

THE LITERARY HERITAGE OF MARKO BRUEREVIĆ IN FOUR LANGUAGES

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ABSTRACT: Marc Bruère Desrivaux stands out as one of the most prominent poets of the Croatian literature at the close of the eighteenth century. Having in mind his contribution to the development of the contemporary literary plurilingualism, this interesting poetic figure may well be studied from diverse aspects: the polyglot manuscript collections of his poems offer ground for discussion on Bruerević the translator, his talent for versifying and metrical translations, etc.

A Frenchman among the common people of Dubrovnik

Marc Bruère Desrivaux (1770-1823) or Marko Bruerević, as he liked to call himself,¹ stands out as one of the most prominent poets of the Croatian literature at the close of the eighteenth century. Having in mind his contribution to the development of the contemporary literary plurilingualism, this in-

¹ *Poslaniza Marka Bruerevichja, pisana is Trawnika svomu Priateglju Andru Altesti u Dubrovnik and Andrii Altestichju Marka Bruerevichja Piesan*, autographs, National and University Library in Zagreb, Collection of Manuscripts (hereafter cited as: NSB), R 3787 and R 3767.

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This article has already been published in Croatian under the following title: »Pjesnička ostavština Marka Bruerevića na četiri jezika.« *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 38 (2000): pp. 185-199. Translated by Vesna Baće.

teresting poetic figure may well be studied from diverse aspects: the polyglot manuscript collections of his poems offer ground for discussion on Bruerević the translator, his talent for versifying and metrical translations, etc. The aim of this study is to highlight the literary heritage of this undeservedly neglected and understudied poet and to draw attention to some of his major concerns and literary characteristics, which made him stand out in the literary circles of Dubrovnik.

He arrived in Dubrovnik in 1772, where his father, René-Charles Bruère Desrivaux, was appointed consul general of France and chargé d'affaires.² Đuro Ferić (1739-1820), a Latinist, an exponent of the Enlightenment, and a precursor of the Illyrian movement in Dubrovnik was his first teacher. Though dominated by Latinism, it was also a century of increasing interest for the Croatian language. Moreover, this unequalled enthusiasm for the study of the Croatian language and literature resulted in a growing tendency to outlaw the Italian borrowings from the popular idiom. The idea of producing a Latin-Italian-Croatian dictionary was soon to see the light. It was compiled by Ardelio della Bella, a Jesuit of Florence, on the basis of the published works and manuscripts of Croatian authors, illustrated by the examples from the Croatian colloquial speech and supplemented with a grammar of the "Illyrian" language, along with the instructions for reading, writing and pronunciation of the Croatian entries.³ It was in the eighteenth century that great many works of the older Croatian writers of Dubrovnik were transcribed. There was growing interest for literature written in the Croatian language, even of those Ragusan writers who used to write in Latin.⁴

Marko Bruerević grew up in a cultural environment marked by the accomplishments of the last Croatian Latinists, the Croatian linguistic idiom and the Italian language, which was the language of education at the time. His intellectual and poetic abilities found expression in four different languages: Latin, French, Italian, and Croatian. As a Frenchman, proud of his nationality, he was the most outstanding representative of the Croatian language and

² Rudolf Maixner, »Interes francuske revolucionarne vlade za strane književnosti i Dubrovnik.« *Grada za povijest književnosti Hrvatske* 28 (1962): pp. 377-387.

³ *Isusovac Ardelio Della Bella (1655-1737)*. Radovi međunarodnog znanstvenog simpozija, Split 1988. Split - Zagreb: Crkva u svijetu - Obnovljeni život, 1990.

