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Le latin et la littérature néo-latine au XIX^e siècle : Pratiques et représentations

NOX ATTICA.

Tres veteres iuncti fraterno more sodales,
Miscabant festis pocula grata iocis.
Primus, castra sequens, fuscis invaserat Indos,
Atque, diu pugnans, vulnera passus erat,
Eloquio praestans, et sacro percitus aestu,
Alter Apollinea clarus in arte fuit.
Tertius, aequoreae studiosus amator arenae,
Piscibus insidias tendere ~~gnarus~~^{doctus} erat.
Vespere, sepositis cyathis, mensaque relicta,
Advolat ad calidum laeta caterva focum:
Versibus et statuunt alternis fallere noctem;
Praebeat optatam si modo Phoebus opem.
Incepit emeritus verbis resonantibus heros;
Carmen et incomptum finxerat ipse suum.

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TWO GENTLEMEN-TRANSLATORS FROM 19TH-CENTURY DUBROVNIK

Neven JOVANOVIĆ

At the dawn of the age of Napoleon, what is today Croatia was divided in at least four parts: the Habsburg Military Frontier, the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia (in a personal union with Hungary), Venetian Istria and Dalmatia, and the Republic of Dubrovnik (Ragusa). The last, a tiny but stubbornly independent and neutral city-state, experienced its second shipping boom in the years 1750-1806, thanks to great expansion of eastern Mediterranean commerce during the French Wars. But in 1806 Dubrovnik found itself caught between the French and the Russian army; on May 27 of the same year, Napoleon's troops brought an end to the 450 years of the republic's independence. Later, after the Congress of Vienna, Dubrovnik was incorporated into the Habsburg province of Dalmatia. For the city and its culture the nineteenth century therefore marks the traumatic end of an era. This is reflected also in biographies of two nineteenth century Ragusan translators into Latin: the priest of plebeian origin Antonio Sivrich (Antun Sivrić, 1765-1839)¹ and the patrician Blasius Ghetaldi (Vlaho Getaldić, Biagio Barone de Ghetaldi, 1788-1872), a bureaucrat in the Habsburg administration of Dalmatia and descendant of the noble line that was part of Dubrovnik's aristocracy from the thirteenth century.

Here we will briefly present the life and works of these two authors, today little known even in Croatia, and point out similarities and differences in their approach to translation of contemporary literature into Latin, showing how Sivrich turned into epigrams some hundred Italian lyric poems, while Ghetaldi translated into Latin one of the most important Croatian epics, the *Osman* by the canonical Dubrovnik author Ivan Gundulić.

¹ For names of authors we provide both Croatian (or Croatianized) versions commonly used in Croatian literary history, and (mostly Italian and Latinized) versions used by authors when they published their works; later in this paper we refer to authors by these historical versions of their names, to make it easier for international readers. – Latin texts of Sivrich and Ghetaldi are accessible on-line in the digital collection *Croatiae auctores Latini*.

1.

In 1803, when his anthology of Italian lyric poetry with parallel Latin translations was published in Dubrovnik, Antonio Sivrich was 38 years old. We know that at that time he had already tried his hand both at Latin verse and at poetic translation into Latin.² In 1807, Sivrich was elected canon of the Illyrian Collegium and Church of St Jerome in Rome (a religious and social center of the Dalmatian, Croatian, Bosnian and Slavonian community in the Eternal City); Sivrich seems to have entrusted this office to another priest. Three years later, in 1810, Sivrich turns up in Ljubljana (Slovenia), where the French government planned to introduce teaching a Slavic language at the military academy of Napoleon's Illyrian Provinces. At the academy Sivrich was to be the first teacher of the 'Illyrian language', but the plan was abandoned. On August 8, 1810, in a letter from Vienna to the Czech philologist Josef Dobrovský, the Slovenian linguist and philologist Jernej Kopitar described Sivrich – politically unfavorably and somewhat condescendingly – as 'ein Ragusaner, fertiger lateinischer versifex und in slavicus ein Erzragusiner'.³ Sivrich moved to Trieste, where he seems to have been active as a priest and as a teacher; we know next to nothing about him for some seventeen years, until, in 1827, he came to Rome and assumed the already mentioned post of canon of St Jerome's Church. He also joined the Accademia latina.⁴ The following year Francesco Guadagni, censor of the Accademia and former pupil of another poet-priest from Dubrovnik, Raimundo Cunich S. J. (Rajmund Kunić, Raimundus Cunichius, 1719-1794), dedicated to Sivrich his *De optima latinis scriptores explanandi ratione acroasis* (Rome, 1828).⁵ There are reports of Sivrich reciting epigrams at the meetings of the Accademia latina, and some of his occasional Latin poetry from Rome

