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*The Sense of an Ending and the Imagination
of the End: Apocalypse, Disaster and Messianic Time*
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The Second Death of Dubrovnik: Selected Testimonies from the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century on the Fall of the Republic in the Light of Lujo Vojnović's Historiosophical Conception

Abstract

This article offers a discussion of various images of the fall of the Dubrovnik Republic at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The end of the independence of this city-state was a watershed event not only in political terms and in terms of statehood, but also in the social, cultural and economic spheres. The study focuses on the occupation of Dubrovnik by the French and the siege by the Russians and Montenegrins (fighting for supremacy over it), as well as on the hopes associated with the emergence of a new reality. In doing so it analyzes examples of literary testimonies describing the events, phenomena and processes that took place at that time. The article is framed by the fundamental dissertation *Pad Dubrovnika* [The Fall of Dubrovnik] by Lujo Vojnović, which, despite the fact that it was published in 1908, grows out of nostalgia for the Republic and the ideological atmosphere of the nineteenth century.

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The official announcement of the abolition of the Dubrovnik Republic in 1808,¹ preceded by the seizure of the city by the French army two years earlier and the subsequent siege by Russian troops, ended the 450-year-long political independence and freedom of one of the last Mediterranean maritime republics. This long period of Dubrovnik's prosperity, which gave birth to the canonical form of the local state tradition and became mythologized in native literature, was disturbed only by a few events, which, however, did not destroy the city's power or threaten the importance of its political and cultural elite.

The only exception in the otherwise favorable fate of the Republic was the catastrophic earthquake that hit the city in 1667, as a result of which half of its inhabitants lost their lives, and "the city, which was great until yesterday, turned into a devastated cemetery, the recovery of which seemed to be beyond human capabilities" (Rapacka, 1977, p. 227).² This catastrophe – symbolically called by Lujo Vojnović "the first death of Dubrovnik" (*prva smrt Dubrovnika*; Vojnović, 1912a, 1912b) – made the then people of Dubrovnik realize how imperfect and insufficient against the forces of nature are even the best state institutions, material wealth and political importance in the world. In the historiosophical conception of the younger of the Vojnović brothers, it is the first stage of the decline of the Republic, which will experience its final end at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when – as he calls it in parallel to the earthquake – "the second death of Dubrovnik" (*druga smrt Dubrovnika*) took place (Vojnović, 1912a, p. 40).³

¹ There is a vast amount of source literature regarding the course of these events (e.g. Ćosić, 1998, pp. 55–98, 2008, pp. 129–146; Čučić, 2003, 2006, pp. 7–17; V. Foretić, 1980, pp. 434–466; Pederin, 2003, pp. 291–308, 2006, pp. 18–40, 2011, pp. 423–441).

² This and all subsequent quotations have been translated into English by the author of this article.

³ For the sake of accuracy, it should be noted that Vojnović also writes about the "third and perhaps definitive death" of Dubrovnik (*treća i, možda, definitivna smrt*), which took place in his times, that is, at the beginning of the twentieth century. The fall of the Republic did not mean the end of its elites, who managed to "revive" the city in the 1860s. However, according to the author, this revival turned out to be too weak, and the city eventually lost its special character (Vojnović, 1912a, p. 40).

In this article we will focus on “the tragedy of Dubrovnik”, particularly on the events that took place in the years 1806–1808, which were crucial for the fall of the Republic. This relatively short period, which saw the tragedy of the city understood in a narrow sense, includes two “acts” – the seizure of the city by the French, and then the siege of it by the Russians and Montenegrins. However, Lujo Vojnović also proposes a broader understanding of the tragedy of Dubrovnik. Its comprehensive outline is presented in his study *Pad Dubrovnika* [The Fall of Dubrovnik], and its most important “acts” are the years 1806–1808 and 1815 (Vojnović, 1908a, 1908b).

The fateful events that turned out to be the crucial point in the history of Dubrovnik were reflected in the legacy of native authors, rich and diverse in terms of artistic and ideological value. The testimonies, which include literary texts as well as memoirs, reports and historical studies from the beginning of the nineteenth century (most of them were even created in the very center of events), present a faithful and detailed picture of this watershed time for the city. They will become the subject of our particular interest, and they will be considered here in the light of the broadly outlined historiosophical conception of Lujo Vojnović. Analyzing the suggestive images of the city plunged into the conflagration of war and defending its freedom with the remains of its strength, we will also refer to the traditional motifs and topoi of the Dubrovnik culture, which played an important role in the strategy of presenting these events.

The events related to the fall of the Dubrovnik Republic for the first time so greatly undermined the existing conviction about God’s providential favor towards the city (aside from the literature describing the experiences from the times of the tragic earthquake, although even then texts showing the enormity of the tragedy were created). But most of all they destroyed the (overwhelmingly idyllic and utopian) image of Dubrovnik.⁴ We can make a bold statement that from then on, the works that create a vision of Dubrovnik are more nuanced, more cautious in presenting a uniform image of the city, more realistic and critical. Looking at such changes in the image of Dubrovnik, the end point is the work of Ivo Vojnović and his *Trilogy*, which – although created at the beginning of the twentieth

⁴ Dubrovnik was the only center of early modern Croatian literary culture (in the period from Humanism through Baroque to Classicism) which developed the image of the city as a special unit of socio-political and cultural life, a unit with a specific meaning for the life of a community and an individual. More on this topic: Fališevac (2013, pp. 281–296) and M. Foretić (2007, pp. 297–300).

century – reflects the nostalgic image of the city,⁵ an image that will later undergo further deconstruction and denial.

The Fall of the Republic: „The inevitable strike of the sword”⁶

In his two-volume historical study *Pad Dubrovnika*,⁷ Lujo Vojnović treats the events of 1806–1808 as one of the stages in the long and complex process of liquidating the independence of Dubrovnik, in which the official abolition of the Republic by Napoleon was a specific sentence of history. Nevertheless, the great attention of the younger of the Vojnović brothers directed at this part of “the tragedy of Dubrovnik”⁸ confirms not only the importance of those events but also their symbolic meaning, at the same time showing the author’s views on this subject.

This is best evidenced by Vojnović’s introduction to his study, where he notes that although the abolition of the Dubrovnik Republic turned out to be an insignificant event in Napoleon’s campaign (“This is really an

⁵ It is also worth noting that the way the Vojnović brothers perceived Dubrovnik was influenced not only by their father Kosta, but also by Medo and Niko Pucić and Ivan Stojanović (Kunčević, 2015, p. 210).

⁶ The phrase used in this heading comes from a passage in Lujo Vojnović’s study *Pad Dubrovnika* in which he comments on the delusional conviction of the Dubrovnik Senate that in the face of the threat of a foreign invasion it would be possible to rely on neutrality to “turn the inevitable strike of the sword away from the City and State” (*odvratiti od Grada i Države „mač neumitnoga udesa”*) (Vojnović, 1908a, p. 176).

⁷ It is worth recalling that this study is often regarded as a historical commentary on the dramatic trilogy of his elder brother Ivo Vojnović, one of the most outstanding and visionary modernist Croatian dramatists. Antun Gustav Matoš draws attention to the significant parallel between these two fundamental works: “This story is in fact nothing more than a realistic historical commentary on the *Dubrovnika Trilogy*, a commentary that displays the filial, poetic and learned pietism of the Vojnović family for this sun of dignity and aristocracy, intellectualism and idealism, piety and practical wisdom, for this eternally sunken sun of the small and dear city of Dubrovnik; this pietism and this love for a homeland and a fallen free culture are second to none” (Matoš, 1973, p. 191). The first drama in the trilogy, *Allons Enfants!*, shows the political decline of the Dubrovnik political elite; the second, *Suton* [Twilight], focuses on the socio-economic decline of the city; and the third, *Na taraci* [On the Terrace], introduces the moral dimension of the decline of the Dubrovnik community. Although these dramas have received considerable scholarly attention, the relations between the brothers’ works, indicated in the above quotation from Matoš, have still not been fully explored.

