Contra formam suae commissionis: Three examples of abuses by Venetian officers in Albania Veneta (early fifteenth century)

Abstract:

This paper analyses instances of corruption reported in connection with three high Venetian officials of Albania Veneta. The apparent abuse of their mandates to govern the region took place during the first two decades of the fifteenth century, when Venice was establishing direct power over the region. Under such circumstances, these cases were seen as the most infamous misconducts and deeds against the Republic and its subjects. By analysing the conditions that prompted the officials' corruption, I argue that the officials' behaviour was not just due to their personal arrogance or individual ambition, but was also prompted by a set of specific socio-political circumstances that generally facilitated corrupt behaviour. Particularly important among these seem to have been the ambiguity of institutional responsibilities, the collision of old and new governing procedures, and the officers' networks and private connections within the regional society.

Keywords: *Albania Veneta, Venetian administration, Republic of Venice, Middle Ages, corruption, abuse of power.*