

1591, will be based on the Jewish merchant network—will tackle the Ragusan supremacy in the Balkan trade.

But if in the last decades of the Cinquecento “the total value and volume of business activities tend gradually to downsize”, nevertheless—according to Moroni—the Balkan trade is “still largely under the control of Ragusan families” (p. 166). The key word to understand this supremacy is family: Gozze, Gradi, Cerva, Bobali, Sorgo and Bona are the protagonists of those years and in such an environment the frame most commonly used to carry out economic activities is that of “brotherly companies”, i. e. companies composed of members of the same family (p. 168). Among all, the Gozze family is the one to rise, and Moroni writes interesting pages about its activities and *modus operandi*. In the thirty-year period under consideration, Raffaele of Marino Gozze is the biggest Ragusan investor, with a turnover exceeding 160,000 ducats, and it is no wonder that the Gozze family is the only one that will recover from the crisis from the end of the sixteenth century (p. 174).

In the meantime, however, new players emerge, usually merchants operating in the most important Balkan cities—Belgrade especially, but also Sofia, Buda, Trnovo—that are associated with Ragusan investors. Moroni does not forget to emphasize that, despite the fact that those are “merchants of various geographical, social and cultural background”, we can notice “already uniform behaviour patterns” (p.179): to some of these emerging figures the author dedicates beautiful pages titled “stories of families and merchants” (pp. 190-200).

From the 1620s on, the decline will come, as testified by rich data on the activities of the Ragusan merchants in the Balkans and on the investments of big merchant-bankers of the Republic in Italian *Monti*, two phenomena that show a nearly perfect synchrony. To aggravate the situation, maritime trade faced a crisis, also as a result of the strong expansion of the North European shipping in the Mediterranean. All this within the general context of strong contraction of the Ottoman economy, which drags with it the fortune of the Republic: “Ragusa, too, is now living a crisis which the Turkish Empire has been living.” (p. 229).

And nothing better than this statement can be used to close these short notes. Moroni has written a book that put Ragusa in the centre of the History, the great one. For that, we should be grateful.

Stefano d’Atri

**Vjera Katalinić**, *Sorkočevići, dubrovački plemići i glazbenici / Sorkočević, Dubrovnik’s noblemen and musicians*. Zagreb: Muzički informativni centar Koncertne direkcije Zagreb, 2014. Pages 165.

This bilingual Croatian-English volume, the latest work of Vjera Katalinić, contains the fruit of the many decades of her research of eighteenth-century Croatian music and is a contribution to the commemoration of the 280th birth anniversary and 225th death anniversary of Luka Sorgo (more commonly referred to as Sorkočević), one of the most prominent members of the Sorgo noble family of Dubrovnik. Besides Bajamonti, Sorkočević is by far the most significant Croatian musician whose work falls within the mainstream of European pre-Classicism and Classicism. By drawing a detailed picture of the atmosphere and the general social landscape of the epoch which glorified the power of the spirit and self-consciousness of human mind, the book provides an abundance of

material that encompasses and compiles, epitomises and deepens, interprets and reinterprets voluminous data on the life and work of the two musically gifted members of the Sorkočević family—Luka (1734-1789) and his son Antun (1775-1841). At the same time, however, the author sets their work in the contemporary context of “their primary occupations and the domestic and international forces that affected them from the musical point of view” (p. 7). In accordance with the spiritual cosmopolitanism that marked the era of the Enlightenment, this book reads not only as a biography of the human and artistic paths of the Sorkočević, but also as a mirror of the social and intellectual trends of their numerous contemporaries in Dubrovnik, and in the broader area of the Mediterranean and Central Europe.

Following the methodology of her previous book on Ivan Mane Jarnović which surpasses the narrow national aspect and affords a fascinating array of data on the European cultural and music history of the second half of the eighteenth century, Vjera Katalinić questions the historical and social context within which the musical culture of Dubrovnik shaped. In doing so she does not underestimate the significance of the Croatian musicians, nor does she neglect the relevance of the work of their foreign counterparts, who “either temporarily or lastingly realised their potentials in the region and contributed to the advancement of local musical life as composers, teachers, interpreters and as implementers of new musical works, new genres, new ways of playing” (p. 7). A relatively rich and vibrant milieu of Dubrovnik, imbued with the propulsiveness of musical ideas, was the home of the noblemen and musicians Luka and Antun Sorgo, but also Jelena Ragnina, married Pozza-Sorgo (1784-1865), to whom the author dedicates a separate chapter. Her musical activity bears witness to a widely spread practice of the acquisition of written and printed musical materials from Italian centres, notably from Venice, but equally so from Rome and Naples, which we find in the music collections and archives on the Croatian coast of the Adriatic (as, in this particular case, in the collection of the Franciscan Monastery in Dubrovnik). Devoted primarily to popular vocal pieces, which she procured as scores or piano reductions so as to be able to perform them, accompanying herself on the fortepiano, Jelena Pozza-Sorgo proved herself as a composer, too. Her songs based on Italian lyrics and accompanied by piano/harpsichord thus “cannot be judged as if they were written for performance before an audience, rather as letters of the soul written for her nearest and dearest... or at the very least as a refined drawing-room pastime appropriate for the class and setting” (p. 147).

