



South Slavic  
countries and  
England – early  
contacts

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- The people in South Slavic countries are not sufficiently familiar with the early English documents dealing with their past and culture(s).

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- The lack of systematic research vs. missing parts from history
- The first contacts between the two cultures go back to the medieval times.
- Pilgrims, seafarers and merchants
- The first known English pilgrim to travel across the Balkans – **Ingulph** (11<sup>th</sup> century)

- **The English pilgrims** mostly travelled to the Holy Land

- Many pilgrims decided to set for Jerusalem (V. Kostic, 1972)

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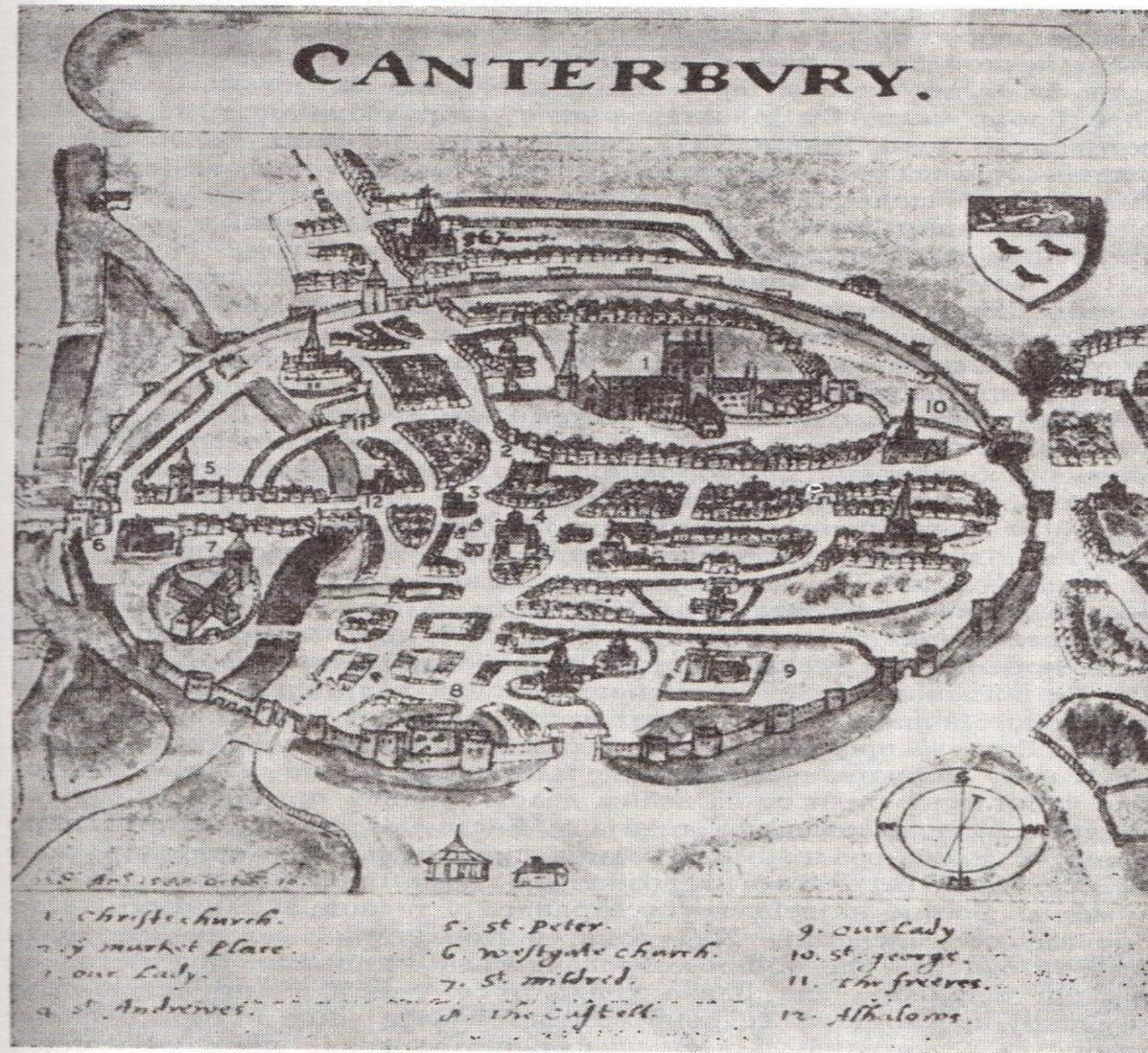
- However, a significant number of pilgrims went on the pilgrimages from the eastern countries to the west

- **West European shrines** (e. g. St. Thomas Becket in Canterbury)

*(St. Thomas Becket is presented on a fresco in the Cathedral of Zadar )*

- The late 14<sup>th</sup> century – the first pilgrimage from the Dubrovnik Republic to Canterbury

Canterbury, 16th c.