² On Sivrich, see Marijan Sivrić, 'Dubrovački opat Antun, can. Sivrić, pjesnik, prevoditelj i jezikoslovac', *Suvremena pitanja: časopis za prosvjetu i kulturu*, 9 (2014), 131-145. The second volume of Francesco Maria Appendini's *Notizie storico-critiche sulle antichità, istoria e letteratura de' Ragusi* (Ragusa: Martecchini, 1802-1803), pp. 291-292 includes Sivrich's Latin translations of a dozen brief poems in Croatian by Nicolò Demitri (Nikola Dimitrović, Dubrovnik, c. 1510 – Crete, c. 1553).

³ F. Miklosich – A. Patera, 'Materialien zur Geschichte der slavischen Philologie. 7: Der Briefwechsel zwischen Dobrovský und Kopitar', *Archiv für slavische Philologie*, 6 (1882), 431-471, 633-650; 7 (1884), 683-726 (p. 454).

⁴ The Accademia latina was founded in Rome in 1814, its first president was Feliciano Scarpellini; in 1830s and 40s the academy held meetings in Palazzo Sinibaldi, Via di Torre Argentina.

⁵ For Guadagni (1769-1837), who also published translations into Latin (from Persian), see the article by Maria Fubini Leuzzi in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, 60 (2003), 59-62.

survives in manuscripts in Dubrovnik (two of the poems are dated 1830 and 1831). He was 74 when he died in Rome.

Sivrich's *Traduzione latina delle Anacreontiche di Giacomo Vittorelli e dei sonetti scelti dello stesso scrittore D'Onofrio Minzoni, di Pietro Metastasio, di Stefano Benedetto Pallavicini, di Benedetto Menzini, di Francesco Puricelli, ed Eustachio Manfredi fatta da Antonio Sivrich* was one of the four titles the printer Martecchini brought forward in 1803, the second year of his activity in Dubrovnik. Antonio Martecchini (d. 1835) was only the third in the series of Ragusan printers; the republic's aristocracy was either suspicious of printing presses or not very interested in them, and the first successful shop was established in the city only in 1783.⁶ Sivrich's book is at the same time a collection of translations and an anthology. A preface, in Italian, explains the intentions of the editor-translator:

mi sono proposto di scegliere i migliori tra quelli [sonetti], che furono pubblicati in italiano. Se io sapessi sceglierli veramente bene, Giovanni de la Bruyere mi loderebbe assai; il quale disse, che *choisir c' est inventer*, cioè a dire, che lo scegliere è un inventare. (*Traduzione latina*, pp. 3-4)

Sivrich's act of choice is proclaimed to have a pedagogical motive (and, probably, a Platonic origin):

Qui si tratta d' impiegare una maniera la più sicura, e la più efficace per aguzzare, e svegliare quell' appetito, che gli uomini tutti naturalmente hanno per il bello, e per il buono; ma che suole purtroppo addormentarsi, o rendersi ottuso in essi, e questa maniera consiste appunto nel raccogliere insieme, e mettere in vista questo bello, e questo buono; onde possa produrre vive impressioni (*Traduzione latina*, pp. 4-5)

Regardless of their form, all poems were turned into Latin epigrams in elegiac couplets, because, as Sivrich remarks in the preface: 'Tutte [le Anacreontiche di Vittorelli] hanno dell' Epigrammatico (*Traduzione latina*, p. 6)'; 'Io ammetto quei Sonetti, che sono scherzevoli, e spiritosi a guisa di certi Epigrammi, ovvero quelli, che sanno porgere una certa unzione allo spirito' (*Traduzione latina*, p. 4)

The collection contains 102 poems (six of them are an appendix of Sivrich's original epigrams). As stated in the title, the main part of the book – 39 poems – is reserved for Jacopo Vittorelli. The rest of the poems, mainly sonnets, are by seven other Italian poets (the deaths of two

⁶ Vesna Čučić, 'Prvi tiskari u Dubrovniku: s popisom tiskane građe', *Vjesnik bibliotekara Hrvatske*, 48 (2005), 108-158.

of these poets inspire 14 funeral poems by almost as many authors), all connected with the Academy of Arcadia.

