

## Short Circuits: Traps of Contextual Approaches to Renaissance Literature

The article criticizes – mostly in principle, but also on particular examples from the Croatian literary historiography and Ragusan and Dalmatian literature – the unfounded connections made between 16<sup>th</sup>-century literary texts and extraliterary reality. In a shift of emphasis, the article reveals the kinds of errors that are caused by disregarding text-immanent approaches to early modern literature and the knowledge inventory they provide. This kind of criticism, of course, does not deny the value of contextual approaches whose application on older literary texts is frequently very valuable and useful. It is clear that literature should not be hermetically separated from other cultural practices. Rather, this criticism rehabilitates and reemphasizes the awareness that the works in question are texts created within the framework of the rhetorical culture, the framework of an intense dialogue among the literary, discursive practices. One should not neglect two facts important for the understanding of these works: firstly, it is precisely in the Renaissance that literature emancipated itself as a cultural practice and a social sub-system, and secondly, literary works of those times were on average as strongly connected to each other through interliterary links as they were to reality. In the past few decades, under the influence of trends in literary theory, contemporary theoretical paradigms have often been applied arbitrarily and ahistorically to the earlier, pre-modern literary texts without much regard for historical poetics and their reconstruction. The unfounded contextual readings are only one example of such harmful, more general anachronism. Principal arguments are in this article exemplified on Petar Hektorović's *Ribanje i ribarsko prigovaranje* (*Fishing and Fishermen's Conversations*), Marin Držić's *Dundo Maroje* and love epistles.

## Urban Culture and the Emergence of Love Poetry in Dubrovnik

The article analyses the relationship between the urban culture and the oldest Ragusan love poetry authored at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century by Šišmundo Menčetić (1457–1527) and Džore Držić (1461–1501). Its conclusion is that this lyric poetry emerges in a gap between the new individualism of humanist thought and municipal collectivism. Rhetorically, that is appellatively, and topically, by attributing an important role to the community and frequent referring to the *opinio communis*, Menčetić's and Držić's poems are open to their surroundings, the narrower or broader social context. They teem with urban folklorisms and the rhetoric of address which can also be explained as a consequence of the influence that Ragusan urban culture exerted on them. The earliest Ragusan poets used numerous motifs which originated from the sphere of the author's social existence and not from the sphere of intimate love life. Držić and Menčetić liked to observe love in its external manifestations, that is through different social rituals (e.g. other people's comments, gatherings or circle dances). Both authors are concerned with details from the Ragusan everyday life and elements of popular culture; however these are of the urban and not rural provenance. Ragusan poets are also prone to using the kind of address which simulates man's extraliterary, colloquial romantic communication with the female interlocutor. The popularity of this type of dialogical love poem in the Ragusan lyric poetry cannot be explained merely by intraliterary reasons and influences; it is probably related to the embeddedness of said poetry in the immediate social context, in the everyday life of the Mediterranean urban culture. With time, towards the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Ragusan love poetry will lose its openness to the community experience.

