cherries you should graft with a cleft when the fruits are ripe, and vines – in the spring, when it makes new strings... If you put any fragrant herb in the cleft, the fruits will smell the same.” The Turkish word *aşlam* refers to grafting fruits in general, and especially to sweet and sour cherries.²⁷

Sour cherries of the Marasca type (*Prunus cerasus* var. *marasca*) were cultivated in Dalmatia, where the city of Zara became famous for the manufacture and export of a sweet liqueur and also of brined ‘Maraschino’ cherries. This has been testified to in 1775-76, in an anonymous description of Dalmatia written in Italian, for the purpose of ‘informing’ the Austrian Empress Maria Theresa of the negligent and detrimental Venetian rule of the area and the ways in which the economy and the way of living could be easily improved. The author, who was by all probability the archbishop of Split, Ivan Luka Garagnin, distinguished the small region of Poljica, between the cities of Spalato and Omiš, as the main producer of this variety of cherry fruit: “La Marasca di Poglizza ha qualità più particolari, e più stimate, e singolarmente una grata fragranza, per cui sono consumata in gran quantità nelle fabbriche de’ *Rosolj* in Zara, e per tutto il litorale Dalmatino, e il liquore così apprestato gode anche nelle Tavole di più fino gusto, e più delicate il vanto sopra d’ogni altro. Sia arte non bene imitata degli altri fabbricatori di *Rosoli*, sia effetto particolare al frutto, che s’adopera, certo è, che hanno i liquori una delicatezza amabile e una dolce soavità, che alletta, e che piace...” Even Venice tried to fabricate the ‘rosoli’ liqueur, but sadly failed due to the unavoidably long duration of shipment of marasca cherries; another reason for the author to criticize the Serenissima for imprudent financial politics towards

²⁵ Čaušević, Ekrem, *Autobiografija Osman-age Temišvarskog*, Zagreb 2004, p. 5, 30, 59–60. The town of Lipova is now in Romania, which is among the top export countries of sweet cherries. On Turkish cuisine see: *The Cambridge History of Food*, vol. 2, pp. 1147–1148.

²⁶ On grafting technique see: <http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/yard-garden/fruit/grafting-and-budding-fruit-trees/>. (accessed on Dec. 10, 2015)

²⁷ Fra Nikola Lašvanin, *Ljetopis*, trans. and comm. I. Gavran, Sarajevo 1981, 249–250; Kursar, Vjeran, “Nikola Lašvanin”, in: *Historians of the Ottoman Empire*, <https://ottomanhistorians.uchicago.edu/en/historian/nikola-lasvanin> (accessed on Nov. 20, 2015); *Aşlam*, in: Skok, *Etimologijski*, t. I, p. 70.

Dalmatia.²⁸ Another contemporary account is made by the famous natural historian and writer, Alberto Fortis, who had noticed that the villages in the vicinity of the town of Šibenik were also supplying marasca cherries to the factories of rosolia in Zara and Šibenik.²⁹

A somewhat different type of rosolia – Розолія, together with other grape or fruit drinks is presented in a compendium of Zaharija Orfelin (1726–1785), in his book of 1783, “Iskusni podrumar” (*The Experienced Wine Cellar Owner*). The author gave an array of recipes about how to fortify wine, to distill spirits and make different sweet or bitter juices. Orfelin wrote in several chapters of how Rosolia was made from distilled brandy with the addition of either yellow or caster sugar, or sugar syrup, adding to one’s own preference, ambergris (*ambra grisea*), or musk (*Moschus orientalis*), or cinnamon, or different colours to make it *à la française* or in Wittenberg’s way. In another chapter, he wrote about making cherry and sour cherry wine, when fresh or cooked fruits were poured into wine, followed by a whole chapter where Orfelin instructed on how to cook *sherbet*, a famous Ottoman drink.³⁰ Not only the prudent advice and transfer of modern and traditional knowledge is to be found within the covers of Orfelin’s book, but also his rant about women drinking and being drunk – abominable in his opinion. I cannot resist sharing this picturesque piece:

„Piana žena ne moţet nikako svoje strasti togda obuzdati, niti svoju sramotu sakriti, no objavljava, gnevit se, ljubiti, viĉet, hinatit se, Ńtiplje, namiguget, nogama tako, kako oĉima ne miruet, i eŃte dalje... Piana žena govoret sve to, ĉto nima tokmo nausta doĉe, i Ńtogoĉ tainoe znadu i za sebe i za drugoga, otkrivajut... kratko skazati, neima gorŃega zla, nego piana žena.”