Today known mostly to historians of literature, Jacopo Vittorelli was hailed as ‘Anacreonte d’Italia’ from 1784 until at least 1850; the public admired his collection of verse in the vein of the Anacreontea (as known from the *Palatine Anthology*). Vittorelli’s love poems, to an Irene and to a Dori, are always four quatrains of settenari, rhymed as *abbx*; the fourth line is often truncated. The poetry is erotic but never sensual; it inhabits a bucolic world of its own, outside of history, populated with Cupids and sheep, Cloris and Fillis, flowers and garlands. Its trump card is its musical quality; Vittorelli’s verse almost sings itself (in this it is similar to Metastasio’s, which Sivrich also translated). Therefore these texts were set to music numerous times during the Ottocento and later, in Italy and beyond, equally eagerly by prominent composers such as Schubert, Donizetti, Bellini, Verdi, and by unexceptional music teachers; at least 160 songs were written to Vittorelli’s lyrics, and settings of his *Guarda che bianca luna* and *Non t’accostare all’urna* are still popular in singers’ repertoires.⁷

The seven authors beside Vittorelli are, in order in which they appear in Sivrić’s book: Onofrio Minzoni (1734-1817), Pietro Metastasio (1698-1782, certainly today the best known among them), Stefano Benedetto Pallavicini (1672-1742), Benedetto Menzini (1646-1704), Francesco Puricelli (1660-1738), Eustachio Manfredi (1674–1739), and Ludovico Savioli Fontana (1729-1804; he was the only author not connected with the Accademia degli Arcadi, but he was the *presidente perpetuo dell’Accademia Clementina di belle arti* in Bologna). After Vittorelli, the authors with most poems in Sivrić’s book are Puricelli (11) and Metastasio (8).

As can be seen, four of the poets belonged to the Seicento: Pallavicini, Menzini, Puricelli, Manfredi (technically, the same can be said for Metastasio, born in 1698). The oldest, Menzini, was one of the first Arcadians, and he gained some repute as a satiric and epic poet (but Sivrić chooses only sonnets, not satires nor epic); he was also a neo-Latin author. Three of the poets (Minzoni, Menzini, Puricelli) were priests, like Sivrić. Three of the poets – Vittorelli, Minzoni, Savioli Fontana – were still alive in 1803, when the anthology was published in Dubrovnik; as far as we know, two of them – Vittorelli and Savioli Fontana – had their poems translated into Latin by others beside Sivrić.⁸

⁷ See Giulio D’Angelo, ‘Jacopo Vittorelli, fortuna letteraria, fortuna musicale’, *Nuova Corvina*, 25 (2013), 112-120.

⁸ An anonymous review of *Jacobi Victorellii Basanensis odes [!] Anacreonticae in Latina carmina conversae, auctore Francisco Philippo Vicetino*, Veronae. Typis Petri Bisesti in 16.º,

2.

Bits and pieces of this preliminary information point towards two pertinent questions: *why* and *how*. While Napoleon was planning the invasion of Britain, Antonio Sivrich composed and published Latin versions of seicento and settecento sonnets and anacreontics: why? And, as Sivrich translated lyric poetry into Latin, what were his poetic and aesthetic guidelines?