## *A Sweet Dream* – the Beginnings of Ragusan Literature and the Growing Independence of Fiction

In the oeuvre of the Ragusan writer Džore Držić (1461–1501) there are two love poems in which the lyric subject elaborately describes his dream: the poem No. LXXVII, known as *A Strange Dream* (*Čudan san*), and the poem No. LXXX from Hamm's edition of Držić's works. This article pays less attention to *A Strange Dream*; rather, its focus is on the poem No. LXXX which has received scant critical attention. It shows that the latter poem appears on the intersection of different literary traditions and different forms of literary knowledge on the dream. On the one hand, the dream described in the poem represents an *oraculum* from the ancient classification of dreams, it is an appearance of a deity – in this case Amor – which gives the dreamer prophecy or advice which impact the waking state. It is clear that the poem revives the Antiquity's interest in the authenticity of dreams, apparent, among other, in the belief that a dream can affect the waking state, or that dreams appearing at dawn are true. Moreover, Amor's role and the form of his intervention, as well as the manner in which he is represented, betray ancient traits. On the other hand, the starting point in Držić's poem is marked by many elements appropriated from the medieval vernacular lyric traditions, emphasising the lover's agony of unrequited love, while some of Amor's attributes are undoubtedly post-classical. From the poem's architecture, narration and complex speech procedures, it becomes apparent that it is modelled on a longer form, a specific *capitolo*, canzone or even Latin love elegy. This is further suggested by comparing the similarities between *A Strange Dream* and the poem No. LXXX, on the one hand, and Tibullus's/Lygdamus's elegy *Di meliora ferant*, on the other. It is obvious that the poem No. LXXX appeared in a poetic context which permitted the fusion of certain elements of the classical *syuzhet* with the fantasy of possession and the topic of unrequited love in such a way that the awareness of boundaries among these elements did not cancel out the possibility of their synthesis into a single text. Such textual heterogeneity is typical of Italian lyric poetry from the second half of the

15<sup>th</sup> century in which prevail plural imitation and the principle of choice and hybridisation. At the time, literary dream, like fiction in general, was freeing itself from moralisation and allegory, and became a marker for intraliterary phenomena which were subordinated to literary logic. A dream can receive the licence for poetic fiction, for the formulation of purely fictional events dependent on intraliterary mechanisms. This is exactly what Držić's poem No. LXXX is about and it should, accordingly, be analysed as one of the indicators of the secularisation of the early Ragusan literature, as well as an indicator of the growing independence of fiction and literary representation of dreams.

## Jeronim Vidulić and the Beginnings of the Croatian Love Poetry

The notary documents of Jeronim Vidulić (ca 1440–1499), Zadar notary, priest and humanist, preserve one love poem in Croatian, known by its first verse *Ako mi ne daš lik* (*If You Do Not Give Me Cure*). It is the only surviving poem in Croatian among Vidulić's papers and it is uncertain whether he was its author or just a copyist. However, it is one of the earliest examples of the Renaissance secular lyric in Croatian as well as the oldest work of this kind created outside of Dubrovnik. This article, among other issues, questions some of the prevailing opinions regarding Vidulić and his poem. Literary historiographers hypothesize that this text proves that love poetry in double rhyme alexandrine first emerged in Dalmatia and from there influenced the first Ragusan poets, Šišmundo Menčetić and Džore Držić. There are, however, no valid arguments for such a statement; it is more likely that the influence travelled in the opposite direction. This article also uses the selective ways of understanding Petrarchism to question the usual labelling of Vidulić as the first Croatian Petrarchist poet and his poem as Petrarchistic. The poem offers a concept of a love relationship alien to Petrarch's *Il Canzoniere* because here man and woman enjoy the requited love. There appear certain Petrarchistic motifs and stylemes, but the Petrarchistic concept of the love relationship, which is crucial, is missing. A formal characteristic of Vidulić's poem points to the non-Petrarchistic poetic traditions: it is structured dialogically, its quatrains are alternately uttered by the man and the woman in their love conversation, the woman delivering the odd stanzas and the man even. This kind of romantic dialogue stems from older medieval love poetry.

