



SUMMARY



This scientific book written by Hrvojka Mihanović-Salopek, Ph.D. and Vinicije B. Lupis, Ph.D. is a multidisciplinary study of the life and work of the eminent diplomat and author Jaketa Palmotić Dionorić from Dubrovnik. The book draws upon a variety of sources including the relevant studies of history, archives, literary history, theatrics, art history and even archaeology, reflecting the author's preoccupations in the context of his active life-span. In the first chapter, a thorough insight into his biography, as well as his complete genealogy are presented, for the first time, by Vinicije Lupis. The Palmota/Palmotić lineage originates from one *Palma de Balisclav*, who lived in Dubrovnik at the end of the 13th century. As early as at the beginning of the 14th century, the family's patronymic name was "De Palmotta", and they were referred to as shipowners and seamen. Depicted next is the rise of the poet's ancestors to highest political and diplomatic offices, including the rank of prince (*knez**) in the Republic of Dubrovnik. All of the notable archival series from the State Archives of Dubrovnik have been used to shed light on their genealogy. Due to a scarcity of biographical data in the partially preserved cathedral-parish family registers and the state administration archival series, we are still left missing out on many details from the family milieu of the poet, politician and diplomat Jakov – Jaketa (Jacob, James) Ivanov Palmotić. This fact notwithstanding, efforts were made to delve into Jaketa's daily routine as deeply as possible on the basis of some archival sources, as well as his preserved diplomatic letters. Hrvojka Mihanović-Salopek's second chapter of the book is focused on the personality of Jaketa Palmotić Dionorić. His historic diplomatic activity is perceived as interwoven with the motives and the form

* This title supposedly derives from German *König*, Russian *knjaz*; a ruler hierarchy-wise below the ranks of emperor and king; Croatian popular etymology: *konte* (Italian *conte*) [the translator's note]

of his literary engagement in the epic *Dubrovnik Rebuilt* (*Dubrovnik ponovljen*). The epic was created as a most authentic artistic reflection of the dramatic events entailed in the great 1667 earthquake in Dubrovnik. In the focus of the present book's attention, however, is a tragedy from his early manhood, *Dido*, which had been performed in Dubrovnik on February 2nd, 1646, but it remained in the shadow of philological studies. The text of the tragedy was published anew within the present book in such a way that the only publication by Stijepo Škurla from 1878 (as well as its 2nd issue by Holthusen from 1974, a Škurla reprint) received an addendum, as well as some corrections, which was based on the newly discovered transcript of Dionorić's work made by Ivan Ksaver Altesti; the transcript has been kept in the Library of the Diocesan Seminary in Dubrovnik.

The tragedy of *Dido* is then viewed in Hrvojka Mihanović-Salopek's work from the standpoint of European neoclassic tendencies, as well as from the angle of Dubrovnik's Baroque neo-antique drama, showing reflections of the Aristotelian and Senecan types of dramaturgy. Besides, the development and the context of Dubrovnik's Baroque melodrama are delineated. Its structural elements of music-and-stage setting enter also into Dionorić's *Dido* as instances of interference. Palmotić Dionorić's work follows the neoclassic concept of composition, even of symmetricalness, being comprised of the three Aristotelian acts, each of them consisting of five scenes of about the same length; it also follows the poetic requirements of harmoniousness inherent in the neoclassic concept of tragedy as advocated by the French dramatist, the author's contemporary Pierre Corneille (1606-1684) in his treatise on the three unities in the play *Discours sur les trois unites*. Dionorić's work is also associated with the conception of linking heroic and patriotic motifs to the mythological foundation as exemplified by the poetics and dramatics of Giangiorgio Trissino (1478-1550).

The importance of harmony and a ruler's prudent governance are the main ideas pointed out in Dionorić's bringing to life the well-known events from the classical period. The underlying concept of *Dido* is the principle, insisted on by Jaketa Palmotić Dionorić throughout it, that a competent ruler must act in accordance with prudence. Furthermore, in Dionorić's opinion, such a person's being of a supreme rank, or authority, or participating in the exercise of power would entail not only a privileged social status, but would require him or her to make certain sacrifices for the purpose of accomplishing good gover-