⁸ Lujo Vojnović uses the phrase “Dubrovnik tragedy” (*dubrovačka tragedija*) in his yet unpublished notes, which are a great source of knowledge about the origins of his work as well as his historical and ideological inspirations when writing his study *Pad Dubrovnika*. The manuscript of this documentation is kept in the State Archive in Dubrovnik (184. RO: Lujo Vojnović, A23 and XI, box 2 and 3).

insignificant event in the Napoleonic epic”; *Ovaj dogagjaj u Napoleonovoj epopeji zaista neznatan*; Vojnović, 1908a, p. ix), it clearly showed the first signs of errors and excessive ambitions of the French leader, which led him to a catastrophe “for which one cannot find a worthy word” (*za koje se ne može da nagje dostojna riječ*; Vojnović, 1908a, p. ix). At the same time, on the level of the moral history of the epoch, the author notes the impact of these events on the person of Napoleon himself, namely “the beginning of blackout, imbalance in the Imperial head” (*početak pomrčine, kvarenje ravnoteže u Cezarovoj glavi*; Vojnović, 1908a, p. ix). Therefore, the fall of Dubrovnik considered in the context of universal history is one thing, and it is another one in relation to the history of the city itself, its inhabitants and the peoples to which they belong:

For us, however, the fall of the Dubrovnik State means something else and at the same time something more: it means breaking the tradition that connected us with the emergence of free cities, with the bourgeois life of free and civilized Europe, but also the loss of the one-of-a-kind harbor where our tribe, so miraculously rich with intellectual energy, but poor in state concepts, was represented in front of civilization and various interests, ideas and trends of the latest times. (Vojnović, 1908a, p. x)⁹

Thus, noting the importance of the fall of Dubrovnik and the abolition of the Republic on the political, social and cultural plane of community life, Vojnović also expresses a firmly critical assessment of the ideological atmosphere of Napoleonic France, which was responsible for that situation. It was “the brutal hand of the centralist Revolution” (*brutalna ruka centralistične Revolucije*) that wiped out “a thousand-year successful political project of an enlightened, working and benevolent ruling and bourgeois class” (*hiljadugodišnji uspjeti politički pokušaj jedne prosvijetljene, radne i korisne vlasteoske i gragjanske klase*; Vojnović, 1908a, p. x).

Let us recall that under the Franco-Austrian peace treaty of Pressburg, concluded on December 26, 1805, the Austrian emperor ceded Dalmatia and Istria to France. After the withdrawal of Croatian border guards, the French troops, which so far had stationed in Italy, entered and occupied the entire Adriatic coast except the Croatian Littoral, Dubrovnik and the Bay

⁹ *Za nas pak, propast Dubrovačke Državice znači nešto drugo i nešto više: znači prekid tradicije koja nas vezivaše sa postanjem slobodnijeh općina, sa gragjanskijem životom slobodne i kulturne Evrope, gubitak jedinstvenoga pristana u kome naše pleme, za čudo bogato intelektualnim energijama, a oskudno državnim koncepcijama, zastupano bješe pred civilizacijom i mnogostručnim interesima, idejama i strujama novijeh vremena.*

of Kotor. The Russians and their Montenegrin allies were still in Dalmatia. In the game between the French and the Russo-Montenegrin forces, the only free (not yet conquered) areas were Dubrovnik and the Bay of Kotor, which was soon captured by the Slavic forces. On the other hand, Dubrovnik was deceitfully seized by the French army of General Jacques Lauriston on May 26, 1806, and saw the end of centuries of its independence and freedom. Here is how Lujo Vojnović, describing the scene of two Dubrovnik senators going to meet the French general in front of the city gate, comments on that event:

On this May day, which was drawing to a close, Idea met Force, unarmed, in the form of two old gentlemen, who carried a thousand years of freedom on their stooped backs. Everyone felt the tragedy of that moment. (Vojnović, 1908a, p. 187)¹⁰

Aside from his deliberations, Vojnović does not miss a chance to explain the baseless and undocumented rumors that the Rector of Dubrovnik himself, with all the attributes of his power, was to meet General Lauriston. Considering such an event to be an impossible breach of state ceremonial and centuries-old tradition, and even describing it as a “picturesque scene” (*slikovit prizor*; Vojnović, 1908a, p. 188), he reminds the reader that in the entire history of Dubrovnik there were only three exceptions – during the visit of the Serbian Tsar Dušan (1349), Emperor Sigismund (1396) and Pope Pius II (1464).

In his study, Vojnović pays a lot of attention to the causes that led to the capitulation of Dubrovnik in 1806. He considers this complex issue primarily in the context of the historical conditions of the city-state, among which he attaches particular importance to political and economic determinants. Dubrovnik – as he notes – lost the ability to understand and conduct war centuries ago, developing in its place “the art of diplomacy without the sanction of force” (*izgubio smisao i ideju rata zamjenivši ih sa diplomatisanjem bez sankcije sile*; Vojnović, 1908a, p. 208). To illustrate this disastrous policy in the long run, he even invokes an official document from the sixteenth century in which its canonical formula was explicitly expressed: “we hope that with the help of God, our work and good guards we will defend our city” (*jer se nadamo da ćemo pomoću božjom, našim radom i dobrim stražama sačuvati glavni naš grad*), and he categorically

¹⁰ U onaj majski dan, koji već naginjaše k zapadu, Ideja sretaje Silu, bez oružja, u obliku dva stara gospara koji, na savijenijem legjima, nošahu hiljadu godina slobode. Svak osjećaše tragičnost onoga časa.

states that it could faithfully reflect the situation of Dubrovnik at the beginning of the nineteenth century (Vojnović, 1908a, p. 209). In his opinion, the economic strength of the city, which was achieved as a result of such policy, disproportionately exceeded its defense capabilities, which ultimately brought the French, and then Russians and Montenegrins to the city walls (Vojnović, 1908a, p. 194). In this context, Napoleon's actions turned out to be not without significance, because – according to the author of *Pad Dubrovnika* – against the official assurances of the command of the French army, in fact he ordered his generals to simulate a march to the Bay of Kotor and at the same time conduct negotiations with the city authorities, which would allow them to approach Dubrovnik (Vojnović, 1908a, pp. 206–207). The behavior of the urban elite is clearly classified as “silent temporary abdication” (*prećutna trenutna abdikacija*), as a result of which “the last state of the Old System in Europe” (*posljednja država Staroga Režima u Evropi*) accepted without any resistance “soldiers of the Revolution” (*pješaci Revolucije*), capturing Dubrovnik “to the tune of a song of freedom” (*uz akorde jedne slobodnjačke pjesme*), i.e. *La Marseillaise* (Vojnović, 1908a, p. 210).

The tragic situation of Dubrovnik in the face of its occupation by the French and Russians was evidenced, among others, by dramatic reactions among its political elite. One of the senators, Dživo (Ivan) Kaboga, proposed a mass transfer of the city's inhabitants and the most valuable riches to one of the islands in the Aegean Sea (to be obtained from the Turkish Sultan). This “really radical and romantic” (*prijedlog doista radikalan i – romantičan*; Kasumović, 1902, p. 364) project of creating a new Dubrovnik might not have been entirely new. As Vojnović points out, according to unconfirmed accounts, a similar idea had been put forward at least twice before in times of great danger to the city: after the earthquake of 1667 and in the face of the Turkish invasion of Dubrovnik in 1678 (Vojnović, 1908a, pp. 178–179).

The causes of the fall of Dubrovnik interested many patriotic authors from the city, both during the crisis of the Republic and at the time of its tragic fall. Ivo Natali, a patrician from Dubrovnik, hailing from a respected family that was ennobled after the earthquake of 1667, went down in the history of his city as one of its most important modern chroniclers: he authored the dissertation *Storia di Ragusa* [A History of Ragusa], written in Italian. This extremely interesting work, still untapped in terms of academic study, is a rich source on events from the beginning of the nineteenth century. The originality and insight of Natali's assessments and diagnoses inspired

Lujo Vojnović when he was writing his own study on the last years of the Republic.

Natali saw the reasons behind the fall of the Republic in what built its power and status,¹¹ which was maritime trade. But the ability to conduct extensive trade cooperation – as he immediately notes – in the absence of strong institutional foundations, leads to the weakening of republicanism, the sense of community and political independence (Natali, 2008, p. 199). A state that values freedom and makes it the basic determinant of its policy, striving to maintain its independence will try to limit the wealth accumulated by trading. Referring to the Spartan lawgiver Lycurgus, Natali even unequivocally points out that freedom requires one to be modest and poor, which, however – he is aware of this – is nowadays opposed by those who believe that the benefits of trade enable the growth of prosperity, satisfaction and progress, that is, everything that builds the contemporary understanding of civilization (Natali, 2008, p. 200). In his deliberations on this subject, Natali uses one more example from ancient history; namely, he compares Carthage and Rome, two powers of the ancient world. The first of them – in his opinion – built its importance thanks to trade, and the second one – as a result of wars it conducted. Despite the clear advantage of Carthage over Rome in many areas, the Phoenician city eventually lost this rivalry “due to the commercial spirit (opposed to) the spirit of freedom and patriotism” (*čemu je uzrok trgovački duh (protivan) duhu slobode i domoljublja*; Natali, 2008, p. 201).