## New Old Translations from Petrarch's *Il Canzoniere*

The influence that Francesco Petrarch's *Il Canzoniere* exerted on older Croatian love poetry is well-known. However, intertextual ties between Petrarch's collection and the works of older, especially the earliest, Croatian love poets have still not been sufficiently investigated. Thus, for example, not all of the translations of the Croatian Renaissance authors from Petrarch's *Il Canzoniere* have been recorded. In this article the term translation is somewhat flexibly used for those texts which first and foremost satisfy the condition of firm semantic ties to the model. In order for an older lyric text to be considered a translation, it must be modelled on one foreign text only and it must follow the basic outlines of its model by taking over its theme and most important motifs, not necessarily in the same order as in the original (although this is desirable). This article discusses two Ragusan texts in the double rhyme alexandrine which constitute the so-far unnoticed translations of two Petrarch's sonnets. One was created at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, which makes it the oldest translation from Petrarch's *Il Canzoniere* in Croatian literature. Its author is Džore Držić (1461–1501) and its model is Petrarch's sonnet No. CCXLVII («Parrà forse ad alcun che 'n lodar quella»). The other text was probably written in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and it is the translation of Petrarch's sonnet No. CXXXII («S'amor non è, che dunque è quel ch'io sento?»). Its author is unknown and it has not been published until now. Besides enhancing the already very rich perception of the early Croatian reception of Petrarch's *Il Canzoniere*, these translations, especially the one by Držić, question some chronological primacies which have started to be taken for granted in Croatian literary historiography.

## City, State, Order – Hanibal Lucić and Dubrovnik

Hvar writer Hanibal Lucić (1485–1553) enjoyed a varied and quite intense relationship to the neighbouring Dubrovnik, both to its literature as well as its society and culture in general. The oldest Ragusan poets exerted numerous and important influences on Lucić's work, and Lucić in several instances showed great interest in the political system and the international status of the Republic of Dubrovnik, particularly in his play *Slave-girl (Robinja)* and his poem *In Praise of the City of Dubrovnik (U pohvalu grada Dubrovnika)*. Literary historiography was intrigued by the fact that despite his interest in Dubrovnik and the praises he sang to it, Lucić was never mentioned by any Ragusan writer. This article examines the ways in which Dubrovnik becomes a political fact in Lucić's works, that is, how Dubrovnik's aristocratic and republican order from the class-communal perspective of a deprived Dalmatian nobleman is turned into a political ideal. The author of the article argues that the absence of references to Lucić in Ragusan writers could be owed to political reasons, primarily to the anti-Ottoman and Ugrophilic utterances which are in Lucić's works linked to the Ragusan Republic. Moreover, Ragusan writers of Lucić's generation were mostly commoners and could have been bothered by Lucić's overt aristocratism. No matter whether Lucić perceived Dubrovnik only as a city or also as a state, as a historical or cultural space, a space of dramatic or a site of social events, his relationship to Dubrovnik was determined above all by the dynamics of communal class relationships alongside the attractiveness of the literary ones.

## *Jur nijedna na svit vila* – a New Reading

The article offers a new perspective on *Jur nijedna na svit vila* (*No Other Nymph Upon This Earth*) by Hanibal Lucić (1485–1553). This is the most famous love, and perhaps even lyric poem of old Croatian literature, as well as probably one of the most important poems in the entire corpus of Croatian literature. In *Vila*, after the introductory summary praise of the lady's beauty, eight octaves systematically and flatteringly describe individual traits of the lady's appearance from top to bottom (hair, forehead, eyebrows, eyes, cheeks, lips, teeth, neck, chest, fingers, walk and posture). Each stanza as a rule is dedicated to one element of woman's anatomy, while the poem ends with yet another summary praise of the lady's beauty as well as a supplication to god to preserve her in eternal youth. The article argues that the poem is an adaptation of the descriptive technique characteristic of vernacular literary Middle Ages which also existed in the Italian chivalric epics of the early Renaissance, from where it moved to lyric poetry. The technique consists of a systematic and detailed description which always moves from top to bottom; parts of the body described are predetermined as are the attributes and rhetorical figures used in the description. Lucić probably took this descriptive procedure over from the chivalric epic, either directly or through older lyric mediation, and to a certain extent adapted it to the Petrarchistic sublime style; nonetheless, its non-Petrarchistic origin remains obvious. The last part of the article explains why Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, more precisely the description of Alcina's beauty from the 7<sup>th</sup> canto, could have been the most probable inspiration for Lucić's poem.



