

"*VERITÀ D'ALCUNI HERETICI*": THE ARCHBISHOP OF BAR VS.
THE COUNT OF ULCINJ – TWO ACCUSATIONS,
TWO TESTIMONIES (THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY)

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ABSTRACT

Based on the sources kept in the state archive of Venice (the series of the Council of Ten and the Venetian Inquisition), the article presents some components of social and religious life in the city of Ulcinj in the 1540s. Central protagonists of the paper are Archbishop Lodovico Chieragati of Bar (1528–1551), his general vicar of the Bar Archdiocese for many years James Dalmas, a nobleman of Bar, the bishop of Budva and Ulcinj, and the count and captain of Ulcinj Baldassare Condumier. The article argues that the testimonies of witnesses (main protagonists), directed to the high bodies of Venetian secular and ecclesiastical authorities do not reflect full historical truth, but they are result of personal intentions and interests of persons sending them. However, even in spite of the subjectivity of their statements, this kind of sources may be considered as a valuable historical source.

Key words: Ulcinj, the Diocese of Ulcinj, Bar, the Archdiocese of Bar, inquisition, patriciate, ecclesiastical history

"*VERITÀ D'ALCUNI HERETICI*": L'ARCIVESCOVO D'ANTIBARI VS.
IL CONTE DI DULCIGNO – DUE ACCUSE, DUE TESTIMONI (XVI SECOLO)

SINTESI

Sulla base delle fonti reperite presso l'Archivio di Stato di Venezia (serie del Consiglio dei Dieci e dell'Inquisizione veneziana), l'articolo presenta alcune componenti della vita sociale e religiosa nella città di Dulcigno negli anni quaranta del XVI secolo. I protagonisti attorno ai quali ruota la trattazione sono l'Arcivescovo d'Antibari, Lodovico Chieragati (1528–1551), il suo vicario generale per molti anni presso l'Arcidiocesi d'Antibari, James Dalmas, nobiluomo d'Antibari, il vescovo di Budua e di Dulcigno, e il conte e capitano di Dulcigno, Baldassare Condumier. Nell'articolo si sostiene che le testimonianze dei testimoni (principali protagonisti), che

portano nella direzione dei vertici delle autorità secolari ed ecclesiastiche veneziane, non riflettono pienamente la verità storica, ma sono il risultato di intenzioni personali e degli interessi dei loro mandanti. Tuttavia, anche a dispetto della soggettività delle loro dichiarazioni, il tipo di fonte può essere considerata una fonte storica di grande valore.

Parole chiave: Dulcigno, Diocesi di Dulcigno, Arcidiocesi d'Antibari, inquisizione, patriziato, storia ecclesiastica

The cities of Ulcinj (Alb. Ulqini) and Bar (Alb. Tivari), as well as areas of their dioceses, were in the sixteenth century the last Venetian outposts towards Ottoman acquisitions. Venetian possessions from 1421 (Ulcinj) and 1443 (Bar) respectively, these cities were according to the basic components of their development much the same to other Dalmatian and Albanian communes under the aegis of the *Serenissima*. However, as early as since the end of the fifteenth century, and particularly after the war occurrences marking a watershed in the history of these areas (the fall of Shkodra in 1479, Veneto-Ottoman wars 1499–1502 and 1537–1539), the very existence of Ulcinj and Bar became immediately threatened. Previously cities with rich hinterland and well populated villages, these hindmost Venetian centres on the East Adriatic were by every new Ottoman advancement constricted regarding areas of their districts, which reflected also on the economic components of their development in non small measure. Internal social strives and confrontations between the patriciate and commoners (particularly in Bar), gradual transformation of these cities into cities-fortresses in which their military function became prevalent by the passing of time, but also insufficient care of Venetian central authorities to provide adequate support, were basic circumstances leading to demographic and other (in the first place economic) disturbances in the development of these cities, frequent migrations of native population (particularly directed towards opposite Italian coast, but also towards Kotor, Dubrovnik and other Dalmatian cities and Istria), as well as general impoverishment of overall population (For more details regarding the history of Bar and Ulcinj see: Jireček, 1923; Šufflay, 1924; Bošković, 1962; Pertussi, 1973; Božić, 1979; Ćirković et al., 1984; Živković, 1989–1992; Marković, 1995; Schmitt, 2001; Bošković, 2004; Čoralić, 2006a; Marković, 2006). During all that time, regardless of the course of political and military circumstances and interdependencies, an extraordinary role for the survival of Catholic population in these areas belonged to the central institutions of the Catholic Church there – the Archdiocese of Bar and the Diocese of Ulcinj. Their contribution to the history of these areas is immensurable and consequently unavoidable while discussing basic components of the development of Bar and Ulcinj (For more details regarding the ecclesiastical history of Bar and Ulcinj see: Farlati, 1817, 8–