The abolition of the Dubrovnik Republic was officially announced at the beginning of 1808. The ordinance issued by General Auguste Marmont, which officially came in response to the hostile actions of the people of Dubrovnik against France, proclaimed the decision to dissolve the Dubrovnik government and the Senate (Vojnović, 1908b, p. 79), which Napoleon himself had accepted in a letter to the general. The sentence of history carried out by Napoleon (Rapacka, 1997, p. 40) – who smashed the “collective soul of Dubrovnik, after so many shocking events” (*kolektivna dubrovačka duša, nakon tih potresnijeh događaja*; Vojnović, 1908b, p. 96) – could be some kind of satisfaction for the people of Dubrovnik: their city

¹¹ These issues would later appear most often in various nineteenth-century writings on the subject. A similar view would be later presented by the Dubrovnik authors Matija Ban and Đorđe Nikolajević, and an author not related to Dubrovnik – Ante Starčević. See Kubik (2015, pp. 250–282) for more detailed information about Dubrovnik in Croatian and Serbian cultural discourses in the first half of the nineteenth century.

outlived its great competitor Venice by eleven years (the fall of the Venetian Republic took place in 1797). Both Mediterranean republics shared the same fate that Napoleon had prepared for them using the same proven means.¹² The omnipresent sense of defeat and the end of a certain history would be visible not only in the testimonies and awareness of eyewitnesses of these events, but also in the memory of many representatives of the later generations of the Dubrovnik intelligentsia. Almost a century later, Ivan Stojanović, in his study *Dubrovačka književnost* [Literature of Dubrovnik], notes that in 1808 Dubrovnik dies “as a result of the terrible judgment of the European conqueror (Napoleon), and from that day Dubrovnik disappears from world history” (*strašnijem „fiat“ evropskog dobitnika (Napoleona), i od onoga dana Dubrovnika nestade u povijesti svijeta*; Stojanović, 1900, p. 22).

Sulla decadenza di Ragusa

An extremely interesting testimony of the fall of the Republic is the poetry collection (translated into Croatian) entitled *Šest soneta o propasti Dubrovnika* [Six Sonnets on the Fall of Dubrovnik]; the work is still unexplored in terms of academic study.¹³ The author – who remains anonymous for fear of censorship or repressions by the new authorities – makes himself known in his work as a traditionalist and “militant Christian believer”; it is possible that he was a church dignitary or a monk representing high literary culture.

In this artistically and ideologically mature text, skillfully using conventional means of imagery and poetic expression, Dubrovnik is presented through the prism of the past and present situation, to which the lyrical subject assigns unambiguous valuation. Nostalgia, reflection and pride, associated with the glorious past, are confronted with piercing regret and sadness, which are a reaction to the current situation

¹² This refers to the insidious policy of France, which in both cases carried out the abolition of the Republic in the name of the alleged defense of the interests of the inhabitants, acting as a judge and conciliator. Referring to this issue, Vojnović makes an ironic comment that “defending one’s political existence against the French is a great, unforgivable sin” (*braniti svoju političku egzistenciju od Francuza veliki je, neoprostivi grijeh*; Vojnović, 1908b, p. 90).

¹³ The manuscript of this unique anonymous work, kept in the library of the Franciscan monastery in Dubrovnik and symbolically entitled *Sulla decadenza di Ragusa* [On the Decline of Ragusa] in the original, was first published in the calendar *Epidauritano* in 1908, and then also in the journal *Sanctus Blasius* (1938, No. 1).

in the city. It is a confrontation – as Lujo Vojnović puts it – between the Force and the Idea, between violence, represented by the enemy with military means and (much more dangerous) means of cultural influence, and the values of freedom and independence, which embody the city. It is worth noting that the culprit of this situation (perceived to be not only outside but also inside the city) is not precisely defined; he is even deliberately depersonalized and presented as an abstract and uncontrollable Force. The main cause of the fall of Dubrovnik is the poison “shamelessly shared by strangers” – alien orders and customs: “It destroys so many treasures of yours / The poison that strangers shamelessly share!” (*Toliko blaga tvoja uništava / Otrov što strane bestidne ga dijele!*) (“Šest soneta”, 2006, p. 62). This is what poisons the axiological and ethical system (especially faith), which is the basis for the functioning and progress of the city, and this is what spreads corruption and sin, leading to the slow death of Dubrovnik (Ćosić, 2008, pp. 134–135).

The work, whose meaning emerges from the entire collection, shows a range of feelings, mainly the fears of the lyrical subject, who is experiencing the current difficult condition of the city. The first two sonnets contain a poetic attempt to diagnose the situation of Dubrovnik after its takeover by French troops, which, however, remain unnamed. The alien threat is depersonalized and shown in an entirely abstract way, thus conveying its insidiousness and power of influence. It is difficult to oppose the poison which, administered in the form of “foreign laws and customs” (*inozemni spisi i običaji*), deprives the city of the attributes that have determined its greatness for centuries: the cult of reason, love of freedom and respect for faith. All of this means a slow and unconscious death for the city: “And you drink death without knowing it” (*Te piješ smrt, a ne znaš da je tako*) (“Šest soneta”, 2006, p. 61). Regret and longing for the irretrievably lost past on the one hand, and fears about the present on the other, are revealed in the uncertainty of the speaker, and on the textual level they are expressed through numerous (essentially rhetorical) questions.

In the third, fourth and fifth sonnet, his despair takes the form of a jeremiad and reaches its peak of intensity. The personified Dubrovnik, in some passages reminiscent of Christ exposed to public judgment and then crucified and abandoned by God, contradicts the previous image of its dignity. Regret over the lost freedom, faith and cultural wealth of Dubrovnik ultimately leads the speaker to an apocalyptic image of destruction and condemnation of the city. Addressing the citizens (with the term “stupid people”; *čeljadi glupa*), he grieves over the death of faith,

which has allowed “crazy and Asian customs” (*običaji ludi, / azijski*) to spread in Dubrovnik. The silence, which the lyrical subject reproaches God for, seems to be a harbinger of fire, crimes and human suffering that destroy the city: “Can’t you see the whip and hear it blow? / Down it comes, and fire brings carnage; / O what horrors you will experience!” (*Zar bič ne vidiš i ne čuješ prasak? / Već silazi, i požar, pokolj šalje; / Kakve ćeš tek strahote doživjeti!*) (“Šest soneta”, 2006, p. 63).

In the last, sixth, sonnet, the lyrical subject experiences the tragedy of the city personally, accepting the blows of fate. However, the final tercet in this sonnet (which also closes the whole of the collection) conveys the hope of regaining the former power and glory, the hope that still remains (although dormant) in those few who are still proud of the old days. It can be assumed that those people will preserve the memory of the city (seen as a “nest of grace”; *milosti gnjezdo*) and carry its image for future generations, thus ensuring its salvation.

Innocent City and Barbarians at Its Gates

The testimony of these events left by Vlaho Stulli in his work known as *Bilješka o opsadi Dubrovnika 1806* [Note on the Siege of Dubrovnik in 1806] (the title of the Latin original is *Nonnulla de obsidione Racusae*),¹⁴ presents the siege of the city by the Russians and Montenegrins, as well as the withdrawal of the French, who had previously occupied the city. The “Innocent City” (*nevini Grad*) – as the author calls it – is presented in a tragic time of its struggle against two invaders from two different civilizations. While the French troops under the command of General Lauriston conquered the city “with contemptible and treacherous” deception (*sramotno i na prevaru*; Stulli, 2008, p. 147), destroying its political freedom forever, the Russian troops and the Montenegrin *chetas* accompanying them carried out “extensive devastation and plunder of Dubrovnik’s wealth” (*opća i golema pljačka dubrovačkog bogatstva*; Stulli, 2008, p. 147). This was – as Vojnović also notes – the “doomsday battle” for “Dubrovnik’s fame and wealth” (*sjaj i bogatstvo Dubrovnika*;

¹⁴ The text, which was written immediately after the Russo-Montenegrin siege of the city, is kept in the National Library in Vienna. One of the copies is kept in the State Archive in Dubrovnik (*Rukopisna ostavština don Luke Pavlovića*, notebook, No. 40) (Čosić, 2008, p. 144). Stulli is also the author of the *Diary*, which also tells about the events related to the fall of the Republic; more on this topic: Stojan (1994, pp. 101–116).