⁴ Petar Kolendić, »Grizićev izvještaj o dubrovačkim književnicima prvih godina 18. vijeka.« *Srd* 4/3 (1907): p. 730.

literature in the struggle against the domination of foreign national cultures. This is how he comments on it in *Satira*, a poem in Croatian:

“...jer svako do glasovita Pregata
slavne bi se slatko harvatske odreko starine?
Jer čupah od župskih do najponosne vladike
stidi se svak jezik slovinski čisto govorit?
Jedva smie u gradu kod načvih haljine peruć
popievku izustit godišnjica bez da riječim
već inostranim neg našim složena bude”.⁵

Bruerević considers foreign influences, starting with the cuisine, fashion and hairdos, as well as literature and architecture, particularly those imported from Italy and France, a threat to the established ways of the Dubrovnik society, which irrevocably changed the lifestyle of its citizens:

“Tudj običaj tako na starog nauka mjesto
kradom se uvlači; hod, život, haljina, način
jest priašni odbačen; i rodnog jezika stavnost...”⁶

It is Bruerević's poems, *Čupe*, *Spravljenice* and *Zvezdoznanci*, deeply rooted in the Croatian tradition of carnival poetry in Dubrovnik, that reveal how much he identified with the Ragusan mentality, landscape, and customs. His poems were well received, as evidenced by the public readings during the carnival of 1805.⁷ But what makes his verse significantly different from most of the Croatian and Latin poetic output of Dubrovnik is the fact that Bruerević was the first to depict the lowest, totally neglected common woman, the indentured serving girl, named *čupa* after the disheveled and messy hair of these twelve-year-old girls. The nobles usually found these girls in the peasant families of their landed properties. Once at the patrician household, the girls were often objects of sexual desire of older aristocrats and their playful sons, as well as victims of ill treatment by the ladies. Bruerević describes

⁵ The poem was first edited by Orsat-Medo Pucić, in the journal *Dubrovnik, cviet narodnog književstva* 3 (1851): pp. 55-57. The manuscript, which served as a basis for this edition, is unknown to me.

⁶ Ibidem.

⁷ See »Pjesni Marka Bruerevichja.«, in: *Pjesnosbranje slovinsko*, ed. Antun Kaznačić. Dubrovnik: Po Petru Franu Martecchini, 1839.

their somber fate in the following manner:

“O plemići lipi i mladi
 ako imate, jakno i lice
 Blago srce, Boga radi,
 Požalite nesrećnice,
 izmrčene, gnusne bjene
 jadne čupe, ucviljene....
Je-da i samo neženjeni
 momci hoće zakidivat
 Neg još smiješno uzmamljeni
 starci stanu dosmrdivat
 da nas vazme gad i tuga
 od njihova pusta ruga.
 Na temu se još pristavi
 da se u kući s nama nađe
 hitri djetić i lukavi,
 koj nas ludijeh draži i snađe,
 i navodi na nesreće,
 dokle izide nješto treće....”⁸

The role of the saviour in situations such as these seemed to have been reserved for *djetić* (household male servant). When there was no such support, the fate of a juvenile mother often had its epilogue at the court, while that of her illegitimate child was even more tragic. Direct in his criticism, Bruerević does not hesitate to unveil this frightening phenomenon, commonplace in the eighteenth century:

“S tog hmile općenim Pile narešene čedom
 Stog nedjelje nie u pustoj godini danah
 koj da neiznađe među stjenam mrtva djeteta.”⁹

Bruère strikes the reader with his deep moral concern for these wretched creatures, expressing sympathy, warmth and profound understanding. There is no doubt that he was sincere as both of his wives came from this lowest

⁸ Ibidem, p. 38.

⁹ »Satyra«, ed. Orsat-Medo Pucić. *Dubrovnik, cviet narodnog književstva* 3 (1851): pp. 55-57.

rank. The sight of Kata Odić, Marko's first wife, a Catholic from the vicinity of Travnik (Bosnia), sitting on the floor and eating with her fingers, appalled his father, a distinguished French diplomat. Nevertheless, upon her death Marko remarried, this time a country girl from Župa Dubrovačka by the name of Mara Kisić.¹⁰

Published verse

The above characteristics make the literary portrait of Marko Bruerević stand out. Although he abandoned the Croatian literary scene fairly early, and died soon afterwards, Bruerević's work is diverse in both themes and poetic interest. These historical circumstances are probably also to blame for his work remaining relatively unknown with only a few of his poems being published, and most of his manuscripts scattered throughout the libraries and archives of Croatia and beyond.