190, 248–260; Theiner, 1863; 1875; Marković, 1902; Stanojević, 1912; Šufflay, 1916; Bici, 1985; Marković, 2002; Jovović, 2004; Čoralić, 2006b; 2006c).

There is not too many original and direct data on the last decades of the existences of Bar and Ulcinj under Venetian rule, in the first place because their archives are not preserved. Besides the documents kept in the archives of Dubrovnik and Kotor, the archival series of the State Archive of Venice (*Archivio di Stato di Venezia*) contain particularly valuable source material, which, even though only fragmentary, may shed some light on particular, less known, components from the past of the aforementioned cities.

This article, which certainly does not claim to be comprehensible, is an attempt, based on some archival documents conceived by the agency of different Venetian secular and ecclesiastical instances, to direct attention to certain details of social and religious dynamism in the Ulcinj area (and also in that of Bar) in the 1540s and to their central protagonists – contemporary ecclesiastical dignitaries of the Archdiocese of Bar and the Dioceses of Budva and Ulcinj. Even though sundered from the much wider historical contents of their origin, these documents disclose some until now unknown circumstances of social and religious circumstances in the aforementioned cities (in the first place in Ulcinj), as well as role of prelates and clergy in times immediately preceding the coming of that area under the Ottoman rule. Thus, these documents are testimonies of actual conflicts on Ulcinj and Bar political and ecclesiastical scene and, even though indirectly, speak of the way in which the leading representatives of ecclesiastical structures in these cities testified of the actual problems. Based on the analysis of their correspondence with the central bodies of Venetian ecclesiastical and secular government, the problem of the credibility of statements of the personally interested protagonists (the count of Ulcinj and the archbishop of Bar) shall be singled out. Furthermore, I shall try to establish how much these sources are results of personal attitude (in this case that of intolerance) and consequently subjective as historical sources, and how much, in spite of that, they reveal of the particular components of to them contemporary political, social and ecclesiastical life of these two cities and dioceses.

The first of two documents to be analysed in this paper, and which, even though concise and without a comprehensive explanation, testifies of the social and religious movements in Ulcinj in the 1540s, is kept in the State Archive of Venice within the deeds of Venetian magistrate of the Council of Ten and belongs to the group of reports which were sent to that council by the representatives of Venetian rule on the trans-Adriatic acquisitions of the *Serenissima* (ASV–CD, Lettere Rettori ai Capi, 278, 15). The act dates to May 1544 (in the Council of Ten in Venice, it was received on the 30th of the same month), and its subscriber, that is the person sending the report was contemporary count and captain of Ulcinj Baldassare Condumier (Bondumier). In a concise address to the heads of the Council of Ten, Condumier states that at the time of

his office in Ulcinj, there were only two patrician families (houses) with five members in total. In order to strengthen patrician ranks, and by that contribute to social stability in the city, Condomier decided, by powers of his authorities and powers, to aggregate in the nobility of Ulcinj few more native families, whose names, as well as the names of existing patricians, he does not mention explicitly. However, it seems that his decision was received with resistance, as Condomier's report retells, of actual bishop of Ulcinj James Dalmas (*Jacobus de Medio, Jacobus Dalmatius*), by his origin a nobleman of Bar,¹ and two his relatives, who were probably closely connected to the existing nobility of Ulcinj. They, without knowledge and approval of the count, started with secret meetings, preparations of conspiracy and complot, and they started by their