## Nalješković's Mascheratas

The article analyses the collection of mascheratas by Ragusan Renaissance writer Nikola Nalješković (ca 1505–1587) consisting of twelve poems. The poems are mostly lascivious and allusive texts which contain some of the most open allusions to the male-female sexual interaction in the Croatian Renaissance literature. The article considers two problems: lascivious allusiveness of Nalješković's mascheratas, and the question of completeness and homogeneity of his carnival cycle. Mascherata is a carnival lyric-dramatic genre of Croatian Renaissance literature characteristic of the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Ragusan culture. It was taken over from Italian literature where it received literary affirmation at the end of Quattrocento, primarily in Lorenzo de' Medici's Florence and in Siena. Nalješković appropriated from the Italian poems not only the structural elements of the genre and their tendency toward performative situations, but he also took over the technique of allegorisation. Allegorisation functions in a straightforward manner: in the poem two semantic fields are placed in equilibrium – the field of denotative meaning which is customarily used to describe in detail a craft or a type of physical activity, and the field of connotative meaning. The latter corresponds completely to the first one and focuses on the details of the sexual act or the ways in which genital anatomy functions. The article argues that such semantic duality in Nalješković's mascheratas should be explored more thoroughly than it has been done previously. Furthermore, it shows that even in some Nalješković's mascheratas which were not usually interpreted as lascivious there occur occasional breaches of figurative language which can be interpreted as lascivious allusions. Towards the end of Nalješković's cycle the lasciviousness decreases: the last two texts do not possess any. Since the last poem is a marriage poem, it is possible that the cycle was written for a particular marriage ceremony. The article also argues in favour of the thesis that Nalješković's mascheratas are a complete, homogenous carnival collection.

## Antipetrarchism in Marin Držić

In his pastorals and comedies Marin Držić often played with the love poetry of high style by using irony and by prefunctioning it for humoristic purposes. Such Držić's relationship towards love poetry is frequently called Antipetrarchistic, which, for several reasons, is not always justified. This article starts by offering a selective definition of Antipetrarchism and Petrarchism as represented in the works of German Romance studies scholars. In the same way in which Petrarchism is, in this more restricted definition, closely linked to the poetics of Petrarch's *Il Canzoniere* and does not include phenomena that bear no affirmative relationship to it, so Antipetrarchism does not unselectively include everything that is different from Petrarchism, i.e. non-Petrarchistic, but only that which ridicules it or contests it, most frequently through the burlesque, or parody, or via its openly refuting thematization. Držić's work does not, as a rule, contain serious, open Antipetrarchism in which Petrarchism would be explicitly thematized and criticized. The analysis of examples from several plays by Držić (*Skup*, *Grižula*, *Tirena*, *Arkulin*) shows that the parody or irony of the Petrarchistic manner is largely connected to the comic quality of character or situation. Characters are made humorous through incongruence between their social or age statuses and the love discourse they use. The same effect is achieved through the application of that discourse in an inappropriate or excess way, or in an inappropriate context. In Držić's texts, in all of the examples of ironization of Petrarchism two mechanisms are simultaneously at play – parodic metatextuality and the comic quality of character or situation – but because of the nature of the genre in which these examples appear, the second mechanism prevails more frequently. Consequently, Držić's Antipetrarchism is limited and generically conditioned. Antipetrarchism, parody, instrumentalization of love poetry are in no way fated poetic choices in Držić, but some of his numerous and functional comedigraphic and dramaturgic devices.