His first book of poetry was published in 1789 when he was probably 25 years old. It included an Italian occasional poem in tercet, written to celebrate the wedding of a young patrician couple from the Sorgo family.¹¹ His verse in Croatian was first published in a volume of occasional poems of the Dubrovnik authors in 1802.¹² On page 28 of this collection we find Bruerević's Italian sonnet, *Parla il Sig. Dottore Lorenzo Giromelli*, together with a Latin epigram and a soothing poem entitled *Razgovorna pjesma gosparu Lovrijezu Giromelli*, written upon an early death of the latter's stepson, the young Ragusan physician, Đuro Detorres (Deturić). It is with this publication that Bruerević presented himself as a polyglot poet.

By 1811, Bruère published a collection of Italian poems of political nature, occasioned by the birth of the French heir to the throne, emperor, and also king of Italy.¹³

Remaining loyal to occasional verse, Bruère contributed a Latin epigram

¹⁰ Aleksander Sapieha, *Podróże w krajach słowiańskich odbywane*. Novi Sad - Wrocław: Matica srpska - Ossolineum, 1983: pp. 216-218.

¹¹ Marc Rene Bruere D., *Per le faustissime nozze dell'egregio cavaliere conte Nicolò Sorgo colla ornatissima dama contessa Elena Sorgo*. Ragusa: Andrea Trevisan, 1789.

¹² *Versi in morte di Georgio Detorres, dottore in filosofia e medicina*. Ragusa: Antonio Martecchini, 1802.

¹³ *Per la nascita del re di Roma*. Ragusa: Antonio Martecchini, 1811.

upon the launching of the biggest vessel ever constructed in the Dubrovnik shipyard, which, unfortunately, sank off the shores of Malta, and never returned to the homeport.¹⁴

Bruerević published another Latin collection of occasional verse in Paris in 1821, the same year that he died.¹⁵ It contained three odes dedicated to the birth of the heir to the French throne, which he subsequently translated into Italian.¹⁶

Paris also witnessed the publication of his translation of the Croatian folk poem *Hasanaginica* in 1826, included in François-Charles Hugues Laurent Pouqueville's *Voyages dans la Grèce*.¹⁷

Eight years following Bruère's death, Antun Kaznačić, a younger contemporary, published the poems *Čupe*, *Spravljenice*, and *Zvezdoznanci*, along with Ignjat Đurđević's *Marunko* and Stijepo Đurđević's *Dervišata*.¹⁸

From his private manuscript collection Orsat Pucić published Bruère's epistles and occasional poems in Croatian in the journal *Dubrovnik, cviet narodnog književstva*.¹⁹ *Satira*, a poem resembling a Latin translation in hexameter, includes powerful irony of snobbery and fashionable trends in society which led to the neglect of the national language and traditional customs. The fate of this Pucić's manuscript is not known.

I. A. Kaznačić, editor of the journal *Dubrovnik, zabavnik narodne štionice*, published in 1868 a collection of jocular and satirical poems (*Kita šaljivo-satiričnih pjesama*) which included *Pjesma za uškati dijete*, a poem of uncertain authorship (Bruerević or Zlatarić) and a masquerade, *Zvezdoznanci*. The poetic atmosphere of the former piece can be identified as that of

¹⁴ *Nave ragusea distinta col nome del celebre antico matematico Marino Ghetaldi. Componimenti Latini, Italiani ed Illirici*. Italia (!), 1819.

¹⁵ *In faustis natalibus ac sollemnibus sacri baptismatis caeremoniis a Deo Galliae dati optatissimi principis Henrici Burdigalae ducis carmina*. Lutetiae Parisiorum: Typis J. G. Dentu, 1821.

¹⁶ *Versione di tre Odi latine del cavalier Marco Bruère Desrivaux, composte in occasione delle solennità del sacro battesimo di sua altezza il real principe Enrico duca di Bordeaux, tradotte dallo stesso autore ad uso di sua altezza reale Carolina Ferdinanda Luigia duchesa di Berry*. Parigi: Presso A. Béraud, 1821.