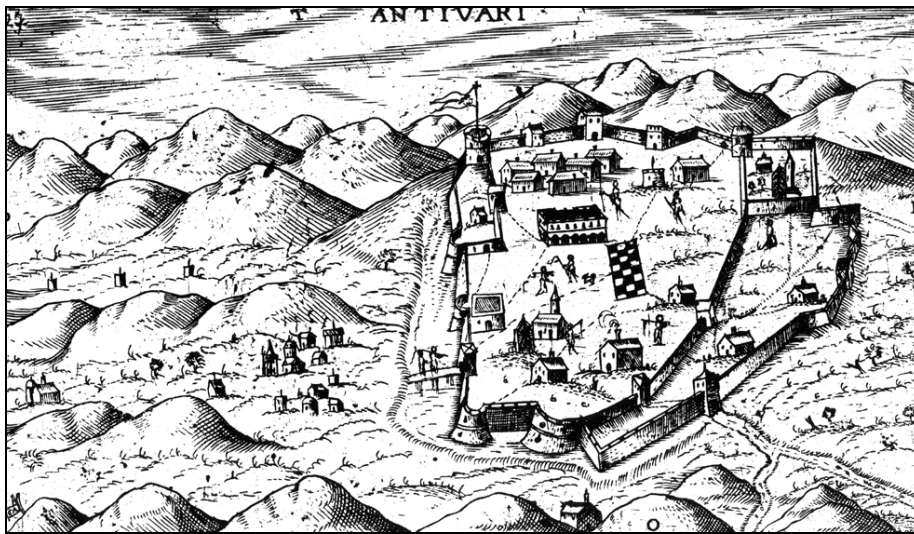


Fig. 1: *The City of Bar after 1571 (Rosaccio, 1606).*

Sl. 1: *Mesto Bar po letu 1571 (Rosaccio, 1606).*

¹ James Dalmas was a nobleman of Bar (on the family of the Dalmas see: Marković, 1995, 29) and a member of Franciscan order. In 1530 (3 October) Pope Clement VII appointed him the bishop of Budva, with a condition that after his death the diocese would be again united with the archdiocese of Bar (based on the decrees of Popes Leo X from 1518 and Clement VII from 1524). The same pope, Clement VII, entrusted to James also the administration of the diocese of Ulcinj (1532), which was confirmed by Pope Paul III in 1536. However, it seems that James (at least, in practice) did not hold both dioceses for long time, but, soon after receiving that of Ulcinj, principally acted in it, and the diocese of Budva was thus *de facto* reunited to the archdiocese of Bar. James Dalmas died in 1558. See: Gulik, Eubel, 1923, 142, 188; Farlati, 1817, 220–222, 259; Marković, 1902, 202–203; Jovović, 2004, 222, 224.



Fig. 2: *The City of Ulcinj after 1571 (Rosaccio, 1606).*

Sl. 2: *Mesto Ulcinj po letu 1571 (Rosaccio, 1606).*

own initiative to direct to the Venetian central authorities letters adding to the social discontent and unrest in the city. It seems that conflicts became sharper with the passing of time, and caused polarisation of Ulcinj denizens on several confronted sides, and, because of the non modest role the bishop played in all these events, the clergy of Ulcinj also became deeply divided. Because of all mentioned, the count and captain of Ulcinj requested the heads of the Council of ten for an intervention, that is for starting an investigation against the leading participants in Ulcinj's social and religious confrontations, thinking by that in the first place on the bishop himself and his closest collaborators (Čoralić, 2006c, 67–68).

Previous acusations which the count and captain of Ulcinj expressed and directed to the Council of Ten in Venice as the central body of state authorised for conflicts of such character, are characteristic, even stereotypical, accusations expressed at such occasions by the governmental officers. "Secret meetings", "conspiracies", "complots", sending of letters with which the confusion existing in the city, which is anyway destabilised because of the Ottoman encirclement and unfavourable political situation, has been increased, these are the "key words" emphasised by the political representative of Venetian rule in Ulcinj in order to provoke the effect as great and as direct as possible in his favour. Putting forward of accusations, finally, he pointed by a request (presented as a recommendation) to the Council of Ten to punish with adequate measures main culprits for the problematic situation in Ulcinj. The report, thus,

actually bristles with accusations and blaming of a part of Ulcinj denizens and the bishop himself, but carefully avoids more profound analysis of real causes of problematic political, social and religious relations in Ulcinj in the mentioned period. The "truth" expressed through this description, thus, puts the "witness" (the person accusing) in the position of an unreliable reporter of real situation and circumstances, and historical reality more close to the truth may be read only from between the lines.

