

The present-day appearance of the Cathedral of Our Lady has been greatly determined by two catastrophic earthquakes that struck the area of Dubrovnik in the spring of 1979, followed by the full-scale reconstruction of the building, but also archaeological research which resulted in most unexpected findings—discovery of the structures that preceded the Romanesque basilica. The course of the research and the renovation of the cathedral has been described by Marin Ivanović, casting light on the project of the presentation of the archaeological finds beneath the building. The care for the cathedral complex over the recent years has been affirmed by the re-opened debate on the decoration of the cathedral's sanctuary, approved by the authorised bodies in 2012, within which the works on the restoration of the former marble main altar—consisting of the late Baroque mensa and a neo-Renaissance retable installed in 1913—were initiated.

The monograph's outstanding value lies in its scientific apparatus: illustrated catalogue units of the works of art of the Baroque cathedral which, besides author and date, include also the material, i.e. technique and the dimensions of the work, along with a list and to a large extent a full transcript of all archival documents related to the cathedral (1199-1940). In assessing the publication as a whole, one cannot escape a commonly used formula "a lavishly illustrated edition", which in this case requires a further specification "in right measure", considering that the beautiful photographs of Paolo Mofardin and the architectural drawings of Ivan Tenšek and Ivana Valjato-Vrus fully complement particular parts of the text, most evidently being produced side by side. The monograph about the Cathedral of Our Lady in Dubrovnik is an outcome of the years of meticulous research conducted by the scholars of the Institute of Art History in Zagreb, carefully compiled and presented through the Herculean efforts of the editor and her collaborators. As a lasting testimony to the care of the cathedral parish for its rich legacy, the monograph is a starting-point and a compulsory reference in any future study of all the periods and layers of the Dubrovnik cathedral, but equally so of the urban development and religious life of the City.

Tanja Trška

Vesna Čučić, *The Republic of Dubrovnik: Final Crisis*. Chicago, IL: ProLibertas Publishers, 2014. Pages XXIII+208.

An earlier version of Ms. Čučić's book was published in Croatian in 2003 (Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU and Matica hrvatska in Dubrovnik), but now appears in a somewhat upgraded English-language version thanks to an able translation by Duško Čondić. As a result, this important monograph will be available to a far broader international audience. Dr. Ante Čuvalo and Ms. Ivana Čuvalo Rosandić founded the CroLibertas Publishers with the sole purpose of publishing books—original monographs, translations, and reprints—of interest to those who wish to be informed about Croatia and her history, something that should not be the project of a small diaspora publisher, but of those Croatian institutions that are responsible for promoting the best of domestic scholarship. The Čuvalos' first publication was a critical study of archival holdings from the Catholic parish of St. Jerome, a Croatian immigrant institution in Chicago, Illinois. Ms. Čučić's monograph is the second book in the series.

The demise of the Republic of Dubrovnik was not the favourite episode for those who applied themes from the history of Dubrovnik as building material for the construction of the Croat national project. Contrary to the narratives of great achievement during the Republic's heyday, the fall of the Dubrovnik polity was too depressing to bear. That in part explains why the subject was infrequently pursued. Besides the two-volume (and then strictly diplomatic) history by Lujo Vojnović (*Pad Dubrovnika*, 1908), which was published on the hundredth anniversary of the events and brought the story up to the

final attempts at the Republic's restoration (from the uprising of 1813 to the Congress of Vienna), there were practically no works on the subject, the somewhat forgotten English-language monograph by Harriet Bjelovučić: *The Ragusan Republic: Victim of Napoleon and its Own Conservatism*, which was published in 1970, being the sole exception. The dearth of research on the Republic's final period has since been reversed thanks to Vesna Čučić's expert insight into the world of troubled relations in Dubrovnik and the Adriatic basin at the turn of the eighteenth century, when Napoleon transferred the spirit of the Great Revolution into a set of legal, educational, and administrative reforms, and then, thanks to his military and strategic advantages, unleashed them on the unwilling European continent.

Vesna Čučić's monograph begins with the context of the French decision to seize Dubrovnik in 1806. The great game after the Third Coalition and the Peace of Pressburg (1805) led to the Franco-Russian conflict in the Bay of Kotor, where the Austrian authorities, under the pressure of the anti-French local movement, did not pass the Bay to the French, as provided by the Peace of Pressburg, but to the Russians instead. The French then occupied Dubrovnik under the pretext that Dubrovnik's neutrality was compromised. Ms. Čučić's approximations about the number of French troops on the territory of Dubrovnik (between 1,100 and 5,000) are particularly telling, as is her account of the role they played in combat against the Russo-Montenegrin army during the Russian siege of Dubrovnik, as well as on the nature of siege itself, which has been downplayed in the previous accounts. This episode, made notorious by the pillage and burning of Konavle, Cavtat, and a number of suburban settlements, has lived in the collective memory of Dubrovnik and helped legitimate the French contributions in defence of the city and its possessions. The arrival of fresh French troops in July 1806 repelled the Russian siege. These are unquestionably the best pages of the monograph and they stress the predatory nature of Russian-Montenegrin effort, something that Lujo Vojnović mainly circumvented in his *Pad Dubrovnika*.

The rest of the book takes up the consequences of conflict, the expenditures that the Republic invested on the French army during the period of dual power (1806-1808), and the damage caused by Russians, Montenegrins, and Orthodox Herzegovinians. The biggest damages were incurred in Gruž, Rijeka dubrovačka, and Konavle, and in Konavle most especially in Čilipi, as well as Bačev Do and Gruda. Most houses were burned in Konavle (235), Župa (188) and *borgo* Pile (134); in percentages: in Obod (84.21%) and Pile (47.69%). Nor was the number of victims insignificant. According to some accounts there were 581 dead only in Konavle, and in the city itself, perhaps more than 150. Ms. Čučić clearly demonstrates that we have underestimated the last crisis of the Republic of Dubrovnik. This was not just the story of the French occupation but, in far greater measure, that of savagery committed by the Russo-Montenegrin forces, something that Medo Pucić called the expected behaviour of 'beasts': "Then the Frenchman grabbed Dubrovnik ... / And by his godless violence / Though we were neither in the wrong or in debt / He destroyed our national rule. / Then the Moscovite went on to chase him / From both the land and the sea / And took with him a Montenegrin troop / And then sat himself round Dubrovnik / A wild hawk in a dove's nest".

Dubrovnik's last crisis was a confrontation between a small patrician oligarchy and modernity, as represented by a self-made emperor and his military force, both being products of the French Revolution, which is to say that they were dedicated to undermining the institutions of old Europe. Republican particularism was swept away by the uniformity of 'scientific' state and its centralism, which was not abridged under subsequent Habsburg rule. It is of great value to remind ourselves of this great epopee, the first act of the modern tragedy, which was far more dramatic than its last convulsions, behind the curtain that is steadily falling in our own time. Thanks to the translation of this valuable book, many new readers will discover the circumstances of Dubrovnik's collapse in all of their depressing detail. Ms. Čučić deserves our thanks and recommendation.