Examining the culture of translation into Latin in Ottocento Italy is beyond the scope of this article; there are strong indications that such culture existed. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Dalmatia and Dubrovnik, always linked culturally to Italy, also sustained a lively tradition of translating, but translation into Latin is especially characteristic for Dubrovnik. There Ignazio Giorgi (Ignjat Đurđević, 1675-1737) produced Latin versions of his own Croatian poems, Raimundo Cunich and Bernardo Zamagna (Brno Zamanja or Džamanjić, 1735-1820) – both of them for a long time teaching in Italy – latinised Homer and Hesiod, the Greek Anthology and bucolic poetry, while Giorgio Ferrich (Đuro Ferić, 1739-1820) turned into Latin Slavic proverbs and folk songs; Zamagna and Ferrich lived and worked in Dubrovnik during Sivrich's youth (Ferrich may have been among his teachers). Moreover, one of Sivrich's peers in the Collegium Ragusinum was Marco Faustino Gagliuffi (Marko Faustin Galjuf, 1765-1834), whose later Italian reputation as improviser was built partly on his agility in verse translation *ex abrupto* from Greek, Italian, French, or English into Latin; here is how, in 1833, Gagliuffi

Giornale sulle scienze e lettere delle provincie venete, 2 (1822), 260-262, cites three Latin versions of *Non t' appressar all' urna*: Sivrich's, an anonymous Catullan ode published in Padova in 1820, and the version by Francesco Filippi (also in elegiac distichs like Sivrich's). The reviewer refrains from judgement, but concludes: 'Noi non verremo istituendo un confronto tra il valore e il merito dei tre traduttori; ma [...] ne lasceremo il giudizio a' nostri leggitori, aggiungendo solo il nostro desiderio che l' elegante traduttore padovano, alla cui modestia furono queste quattro sole ora sottratte, si voglia risolvere a far pubbliche anche l' altre da esso maestrevolmente in latino voltate.' – A partial list of Latin translations of *Amori* by Savioli Fontana until 1834: *Canzonette del signor conte Lodovico Savioli ridotte ad altrettante elegie latine e presentate a sua eccellenza il signor conte Bonifazio Spada cavaliere gerosolimitano...* (In Faenza: presso l'Archi impress. cam. e del s. Ufficio, 1764); *Canzonette del signor conte Lodovico Savioli bolognese tradotte in versi latini elegiaci dall'abate Giovanni Giovannardi faentino* (In Faenza: presso Gioseffantonio Archi, 1773); *Canzonette del senatore Lodovico Savioli bolognese tradotte in latini versi elegiaci dal sig. abate Antonio Laghi parroco di Santa Croce di Faenza* (In Faenza: presso Michele Conti, 1807); *Amori di Lodovico Savioli Fontana e traduzione a fronte fatta da Pietro Guadagnoli aretino in elegie latine* (Pisa: presso Sebastian Nistri, 1824); *Ludovici Saviolii odae a Francisco Philippo in latina carmina conversae* (Venetiis: ex officina Pauli Lampato, 1834).

remembered the atmosphere in the Collegium when he was a not-yet-twelve-year-old pupil (that is, around 1777):

Nec nos quidem sine maxima voluptate meminisse possumus felicissimi temporis, quo nos in lyceo ragusino ante annum aetatis duodecimum ad rhetoricam aggregati aemulabamur aequales nostros [...]. Non erat nostro in numero, quae nunc in quibusdam scholis redundare fertur, doctrina. Attigeramus dumtaxat aliquid ab historia sacra et civili: illirice loquebamur, sed oratiunculas italicas et versiculos latinos, quibus aliquando seniores plaudebant, sponte etiam nostra scribebamus. (Marco Faustino Gagliuffi, *Faustini Gagliuffi Specimen de fortuna latinitatis. Accedunt Poemata varia meditata et extemporalia* (Augustae Taurinorum : Ex officina Favale, 1883), p. 18)

So Sivrich translated into Latin because this was what was expected; this was what people who appreciate the belles lettres did. Moreover, Latin versions of the *sonetti scherzevoli e spiritosi, che sanno porgere una certa unzione allo spirito* may have provided an attractive set of models for classrooms in Dubrovnik (even if we don't know for sure whether Sivrić taught there). Close engagement with witty poetic texts would bring pupils simultaneously to the best of current Italian culture, to Latin proficiency, and to a general refinement of the mind.⁹ Finally, publishing a book of Latin translations was perhaps a sort of a career move, a legitimization of one's abilities as well as a gesture towards what Gagliuffi would call 'gloria litteraria'¹⁰ – a glory sooner to be sought abroad than at home.

3.