Five years later (29 July 1549) was created a letter of the actual Archbishop Lodovico Chierigati (Chierigato, Chierupati) of Bar,² directed to the representatives of Venetian inquisition (*Santo Uffizio, Savi all'Eresia*, ASV-SU, 8, IV, 1549).³ The letter is sent from Vicenza, the homeland of Chierigati, where he, as it seems, spent the most times in the period while he was holding the dignity of the archbishop of Bar. The same as in the previous document, particular details regarding motives and causes for the creation of this documents are not presented here. The archbishop of Bar in the introduction remark that he received news on repeated, renewed unrests and conflicts in Ulcinj by his vicar and procurator in Bar.⁴ The assertion naming some denizens of Ulcinj (without defining them by their own names) as adherents of Protestant creed (*alcuni heretici luterani*) deserves particular research attention. The archbishop of Bar, surprised by these news, see them as extremely dangerous persons for Catholic church there and its believers and from these reasons reports these phe-

2 Lodovico Chierigati was a scion of a reputable noble family of Vicenza, whose members were noted in sources as prelates in several dioceses of Dalmatia (Leonelo was the bishop of Rab 1472–1484 and Trogir 1484–1488; Giovanni was the bishop of Kotor 1493–1513). A member of Franciscan order, he was appointed as the archbishop of Bar by Pope Clement VII on 11 May 1528. He generally even did not stay in his see; from 1530 he was the administrator of the diocese of Narni in Central Italy, and from 1546 he was mostly participating in the work of the Council of Trent, where from in the same year he summoned his suffragan bishops to join him. Because of his absence, he entrusted the aforementioned James Dalmas (1538), at that time the bishop of Budva and Ulcinj, with the administration of the archdiocese of Bar. It seems that Chierigati in 1541, according to his own initiative (even without official approval from Rome) took over the formal administration of the diocese of Budva, because in a letter to his general vicar there he styled himself as *Dei et apostolice Sedis gratia Archiepiscopus Antibaren. et Buduensis*. In 1551 from Trent he resigned the office of the archbishop of Bar (and together with it on that of the bishop of Budva), but, according to the writings of D. Farlati, he retained the title of the archbishop of Bar and the primate of Serbia, and a portion of income of the archiepiscopal mensa of Bar. It is noteworthy that Pope Paul IV after the death of Dalmas (1558) appointed as the bishop of Budva certain Anthony from Bari, which suggests that Chierigati's temporary taking over of the episcopal see of Budva was not caused by a mandate of the Holy See, but a personal action of the archbishop of Bar. He died in Vicenza on 4 June 1573. On Lodovico Chierigati see: Gulik, Eubel, 1923, 110; Farlati, 1817, 100–102, 222; Marković, 1902, 202–203; Jovović, 2004, 221–224.

3 I dealt earlier with the processes of Venetian Holy Office referring to the persons originating from the East Adriatic in several works. Cf. Čoralić, 2001 and a detailed survey of additional literature on the aforementioned topic there.

4 Chierigati do not mention the name of his vicar and administrator of the archdiocese of Bar during his absence, but from other sources it is known that he was James Dalmas mentioned above.

nomena to the qualified representatives of Venetian inquisition. On all these events, Chieregati wants to report even personally to the representatives of the Holy Office in Venice, in order that all dangerous of religious deviance in Bar and its diocese would be removed urgently and effectively (Čoralić, 2006b, 68–69).

It is not known how was this notification of the archbishop of Bar received in Venice, in the office of the inquisition. Presented document is all which may be found regarding these events in Ulcinj in the acts of Venetian inquisition. Taking all in the account, and it was the destiny of many other numerous missives directed to the Holy Office (frequently exclusively in order to blacken undesirable persons and groups), the central office of Venetian inquisition, qualified for the whole area of the East Adriatic coast under the rule of the *Serenissima*, did not consider the information on the Lutheranism of the denizens of Ulcinj as a case serious and worthy of attention. The process, as it seems from the existing evidence, is not started and Chieregati's information/complaint is actually only information on our disposal. However, by comparative analysis of both documents, originating from different Venetian magistrates, may be concluded that certain social (triggered by the possibility of creation of new patrician families) and religious (division of the clergy there on supporters and adversaries of the actual bishop of Ulcinj James Dalmas, a denizen of Bar by origin) movements happened during the 1540s. The Archbishop Chieregati of Bar, maintaining frequent relations with Dalmas, his procurator and vicar in the archdiocese of Bar during his absence, might, as the documents suggest, hold the side of his person of confidence, rendering to him in that way support in his intentions. It is probable, moreover, that the accusation for Lutheranism was only an attractive, powerful "argument" by which Chieregati (based on Dalmas's information) tried to attract attention of Venetian inquisition, but also of state authorities, on the city Ulcinj and unrests and conflict in it.