Vojnović, 1908a, p. 232). However, let us return to Stulli's report and quote the following passage:

The picture was the same everywhere: dirt from the devastation, the houses were either burned or completely empty. The villages were deserted. There were no herds or any other animals in the fields. Everything was completely ravaged by barbaric madness and plunder. (Stulli, 2008, p. 148)¹⁵

The above-mentioned picture of destruction and looting shows the legitimacy of Ivo Natali's views quoted earlier, according to which – let us recall – wealth does not support the possibility of maintaining political independence. This opinion is shared by Vojnović, who recalls the images with which the invaders came to Dubrovnik. They thought that they would find “golden towers” (*kule zlata*) there, and the city itself was to be “one little Paris” (*jedan mali Pariz*) for them. The magically sounding name of Dubrovnik was “synonymous with the centuries-old, mysterious accumulation of treasures, a kind of small European Mexico” (*sinonim mnogovjekovnoga, tajanstvenoga gomilarja blaga, neke vrste malog evropskog Meksika*; Vojnović, 1908a, p. 194).

For Stulli, the barbarity of invaders from the East, for whom the most important goal was to gain as much spoils as possible, was confirmed primarily by the enormous destruction of the culture of Dubrovnik. The apocalyptic description of their “achievements” culminates in the passage about the plunder of the monastery of St. James and the profanation of the relics of St. James and St. Philip, and in one about the destruction of the library in Dubrovnik, which the great Alberto Fortis admired during his stay in the city: “Finally, because of great greed, they also plundered the library, from which most of the better books were removed, while the rest was left, destroyed and torn” (*Najposlije su, zbog velike pohlepe, opljačkali i knjižnicu, iz koje je bio odnesen veći i bolji dio knjiga, dok je preostali dio bio ostavljen, oštećen i rastrgan*; Stulli, 2008, p. 148).

In his vivid description of the siege of Dubrovnik, Stulli does not spare criticism of the French, especially General Lauriston, whom he directly accuses of ineptitude and plain fear that prevented him from defending the captured city. Commenting on the same topic, Vojnović points out that the French simply fell into a primitive ambush set by the Russians

¹⁵ *Svugdje je bila ista slika: prljavština od pustošenja, kuće su bile ili spaljene, ili potpuno prazne. Sela su opustošena. Na poljima nije bilo niti stada, niti krda životinja. Sve je bilo potpuno opustošeno zbog barbarske ludosti i grabeža.*

(Vojnović, 1908a, p. 216). Deeming Lauriston's military and organizational abilities completely inadequate to the difficult conditions in which he had to fight, Stulli notes that (with the deliberate passivity of the Russian troops) a small number of soldiers commanded by the French was enough to capture the city following – as Vojnović puts it – “luckily a successful offensive” and “a safe military march” (*sretno uspjeli raid; bezopasna vojnička šetnja*; Vojnović, 1908a, p. 215), which at the same time encouraged the attack of a larger and more formidable opponent. This was the direct cause that brought destruction, hunger and omnipresent fear on Dubrovnik,¹⁶ which – as the author does not fail to emphasize – was experienced by the French general himself. “He was shaking with fear,” writes Stulli, “hidden in the basement, crying from time to time, like a woman unfit for war!” (*drhtao od straha, skriven u podrumu kuće, svako malo plačući, poput žene nesposobne za rat!*; Stulli, 2008, p. 149). After these words, he unequivocally states: “This is how Napoleon's man conducted war! That's how he defended the City!” (*Tako je Napoleonov pomoćnik ratovao! Tako je branio Grad!*; Stulli, 2008, p. 149). Vojnović, in turn, explicitly states that “the Dubrovnik expedition” (*dubrovačka ekspedicija*) belongs to the category of Napoleonic expeditions, which in their assumptions and specific conditions “get out of the Emperor's control” (*otimahu se Carevoj kontroli*; Vojnović, 1908a, p. 233).

On the other hand, Stulli also writes positively about the French, not only about their military actions against the Russians, but also about their defense of the city: one of its ports – as he puts it – was bathed in fire as if in a “terrible eruption of the hot Vesuvius” (*strašna eksplozija gorućeg Vezuva*), and in the hills one could hear “enemy screams resembling the barking of animals” (*krici neprijatelja, koji su nalikovali urlikanju zvižeri*). He also writes about General Gabriel Molitor, whose arrival from Split to help General Lauriston he views as salvation for Dubrovnik: “It would have been terrible if the brave commander Molitor had not been there with his strong hand, which does not know defeat, and if he had not come quickly from

¹⁶ In Vojnović's opinion, the ease with which the French entered Dubrovnik and then left it proves that the siege of the city and its bombing by the Russians were in fact aimed more at Dubrovnik itself than against the French troops, and that “the dark forces were more likely to take revenge on the Republic and hand it over to plunder and destruction than to make a decisive stroke against the French command” (*neke tmaste sile rade [su] bile više osvetiti se Republici i predati je pljački i raspu, nego li nanijeti francuskim gjeeralima usudan udarac*; Vojnović, 1908a, p. 216).

Split with his soldiers to the rescue of the state, of the freedom of the City” (*Strašno bi bilo da hrabar zapovjednik Molitor nije snažnom rukom, koja ne zna za poraz, bio na spas države, na slobodu Grada, te da sa svojim vojnicima nije brzo došao iz Splita*; Stulli, 2008, p. 149).

Tearful and Bitter Defense of the City

Another example, this time strictly poetic, describing the doomsday of the siege of Dubrovnik is Urban Appendini’s Latin elegy entitled “Svetome Vlahu” (“Ad S. Blasium”) [To Saint Blaise].¹⁷ The brother of the more famous Francesco Marija (an eminent philologist, historian and poet) – as he testifies in his own commentary – wrote it “during fifteen very dangerous days” (*u onih petnaest vrlo pogibelnih dana*) of the siege, thus discovering “the great advantage of poetry” (*vrlo velika korist poezije*; Appendini, 2008, p. 154).

The elegy, describing the siege of Dubrovnik and the destruction it suffered during the fights for its conquest, is addressed – as its title suggests – to the patron saint of the city, St. Blaise.¹⁸ The author’s intention is clearly visible already in the opening lines, where he wants to draw the saint’s attention – so far he has been seemingly deaf to the prayers of the inhabitants – to the fact that the “wild enemy” (*divlji neprijatelj*; Appendini, 2008, p. 151) lurks for Dubrovnik from the sea and land, wanting to destroy it: “The savage enemy threatens a siege, sitting on top of the Srđ hill, and from the other end with many ships encircles our sea” (*divlji neprijatelj pritišće opsadom, sjedeći na visokom vrhu Srđa, i iz drugog kraja mnogim nam lađama naše more naširoko okružuje, spreman da nas upropasti!*; Appendini, 2008, p. 151). Probably expecting a miraculous intervention, the lyrical subject even describes the city as the temple of St. Blaise being hit by enemy fire. Interestingly, in this text the city functions not only in a clearly articulated sacred perspective, but also as a space of civilization and culture as opposed to the “wild and unbridled nation that hides on the Cadmean rocks” (*surov i neobuzdan narod koji živi preko kadmejskih hridi*; Appendini, 2008, p. 151). This aspect

¹⁷ The text was published in the collection *Carmina: Accedunt selecta illustrium Ragusinorum poemata* [Carmina: A Collection of Selected Poems by Famous Ragusians] in 1811 (Čosić, 2008, p. 144).

¹⁸ As Luko Paljetak notes, Dubrovnik chose Saint Blaise as its patron because of the miracle that the city experienced in 972, when the Venetians wanted to conquer the city by trickery, just as the French would do later (Paljetak, 2001, pp. 5–6). More on this topic also: Fališevac (2007, pp. 133–156).

is also emphasized by Vojnović, mainly with reference to the Montenegrins, who – driven by “the impulse of a patriarchal mountain nation” (*nagon patrijarhalnoga, gorskoga naroda*) – could not control their “innate need to plunder” (*neodoljiva i urogjena potreba pljačke*). On the other hand, under the circumstances which made them unable to conduct regular warfare, they performed well in the difficult mountain terrain, for which they were praised by their Russian command (Vojnović, 1908a, pp. 234, 248).