## Dinko Ranjina as a Literary Critic

The article presents views on literature proffered by Ragusan Renaissance poet Dinko Ranjina (1536–1607). Literary criticism is here understood more broadly than usual, to include poetic ruminations of the early modern authors, their views on the nature of literature and especially their thoughts on the value of particular literary works or oeuvres. Special attention is paid to the prose dedication in Ranjina's book *Pjesni razlike* (*Miscellaneous Poems*) (1563) which is in part a translation of a Platonic treatise by Bernardo Tasso *Ragionamento della poesia* (1562). This dedication contains relevant poetic arguments, and the most famous of them show Ranjina as establishing his position with regard to his own literary tradition, discussing its beginnings, and justifying his decision to write in the vernacular by appealing to the examples of Šišmundo Menčetić and Džore Držić. The article reveals that besides Bernardo Tasso's treatise, in his dedication Ranjina had translated from at least one other text – Latin biography of Oppian, Greek poet from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. The article also offers an analysis of several Ranjina's poems in which the author, using metalyric, protocritical utterances, comments on the literary creation and evaluates literary texts by other authors. Among these poems of particular prominence is a cycle of nine grave poems which Ranjina dedicated to his illustrious predecessors and co-citizens Menčetić and Držić. In them he brings forth generalized and most frequently occasional praises of the two oeuvres, but there also appear certain stylistic and generic characterizations which show that Ranjina was well aware of the differences between the two lyric poetries. One of the aims of Ranjina's reflections on his native literary tradition must have been an attempt to establish a Ragusan literary canon and to participate in the formation of a separate Ragusan cultural identity.

## *Mudri čatnik (Wise Reader) – Religious and Literary Discourse in Vila Slovinka*

The article analyses interconnections between literary and religious discourses in the epic poem *Vila Slovinka (Fairy Slovinka)* (1614) by Juraj Baraković. It supports the reading of *Vila Slovinka* as a text which reflects the literary culture of the late Middle Ages and the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and not as a Baroque or specifically Mannerist text. Therefore the article argues against the understanding of mannerism as an inclusive worldview or a transitional period between the Renaissance and the Baroque which is widespread in Croatian literary historiography. Instead, it proposes that the concept of mannerism be used only for a specific aesthetic tendency or orientation, and not a periodisation category in older Croatian literature. This aesthetic tendency manifests itself in the heightened and primarily stylistic artificiality of the text, as well as in the different forms of anti-mimetic impulse. In the analysis of *Vila Slovinka* special attention is paid to the narrator's love story from the 11<sup>th</sup> canto and the way in which it is announced at the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> canto: through the use of a proemial poem typical of Renaissance collections of love poems. In the second part of the epic Baraković clusters mutually loosely connected topics of mostly religious and didactic nature which elevate the private trauma from the first part of the epic to the level of the exemplum and sometimes allegory. The love story with its usual literary codification is precisely one of such topics. The second part of *Vila Slovinka* represents a religious justification for the autobiographic content from the first part, but it is also a literary self-legitimation. In it the author links himself to the tradition of those works in European literature where the protagonist, usually in the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular, undergoes a progression from the rejection of the worldly to the acceptance of the heavenly. In the analysis of *Vila Slovinka* special attention is paid to the ambiguity between the factual and fictional. The oscillation between fiction and fact is a deliberately inconclusive state which opens up a conventionalised space within literature that allowed the author to play with the demand for truthfulness. Such playing with the boundary be-

tween the text and the world is characteristic of the Renaissance, of the epistemological plurality of the Renaissance literature. The final part of the article examines the notion of stylistic modernity of *Vila Slovinke* because critical texts on Baraković frequently argue that his epic is baroque in style. However, considering its size, stylistic artificiality in this epic poem appears relatively rarely; it almost never encompasses larger sections of the epic and is very rarely manifested as an accumulation of figures. It does not resemble so much the *stile acuto* of the Seicento as it does certain types of figuration present in the 16<sup>th</sup>-century literature. Baraković's favourite figures include various types of repetitions, cataloguing and enumeration, anaphoras, etymological figures and accumulation of literal expressions, while metaphors and tropes in general do not play a prominent role in his text. Baraković was probably influenced by Ragusan poet Dinko Ranjina (1536–1607), whose work he knew well, when he developed these kinds of figuration.