The analysis of two previous documents (even though not very large by their content) reveals an interesting fragment from ecclesiastical and political narrative in the area of the diocese of Ulcinj and archdiocese of Bar in the last years of the first half of the sixteenth century. Following the traces of archival sources it has been pointed to the actual protagonists of religious and social events there – the archbishop of Bar Lodovico Chieregati, the bishop of Budva and Ulcinj and the patrician of Bar James Dalmas, and to the count and captain of Ulcinj Baldassare Condomier. These excerpts regarding the events happening in Ulcinj in the 1540s report, in the first place indirectly, also on the relationship of two neighbouring dioceses, on the problems and difficulties of life in these areas and cities in the dusk of their final loss for the *Serenissima*, when the course of their history was redirected to another track. The documents discussed here and those published as appendices at the end of the paper are an example also for the way how the protagonists present actual circumstances and problems to the representatives of Venetian secular (the Council of Ten) and ec-

clesiastical authorities (the inquisition). Their testimonies betray in the first place their personal interests and intentions, but they are not useless as an objective historical source. From both letters, regardless of subjective parlance of their authors, may be observed wider problems of social, political and ecclesiastical life of these two Southern dioceses, which would, finally, in several decades contribute to the permanent loss of control of Venetian authorities over these areas.

APPENDIX 1

A transcript of the report of Count and Captain Baldassare Condumier regarding social and religious turmoil in Ulcinj, directed to the Council of Ten in Venice

Clarissimi Domini Honorandissimi. Per pacifico et quieto uiuere di questa fidelissima cita habbiandomi parso essere di bisogno aggregar algune case in numero di nobili, di quali solamente erano case due, et in tutto persone numero cinque, come piu diffusamente appar nelle mie in tal materia indrizate alla Illustrissima Signoria, parche il Veschovo di questa terra, che e nobile d'Antiuari et parente de certi dui fradelli deua quali sempre hano atesso alla innouatione et scandalli, si fecino licito senza alguna saputa mia far colloquii, et consulti et scriuer lettere alla Illustrissima Signoria con intitularsi ambadori da parte di nobili con vniuersal murmuratione et scandallo di tutta questa citta, la quale è desiderosa di viuer in pace et non attender à scandalli e rixe, come è di mente di esso episcopo, et questi tali, et quale episcopo etiam pare, che de qui habbia misso in confusione et scisma questo suo clero, de modo che se da me non li fusse stato obuiato de facili resultaua qualche manifesto scandallo infra li parenti di esso clero la natura di qualli, perche vedo esser al tutto aliena al quieto viuere anci sono disturbatori di pace et vnione, ho deliberato di formar il processo contra di esso Veschouo et contra quelli a mi proceder accio da loro castigo tutti li altri pretendino exempio di ben viuere, come è di mente di Vostre Excelentissime Signorie, alle qual reuerentemente ho vaghliuto dar notitia come debbitamente diebbo, alle gratie delle qual humilmente mi raccomando.

Olchinii die ...⁵ Maii 1544

Balthasar Bondimerius Comes et Capitaneus Olchinii (ASV-CD, Lettere rettori ai capi, 278, Dolcigno, 15, May 1544, p. 1)⁶

a tergo: Clarissimis Dominis Capitibus Excelentissimi Consilii X Dominis Obseruandissimis

⁵ The place for the date is left empty on purpose.

⁶ Fol. 15, pp. 2–3 are left blank.

manu aliena: 1544 Maii; recepto 30

Olchinium. Scribit formate processum contra illum episcopum et alios, qui mouerint seditionem ob nobiles creatos ab ipso potestate (ASV–CD, Lettere rettori ai capi, 278, Dolcigno, 15, May 1544, p. 4).