¹⁷ Rudolf Maixner, »Bruerovičev francuski prijevod *Hasanaginice*.« *Građa za povijest književnosti hrvatske* 28 (1962): pp. 389-397.

¹⁸ *Pjesnosbranje slovinsko*. Ragusa: F. P. Martecchini, 1839.

¹⁹ *Dubrovnik, cviet narodnog književstva* 3 (1851): pp. 19-58.

Bruerević, not only because of the abundant use of the Turkish borrowings but on the account of the poetic motive as well. In a predominantly Bruèrian tone, the poem relates the servant-master relationship, describing a wet nurse who lulls a patrician baby boy to sleep by addressing him as the ruler of the entire world, whereas Zlatarić drew from different poetic subjects:

“Ninaj svijeta gospodaru
ninaj carski poklisaru...”²⁰

In 1878 *Slovinac* published Bruerević’s satirical poem (*kolenda*) dedicated to Antun Kaznačić and a humorous dramatic writing entitled *Vjera iznenada*.²¹

Bruère’s eleven poems in Croatian and three Latin odes: *Breni laudes*, *Ad pacem* and *Ad Georgium Ferrichium* were published in the series *Five centuries of Croatian literature*.²²

I have recently published two of his Italian epistles: *Al Signore Giugno Resti essendo egli conte id est podesta di Lopud, detto volgarimente isola di Mezzo*,²³ and *Alla signora Maria Giorgi epistola*, in the original and Croatian translation by Mihaela Vekarić.²⁴

Manuscript legacy

Bruerević’s manuscript legacy can be traced to the following collections: Several Latin poems exist in Čulić’s manuscript collection of the Library of the Franciscan Monastery in Dubrovnik.²⁵

²⁰ *Dubrovnik, zabavnik narodne štionice* 2 (1868): pp. 102-104.

²¹ »Vjera iznenada.« *Slovinac* 1/11 (1878): pp. 105-108, 117-119, 134-136, 150-152, 166-167, 182-183; Bruerević’s *kolenda* to Antun Kaznačić was published without the title in the journal *Slovinac* 1/13 (1878): p. 144.

²² *Zbornik stihova i proze 18. stoljeća*, ed. Rafo Bogišić. Pet stoljeća hrvatske književnosti, vol. 19. Zagreb: Matica hrvatska-Zora, 1973: pp. 283-321; *Hrvatski latinisti* II, ed. Vladimir Vratović. Pet stoljeća hrvatske književnosti, vol. 3. Zagreb: Matica hrvatska-Zora, 1970: pp. 877-893.

²³ Slavica Stojan, »Lopud u poeziji Francuza i hrvatskog pjesnika Marka (Bruera) Bruerevića.« *Zbornik Dubrovačkog primorja i otoka* 6 (1997): pp. 20-23.

²⁴ Slavica Stojan, *U salonu Marije Giorgi Bona*. Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 1996: pp. 60-64.

²⁵ The collection consists of odes dedicated to Đuro Ferić and Junije Resti, an epitaph to Junije Resti (accompanied with an Italian translation), and elegies upon the death of Benedikt Stay, Petar Aleti and Đuro Ferić.

The Croatian National and University Library in Zagreb houses five manuscript writings of Bruerević's poetry, including autographed epistles and occasional poems, transcribed by Klement Rajčević.²⁶

The Scientific Library of Dubrovnik keeps seven manuscripts of his poems and translations from Latin.²⁷

Bruerević's autograph translation from Latin, *Volgarizzamento di varie poesie*, was located at the library of the Institute for Historical Sciences in Dubrovnik, but seems to be missing.²⁸

The manuscript of Bruerević's poems from the Pavlović-Gracić collection at the State Archives of Dubrovnik under the title *Raccolta di poetici componimenti in lingue diverse* contains 33 poems in Italian, 18 in Latin, and under a separate heading of *Pjesni i začinke* are 9 poems in Croatian. This archive also houses *Tomačenja iz Franceskoga jezika* with Croatian translations from French, the authorship of which could most likely be attributed to Bruerević. The same manuscript also contains 7 Croatian translations from Latin, along with 15 Croatian translations from Italian of diverse Ragusan authors.²⁹