Although starting from the musical domain, Vjera Katalinić places the Sorkočević into a wider social-political and culturological framework, and examines their biographical data from a comparative and interdisciplinary angle. From these standpoints she draws attention to some important, though until now less addressed issues and aspects of Dubrovnik’s musical culture. As she herself stresses in the preface, the aim of this book is “not to show only *how* these Ragusan musicians worked, but to ... find the *reasons* and *stimuli* for their procedures outside the musical context” (p. 7).

As the Republic’s diplomatic representative in the negotiations with the then leading powers of Europe—France in 1778 and Austria in 1781-1782—Luka Sorkočević was in a position to establish relations and contacts with foreign individuals, circles and institutions, and to become familiar with the cultural and social being of the European intellectual elite, including that of music. His diary is a remarkably interesting and in many respects illuminating document about numerous diplomatic activities, foreign contacts and diverse cultural events, and indirectly about the details from his life and work. By leaning on the journal entries, the author reconstructs the features of the musical life of Vienna in 1781, with special emphasis on distinguished musicians with whom Sorgo came in contact (Haydn, Metastasio, Gluck and others), along with the written and printed musical materials which he brought with him to Dubrovnik. Indeed, Sorgo’s diary is an excellent

document about the musical-cultural atmosphere of the city at the end of the eighteenth century which, thanks to the engagement of enlightened intellectuals and diplomats, members of formal and informal “Academies”, assimilated the elements of various traditions and opened the doors widely to new ideas in their society. In a manner of a meticulous researcher, Katalinić takes the reader to Rijeka as she interprets Luka’s diary records on the events, persons and musical life of that city of significance for Dubrovnik’s diplomatic and especially commercial activity.

The chapter which occupies most space deals with Luka and Antun Sorgo as composers within the context of Croatian and European music of the *settecento*, with recap on the most important features of their composition style and influences. The Sorgos’ repertorised music legacy is mainly filed in the music collection of the Franciscan Monastery in Dubrovnik, apart from two of Antun’s compositions: a handwritten version of *Tantum ergo* (in A Major) for three voices and orchestra, preserved in the collection Udina-Algarotti, the property of the Diocese of Krk, since 1935 housed in the Croatian Music Institute (*Hrvatski glazbeni zavod*) in Zagreb, and a unique copy of the printed *La Preghiera*, kept in the *British Library* in London. This chapter also outlines a list of compositions of doubtful authorship (Luka or Antun Sorgo?), in which Katalinić tries to tackle the riddles of attribution by casting more light on the compositions of both Sorgos. This, however, is “just one of the first attempts to put down on paper the speculations, hypotheses and quandaries that occupy musicologists unburdened by prejudices” (p. 133). In this regard, the book is a useful stimulus to future researchers, yet paying equal respect to all the predecessors (researchers, musicologists, composer-arrangers and performers) thanks to whom the Sorškočević legacy has survived to date as an indubitable value of the national musical and cultural heritage. Enclosed is a CD containing Luka Sorgo’s instrumental compositions which the German *Classic Produktion Osnabrück* recorded in 2003, performed by the ensemble *Salzburger Hofmusik* led by Wolfgang Brunner, one of those who in a refined and sophisticated manner contributed to the presentation and popularisation of Luka’s works to a wider audience. Throughout the book is also richly illustrated.

Lastly, this well-written book appeals to the reader with its intellectual breadth and insightfulness as much as with the excellence of style. Devoid of abstract terminology and hermeticism, it is an easy read in either of the versions, and should interest not only musicologists but wide readership too.

Ivana Tomić Ferić

*Sv. Vlaho u povijesti i sadašnjosti* [*St Blaise in History and the Present*], exhibition catalogue, ed. **Pavica Vilać**. Dubrovnik: Dubrovački muzeji, 2014. Pages 534.

*Sv. Vlaho u povijesti i sadašnjosti* (St Blaise in History and the Present) is a catalogue of the exhibition organised by Dubrovnik Museums, mounted at the Rector’s Palace and the Rupe Granary in Dubrovnik in 2012. The ambitious exhibition project and the extensive catalogue were intended to be a tribute to the main patron saint of the city, commemorating the 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dubrovnik museums as well as the 1040<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the legendary event that is traditionally believed to mark the very beginning of the Ragusan devotion to St Blaise. As a matter of fact, according to the late-medieval historical accounts, it was in the year 972 that the saint appeared to a local priest, *dum* Stojko, and saved the city from the Venetian conquest. The legend has it that the Venetians