APPENDIX 2

A transcript of the information regarding religious turmoil in Ulcinj directed to the Venetian Inquisition from Vicenza by Archbishop Lodovico Chieregati of Bar

Eccellentissimi et Clarissimi Signori mei Osseruandissimi

Essendomi uenuta notitia si da particular informatione, come da lettere del nostro vicario et locotenente d'Antivari del caso nouamente seguito in Dulcigno cum grande scandallo et confusione de quele pouere anime christiani, causa l'insolentia et per verità d'alcuni heretici luterani subliuati nel loco et parendomi esse cosa degna di cellere prouisioni, mosso da zello et carità christiana sendo comesa a me la cura spirituale de quele parte è sentendo quanto difficilmente li agenti in tal materia indri-zati dalli Signori sopra li cose lutherani a Vostri Eccellentissimi Signori possano già tanti giorni essi uditi per tanto desideroso de l'honor de Iddio in è parso cum li presenti mie reuerentamente suplicare et exportare Vostri Eccellentissimi Signori a conseruatione della fede christiana li piacia alli exhibitori delle presente mie darli una breuissima uidentia che serà di pochi parole, concisiacosa che altro non intendano ricercare da Vostri Eccellentissimi Signori sopra li cose lutherani cum autoritate ut in petitione, et questo è quanto sii suplica a Vostri Eccellentissimi Signori per poter dar logo alla giustitia contra il mal exemplo di tali falsi heretici lutherani non essendo più perlixo me inclino et faccio reuerentia a Vostri Eccellentissimi Signori pregando nostro Signor Iddio li doni la sua santa gratia et mi tenga nel numero de suoi devoti vaxalli et fidelissimo della nostra Illustrissima Signoria.

Da Vicenza, a di XXIX iulio

MDXLIX

D. V. Eccellentissimo Signor Lodovico Chieregatto Arciuescovo d'Antibari primatur de quia.

a tergo: Lettere del Illustrissimo Lodovico Chieregatto Arciuescovo de Antiuari scritte alli Eccellentissimi Signor Capi dell'Eccellentissimi Consiglio dei Dieci, 1549

Alli Eccellentissimi et Clarissimi Signori mei Osseruandissimi li Signori Capi de l'Eccellentissimo Consiglio dei Dieci (ASV–SU, 8, IV, 29 July 1549).

"VERITÀ D'ALCUNI HERETICI": BARSKI NADŠKOF VERSUS ULCINJSKI
KNEZ – DVE OBTOŽBI, DVE PRIČEVANJI (16. STOL.)

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POVZETEK

Na osnovi izvirnega gradiva iz Državnega gradiva v Benetkah (fondi Sveta desetih in beneške inkvizicije) so prikazani nekateri elementi iz družbenega in verskega življenja v mestu Ulcinj v 40. letih 16. stoletja. Osrednja protagonista razprave sta barski nadškof Lodovico Chierigati (1528–1551) in njegov dolgoletni generalni vikar in poverjenik za Barsko nadškofijo, barski plemič Jakov Dalmas, budvanski in ulcinjski škof. Slednji je po poročanju kneza in kapetana Baldassareja Condumierja glavni krivec za družbene in verske spore v Ulcinjski škofiji, ki so jih povzročile Condumierjeve namere, da takratnemu maloštevilnemu ulcinjskemu plemstvu pridruži nekatere nove družine. Z dopisom iz Benetk je na osnovi teh spopadov reagiral nadškof Chierigati, ki je posredno podpiral svojega zaupnika Dalmasa in obtožil pred beneško inkvizicijo del ulcinjskega klera za privrženost protestantizmu. Na tej osnovi se analizira okoliščine v Ulcinju in v Barski nadškofiji in Budvanski škofiji ter razjasnjuje vlogo posameznih protagonistov takratnega dogajanja. Izkazuje se, da pričevanja prič (glavnih protagonistov), ki so jih prejeli vrhovi beneške posvetne in cerkvene oblasti, ne izkazujejo popolne zgodovinske resnice, temveč so rezultat osebnih namer in interesov pošiljateljev dopisa. Pa vendar se kljub neobjektivnosti, izkazani v teh dopisih, lahko sklepa, da je ta vrsta gradiva dragocen zgodovinski vir.

Ključne besede: Ulcinj, Ulcinjska škofija, Bar, Barska nadškofija, inkvizicija, patricijat, cerkvena zgodovina

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