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MARQUIS GORDIO FRANGIPANE. THE SOLEMN INDUCTION OF THE RECENTLY ELECTED HONORARY MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY OF BRETHERN OF THE CROATIAN DRAGON IN ZAGREB

Ivan *MIRNIK*, Mislav *GRGIĆ*, Željko *HEIMER*

Abstract

Between April 28 and May 1, 2024, Marquis Gordio Frangipane of Joannis accompanied by his family came to Croatia, invited by the Society of the Società dei Fratelli del dragone croato (*Societas fratres draconis Croatici*) of the Croatian Dragon, in order to be received as their member of honour. His visit included Zagreb, Ozalj, Ogulin, Grobnik, Krk (Veglia) and Kraljevica (Porto Rè). His solemn induction as a member of honour took place on April 29 at the Knights' Hall above the Medieval Stone Gate of the Upper Town of Zagreb.

Keywords: the Frangipane Family of Friuli; Gordio Frangipane; the Society of the Brethren of the Croatian Dragon.

Riassunto

Il marchese Gordio Frangipane. La sua solenne recente nomina a membro onorario della Società dei Fratelli del dragone croato a Zagabria

Il marchese Gordio Frangipane di Joannis giunse in Croazia il 28 aprile 2024, insieme con la sua famiglia, invitato dalla Società dei fratelli del dragone croato per esservi ricevuto come membro onorario. La sua visita, protrattasi fino al 1 maggio, incluse Zagabria, Ozalj, Ogulin, Grobnik, Krk (Veglia) e Kraljevica (Porto Rè). La cerimonia ebbe luogo il 29 aprile nella Sala dei Cavalieri sopra la porta medievale di pietra della Città Alta di Zagabria.

Parole chiave: famiglia Frangipane del Friuli; Società dei fratelli del dragone croato.

The Society of Brethren of the Croatian Dragon (*Societas fratres draconis croatici*) is a philanthropic and historical society, founded in Zagreb 1905 by Emilij Laszowski Szeliga, the historian and archivist, and Dr. Velimir Deželić Sen., the librarian, inspired by the prestigious *Ordo equestris draconis*, founded in 1408 by Emperor-King Sigismund of Luxemburg. The Society's motto is "Pro aris et focus, Deo propitio!" and its patron is St. George. The society's activities are led through several local chapters and sections. Through its existence an entire gallery of illustrious men – and women – have marked the history of the Society of Brethren of the Croatian Dragon. Besides regular members, the Society also have honorary members, the most notable of them were Blessed Alojzije Stepinac, Cardinal-Archbishop of Zagreb, as well as Archdukes Otto and Karl von Habsburg. This time it was Marquis Gordio Frangipane to be elected honorary member, with the predicate *Drago di Castello*.

Several Croatian and Hungarian historians in the 19th c. kept contacts with the Friulan Branch of the Frangipane family – particularly with Antigono and Francesco Frangipane – let us mention Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski (de Sacci), Radoslav Lopašić, Ludwig von Thallóczy (Strommer) and Samu Barabás. Their principal aim was to study the family archives kept at the Castello di Porpetto.

In more recent times it was during the scholarly convention "La tradizione classica nella medaglia d'arte dal Rinascimento al Neoclassicismo", commemorating the Peace of Campoformio and the abolition of the millenary Republic of Venice, held at the Castle of Udine between 23 and 24 October 1997, that Ivan Mirnik of the Zagreb Archaeological Museum Department of Numismatics had the privilege to meet Marquis Doimo Frangipane, the father of Gordio Frangipane, thanks to the friendly gesture of his colleague Maurizio Buora. Mirnik had also the honour of being

received at the Castle of Joannis by Marquis Doimo and his consort Feliciana twice. The second visit took place in company with the representatives of the Croatian State Archives in Zagreb. It was on 3 October 2004, immediately after the beatification of Emperor-King Charles of Austria that members of a group of Croatian pilgrims, among them Nikša and Siniša de Kuščić, Claude and Jerolim Grbeša, Ivo Majer, Marko Fak, Ivan Viđen and Ivan Mirnik, met Marquis Doimo Frangipane and his sister Fosca, clad in the mantle of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, in the arcades of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.