nance. What surfaces in Dionorić's dramatic comments is the fact that the author moved away considerably from a classical consciousness that was subordinated to the decisive role of gods' interference in what were predestined human lives. Interventions by the antique gods are actually viewed by Palmotić Dionorić only as changes within the consciousness of the respective *personae dramatis* themselves. Accordingly, his didactic post-Tridentine sentences, written under the influence of Ivan Gundulić, reflect his psychological efforts to comprehend the possible reasons for and the motivations of his protagonists' deeds. In such a way, within a classicistic scheme with a canonised and petrified mode of the characters leading decorous dialogues even a more realistic option of interpreting the progress of dramatic storyline is selected by the author. Dionorić's overall presentation of the characters in a convincing manner, as well as the connotations of his didactic comments have added to the mythological story a strong social and political angle with regard to the problems of governing a state and diplomatic moves in the direction of finding reliable allies. The idea of establishing harmony and order when running a community is present not only in respect of the meaning of the drama, but also in the structuring of metrical elements within the drama: as far as the versification of the work is concerned, the doubly-rhymed twelve-line stanza denotes the voice of reason, whereas the quite flexible and the most recurrent eight-line stanza indicates the voice of the characters' habitual reactions and reflects emotional influences. Aeneas is a hero who is, in spite of his ruthless determination, singled out by the author as an example of a good ruler whose personal feelings are overpowered by the importance of his parental and patriotic duties. The characters of Dido and Aeneas, placed in such a concept of drama construction, are perceived by the author as prototypes of the two modes of ruling a kingdom, with their tragic conflict as the prevalence of the voice of reason over emotions, as well as a simultaneous incapability of the voice of emotions to come to terms with the counterpoised ruthlessness and to bring the lost equilibrium back.

In the chapter entitled *Various Faces of the Didoes of Dubrovnik*, Hrvojka Mihanović-Salopek studies the above literary type in correlation with the rest of distinctive genres applied by the authors from southern Croatia who dealt with the subject of Vergil's *Aeneid*, i.e. *La Didone*, a dramatised episode from the melodrama by Stjepan Zanović, published in Italian in Rotterdam, 1772, manuscriptal translations of *Dido* related to the 18th century

epic poetry by Luko Mihov Bunić and Gjuro Hidža, both from Dubrovnik, as well the hand-written librettist drama *Dido*, which was recast by Ivan Franatica Sorkočević in 1750, remodelled after the 1724 work by Pietro Metastasi, bearing the same title. In the chapter following the above one, a detailed analysis and interpretation of Dionorić's tragedy is set forth by Mihanović-Salopek: its specificities, semantic features, the structuring of metric elements and composition in accordance with the requirements of classicism such as symmetry, harmony, unity of action, place and time. In the final part of this literary history study, Palmotić Dionorić's work's reception is presented within the framework of Croatian and foreign Croatology studies, e.g. philological reviews and critical observations, along with a recent reappraisal of his work.

In the chapter entitled *The Fine Arts Heritage of the Palmotić Lineage*, Vinicije Lupis has shown the visual arts heritage left by the poet and his family. Next special attention is paid to classical motifs in the art of the city of that time, notably due to the fact that Dubrovnik got established as an urban and civilizational centre of southern Dalmatia within a continuity of the antique heritage. The classical world lived also in the tradition of medieval *Ragusium* - Dubrovnik, persistently pointing to its roots in the ancient colony of Epidaurus, as testified to by the classical motifs adorning the capitals of the Prince's Palace's pillars from the mid-15th century. Jaketa's *Dido* was put on stage as long ago as in 1646. Lupis's work is a thorough account of the plastic art influence of the antique world, with special reference to the Trojan cycle in the fine arts of Dubrovnik. Besides, classical motifs in the heritage of goldsmith's trade, wall painting, painting and archaeological monuments are shown. The antique foundations of civilization had their stronghold in Dalmatian cities, too. By the same token, in the climate of the Renaissance-related process of *rediviva* of the classical spirit, the neighbouring city of Korčula perceived Antenor of Troy as its forefather and founder, referring to the first chapter of *Aeneid*. The Trojan cycle had a significant role to play in the cultural affirmation of the Croatian south from the 15th to the 17th century, as well as a linkage with Italy developing that time's civilization-related ecumenicalism with the country that was an important cultural backbone of the Mediterranean. The *Aeneid* characters' bravery and moral principles complemented the Christian spiritual formation of the young living in the Baroque period, particularly of those who were groomed for responsible state and church positions. The book has presented for the first time

diplomatic handbooks that may have also been used by Jaketa Palmotić when being trained for the ambassadorial post. The book contains scientific studies, as well as the following: a description of all Jaketa Palmotić Dionorić's existing manuscripts of *Dido*, the poet's bibliography, some art contributions offering the scanty and mostly unknown records of the author's life and work, as well as some neo-antique fine art representations of the poet's time.

Palmotić Dionorić's personal life was always in the shadow of his engagement in society: throughout it he strove to keep the Republic of Dubrovnik alive in the tempest threatening to obliterate its freedom. From the preserved written sources we can see that Palmotić Dionorić was a talented and accomplished diplomat, that he was a sophisticated person. His public work and political commitment brought him to the forefront of the historic reality of 17th century Dubrovnik. It was a very difficult period of time in the aftermath of the earthquake, but at the same time also a glorious revival of the history of Dubrovnik. And it was the time of the climax of the Palmotić lineage - that of Džore, Junije and Jaketa, a time of great patriots and skilled diplomats. The poet's *Dido* is nothing short of being interesting to-date, not just as a realisation of a dramatic conception within the style formation of the day, but in the book's interpretation also as the awakened voice of the Republic of Dubrovnik, of its shrewd, cautious, wise and alert diplomacy carefully keeping watch over the fate of the city, setting an example for the generations to come.

Translated by Andrina Pavlinić, M.A.