How did Sivrich translate? A telling device is the page layout of his book. The original and its translation are published side by side. In the case of such an arrangement in a book printed in Dubrovnik, where both Italian and Latin were used as cultural languages, it was certainly not an aid to those with less knowledge of the original language; in the worst case, the readers – say, the twelve-year-old pupils – would be just acquiring competence in *both* languages. The layout, I believe, highlights the relationship of the translation to the original. A Latin poem as

⁹ Significantly, in our time Vittorelli's poetry, popular and proper at the same time, has been characterised as 'adatto alla lettura di signorine di buona famiglia come alle traduzioni in latino ad uso di innocenti seminaristi' (D'Angelo, 'Jacopo Vittorelli', p. 115).

¹⁰ 'Latinitati serviant oportet patresfamilias, qui eam filiis vel gloriae literariae quaerendae utilem, vel legitimis in societate civili gradibus necessariam esse vident' (Gagliuffi, *Specimen*, p. 16).

a version of an Italian poem is a challenge. It invites the reader to compare, to notice differences and similarities and enjoy them. Sivrich himself alludes to it in the preface:

Questi Sonetti saranno accompagnati dalla traduzione latina. Ho atteso a renderla fedele; ho atteso ciò non ostante a renderla tale, che tutto sembri nato dalle viscere stesse di quella lingua, nella quale traduco; ho atteso a mettere in contrasto le forze della lingua latina con quelle dell'italiana (*Traduzione latina*, p. 5)

We will demonstrate his procedure with two examples: first, an anacreontic poem by Vittorelli and Sivrich's translation of it; then, a sonnet by Puricelli and Sivrich's Latin version.

Irene, siedi a l'ombra
Di questo ameno faggio,
E copriti dal raggio
De l'infocato Sol.

Ogni agnellino intanto
Pascolerà tranquillo
La menta ed il serpillio,
Di cui verdeggia il suol.

Ma leva da la fronte
Il cappellin di paglia....
Chi mai, chi mai t'agguaglia
In grazia ed in beltà?

Gitta il cappel su l'erbe,
E lasciati vedere....
Pupille così nere
Venere in ciel non ha.

(*Traduzione latina*, p. 24)

Irene, fagi dulces has conside ad umbras,
Dum fugere infesto solis ab igne juvat.
Interea teneris agni pascentur, et agnae
Graminibus, quorum hic copia multa viret.
Quem geris e palea, nunc tu depone galerum;
Quis tibi se forma praedicet esse parem?
Deposito nigros oculos ostende galero;
Tam nigros oculos non habet ipsa Venus.
(*Traduzione latina*, p. 25)

The *music*, the singable quality of Vittorelli is not present in Sivrić's epigrams. The Latin poem seems more condensed (if we count verses, we'll find that four of Vittorelli's have been translated by two of Sivrich's), though a closer look shows that Sivrich manages to reproduce every motif from the original. Occasionally the translator decides to introduce equivalents (*ogni agnellino* – *agni... et agnae*; *lasciati vedere* – *ostende*) or leave something out (*tranquillo*, and the epizeuxis of *chi mai* – that last loss is made up elsewhere, by the *conduplicatio* of *nigros oculos*). What is left out as well is concreteness: Latin is not only less musical, it is also more

abstract. *Menta* and *serpillo* become just *gramina*; Irene simply puts down her hat, neither lifting it *da la fronte* or throwing it *su l'erbe*; and Latin Venus from the final comparison is not *in ciel*.

Amore obbligato a ferire con nuovi dardi.

Stanco di saettare Amore un dì	Fuderat immitis quamplurima tela Cupido;
Sul margine d' un rio si riposò,	Sed somno tandem languida membra dedit
E per qualche ragion, che dir non sò,	Fluminis in ripa fessus. Foedissima vultu
Amor, che veglia sempre, allor dormì.	Tunc vetula accessit nomine avarities;
E mentre cheto egli dormia così,	Et rapuit fugiens auro fulgentia quotquot
Una Vecchia bruttissima passò,	Tela tenebat Amor, cui nova tela dedit.
Chiamata l'Avarizia, e a lui cangiò	Ut puer evigilans novit procul esse sagittas,
L' arco, e gli strali d'oro, e poi fuggì.	Vindicibus crebro quae nocuere Diis,
S' avvide Amor, quando svegliato fù,	Perditus incassum flevit; nunc laedere nescit;
Che quell' armi tremende più non à:	Vel tantum telis laedit avaritiae.
Che di piagar i Numi avean virtù.	
Disperato ne piange; e d' indì in qua	(Traduzione latina, p. 89)
Amor non è più Amor, nè fere più,	
O sol con l' armi d' Avarizia il fa.	
(Traduzione latina, p. 88)	