Having paid a visit to Marquis Gordio Frangipane at his castle in Joannis on 25 October 2023, Professor Mislav Grgić, the Grand Master of the Society of Brethren of the Croatian Dragon, accompanied by some members of the same Order, made a detailed plan of the visit of the Marquis and his family to Croatia in April of 2024.

The Frangipane family – Gordio, his consort Genoveffa and son Agostino – was invited for a late lunch at the restaurant “Vinodol” in Zagreb on 28 April 2024. By the way,

this restaurant was named after the “Valley of Vineyards”, which lies on the Croatian Littoral and was for several centuries one of the demesnes of the Counts of Krk (*Veglia*), who later, in the 15th c. took the name of Frangipane (*Frankopan*) and who were related both to the original Roman Frangipane and the Friulan Frangipane family from which Gordio Frangipane issues, since time immemorial. The pleasant company consisted of Marquis Gordio Frangipane, his consort and son, as well as the Grand Master Professor Mislav Grgić, the Dragon of Strossmayer, the Master of Ceremonies Dr. Željko Heimer, the Dragon of the Butchers' Gate and Mo. Josip degl' Ivellio, the Dragon of Brač II (*Brazza*), as well as Dr. Ivan Mirnik, Dragon of Cetingrad, who was to be induced on the following evening at the Knights' Hall above the Stone Gate of the Upper (Old) Town of Zagreb, together with Marquis Frangipane. After the lunch the guests were shown around the old town, as well as the seat of the Society. A particularly emotional moment there was when the Marquis Frangipane took a photo with the Dragon coat of arms and the Frankopan flag. The evening



ended after the descent from the Zagreb's Upper Town with the old funicular, providing another unique impression to the collection.

On the following morning, the entire party headed to the imposing Castle of Ozalj (*Stari grad Ozalj*) on the Kupa River, first built and owned by the Babonićs, then subsequently the by families of Frankopan, Zrinski, Perlas, Batthyány and finally by the Princes of Thurn und Taxis (*Torre e Tasso*). It is important to mention that the both Frangipane families from Croatia and Friuli were in contacts with the Thurn und Taxis family already in the Middle Ages. In 1928 Prince Albert Lamoral von Thurn und Taxis presented the castle of Ozalj and some surrounding forests to the Society of Brethren of the Croatian Dragon. There the Society established a museum and rich archives. After the Second World War the castle was confiscated in 1946. It was only after the Croatian independence that it was finally returned to the Society of Brethren of the Croatian Dragon in 2002.

At Ozalj, the guests met Mrs. Lidija Bošnjak, the mayor of the city of Ozalj, and were greeted by the members of the Karlovac

Chapter of the Society of Brethren of the Croatian Dragon, as well as by Stjepan Bezjak, the director of the local museum today housed in the castle. After the brief visit to the Ozalj Castle and its museum the party continued to Ogulin, another castle linked with the Croatian Frangipane Family.

There the guests were received by the local mayor Dalibor Domitrović, the director of the local museum Ana Krznarić and the young Frankopan guard of honour in historical uniforms. Having seen the castle and its surroundings, the guests were invited to lunch at the historical cellar of the Hotel Frankopan.

In the evening of Monday, 29 April 2024, the solemn induction of the Dragon di Castello (and also Dragon of Cetinograd) took place at the Knights' Hall above the Stone Gate took place in the presence of numerous members of the Society and guests, among them notably Duke Karl von Hohenberg. The induction ceremony for honorary members is shorter than the one practiced during the swearing-in of regular members, but it is not less solemn. Both new honorary members thanked the College of Masters and the Grand Master with an address



each. We quote the address given by Marquis Gordio Frangipane, Dragon di Castello:

“Onorevole Gran Maestro Drago di Strossmayer, onorevoli confratelli della Società del Drago Croato, Vi ringrazio per avermi accolto nella Vostra prestigiosa Istituzione!