[A drunken woman cannot contain her passions, nor hide her shame, so she exclaims, rants, gets angry, smacks kisses, shrieks, loves to spite, pinches, winks, not a moment of stillness in her neither legs nor eyes etc. . . A drunken woman tells everything that comes to her tongue, revealing hers or anybody’s secret. . . To say it briefly, there is no greater evil than a drunken woman.]

²⁸ The document was discovered, translated and published by Grga Novak, „Poljoprivreda Dalmacije u drugoj polovini XVIII stoljeća – Dell’ agricoltura in Dalmazia”, *Starine JAZU*, 49–53, 1959–1964, together with the original Italian text – the quotation above is from the part published in vol. 50, pp. 510–511. Josip Bratulić assumed that the ‘anonymous’ writer of this document could have been, in his opinion, the archbishop of Split – Ivan Luka Garagnin, to whom the famous Alberto Fortis had dedicated his book on *Della coltura del castagno da introdursi nella Dalmazia marittima, e mediterranea*, Napoli 1780 – *Put po Dalmaciji*, Zagreb 1984, p. XXII, n. 25.

²⁹ Fortis, Alberto, *Put po Dalmaciji*, transl. and comm. by Josip Bratulić, p. 109.

³⁰ Orfelin, Jakov, *Iskusni podrumar*, Digital edition at the University Library of Serbia = <http://ubsm.bg.ac.rs/view.php?q=96&e=f&p=0207&z=3&x=0&w=1536&h=723>. (accessed on Dec. 9, 2015)

Returning to a more 'serious' matter, another Franciscan got closer to St Francis ideal of expressing love to all God's creations. Fra Marijan Bogdanović (c. 1720 – d. 1772), the friar of the monastery of Kreševo in Central Bosnia, stands out as a person very much involved in earthly labours, which reminded me of a variety of physiocratic valuing of agricultural labour. Fra Marijan wrote how on 26 November 1770, on the first quarter of the moon, he had planted two pear trees near the monastery. Were they old *jeribasma* trees which Evliya had marveled at in the nearby city of Travnik, recording that when put in the pickle (*turşu* > *turšija*), those pears were honey sweet and the juice itself was known to provoke a mood of *ćeif* (of being appeased, soothed, placate), I wonder.³¹ The next year, fra Marijan had also made an 'experiment' with crops, as he recorded: 'Die 11 [Septembrii] seminavi in meo (horto) parum tritici ex Hispania allati, quod in uno stipite plures generat spicas'. I failed to identify with certainty this kind of *triticum*, though it could probably have been a type of *sorghum* (millet, *sirak*, *sijerak*), which has a broom-like *spicas* (hence the name Serb./Croat. *metlaš*), and is a genus of many varieties. One of them, *sorghum vulgare* is known also as 'Arabian millet' in the Balkans. This Hispanic grain was not maize *proper*, because fra Marijan had previously, in the year 1768, used what was by then a quite domesticated term – *grani indici*, together with other grains the monastery sowed (millet and barley).³² The friar had also tended to his beehives, carefully observing and proudly recording the first time the bees had swarmed in the garden. Vegil's *Georgica* was certainly not unknown to him, and the great poet had made elaborated *laudatio* to bees in the best part of the fourth book, among else: "Esse apibus partem divinae mentis" (B.IV: 220).³³ Both fra Nikola and Fra Marijan belonged to a monastic order established by a saint who loved Nature and all God's creatures dearly. Lynn White proposed in his short, but seminal, text that St Francis of Assisi should be made the patron saint of ecology, which was actually granted by Pope John Paul II in 1979,