The sonnet is compressed into five elegiac couplets. Because of that, Puricelli's uncertainty in v. 3 – the lyric voice does not know why tired Love fell asleep – is removed in Sivrich's version, with a side-effect of losing the concetto of Amor which never sleeps falling asleep. In return, Sivrich expands the image of shooting the bow (his merciless Cupid shot as many arrows as he could); the arrows will play an important role in the rest of the sonnet. Sivrich also shortens the story; the Italian has the tired Amor first rest *sul margine d' un rio* and then fall asleep, while in Latin Cupid proceeds immediately from shooting to sleeping on the riverbank (need for rest is hinted at in *languida membra* and *fessus*).

In the second part of the octave (l. 5-8 Puricelli: 3-6 Sivrich) the compression is not in the words and lines of the Latin version, but in its organisation of the story line. Sivrich introduces the old hag Avarice in an effective manner by an enjambement; she did not pass by chance (*passò*), she drew near (*accessit*); she simultaneously steals Cupid's weapons and flees – here the translator plays with sounds (*fugiens... fulgentia; tela tenebat*). The *nova tela dedit* in v. 6 shifts the focus from the stolen arms to those that have been given in return, and in that way actually improves the epigrammatic quality of the poem, better preparing the punchline.

The translation of the sestet compresses the first two lines into a single hexameter line (l. 7 Sivrich). Here too Sivrich makes up for losing the paradox (*Amor non è più Amor*) by adding small embellishments: *vindices*

Dii, Cupid who cries *incassum*, smart use of the *figura etymologica* (*laedere... laedit*) and sound effects (*tantum telis laedit*).

A comparison of the Italian originals with Sivrich's renderings shows that the priest from Dubrovnik told the truth in his preface. He calmly accepted the fact that *some* aspects of the poems cannot be reproduced (the form, the rhyme, and musicality as a product of the two); on the other hand, he strove to transfer every significant component of the poem. He moved elements around without hesitation, but for any effect or detail he left out, there was a compensation – if not at the same place, then somewhere nearby. Sivrich's appreciation of epigrammatic wit led him both to streamline movement of the text towards the punchline, and to make the text more abstract – a stimulus for the mind more than for the senses.

4.

Biagio Ghetaldi, born when Sivrich was 23 (the priest may easily have been one of the young patrician's teachers), had a distinguished bureaucratic career, beginning in 1806, while Dubrovnik was still a free republic, then serving under the French rule, and in 1817 moving to Zadar (Zara), from 1823 to 1853 advancing in Austrian local administration to the level of *consigliere aulico* in the *Governo della Dalmazia*, and even acting as deputy lieutenant of the province in 1849-1852; he received his barony in 1847. In 1830-1843 Ghetaldi proposed numerous initiatives for improving agriculture, trade, shipping and customs regulation; there were ample grounds for such improvements, as during his lifetime Dalmatia was the second poorest region of the Habsburg Empire.¹¹ On his retirement, Ghetaldi spent a longer period in Venice, where his first-born son Sigismondo (b. 1830) died in 1853; the bereaved father returned to Dubrovnik, and spent the rest of his life mostly in his suburban villa. Both before and after his retirement he published a number of occasional poems in Latin (rarely in Italian), for events such as the Emperor's birthday or royal visits to Dalmatia. In 1864, in advance of Dante's sescentennial jubilee,

¹¹ The fullest extant biographical sketch is Nikša Lučić – Darko Novaković, 'Ghetaldić, Vlaho', in *Hrvatski biografski leksikon* (Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod 'Miroslav Krleža', 1998). For the political and economic situation in eighteenth-century Habsburg Dalmatia, see Dominique K. Reill, 'A Mission of Mediation: Dalmatia's Multi-National Regionalism, 1830s-1860s', in *Different paths to the nation. Regional and national identities in Germany, Italy, and the Habsburg Monarchy, 1830-1870*, eds. Laurence Cole and Alberto Mario Banti (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 16-36.