Rešetar's manuscript collection located in Prague (Statni knihovna), among others, includes Bruerević's collection of poems transcribed in 1833 by Marko Marinović, under the title *Poesie Illiriche, Latine ed Italiane*.³⁰

In 1996 I discovered an unknown collection of 60 Bruerević poems, most of which were penned in Italian, and are kept at the Archives of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb.³¹ The volume consists in large extent of sonnets (*sonetto satirico*), verse which he referred to as *poemetto*

²⁶ NSB, R 3843. Autographs of the poems *Čupe*, *Spravljenice* and *Zvezdoznanci* were Antun Kaznačić's gift to Ljudevit Gaj, editor of Bruerević's poetic work.

²⁷ In addition to Bruerević's Croatian poems, the library also has in its possession his Croatian translations of Horace (MS 331), Catullus, Propertius and Ovid (MS 141). See Stjepan Kastropil, *Rukopisi Naučne biblioteke u Dubrovniku*. Zagreb: JAZU, 1954.

²⁸ Miroslav Pantić, »Rukopisi negdašnje biblioteke Bizaro u Historijskom institutu u Dubrovniku.« *Anali Historijskog instituta JAZU u Dubrovniku* 8-9 (1962): pp. 585-586.

²⁹ See Fedora Ferluga-Petronio, »Višejezični Bruerevićev rukopis *Raccolta di poetici componimenti in lingue diverse*.« *Dani hvarskog kazališta* 23 (1997): pp. 211-223.

³⁰ See Oton Berkopec, *Rešetarova knihovna Ragusian*. Praha: Statni knihovna ČSR-Slovenska knihovna, 1967: p. 38.

³¹ Slavica Stojan, »Pjesničke poslanice Marca Bruèrea Dubrovčanima.« *Dani hvarskog kazališta* 23 (1997): pp. 223-235.

(*poemetto tragico, eroicomico*), *canzonetta (canzonetta cantabile)*, *arietta (arietta per musica)*, and a number of very lengthy epistles exceeding a hundred or even several hundred lines. His poetic letters in verse, sometimes without the stanza form, but often in tercets, Bruère simply distinguished as epistles, poems, or narrative poems. Bruerević perfected the triplet metrical form in his *capitolo*, named most likely after the manner of Francesco Berni, the Italian poet well liked and emulated by Bruère's contemporaries. Berni's was a tradition of the witty *arcadia bernesca* which had its followers in Italy as well as in the eighteenth-century Dubrovnik.³² The epistles, addressed to close companions in Croatian or Italian (his friend Altesti was honoured with a bilingual epistle in the Croatian and the Italian language) provide a moving picture of the poet's life, with the most subtle insights and deeply personal passages. His epistles, observing and reflecting, are a blend of funny and serious verse, the jocular and the sober. Although a dramatic record of his own life, Bruerević found the power to jest about it, a practice which owed much to his great teacher, Horace.

The major source of Bruerević's Latin works are the manuscripts *Poesia Latina* and *Latina carmina* of the trilingual collection *Poetici componimenti in Italiano, Slavo e Latino* kept at the State Archives of Dubrovnik,³³ as well as his Latin poems at the Franciscan Library of Dubrovnik,³⁴ contributing thus to the Latin output of the eighteenth-century Croatian literature. It should be noted, however, that Bruerević's literary reputation did not rest on his Latin works, for his name failed to appear in the anthology of the Latin poetry edited by Urbano Appendini in 1811, which included most of his Dubrovnik contemporaries.³⁵

Translations

Bruerević devoted much of his talent to translating. Famous are his Croatian

³² Stanislava Stojan, »Berneska poezija u Dubrovniku na prijelazu iz 18. u 19. stoljeće.« *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 31 (1993): pp. 133-148; Ivica Martinović, »Stihovi Rajmunda Kunića o Ruđeru Boškoviću.« *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 34 (1996): pp. 151-160.

³³ *Legacy Pavlović-Gracić*, vol. 36, pp. 61-68 and 119-136 (State Archives of Dubrovnik).