Se vogliamo ricordare brevemente le più importanti vicende che legarono i Frangipane friulani a quelli croati, la più spettacolare di queste fu l'arrivo in Friuli del conte Bartolomeo di Veglia nel 1332. Egli venne in aiuto del parente e alleato Nicolò feudatario libero di Castello e Tarcento, famigliare alla Corte di re Carlo I d'Ungheria e podestà di Trieste. Bartolomeo figlio di Federico assieme a Hermann von Ortemburg e Volvin von Steinberg, era al comando di ben 7000 cavalieri! Nel 1336 Bartolomeo tornò in Friuli pose l'assedio alla Città di Udine e consentì la definitiva vittoria di Nicolò sui feudatari Savorgnan e la città di Udine. Due anni più tardi fu chiamato in Friuli Doimo di Veglia quale arbitro dei patti dotali tra la nipote di Ettore Savorgnan e il figlio di Nicolò. In seguito al tempo in cui il conte Cristoforo, comandava le truppe dell'Imperatore Massimiliano in Friuli, quando fu ferito e preso prigioniero fu ospitato al Castello di Porpetto, prima di essere condotto a Venezia. Ma soprattutto è importante ricordare come l'ultimo dei Frankopan, eroe e poeta, il marchese Fran Krsto fosse in costante rapporto epistolare con il conte Pietro Urbano Frangipane, firmando ogni lettera con la formula di cortesia “servitore e parente”. Fran Krsto ereditò dal marchese Mario, ultimo Frangipane di Roma il marchesato di Nemi e quando nel 1660 si recò a Roma per sposare la marchesa Giulia Naro Patrizi, nipote del Cardinale Antonio Barberini (a sua volta nipote del papa Urbano VIII), volle con sé Orfeo Frangipane figlio del conte Pietro Urbano di Castello e Tarcento.

Orfeo rimase alla corte di Fran Krsto sia a Roma che a Bosilievo per oltre dieci anni, fino a essere coinvolto nella famosa congiura. Riuscì a salvarsi portando via con sé la vedova Giulia Naro, con cinquanta grandi casse piene di gioielli arredi preziosi e documenti. I fuggitivi approdarono con una nave a Monfalcone (qui ebbero un lasciapassare dal Collegio dei responsabili della città, tra cui il conte Gian Mattia di Strassoldo, in seguito governatore di Karstadt, da cui discendo) e passando per Castello di Porpetto raggiunsero infine Roma. Sulla testa di Orfeo l'Imperatore pose una

taglia di 100.000 talleri ed egli dovette fuggire in Francia dove, prima di morire nel 1681, ricevette la visita di suo fratello Nicolò Antonio e nonostante tutto lo consigliò di recarsi a combattere con l'esercito imperiale contro i Turchi che di lì a poco avrebbero posto l'assedio a Vienna, Nicolò Antonio seguì il consiglio di Orfeo che aveva imparato ad amare la Croazia vivendo al fianco di Fran Krsto e temeva per la minaccia turca. Così Nicolò Antonio anziché pensare a vendicare il fratello, combattendo contro gli Asburgo, prese parte alla liberazione di Vienna e inseguì i Turchi con l'esercito imperiale fino alla liberazione di Buda nel 1684.

Essa unisce ai più nobili scopi culturali, volti al progresso umano, la difesa di antichi valori patriottici e cristiani cattolici. Anche oggi, siamo chiamati ad affrontare sfide grandi e paragonabili a quelle degli avi. Essi rischiarono la vita in battaglia per la difesa della patria, i loro valori si riferivano ai concetti di matrice classica e poi cristiana di humanitas e pietas, uniti a un legittimo orgoglio per la propria civiltà. Ai giorni nostri rischiamo di lasciare il posto ad altri obiettivi, quali il profitto e il dominio della tecnologia sull'uomo, che inevitabilmente indeboliscono la sua identità. Allora si comprende come la conoscenza della storia sia più importante che mai. Io porto nel nome Frangipane, un'antichissima tradizione a cui si unisce la testimonianza del millenario archivio famigliare, questo destino di cui non ho alcun merito, antepone oggi all'antica fierezza un'umile e consapevole responsabilità. Tutto ciò, per quanto affascinante è anche un peso, ma in circostanze speciali come questa cerimonia viene alleggerito ed esprime i più alti significati. Vi ringrazio per la Vostra pazienza!”