Ghetaldi's Latin translation of the story of Count Ugolino from *Inferno* 33 appeared together with six other translations of the same passage (the translators were Uguccione Nonvrai, a Mexican – actually a pseudonym of the editor, Alessandro Piegadi, canon of San Marco in Venice – Carlo d' Aquino, Melchior Cesarotti, Francesco Testa, Antonio Catelacci, and Gaetano Dalla Piazza), as Dante Alighieri, *Morte del conte Ugolino, quadro di messer Dante Allighieri ritratto in metro latino dal giovane Messicano Uguccione Nonvrai e da altri sei celebri autori*, ed. Alessandro Piegadi (Venezia: Giambattista Merlo, 1864).¹² The next year, in 1865, again in Venice, the Tipografia Gaspari brought out Ghetaldi's Latin version of Gundulić's *Osman: Ioannis Francisci Gondulae patricii Ragusini Osmanides a Blasio e Baronibus Ghetaldi eius conterraneo latinis versibus expressa*. The translator died seven years later.

Ghetaldi was a corresponding member of learned academies in Rome (Accademia Tiberina, from 1842; Accademia degli Arcadi, from 1844) and in Paris (Société orientale, from 1844). He was also in contact with a number of prominent Italian and Dalmatian intellectuals, most famous among them the Dalmatian-born Niccolò Tommaseo, one of the leading figures in the Italian Risorgimento.¹³ But it seems that Ghetaldi – contrary to his mid-century Dalmatian peers, who were busy imagining and promoting a providential role for their homeland as a bridge between East and West, Slavic and Latin – shunned political activity, preferring to turn anything and everything (from everyday situations to newspaper headlines) into thousands of Latin, Italian, and Croatian poems; his surviving works in the archive of Dubrovnik's Friars Minor monastery fill twenty hefty volumes.¹⁴ This vast corpus and the quality of Latin writing in it make Biagio de Ghetaldi a serious, though hitherto

¹² In this edition, all translations are followed by a critical *Nota dell' editore*; only the note on Ghetaldi's version ostensibly refrains from criticism, saying: 'Di questa metrica traduzione, che, vivente il suo Autore, ho stampata, non pronunzio giudizio, il quale, per lo mio alto concetto verso di tanto uomo, sarebbe forse sospetto. Dica altri quello che gliene pare: che ognuno di cosa pubblica ha pien diritto di sentenziare. Che se mai tale, o tale, trovasse nello stile del Traduttore il serpit humi d'Orazio, si risovvenga di quelle parole d'Orazio stesso a Pisoni, che, cioè, poesia è come pittura [...] impertanto chi questa poesia del nobile traduttore Raguseo propius non gusta, la osservi longius; se decies repetita gli annoia, semel la legga; e l'Illirico traduttore latino e l'editor Veneziano ottenuto avranno compitamente l'intento loro.' (Piegadi, *Morte del conte*, p. 59)

¹³ For the relationship of Tommaseo and Ghetaldi, see Niccolò Tommaseo, *De rerum concordia atque incrementis (Della sempre crescente armonia delle cose)*, ed. Patrizia Paradisi (Bologna: Patron, 1998), p. 56.

¹⁴ Ghetaldi's literary inheritance has been neither comprehensively described nor studied; for information on the extent of his surviving writings I am indebted to my colleague at the University of Zagreb, Darko Novaković.

unrecognized candidate for the last significant Latin author of Dubrovnik and Croatia.¹⁵

5.

In a consolatory ode to Ghetaldi on the death of his son, written by a certain G. Pittana and published in the *Gazzetta di Venezia* on March 26, 1853, the next to last stanza has these words of the deceased Sigismondo to his father:

Nè per te, credi, fia vano
Dall' illirico sermon
Trasportar lo slavo Osmano
Nella lingua di Maron.