³¹ Jelenić, Julijan, „Ljetopis franjevačkog samostana u Kreševu”, *Glasnik Zemaljskog Muzeja*, 29, 1917, str. 56 (further: Jelenić, J., „Ljetopis franjevačkog...”); Evlija Č., *Putopis...*, str. 145. This type of *turšija* was recorded in Serbia at the beginning of the 20th century as “vodnjika”, since unlike prickled vegetables, the fruits were sunken in pure water with honey, and left to ripe in the dark place for a fortnight – Mijatović, Stanoje M., „Srpska narodna jela (s prilogom o pićima) u Levču i u Temniću”, *Srpski etnografski zbornik*, 10, 1908, str. 48–49. On the meanings of *ćeif*, see: Zirojević, Olga, “Će(j)if”, *Republika*, br. 428-429, maj 2008, <http://www.republika.co.rs/428-429/10.html>. ((accessed on Dec. 9, 2015)

³² Jelenić, J., „Ljetopis franjevačkog...”, str. 72; Evlija Č., *Putopis...*, str. 145; Simonović, D., *Botanički rečnik...*, str. 447–448.

³³ Publius Vergilius Maro, *Georgica*, hrsg. von Dr. E. Glaser, Halle 1872, digitalized at the University of Michigan: <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015069581554;view=1up;seq=139>. (accessed on Dec. 10, 2015)

though the Benedictines and the other monastic orders in Western and in Eastern Christianity had also joyfully put their hands 'into the soil'.³⁴

Instead of a conclusion, a brief addendum. This quilt, which seems to be patterned by the differing examples set out in this article, may seem randomly stitched together; however I hope that the reader will appreciate how carefully I have picked the individuals and their stories. Looking at the motives which urged them to commit ideas to paper, a universal feature might bind them together: *verba volant, scripta manent*. This also demanded, and still demands, a certain amount of curiosity and bravery, being aware that there would be some 'future readers' of all that had been written. Another Franciscan, Fra Nikola Gojak, would start his chronicle in 1712 with these words: *Otio sam biti kuriož, kada se je koja stvar dogodila, tako sam otijo napisati, da se do poslička more naći* [*I wanted to be curious, when something happened, I wanted to write it down, so that it could be found for eternity*].³⁵ Other voices on 'historical recording for the future' belonged to the scribe Bashkeski (1747–1804) and the *kadi* in Sarajevo, Mustafa Muhibbi (d. 1854), who left their *mecmuas* – personal notebooks for posterity, inserting fragments of life and events, i.e. historical records of their time. Both were aware that their 'private' notes would circulate and would be read, and expressed concern about the 'unknown' audience.³⁶

The 'facts' are like 'mercenary soldiers of argument, ready to enlist in yours or mine, wherever the evidentiary fit is the best' – this wisdom I joyfully borrow from Lorraine Daston, an expert on 'factuality' and 'objectivity'.³⁷ As for myself, I tend to lure my 'facts' and 'evidence' into the beautiful terrain of historical narration. Faced

³⁴ White Jr., Lynn, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis", *Science*, 155, 3767, 1967, pp. 1203–1207; Boersema, J. Jan, "Why is Francis of Assisi the patron saint of ecologists?", *Science & Christian Belief*, 14, 2002, pp. 51–77; *Saint Francis of Assisi and Nature: Tradition and Innovation in Western Christian Attitudes toward the Environment*, ed. Roger D. Sorrell, Oxford University Press 2009. Dumbarton Oaks published a collected volume of studies on *Byzantine Garden Culture*, eds. A. Littlewood – H. Maguire – J. Wolschke-Bulmahn, 2002 (<http://www.doaks.org/resources/publications/doaks-online-publications/byzgarden>), especially for our topic see: Alice-Mary Talbot, *Byzantine Monastic Horticulture: The Textual Evidence*, pp. 37–67, and there is still more research to do for the Orthodox garden practices. One of the oldest surviving is the oasis of St Catharine on Mt Sinai. Though I have seen some monastic gardens myself, I'm very fond of the garden behind the Jesuitkirche in Vienna, next to the Academy of Science, which I observed every day while smoking my cigarette at the hall window of the former Institute for the Byzantine and Neohellenic Studies at Postgasse 7.