Despite the hopes of people who fled from the endangered area to the city itself, treating its walls as a guarantee of greater security, Dubrovnik has become an arena of an apocalyptic catastrophe, affecting every rich patrician and every poor urban man, and even those who gathered in prayer in the Cathedral of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. The elegiac tendency of the lyrical subject to express the feelings and experiences of the city community (which at the level of language is revealed in the use of the plural) also displays a desire to create a specific community experience that is to be permanently recorded in the minds of the inhabitants of the city:

At the same time, a terrible sound could be heard reaching the stars; according to traditional customs it is the joy of victory; it soaked up in us, thereby multiplying our fear. We saw the terrible fires burning at night and during the day, and we saw the roofs of large houses outside the city, which had taken much effort to build, destroyed by swirling flames. (Appendini, 2008, p. 152)¹⁹

In this vivid and suggestive vision Dubrovnik turns into a *locus horridus*. Left at the mercy of barbarian invaders, the city is waiting only – it would seem – for certain death. The city walls are shaking from artillery fire, and the roofs of houses, engulfed in flames, are collapsing with a great crash. The author’s attention is also directed at people who – in search of shelter – hide in dark cellars to escape from “the jaws of horrible death, which, armed with a hissing whip, has already taken many, inflicting terrible wounds on them” (*ralje užasne smrti, koja je naoružana šištajućim bičem već mnoge otela zadavši strašnu ranu*; Appendini, 2008, pp. 152–153). In the face of this unimaginable catastrophe, everyone becomes equal: “The rich man laments that everything he had is destroyed, and the poor man withers pale from insatiable hunger, and laments that he has no supply of a little water with

¹⁹ *Ujedno je do zvijezda išao jezivi zvuk, kojim su se, slaveći po očinskom običaju veseli trijumf, radovali udvostručavati naš strah. Vidjeli smo grozne požare kako gore i noću, i danju, i vidjeli smo brzim vrtložima plamenova uništene krovove velikih kuća pred gradom koje je dugotrajni posao bio sagradio.*

which he could quench his thirst in his dry mouth” (*Bogataš oplakuje što mu je sve uništeno, a siromah malaksava blijed od neutažive gladi, i žalosti se što nema zalihu malo vode kojom bi od suhijh ustiju mogao odagnati žeđ*) (Appendini, 2008, p. 153).

The arrival of French troops under the command of General Molitor, interpreted as an intervention of St. Blaise, moved by the enormity of his city’s misfortunes, becomes a turning point in the campaign for the siege of Dubrovnik. The general is motivated, on the one hand, by the patron saint of the city, ordering him to rush to save Dubrovnik, and on the other hand by the fame of the invincible Napoleon he serves. The arrival of General Molitor causes panic among the ranks of the invaders, who abandon their spoils and weapons and flee in fear; it also brings joy and hope in the hearts of the martyred defenders of the city. The French savior is presented not only as an efficient commander, but also as a compassionate man, moved by the enormity of the destruction in the city:

All fear is gone when the French appear on the highest peak of Srđ and join the brave forces. They are called on to fight by Molitor; Molitor of whom no one is better loved when sitting in the middle of a gathering, nor is anyone braver when he is the first to lead a tight force into battle. Blaise orders him to hurry to save us, and he is accompanied by the glory of the invincible Napoleon. How mercifully he cries looking at so many damaged roofs! How he sighs over our sufferings! And how he thanks for what has been done with courageous heart and what has been ordered by the wise Lauriston, protecting the city entrusted to him with little force to pave the safe path of the winner! (Appendini, 2008, p. 153)²⁰

The above-outlined convention of describing the besieged Dubrovnik is also present in the testimony of Miho Radilović entitled *Bilješka o događajima iz 1806*. [A Note on the Events of 1806] (title of the Italian original: *Memoria delle cose successe nell’an. 1806*. [Memory of the Things that Happened in the Year 1806]).²¹ In this text we can find – as in the case

²⁰ *Već je sav strah nestao, već se na najvišem vrhu brda Francuzi pojavljuju i u hrabroj četi pristupaju. Njih klikćuće vodi Molitor; Molitor od kojeg nitko nije voljeniji kad sjedi usred skupa, niti itko hrabriji kad prvi natismute muževe vodi u rat. Vlaho mu zapovijeda da nas požuri spasiti, a goni ga slava nepobjedivog Napoleona. Kako blag plače, gledajući toliko srušenih krovova kuća! Kako on uzdiše nad našim nevoljama! I kako isti hvali ono što je hrabrim srcem učinio i što je zapovjedio mudri Lauriston, čuvajući povjereni grad dosta neznatnom silom da odatle prostre siguran put pobjedniku!*

²¹ The text was originally included in the baptism register of Orašac parish for the year 1806 (Ćosić, 2008, p. 145). According to unconfirmed information, it was published for the first time in 1895 (Vojnović, 1908a, p. 177).

of the previously discussed one – an apocalyptic image of the city that was barbarously destroyed and plundered by the Russians and their Montenegrin allies. The French are presented “positively” in this text, and their entry into the city is presented as one of the stages of a military operation forced by the circumstances in which they found themselves.²² Meanwhile, the main focus of criticism is directed against the Russians, who immediately after landing on the coast began to commit “enemy deeds” (*neprijateljstva*; Radilović, 2008, p. 156). Over time, their actions grew stronger, foreshadowing what would happen to the city itself:

When the enemy took over the land and laid siege to the city, it is not possible to say what kind of misery he inflicted on all sides. Gruž and Rieka were the first settlements to experience his barbarity. (Radilović, 2008, p. 156)²³

The most important and interesting part of Radilović’s testimony is the apocalyptic description of the destruction of the city. Its expressiveness aims to emphasize that there are no adequate means to convey the enormity of the suffering:

Who could describe the way these rogues invade houses, break, smash, burn and do all that barbarism brings to their minds. Where they do not find gold or silver, they catch the poor unfortunates who did not have time to shelter somewhere, they beat them, torture them in various ways, to make them confess in pain wherever there are some hidden things. (Radilović, 2008, p. 156)²⁴

²² In his study, Vojnović refers to the testimony of Toma Basilević, one of the deputies sent by the Dubrovnik authorities to meet General Lauriston on his way to the Bay of Kotor. According to the report of this pro-French figure (both in the field of politics and culture), the commander-in-chief of the French troops was marching “against the Russians” and wanted to cross the territory of Dubrovnik “with the permission” of the Senate as a “friend and defender” (*on maršuje put Boke kotorske protiv Rusa i traži dozvolu od Senata da progje sa svojom vojskom, kao prijatelj i zaštitnik*; Vojnović, 1908a, p. 182). As Vojnović notes, Basilević’s pro-French orientation contributed to the creation of “an unjustified Jacobin but also a Russian legend” (*neosnovanost žakobinskog, pa i ruskog predanja*; Vojnović, 1908a, p. 195) about the alleged voluntary handing over of the city to the French.

²³ *Kako je neprijatelj zagospodario zemljom, te započeo opsadu grada, izreći nije moguće kakve sve jade zadavaše na sve strane. Gruž i Rieka bijahu prva naselja koja su okusila njegovo barbarstvo.*

²⁴ *Tko bi mogao opisati onaj način kojim oni nitkovi nasrću po kućama, prolamaju, razbijaju, pale i čine sve ono, što im barbarstvo najgore na um donša. Gdje ne nadju zlata ili srebra hvataju oni biednu čeljad, koja nisu imali vremena da se nekamo sklone, batinaju ih, muče ih na razne načine, da bi u bolima izpovjedili, gdje se nalazi koja skrivena stvar.*

The author concludes his emotional argument, which employs the hyperbolization of the torments and sufferings experienced by the city and its inhabitants, in an unequivocal manner: “The barbarism of this devilish race committed in our country has never been seen in the world, nor has it been recorded in history” (*Barbarstvo te djavolske rase izvršeno po našoj Državi nije se nikada slično u svietu vidjelo, niti je u poviesti zabilježeno*; Radilović, 2008, p. 156).

A significant part of the text is devoted to outlining the image of the enemy. And although the enemy is consistently presented as a dehumanized mass – focused only on murder and plunder (in the case of Montenegrins, robberies are committed not only by men, but also by women in male disguise) – it is clear there is also a tendency to include the current political and religious opponents within the enemy category:

The people of Trebinje, those from the surrounding area and Ljubinje joined them, so schismatics, Turks and Gypsies, bad Christians and all the devils of this world merged into one, just to lead us to ruin. (Radilović, 2008, pp. 156–157)²⁵

The description in the above passage corresponds to the commentary on this subject made by Vojnović: the invasion of Dubrovnik, especially in the case of the Montenegrins, was also motivated by religious factors. Vojnović accuses the Montenegrins of gullibility – the Russian Tsar persuaded them to engage in “the crusade war against the Jacobins” (*krstaška vojna protiv žakobina*; Vojnović, 1908a, p. 234), that is, the French and their allies on the Adriatic.