- After pilgrims, **seafarers** and **merchants** stepped onto the “scene”.
- At the beginning, they were much more interested in transporting/selling of varied valuable objects than manuscripts and rare books.
- Objects of art were transported as well.

“The exchange of products of artists was chiefly connected with the exchange of commodities. The merchant ships sailing between England and Dubrovnik often carried, in addition to English cloths or Cretan wine, various works of arts. Among the English products which found their way into various places on the Adriatic coast were specimens of plate, richly decorated and embroidered pieces of English clothing, alabaster reliefs produced in Nottingham and other English centres, and pieces of church furniture, such as the brass lectern in the form of an eagle with spread wings, now in the Dubrovnik Cathedral.” (V. Kostić, 1972:501)

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– The Dubrovnik firms in London – from the early 16<sup>th</sup> century.

(*Dubrovnik – Ragusa, the Republic of St. Vlaho*, the protector of Dubrovnik)

– The English merchants occasionally came to some towns on the Adriatic coast (the late 15<sup>th</sup> century)

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- The new ways of communication implied **ecclesiastical politics**
  - Protestant England – desirable for many (e. g. Dalmatian subjects dissatisfied with the Roman Catholic Church issues)

– The early 13<sup>th</sup> century – fleets of **Venetian merchant ships, Flanders (Flemish) galleys**

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– Flanders galleys as “mediators” between the east and the west of Europe.

– The members of the crew – the seafarers from the southeastern part of the Adriatic (***Bar, Kotor, Budva, Zadar, Dubrovnik, Split***)

- Galleys sailed towards the west carrying the exotic spices and wine from the east, valuable objects, the Venetian cloth.
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- From the west they were bringing manufactured products and the English wool necessary for the weaving

- Galleys usually set out in early March (the Channel – some of them sailed to the Flemish ports , such as Amsterdam, the others sailed to England, especially London) (Čoralić, 2012)

- London – a quay of galleys (*Galley Key*) nearby the Tower

- The activities of the crew from the Venetian galleys and the well-to-do men from the south-east of Europe were not always eagerly accepted by the local population
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- In **1456** and **1457** two Venetian merchants were killed in **Lombard Street**

- The reaction of Venetians

the center of their trading was changed – now it was Southampton (the mid-15<sup>th</sup> c. to the mid-16<sup>th</sup> c.)

- In the port of Southampton there was also a quay called Galley Key with the districts where merchants from the Mediterranean were situated

- According to Čoralić, while the galleys were in the port, the captains stayed on board
- The members of the crew were expected to find the lodgings in the town
- The lists of the names of the members of Flanders' galleys
- In **1396 Blaž** from **Zadar**, a member of *Pietro Balbi's* crew
- In **1444 Damjan and Nikola** from **Bar** – members of *Luca Bembo's* crew
- In **1458 Andrija, Ivan, Nikola, Pavao** and **Rado** from **Kotor**

– In 1484 the civic authorities of Southampton prohibited Ivan from *Zadar*, Nikola from *Bar* and **Mihovil** from *Dubrovnik* to manufacture clothes (Čoralić, 2012)

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– From the mid-16<sup>th</sup> c. London again in the focus of attention

– **Henry VIII** limits the export of the wool

\*\*\* *the woollen cloth* → *kariseja*

– The district where men from Dubrovnik (and the Mediterranean) were mainly situated – between **the Thames, the Tower** and **Lombard Street**