“Honourable Grand Master Dragon of Strossmayer, honourable brothers of the Croatian Dragon, I thank you for welcoming me into your prestigious institution!

If we want to briefly recall the most important events that linked the Friulian Frangipane to the Croatian ones, the most spectacular of these was the arrival in Friuli of Count Bartolomeo di Veglia (Bartol Krčki) in 1332. He came to the aid of his relative and ally Nicolò, free feudal lord of Castello and Tarcento, family member at the Court of King Charles I of Hungary and mayor of Trieste. Bartholomo, son of Frederick, accompanied by Hermann von Ortemburg and Volvin von



Steinberg, was in command of 7000 knights! In 1336 Bartolomeo returned to Friuli and laid siege to the city of Udine and allowed Nicolò's definitive victory over the Savorgnan feudal lords and the city of Udine. Two years later Doimo di Veglia was called to Friuli as arbiter of the dowry agreements between Ettore Savorgnan's niece and Nicolò's son. Following the time in which Count Cristoforo commanded Emperor Maximilian's troops in Friuli, when he was wounded and taken prisoner; he was hosted at the Porpetto Castle, before being taken to Venice. But above all it is important to remember how the last of the Frankopans, hero and poet, Marquis Fran Krsto was in constant correspondence with Count Pietro Urbano Frangipane, signing each letter with the courtesy formula of "servant and relative". Fran Krsto inherited the marquisate of Nemi from the marquis Mario, the last Frangipane of Rome and when in 1660 he went to Rome to marry the marquise Giulia Naro Patrizi, nephew of Cardinal Antonio Barberini (in turn nephew of Pope Urban VIII), he was accompanied by Orfeo Frangipane son of Count Pietro Urbano of Castello and Tarcento.

Orfeo remained at the court of Fran Krsto both in Rome and in Bosiljevo for over ten years, until he was involved in the famous conspiracy. He managed to save himself by taking Fran Krsto's widow Giulia Naro with him, with fifty large chests full of jewels, precious furnishings and documents. The fugitives landed by ship in Monfalcone (here they received a pass from the College of the city's leaders, including Count Gian Mattia di Strassoldo, later governor of Karstadt/Karlovac, from whom I'm a descendant) and passing through Castello di Porpetto, they finally reached Rome. The Emperor placed a bounty of 100,000 thalers on Orfeo's head and he had to flee to France. There, before dying in 1681, he received a visit from his brother Nicolò Antonio and despite everything, he advised the brother to go and fight with the imperial army against the Turks who would soon lay siege to Vienna. Nicolò Antonio followed the advice of Orfeo, who had learned to love Croatia by living alongside Fran Krsto and who feared the Turkish threat. So Nicolò Antonio, instead of fighting against the Habsburgs to avenge his brother, took part in the liberation of Vienna and pursued the Turks with the imperial army until the liberation of Buda in 1684.

The Society combines the noblest cultural aims, aspiring for human progress, with the defence of ancient patriotic and Catholic

Christian values. Even today, we are called to face challenges that are great and comparable to those of our ancestors. They risked their lives in battle to defend their homeland, their values referred to the classical and then Christian concepts of humanitas and pietas, combined with a legitimate pride in their own civilization. Nowadays we risk giving way to other objectives, such as profit and the domination of technology over man, which inevitably weaken his identity. Then we understand how knowledge of history is more important than ever. I carry in the name Frangipane, an ancient tradition which is combined with the testimony of the thousand-year-old family archive, this destiny for which I have no merit, and today places a humble and conscious responsibility before ancient pride. All this, as fascinating as it is, is also a burden, but in special circumstances like this ceremony it is lightened and expresses the highest meanings. I thank you for your patience!"