The image of torments and sufferings experienced by the inhabitants of the attacked city – “because they have already experienced the beating, burning, cold of knife and sword and every other torment and barbarity, so they would rather die now than suffer it all” (*jer su okusili batine, paljenje, noževe i sablje i svakojake muke i barbarstva, tako da bi voljeli više odmah umrijeti, nego ono sve pretrpjeti*; Radilović, 2008, p. 157) – is accompanied by Radilović’s remark about the internal threat posed by traitors, who offer their help to the invaders in murder and plunder.

The author of *Bilješka o događajima iz 1806* sees the reasons for the enormity of the destruction of Dubrovnik and the misfortunes of its inhabitants beyond the sphere of political reality in which the city was at the turn of the nineteenth century, thus remaining in the convention

²⁵ *K ovima se pridružiše neki stanovnici Trebinja i okolice kao i Ljubinja, tako da se shizmatici, Turci i cigani, zli kršćani i svi djavoli ovoga svieta udružiše u jedno, kako bi nas upropastili.*

of the biblical (apocalyptic) message about its tragic fate. By abandoning the actual context of events and shifting the focus to the supernatural and miraculous plane, Radilović in fact ignores the political guilt of the city and the inability of its elite to defend it:

But it was all because of our sins, for which the most just God punished us with this enemy lash, so that we may finally, admitting our imperfections and breaking out of the clutches of sin once and for all, follow the path of purity. (Radilović, 2008, p. 157)²⁶

The author realizes the catastrophic situation of Dubrovnik and does not see any possibility of saving it apart from the intercession of St. Blaise, the patron saint of the city (“Our State was thus devastated for nineteen days, and its liberation seemed impossible, except through the intercession of Saint Blaise at the Majesty of God”; *Naša Država bijaše na taj način pustošena 19 dana, a njeno oslobodjenje bijaše skoro nemoguće, osim po zagovoru Sv. Vlaha kod Božjeg Veličanstva*; Radilović, 2008, p. 157). Such a miraculous salvation finally comes when the French arrive, a small number of whom scare the invaders so much that the Montenegrins flee in panic and the Russians return to their ships. Radilović comments on these events as follows:

In this way, it is clear that the city was liberated from the siege by a miracle and not with human help. Is there anyone who has not noticed God’s hand that has blinded the enemy’s eyes and poured such fear into him that 1,500 people have defeated so many thousands of enemies? (Radilović, 2008, p. 158)²⁷

There is, however, a specific message and lesson to be learned from these tragic events for Dubrovnik, which ultimately experienced a miraculous salvation. God punished the city and its inhabitants for their sins, but at the same time gave them life and time for reflection:

Let us therefore thank God, who – as St. James the Apostle says, punishes the one He loves (*quem diligit castigat*) – punished us as the Most Just Judge for our sins, and then as a Loving Father He left us what is valuable, that is, life and time, so that

²⁶ *Nu sve je ovo radi naših grieha zbog kojih nas je najpravedniji Bog kaznio ovim neprijateljskim bićem, da bismo napokon priznavajući svoje manjkavosti i već jednom odtrgnuli od grieha, zaputili se putem čestitosti.*

²⁷ *Na taj način je bjelodano, da je grad čudom oslobodjen od obsade, a ne pomoću ljudske ruke. Ima li itko, koji ne vidi, da nije bilo ruke Božje, koja je neprijatelju zatvorila oči, te mu ulila takav strah da bi bilo nemoguće, da 1500 ljudi nadvlada toliko tisuće neprijatelja?*

we would correct our mistakes and thus avoid hell and deserve paradise, which I wish you all. (Radilović, 2008, p. 158)²⁸

In the above passage, the motif of theodicy functions as a reflection on the meaning of the tragedy for the city and its inhabitants. This motif is also found in earlier texts describing the tragic earthquake of 1667: the disaster that hit the city is treated in terms of a warning, for example in the well-known text by Nikola Bona *Pjesan gospodina Nika Dživa Bunića vlastelina dubrovačkoga* [A Poem by Nobleman Niko Dživo Bunić, Lord of Dubrovnik], or in the text by Petar Kanavelić *Dubrovnik pjesan gospodina Petra vlastelina corcivlanscoga* [Dubrovnik – A Poem by Nobleman Peter, Lord of Korčula] (Stojan, 2015, pp. 113–148). It is worth recalling the earlier belief of the local elite that God protects Dubrovnik because of the important tasks it performs for Christianity. In this interpretation, the true aim of God's intervention was not to punish the city for its sins, but to reward its exceptional merits in the mission it was carrying out on the border of the worlds, between Venice and Turkey. The miraculous saving of Dubrovnik goes against – as Junije Resti puts it – all human considerations (after: Kunčević, 2015, p. 204).

“Celebration” of the Fall of the Republic

The new reality that followed the turbulent and tragic period meant only apparent stabilization for the city. Dubrovnik came under French rule, definitively losing its political freedom and independence. For the first time in its history, it was given an imposed protector, exercising full power on behalf of a foreign ruler. Although this situation changed the current political and social relations, as well as the conditions of the city's functioning, it was accepted by part of the community friendly towards France. French culture, ideas and science from France had taken root in the Dubrovnik aristocracy long before the events of the beginning of the nineteenth century (Kasumović, 1902, p. 364). However – as Vojnović notes – the fall of Dubrovnik “for the first time in history, and this time definitely” (*prvom u istoriji, a ovaj put definitivno*) caused an internal division in the souls of its inhabitants (the legendary “descendants of refugees from Epidaurus”). Among those

²⁸ *Zahvalimo dakle Bogu, koji – kako kaže Sv. Jakov apostol: »quem diligit castigat« (kažnjava onoga, koga ljubi) – koji nas je za naše griehе kao Najpravedniji Sudac kaznio, da nam zatim kao Ljubezni Otac ostavi vriedniji dio, to jest život i vrijeme, da izpravimo naše pogreške, te tako izbjegnemo pakao, a zadobijemo raj, što želim svima.*

who stoically accepted the judgment of history against their city and those in whom it provoked rebellion and opposition, there were also those who “cynically accepted the definitive decision of the Almighty Emperor” (*cinički prime definitivno rješenje Svemogućega Cara*; Vojnović, 1908b, p. 96).

The latter attitude was apparent in connection with the event that took place in Dubrovnik on May 12, 1808, when, on the occasion of the ceremonial awarding of Auguste Marmont with the title of *duc de Raguse* (the Governor of Dubrovnik), a specially prepared cantata was performed. The text, the original title of which was *Cantata per la venuta in Ragusa di sua Eccellenza Augusto Marmont* [Cantata on the Arrival of His Excellency Auguste Marmont in Ragusa], was written by father of Giovanni-Battista Rosani (Piarist, professor of Greek literature at the Secondary School in Dubrovnik), the author of the music was Tommaso Resti, and it was published by Antun Martecchini in Dubrovnik in 1810. The ceremonies, to which the new authorities invited the inhabitants – appealing for an “external manifestation” of their respect and gratitude to Marmont (directly responsible for “raising the homeland to the level to which he exalted France and Italy”; *pošto je njegova volja uzdignula vašu domovinu na istu visinu na koju je uzdignuo Francusku i Italiju*; after: Paljetak, 2006, p. 54) – were attended by Francophiles from Dubrovnik, among them members of the local Masonic Lodge.

The text of the cantata is the only work analyzed here that does not refer precisely to Dubrovnik. Although it presents a broader perspective, it arises from the new circumstances in which the city found itself after the introduction of French rule. The ideological layer of the work was influenced by at least two statements by Dubrovnik notables from that period: the speech of Dominik Garagnin, the civil governor of Dubrovnik (entrusted with this function by Marmont in 1808), and the response to it by Sabo Đurđević, chairman of the City Council.

At a meeting when the new local authorities were elected, Garagnin argued that Dubrovnik had finally returned to its Illyrian motherland, from which it had been disconnected for centuries. The city was now “under the protection and administration of a common sovereign” (*pod zaštitom i upravom zajedničkog vladara*) and was in a union with its Slavic brethren (which he described as “holy union”; *sveto združenje*); Dubrovnik owed this only to “Napoleon’s victorious genius” (*pobjedničkom geniju Napoleona*; after: Paljetak, 2006, pp. 57–58). It was the Emperor of the French who offered the people of Dubrovnik help and support in difficult times. Knowing their expectations, he wanted to compensate them for the wrongs caused,

but also to restore the local economy, trade, crafts and science. Napoleon and “the sweetest and wisest administration” (*najslada i najmudrija uprava*; after: Paljetak, 2006, p. 58) was a guarantee of a better future for Dubrovnik.