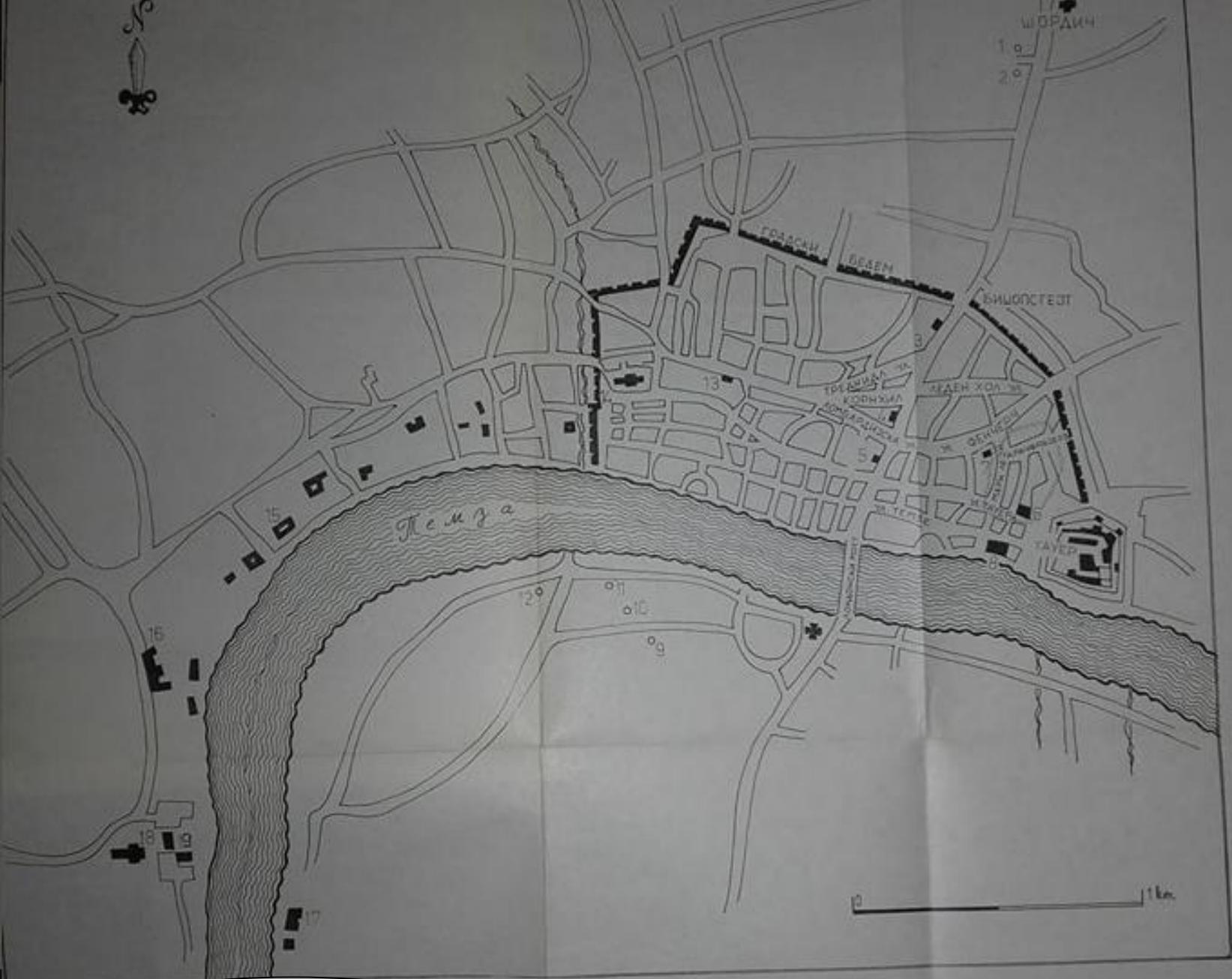
– ~~The golden age of the trade between Dubrovnik and England~~