³⁴ *Ad Georgium Ferrichium*, Library of the Franciscan Monastery in Dubrovnik, MS 180, pp. 158-160.

³⁵ Urbanus Appendini, *Carmina*. Ragusii: Typis Martecchinianis, 1811.

translations of Horace, Catullus, Propertius and Ovid.³⁶ The Latin works of his contemporaries were also a challenge, along with Italian and Croatian translations of his own poems in Latin. Thus, for instance, to celebrate the occasion of Đono Resti's election to the rector's office in 1802, Bruerević composed an ode in Latin which he subsequently translated into Italian.³⁷

Apart from being the author of one of the seventeen French translations of *Hasanaginica*, Marc Bruère had little affinity for expressing himself in his native tongue. Couched in French, Bruère's intelligence reports are not only a valid proof of his excellent command of the language (though in Dubrovnik from his early childhood), but are also a display of the mastery of diplomatic style commonly practiced by the French agents to the Levant.³⁸ His occasional poems and epistles were written in Italian, Croatian or Latin, rarely French. True, some of his poems, according to his own record, resemble those of "the French tradition". Thus his Italian poem, *Idilio*, from the manuscript collection of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts bears the reference *imitazione dal Francese*, dated 1793. Italian and not French was the literary idiom of his epistle to a compatriot, reading:

"Marko Bruère, Al Signor David Console di Francia a Trawnik in Bossina, sopra l'imperfezione d'un Telescopo stato mandato, quasi fosse un capo d'opera in regalo al Passa d'Albania in Scutari, ove l'autore era Console di Francia.

Capitolo

Riverito collega osservandissimo,
 Che avete un nome Ebreo, benchè Cristiano,
 Anzi Agente del sire Cristianissimo.
 Susar vi piaccia, e non vi paja strano
 Se non vi scrivo in prosa, come s'usa,
 Ne in Francese, ma in verso Italiano."³⁹

³⁶ Vladimir Vratović, »Nekoliko Bruerevićevih prijevoda iz Horacija.« *Živa antika* 4/2 (1954): pp. 269-277; *idem*, »Horacije u dubrovačkom pjesništvu 18. i 19. stoljeća.« *Rad JAZU* 357 (1971): pp. 275-352; Veljko Gortan, »Posljednji hrvatski latinisti iz Dubrovnika« *Živa antika* 22/1 (1971): pp. 325-334; Željko Puratić, »Neki prepjevi i preradbe Ovidijevih pjesama u hrvatskoj književnosti.« *Živa antika* 22 (1972): pp. 231-234; Vladimir Vratović, »O recepciji Horacija u hrvatskih latinista« *Forum* 14/9 (1975): pp. 529-534.

³⁷ *Raccolta di poetici componimenti in lingue diverse. Legacy Pavlović-Gracić*, vol. 36.

³⁸ R. Maixner, »Bruerevićev francuski prijevod *Hasanaginice*«: p. 396.

³⁹ *Legacy Pavlović-Gracić*, vol. 36, p. 25.

Four languages

Bruerević's place in the history of the eighteenth-century Croatian literature rests on his carnival poems, epistles, and occasional verse (*kolende*) in Croatian. Warm-hearted and loving are the lines to Mara, his wife and ex-*čupe*, in a poem *Mari Bruerevici, svojoj ženi*:

“Mara zlato, dušo Mara,
Al je ljubav, al pomama!
Koja li je pasja para
Ka se ovako ruga s nama?”⁴⁰

His verse conveys the profound and passionate relationship with this woman whom he missed tremendously while away in Paris. In contrast to a tender declaration of love is a curse—*pasja para*—typical of the colloquial Dubrovnik speech, for which a person could be taken to court and fined up to several perpers. Bruerević had obviously absorbed it in his family circle, concentrating in this instance on the rhyme rather than the meaning.

The versification of Bruerević's Croatian poems generally fashioned after the Croatian literary tradition of Dubrovnik, including also the ten-syllable meter through which he tried to imitate the style and language of a folk poem with the characteristic patterns of oral poetry.