In his response to Garagnin, Sabo Đurđević assured him that the desires and expectations of the Dubrovnik community had been fulfilled: Napoleon, as “the greatest of all sovereigns”, “our father” and “his immortal genius” (*najveći među suverenima, naš otac, njegov beskrajni genij*; after: Paljetak, 2006, p. 58), in his efforts to care for the fate of the world, took care of Dubrovnik as well. Thanks to him and his help, the culture, science and economy, which had always been of special concern to the city, would “flourish even more” (*još više će procvjetati*), and their small homeland, which until recently had been in a precarious position among the great European powers, would finally be able to look with hope at “the bright future that lies ahead” (*blistava budućnost koja stoji pred njom*; after: Paljetak, 2006, p. 58).

The short cantata, consisting of two parts, describes a meeting of three Geniuses – Illyrian, Italian and French. In the first part, the Illyrian Genius, immersed in grief and sorrow, presents to the Italian one “an image of his misfortunes” (*slika nedaća*; Rosani, 2006, p. 45). In fact, it is an apocalyptic image of the torments and sufferings of the lands that he embodies; he talks about looting, rape and murder, which introduce a disturbed order into human reality and do not allow for the triumph of happiness and joy: “[...] they have conspired / All against me, as if all the earth / Was ruled only by misfortune / So that my suffering may be even greater” ([...] *urotiše se / Svi protiv mene, kao da u svoj zemlji / Vlada samo zla sreća / Zato da patnja moja bude još veća*) (Rosani, 2006, p. 45). There are also specific historical references that point to the enslavement of the South Slavic nations by Austria, Venice and Turkey. Understanding the tragic situation of his interlocutor, the Italian Genius consoles him and talks about Napoleon – the “Supreme Hero” (*Vrhovni Heroj*), to whom heaven has entrusted the fate of Europe. At the end of this part comes the French Genius, who, praising the Emperor of the French, emphasizes that he cares only about “the progress of humanity” (*napredak čovječanstva*); this also heralds the return of the lost glory to the Illyrian Genius.

In the second part, the French Genius – on behalf of Napoleon himself – convinces the Illyrian one that a better time has finally come for him. In a flash of memories of the last difficult and tragic years, the Illyrian Genius notes that Dalmatia and Dubrovnik have already experienced his help. The passages that follow include an idealized presentation of the French Emperor and Marmont, emphasizing their moral greatness and military merits. However, special attention is paid to Marmont, who is not only an

efficient executor of Napoleon's plans, but is seen as the guardian of the arts and sciences – he is to be surrounded by Aphrodite, Athena and Apollo (Rosani, 2006, p. 51).

As can be seen from the above overview of the content, in its ideological layer the cantata is an expression of a strong pro-French or even Francophile orientation, which is particularly apparent in the dialogue between the Italian and Illyrian Geniuses (Paljetak, 2006, pp. 59–60). The attribution of decidedly idealized merits and values (mainly in the moral sphere) to France, especially to Napoleon and Marmont, has a propaganda overtone, pointing to the indisputably key role of the French in the process of restoring the disturbed order in Europe. Against this background – according to the text – Dubrovnik plays an important role, as it has received the extraordinary honor of being Napoleon's protectorate; the mission itself was exercised by Marmont. From today's perspective, taking into account the entire historical context, the cantata shows the political blindness and cynicism of the author (Paljetak, 2006, p. 59) and the recipients who accepted such an idea. This was best expressed by Lujo Vojnović, who – writing about Marmont being awarded the title of voivode in terms of a symbolic end of the Republic – observed, not without irony: “The fall of Dubrovnik's independence and the banner of St. Blaise could not be celebrated more beautifully or with more dignity!” (*Propast dubrovačke nezavisnosti i zastave Svetoga Vlaha nije se ni ljepše, ni dostojnije mogla da proslavi!*) (Vojnović, 1908b, p. 102).²⁹

It is worth noting that the above-mentioned ceremony also included recitations and readings of other works of Dubrovnik poets and writers, among them Petar Sorgo, Mato Katičić, Antun Antunović and Petar Bona, who praised the new authorities, their representatives, their qualities and merits. At the same time, there was a significant departure from the tradition of Gundulić's glorification of “beautiful, dear, sweet Freedom” (*lijepa, draga, slatka Sloboda*), which was a constitutive element of the identity of the Dubrovnik authors. The “school of servility” (*škola servilnosti*) inaugurated in this way, where people were taught to praise “lawless occupiers of the homeland” (*bespravne okupatore svoje zemlje*), immediately introduced to the Dubrovnik scene of public life a generation of – as Vojnović calls them – “broken characters” (*polomljeni karakteri*; Vojnović, 1908b, p. 102).

²⁹ Vojnović also mentions the second cantata that was presumably presented at that time. The text by Luka Zamanja and Angel Descarneau shows the Genius of Marmont talking to Dubrovnik about his happiness (Vojnović, 1908b, p. 102).

The Fall of the City – the Beginning of a New Dubrovnik

The fall of Dubrovnik, whose most tragic stage turned out to be the period 1806–1808, and which was officially confirmed by the abolition of the Republic by Napoleon, meant the end of all that the city symbolized. Although the eyewitnesses of the events mentioned in the texts presented in this article were aware of the twilight of the great history of Dubrovnik, the true meaning of those events can only be reflected more fully from a longer perspective of time. One of the most characteristic assessments of that watershed period from the perspective of the beginning of the twentieth century was presented by Ivan Stojanović in his study *Dubrovačka književnost*. Trying to look comprehensively at the strength of Dubrovnik and assess its ability to survive throughout history, he makes a vivid comparison:

Dubrovnik can be compared to a richly dressed girl who has been going her way for centuries, until she experiences a setback in life (the first epoch, the earthquake of 1667); she may still live after it, but she feels bad in her skin. On the way, the robbers await her, attack her, already weakened, and lift her clothes; she is bound and she awaits judgment. They sentence her to death. Antun Sorkočević writes that this land, too, was awaiting its judgment at the Congress of Vienna; and then came the sentence: *mise a mort* – death! (Stojanović, 1900, pp. 295–296)³⁰

Stojanović clearly identifies the beginning of the tragic fate of Dubrovnik with the catastrophic earthquake in the second half of the seventeenth century, which undermined the city's power and contributed to its weakening.³¹ The loss of the rank and significance, which Dubrovnik prided itself on, encouraged its enemies to take decisive action that ultimately brought an end to the Republic (whose final death was caused by decisions

³⁰ *Dubrovnik se može isporučiti sa bogato urešenom gospogjom, koja prevalljuje svoj put života vijekovima, pa je u jedan čas snahodi kap po životu (prva epoha, biva trešnja od g. 1667.); iza tog još može živjeti, ali u zloj koži, te još lazi. Dočekuju je na putu razbojnici, navaljuju na nju već oslabljenu i dižu joj odore; vežu je i ona tako vezana čeka osudu. Osuguju je na smrt. Antun Sorkočević piše, da je tako i ova zemlja čekala svoju osudu na bečkom sastanku; kad dohodi oglas „mise a mort“ – osugjena na smrt!*

³¹ A similar assessment is made by Lujo Vojnović in his previously mentioned article “Prva smrt Dubrovnika” [The First Death of Dubrovnik]. If it had not been for the catastrophic consequences of the earthquake, Dubrovnik could have built a stronger position which, after its fall in 1806, would have enabled it to more effectively resist “the challenges of the times” (*nevolje vremena*; Vojnović, 1912b, pp. 68–69).

made at the Congress of Vienna, 1815). Stojanović, however, is also able to see the positive aspects of this death of the city – its fall is supposed to give hope for change and its slow rebirth in the future:

It's dying; but the dead body still shows a certain beauty that enchants just like any beautiful body a few hours after death (the second epoch). Later, the body disintegrates and the stench spreads all around. This is the third, or the present-day era, when political parties give life to the people of Dubrovnik – as they would say in Italian – *l'ultimo colpo di grazia*. (Stojanović, 1900, p. 296)³²

Citing Nikola Tommaseo (an Italian linguist, writer and essayist, actively involved in cultural life in Dalmatia), Stojanović states in the same dissertation as follows:

This is how [...] „A city of islands, a city of oak forests, dies; a Greek, Roman and Slavic city; at the same time a friend of the Crescent and the Cross; the Illyrian Athens; Dalmatian Venice; a city of diplomacy, mathematics and epigrams; a city of social fusion [...]”. (Stojanović, 1900, p. 296)³³

With the fall of Dubrovnik, all its political, cultural and scientific legacy, which for centuries determined its uniqueness in the Slavic world, becomes history. In the long run, the events of 1806–1808 radically defined its new identity and community awareness of local elites.