– **Argosy** – *a big sailing-vessel / clipper*

*(Arragouse, Aragouse, Aragusa, Ragusa)*

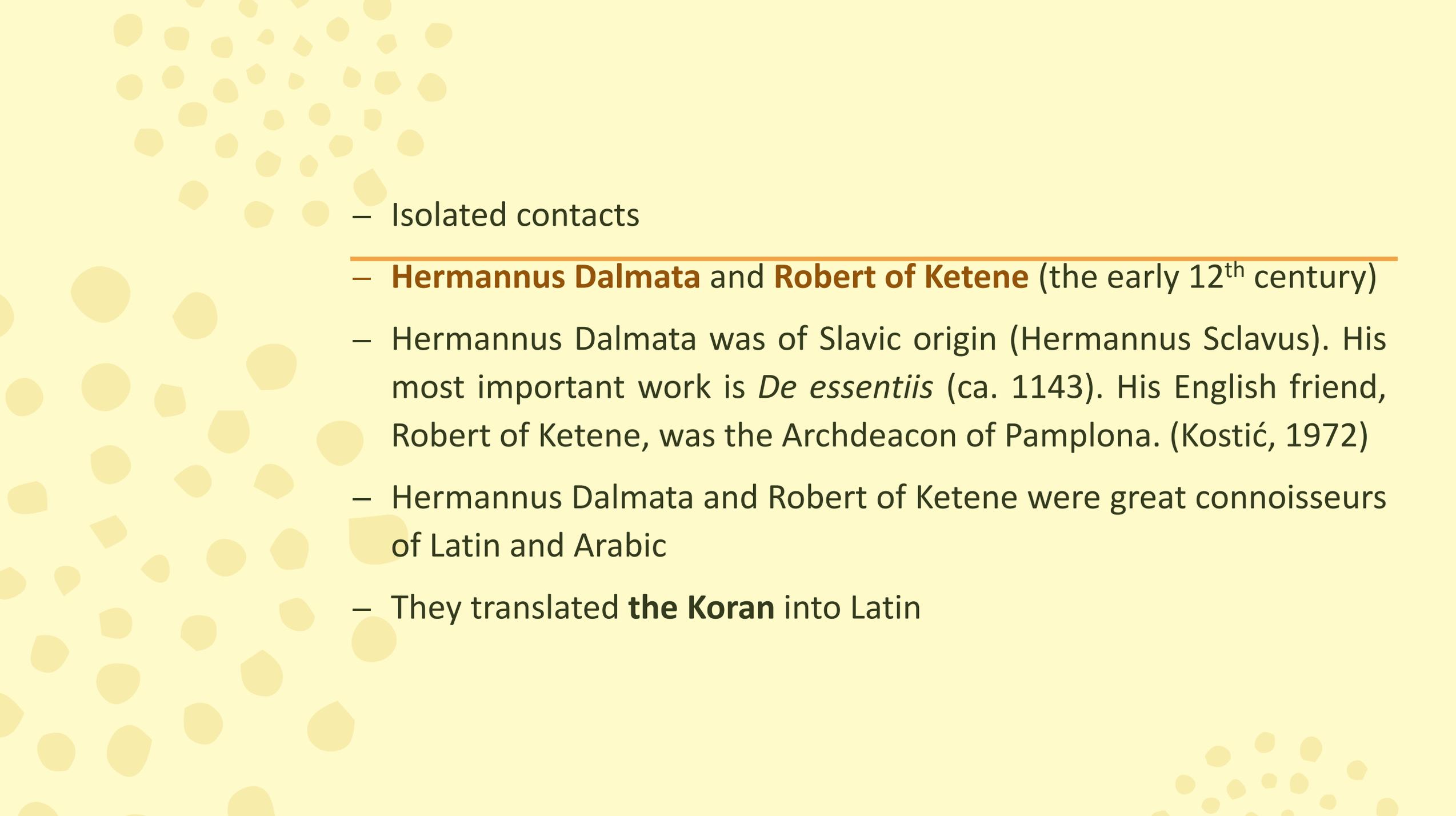
*(\*\*\*argosy → karaka)*

- The term *argosy* was used by **Shakespeare** in his plays ***Taming of the Shrew*** and ***The Merchant of Venice***



*The district in London where people from Dubrovnik / the Mediterranean were situated*





- Isolated contacts

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- **Hermannus Dalmata** and **Robert of Ketene** (the early 12<sup>th</sup> century)

- Hermannus Dalmata was of Slavic origin (Hermannus Sclavus). His most important work is *De essentiis* (ca. 1143). His English friend, Robert of Ketene, was the Archdeacon of Pamplona. (Kostić, 1972)

- Hermannus Dalmata and Robert of Ketene were great connoisseurs of Latin and Arabic

- They translated **the Koran** into Latin



**Hermannus  
Dalmata**  
(on the right)

- Simon Simeonis, a Franciscan Friar, is considered to be the first British travel writer who mentions this region in his travelogues

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- He went on a pilgrimage to **Jerusalem** with Hugo the Illuminator in **1323**
- On their route they passed Pula *with a fine port*, Zadar, where they could see *lovely bonnets for women*, **Ulcinj**, a town which, according to Simeonis, belongs to the king of Raška.

- **Bernardo**, the Archbishop of Dubrovnik – the first educated man active both in England and Ragusa – the late 12<sup>th</sup> c.

*(most probably became the Bishop of Carlisle some time after 1203)*

- The English preacher in Split (the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> c.)
- Visits of the South Slavic scholars to English universities
- Contacts on the “**neutral ground**” – in international centres of education (e. g. *Italian universities*). (Kostić, 1972)