³⁵ *Makarski ljetopisi*, ed. J. A. Soldo, Split 1993, str. 83.

³⁶ Bašeskija, *Ljetopis*, transl. and comm. M. Mujezinović, Sarajevo 1987, 2nd edition, 25, 184. Muhibbi was less known than Bašeskija until the superbly written study of Tatjana Paić-Vukić appeared – *Svijet Mustafe Muhibbija, sarajevskoga kadije*, Zagreb 2007, str. 97ff.

³⁷ Daston, Lorraine, "Marvelous Facts and Miraculous Evidence in Early Modern Europe", *Critical Inquiry*, 18, 1, 1991, pp. 93–94.

with another 'reign of terror', reinventing enemies, re-erecting walls, I choose to try to decontaminate the past, which is 'the present thinking about the past' (Collingwood, of course). Displaying these traits of evidence on the porousness of past borders, on the process of *une osmose sociale et économique* as skillfully molded in Jens Oliver Schmitt's text,³⁸ extracting and bringing to the foreground the less visible liaisons between people of 'confronted' worlds should give us hope to pursue these zigzagging lines of inquiry. As a historian, I am in the business of 'résurrection de la vie intégral' – a motto I share with both Michelet and the Ottoman historian Ibrahim Peçevi (1574–1650), as he noted it on the first page of his voluminous work in c. 1640. In a humble way, he stated that the thought had occurred to him to describe some dates and persons who were worthy, those he had studied 'in order to bring [them] to life'. Peçevi also recorded that during the advancement of Ibrahim Pasha's army on Nagykanizsa in 1600, the peasants were threshing wheat, adding a short note which speaks volumes of his own curiosity in every living thing: 'There is a plant called buckwheat, which grows in certain climates, but it was not the harvest time yet'.³⁹ In the terrain, the space, of Southeastern Europe, with diversified geography, climate, vegetation, fruits of the earth... history is always a polyphonic story to tell, and differences should be cherished, as I hope I have shown here. I intend to pursue these threads further still.

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³⁸ Schmitt, *Des melons pour la cour du sancak beg*”, 437–438ff.

³⁹ Pečevića, Ibrahim Alajbegović, *Historija*, transl. and comm. F. Nametak, vol. I, Sarajevo 2000, str. 15; vol. II, str. 195. Depending on the climate conditions, spring crops are harvested and then trashed by the end of July, and buckwheat prefers cooler and humid climate, and matures in September, which makes this description quite accurate.

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Резиме

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Полифонија прича из Југоисточне Европе 17. и 18. века

Рад је осмишљен да представи избор из обиља наративних и, у мањој мери, документарних извора и приповедача са широког простора југоисточне Европе у оквиру епохе позне ренесансе и раног барока. Сасвим различитог порекла и образовања, конфесија те професија – световних и црквених, војничких и трговачких, аутори и њихова дела заслужују подробнију текстолошку анализу, која је овде само наговештена, јер је у првом плану њихов однос према „животним” стварима и земаљским темама. Оне се крећу од јела, „хлеба насушног” белог и кукурузног који је у походу да потисне пшеницу, преко зачина (’златног’ шафрана), сочних трешања и мараскино вишања, лозе чардаклије у еремиторијуму једног марофа, крушака у туршији, па и пијаних жена. Од баште једног војног командата на хабсбуршкој крајини, преко султанових вртова с јабланима и фонтанама, до фрањевачке баште с пчелињаком. Текст пледира да се историографија ослободи бремена и тираније заморног марша фактографије, и да се пажња усмери на културне и антрополошке студије „многогласја” историјских извора. Управо у разноликости лежи истинско богатство овог простора.