In Vojnović's study, which is primarily an insightful historical analysis enriched with many valuable documents, there are, however, characteristic rhetorical figures that belong to the repertoire of literary devices. In one of his comments, for instance, he employs an allegory of the homeland – the image of a ship in the rough waters of the ocean:

The story of the fall of the Republic is the story of a shipwreck. Before the final disaster of the ship with the banner of St. Blaise, captains, sailors, travelers threw everything that might weigh on it. And then it sank [...]. (Vojnović, 1908a, p. xi)³⁴

³² *Umire; ali mrtvo truplo kaže još njeku ljepotu, koja začarava, kako svako lijepo tijelo nekoliko ura poslije smrti (druga epoha). Poslije se truplo raspada, i smrad se proteže naokolo. To je treća epoha današnja, kad stranke političke davaju životu Dubrovčana – kako bi rekli na italijansku – „l'ultimo colpo di grazia“.*

³³ *I tako pogine [...] „Grad ostrva, grad dubrave; grad grčki, rimski i slavenski; u isto doba prijatelj Polumjeseca i Krsta; ilirska Atena; dalmatinski Mleci; grad diplomacije, matematike i epigrama; grad stapanja sojeva [...]“.*

³⁴ *Istorija pada Republike istorija je jednoga brodoloma. Prije konačne propasti broda sa zastavom Svetoga Vlaha, kapetani, marnari, putnici baciše sve što je moglo lagju da optereti. Potom potonuše [...].*

Vojnović's final assessment on the responsibility of the Dubrovnik elite for the fall of the Republic³⁵ is softened because, as he writes – despite previously articulated accusations against them – their policies managed to save the city from a much worse fate (Vojnović, 1908b, p. 330). In addition to his sharp anti-Napoleonic criticism that is apparent in his deliberations, there is also an accusation (which makes a conclusion of the analyses carried out in both volumes) against the Christian world, which was passively watching the events of the beginning of the nineteenth century or even participating in the fall of Dubrovnik. This lack of Christian solidarity, manifesting itself in the breach of “all the lofty slogans of brotherhood, freedom, civilization and law” (*sve zvučne fraze o bratstvu, slobodi, civilizaciji i pravu*; Vojnović, 1908b, p. 328), ironically could be overcome only through the intercession of Muslim Turkey, the former guarantor of Dubrovnik's independence.

All this means that the fall of Dubrovnik should be attributed – according to Vojnović – “a meaning that goes beyond the limits of an ordinary historical event” (*značaj koji prelazi granice običnog istorijskog događaja*; Vojnović, 1908a, p. xi). With the abolition of the Republic, the entire political, cultural and economic capital of Dubrovnik was destroyed, as was the possibility of its impact on the Balkans. Dubrovnik left a rich literary and cultural legacy, which is a testimony to the city's innumerable ties with Western civilization. The pragmatic policy pursued by the Republic contributed to the weakening of Venice's dominant position in the Mediterranean, its trade cooperation with the Balkan Slavs prevented them from being exploited economically by other countries, and the moral support (Vojnović, 1908b, pp. 330–332) provided by the people of Dubrovnik prepared the ground for the future liberation of the South Slavic nations (i.e. Croats and Serbs).

In Lujo Vojnović's historiosophical vision, the fall of the Republic – however painful and dramatic for its national, political and cultural elite – functions in the perspective of *longue durée* as “the beginning of a new Dubrovnik”. Its cultural and especially political legacy (in the form of local republicanism) has a chance to play the role of an essential element of the new reality in which the South Slavs will live. So in this sense,

³⁵ Let us emphasize here that the fall of the Republic is believed to have been caused by a combination of three factors: the French occupation, the Russo-Montenegrin siege and the impotence of the Dubrovnik elite (Čosić, 2008, p. 143). See Čosić (1998, pp. 55–98) for more specific information about a broader political, social and economic context of all these breakthrough events.

the death of Dubrovnik, or even its crucifixion, becomes a sign of its future resurrection (Ćosić, 2009, pp. 441, 449).

Many literary and historical testimonies which provide a record of this tragic and disastrous period remain not only unexplored, but have not even published to this day (e.g. Luko Stulli's *I primi giorni dei Francesi in Ragusa* [The First Days of the French in Ragusa]). They are dominated by a strong tendency to describe the invasions, sieges and destruction experienced by Dubrovnik in the most detailed and the most vivid way. The authors of Dubrovnik, including writers, poets, members of the clergy and chroniclers, regardless of their literary abilities, left behind testimonies which – looking at the whole body of them – convey a vision of “a dying (or dead) city”,³⁶ a city plunged in suffering, fear and hopelessness. However, the first generation of Dubrovnik authors after the fall of the Republic had a different attitude to the tragic events of 1806–1808 and their consequences for the situation of the city and its inhabitants. There are works marked with reverence, the rhetoric of peace and “happy death”, as well as a grain of hope for the upcoming changes (Ćosić, 2009, p. 440).

At the same time, the events of 1806–1808, when the immediate danger and real threat to the independence and freedom of Dubrovnik became apparent, occasioned the presentation of one of the most important topoi of the Dubrovnik imaginary, i.e. the belief that the city, located on the border of different worlds, defends itself against eastern barbarity.³⁷ The end of Dubrovnik's freedom – symbolized by the existence of the independent Republic, resisting stronger political and military powers – was somewhat of an end of history; history in which the durability and stability of Dubrovnik and its ability to survive despite threats and dangers were attributed not only to the legendary efficiency of Dubrovnik's diplomacy, but also to God's providence (Kunčević, 2015, p. 212).

It is worth noting that the image of the fall of Dubrovnik did not enter the general consciousness not only because it had not acquired an artistically appropriate form which would leave a mark on the image of those events

³⁶ A broader perspective of Dubrovnik as “a dying (or dead) city” is discussed by Ivanković (2008, pp. 86–112).

³⁷ An interesting issue in this context, which, however, goes beyond the scope of this article, is the revival of this topos during the siege of the city by Serbs and Montenegrins during the war after the fall of Yugoslavia. The invasion of 1991 abruptly brought to the fore the image of Dubrovnik as a defender against attacks from the East, as a Bulwark. “Serbian and Montenegrin barbarians” personified “aggressive East” (Kunčević, 2015, pp. 214–218).

and could canonize the vision of the disaster of the Republic, but also because the dominant image of the city was still the one created in earlier periods and codified by such authors as Hanibal Lucić, Mavro Orbini and Ivan Gundulić. The memory of Dubrovnik as an oasis of freedom in the ocean of the Slavs' slavery by Venice and Turkey, and the perception of Dubrovnik as a city of culture, art and science, were glorified after the fall of the Republic,³⁸ becoming one of the elements of the national revival discussions and an important set of arguments for including its legacy in the postulated modern Croatian culture.

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³⁸ According to Kunčević, the topoi developed in earlier periods, along with modern ideas guarantee the durability of the Dubrovnik myth (Kunčević, 2015, p. 218).

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Druga śmierć Dubrovnika. Wybrane świadectwa z początku XIX wieku na temat upadku Republiki w świetle koncepcji historiozoficznej Luja Vojnovicia

Artykuł podejmuje próbę omówienia różnorodnych obrazów upadku Republiki Dubrownickiej na początku XIX wieku. Kres niezależności tego miasta-państwa oznaczał przełom nie tylko w sferze politycznej i państwowej, ale także w sferze społecznej, kulturalnej i gospodarczej. Szczególną uwagę poświęcam okupacji Dubrovnika przez Francuzów oraz oblężeniu przez Rosjan i Czarnogórców (walczących o zwierzchnictwo nad nim), ale i nadziejom, z jakimi wiązano nastanie nowej rzeczywistości. Poddaję analizie przykłady literackich świadectw opisujące wydarzenia, zjawiska i procesy, jakie wówczas miały miejsce. Ramy artykułu wyznacza fundamentalna dla tematu upadku Dubrovnika rozprawa Luja Vojnovicia *Pad Dubrovnika* [Upadek Dubrovnika], która mimo tego, że została wydana w 1908 roku, wyrasta z nostalgii za Republiką i z atmosfery ideowej XIX stulecia.

Słowa kluczowe: Dubrownik w XIX wieku, upadek Republiki Dubrownickiej, okupacja Dubrovnika przez Francuzów, oblężenie Dubrovnika przez Rosjan i Czarnogórców, Lujo Vojnović.

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