The ceremony of the solemn induction of two new honorary members was enhanced musically by the Academic Male Choir of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing of the University of Zagreb, which is the youngest, largest and most awarded choir in Croatia. The conductor and choirmaster of the Choir is maestro Josip degl' Ivellio, Dragon of Brač II. In the draconian tradition the solemn ceremonies end with a reception and joint meal, as was the case on this occasion as well. However, this one was special with a small ceremony taken after the blessing of the food: newly inducted Dragon di Castello started the meal by breaking a loaf of bread – (*frangere panem* – Frangipane). The bread for this occasion was made after a traditional medieval recipe, shaped like in the Frankopan coat of arms.

Next day, on the Croatian Memorial Day of Zrinski and Frankopan (30 April 2024), a visit to the Frankopan castle in Grobnik was organized for Marquis Frangipane and his family. The reception of the Marquis was at the highest level, starting with a honorary cannon shot and welcome speeches by the Mayor of Čavle Municipality, Ivana Cvitan Polić, and the Mayor of the City of Čabar, Antonio Dražović. The home Municipality of Čavle, the city of Čabar and the Cathedral of the Čakavian Assembly of Grobniščina and the Frankopan Guard Grobnik participated in the organiza-



tion of this event at Grobnik. For distinguished guests, in addition to the ceremonial line-up of the Frankopan guard Grobnik and the reading of the welcome proclamation, an interpretive tour of the Church of St. Philip and St. James and the Castle of the City of Grobnik was organized. Fr. Krunoslav Kocijan, guardian of the Shrine of Our Lady of Trsat from Rijeka and his deputy Fr. Marin Grbešić, both from the Franciscan province of Glagolitic St. Francis of Assisi provided solemn prayer in Latin and in Croatian, during the laying of a wreath in memory of Croatian dignitaries Fran Krsto Frankopan and Petar Zrinski. Afterwards, a traditional Frankopan lunch was organized for all guests with a “Frankopan table” and the indispensable *polenta* (cornmeal), *kompiri* (potato) and Grobnik cheese in the Frankulin’s family farm. Heroes die, but the stories about them and their rich cultural legacy of the two most famous Croatian noble families still live on in the spirit of the people who do not forget them. Therefore, Croatian people are proud and privileged to contribute to the stated goal with mentioned activities.

After Grobnik, the dignitaries headed to the city of Krk on the island of the same name. The Day of the Death of Zrinski and Frankopan was commemorated on 30 April 2024 by the Cultural Center of the City of Krk, with a full-day program called “In the city of Krk, the city of your ancestors (... live forever through art and music...)”. At Krk’s town hall special ceremony was held, with welcome speech of the Mayor of the City of Krk Darijo Vasilić, followed by the screening of the documentary film from 1919 about the transfer of the remains of Zrinski and Frankopan from Wiener Neustadt to the Zagreb Cathedral (after being restored and adapted for broadcasting last year, it was here presented to the public for the first time), followed by the panel about the Croatian Memorial Day of the Zrinski and Frankopan with invited talks of Professor Mislav Grgić, the Grand Master of the Society of Brethren of the Croatian Dragon, Maja Parentić, head of the Cultural Center of the City of Krk, and Msgr. Dr. Franjo Velčić, Vicar General of the Diocese of Krk. A holy mass for Petar Zrinski and Fran Krsto Frankopan was

held in the Krk Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, followed by the “Fantasia poetica” concert in the church of St. Quirinus, baroque music following the lyrics of Zrinski and Frankopan, performed by the “Capella Zriniana” Ensemble. The spectacular evening finished with a late supper accompanied by the hosts, musicians and guests, providing opportunity to exchange stories and ideas for future activities.

On the final day, 1 May 2024, Professor Mislav Grgić, the Grand Master of the Society of Brethren of the Croatian Dragon, the Master of Ceremonies Dr. Željko Heimer, the Dragon of the Butchers’ Gate, together with Marquis Gordio Frangipane and his family visited Nova Kraljevica Castle, under the coordination of Jelena Mateševac Skočilić, Director at Kraljevica Tourist Board, and with support of Tomislav Beronić, Dragon of Glagoljica.

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