“Plemenitu Gosp. Antunu Lukšinu Sorgo čim se spravljaše na put Pjesan

Da mi je znati Ante prijatelju,
Koje tebi sile i nevolje,
Omraziše toli rodnu zemlju
Da po svitu ideš tražit bolje?
Znaj da svjesno ni korisno nije
Bolje ištuc' dobro ostaviti
A na svrhu gdjeno je bolje gdi je
Ner sred roda svoga može biti?...”⁴¹

Bruerević has been given credit for being the best author of the occasional verse known as *kolenda*. This specific form of personal satire associated with

⁴⁰ *Dubrovnik, cviet narodnog književstva* 3 (1851): p. 38.

⁴¹ *Legacy Pavlović-Gracić*, vol. 36, p. 94; *Dubrovnik, cviet narodnog književstva* 3 (1851): p. 45.

St. Martin's Day, Christmas, New Year's Day and Epiphany was sung in chorus upon a visit to a friend to whom it was dedicated. Holiday greetings wrapped in a predominantly sardonic tone distinguish *kolenda* from other forms of occasional verse. They show the breadth of Bruerević's familiarity with all the aspects of the Dubrovnik society, his verse accommodating not only the elements of the cultural-linguistic tradition and colloquial expressions associated with the life of ordinary people, but the Italian language as well, which, in a way, contributed to the humour of his poetic articulation:

“Nu zahvali verlo Bogu,
Što te iščešljat sam ne mogu
Kako se ono lijepo čini,
Kad se skupe Tintilini.⁴²
Er daleče tisuć milja
Od mene je ma fratiglia
I nije mi Giva Stelle⁴³
Che sapeva le piu belle.”⁴⁴

His friend, Antun Sorgo, was also honoured by Italian verses:

“Al Sig. Conte Antonio di Sorgo
Essendo egli di guardia al castel S. Lorenzo canzonetta

Antonio a fior di quanti
Giovani furo o sono
Più vaghi e più brillanti
Ecco ti reco un dono;
Dono ch'a me commesso
Fu come a fido messo.”⁴⁵

One of the rare French poems, in which Bruerević reflects upon Niko Pozza Sorgo and the true friendship the three of them had shared since the child-

⁴² *Tintilini* or cheeky imps were traditionally held to be the spirits of unbaptized children.

⁴³ Bruerević's contemporary, in charge of Dubrovnik's *lazzaretto*.

⁴⁴ This *kolenda*, dedicated to a friend, Antun Sorgo, was composed in Paris, on the Christmas Eve of 1820. *Zbornik stihova i proze 18. stoljeća*: pp. 309-311.

⁴⁵ The poem is part of the manuscript collection of Bruerević's poetry *Rime di Marco Bruère Desrivaux*, kept at the Archives of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, IV A 68, pp. 185-187.

hood days, is dedicated to the patrician Antun Sorgo:

“Antoine de Sorgo
 Mon très gracieux ami:
 Et toi aussi Nico
 Soyons tous trois unis
 A dire Nico tout court,
 Je veux dire par là,
 Ce cavalier de cour
 Le jeune Nico-Pozza...”⁴⁶

The poetic heritage of this proud Frenchman, deeply devoted to the Croatian cultural setting, passionately in love with the rhythm of its ordinary life, its language and literary tradition, shows him as one of the major exponents of plurilingualism of the eighteenth-century Croatian literature. Curiously, Bruère’s native French was the idiom least employed. Modeling after the tradition of the Italian poet Francesco Berni, Bruerević wrote sonnets, *canzoni* and epistles in Italian. His contemporaries, however, showed preference for Bruerević’s Croatian rather than Latin verse. Polyglot poetic output was a literary fashion of the day, and Bruerević was no exception. However, this poetic figure deserves to be singled out in that, as a descendant of a great nation with an equally celebrated literature, he decided to write in a language of a small nation, producing his very best pieces in Croatian.

⁴⁶ Žarko Muljačić, »Nouvelles données concernant Marc Bruère-Desrivaux.« *Annales de l’Institut Français de Zagreb* 2-3 (1953-1954): pp. 195-198.