A note explains:

L'illustre Sig. Barone Biagio De Ghetaldi sta ora traducendo in bei versi latini l'Osmanide, poema illirico del secolo decimosesto; e se egli, come speriamo, farà dono al pubblico del suo egregio lavoro, la colta Europa avrà motivo di essergli riconoscente per vedersi così spianata la via ad intendere il grande epico slavo.¹⁶

The glory of 'il grande epico slavo' by Ivan Gundulić (1589-1638) began to spread beyond Dubrovnik at least fifty years before, after Francesco Maria Appendini's *Notizie storico-critiche sulle antichità, istoria e letteratura de' Ragusi* (Ragusa: Martecchini, 1802 – 1803), where the epic was advertised with words by Giovanni Lovrich: 'L'elevatezza del pensare, la dolcezza del verseggiare, e la naturalezza della rima, che in lui si ammirano, devono far insuperbire la nazione Illirica, e specialmente la patria sua d'aver prodotto il suo Omero anch'essa' (Appendini, *Notizie*, 2, p. 262). Indeed, until this day *Osman* remains one of the two most famous and most studied epic poems in the canon of Croatian literature (the other being *Judita*, from 1501, by Marko Marulić from Split).¹⁷ Gundulić worked on

¹⁵ In Croatian literary history, the canon of neo-Latin authors usually ends with Marco Faustino Gagliuffi. But Ghetaldi, one generation younger, will be writing for almost forty years after Gagliuffi's death.

¹⁶ Cf. G. B. Contarini, *Menzioni onorifiche de' defunti scritte nel nostro secolo: ossia Raccolta cronologica-alfabetica di lapidi, necrologie, biografie, prose e poesie dei defunti nell'anno 1853* (Venezia: Tipografia F. A. Perini, 1853), pp. 13-14.

¹⁷ For an approach to *Osman* in English, see Zdenko Zlatar, *The Slavic Epic: Gundulić's "Osman"* (New York: Peter Lang, 1995).

it from around 1622 until his death. *Osman* is a poem of twenty cantos, some 10,500 octosyllabic verses in stanzas of quatrains, but with cantos 14 and 15 missing (they were probably never written; several later authors competed to supplement the gap). The poem as a whole was not printed until 1826,¹⁸ but it had a rich manuscript tradition and circulation, testifying to intense local interest. Today some eighty manuscripts are known, the oldest of which is dated 1651-53, a dozen years after Gundulić's death (no autograph of *Osman* survives).

The epic is built around a true story, a chain of events taking place just a little while before Gundulić started writing. In 1621 and 1622 the young sultan Osman II, the last descendant of the old Ottoman dynasty, suffered heavy losses during the Polish-Ottoman War, especially in the close-run battle with Polish troops at Hotin (Chotin, on the Dniester, today in Ukraine). Soon afterwards, in Istanbul, Osman was ousted and murdered in a revolt of the Janissaries.

Hotin and Osman's downfall created excitement in the Western world. The Ottoman empire was seen as weakening; a millenarian prophecy turned up presaging that the empire would fall one thousand years after Mahomet, in 1632. Gundulić's poem offers at the same time a poetic account of the events and an exhortation to the Polish prince Wladyslaw IV Vasa, who is invited to take on the role of the leader of Catholic Europe against the Turks and to bring freedom to all the Christians under Turkish rule. *Osman* is also a poem of the Baroque era, as it shows in its style, in its fragmented storylines, in its secondary narratives, in its way of handling time. Regarding epic tradition, Gundulić is in constant dialogue with Tasso's forty years older *Gerusalemme liberata* (1581).

The fact that *Osman* is in Croatian, that it may be seen as belonging to one of the most distinguished literary genres, that it is rooted in literary traditions of Dubrovnik, hailed as a 'Slavic Athens' (bestowing on its dialect enough prestige to become the Tuscan of the South Slav world); the fact that the theme of *Osman* can be interpreted as pan-Slavic; even the fact that the poem is ambiguous in an attractively modern way (it has been found 'magnificent in its incompleteness'¹⁹) – all this brought Gundulić's epic remarkable popularity during the Ottocento throughout the Croatian lands. Soon after the first edition of *Osman*, Martecchini published two full-length Italian translations, by the Zadar-based Dalmatians Nikola

¹⁸ The *editio princeps* was brought forth in Dubrovnik, by the same Martecchini that published Appendini's *Notizie* and Sivrich's *Traduzione latina*.

¹⁹ Pavao Pavličić, *Studije o Osmanu* (Zagreb: Zavod za znanost o književnosti Filozofskoga fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 1996), p. 163.

Jakšić (Giachich, 1827) and Marc-Antonio Vidovich (1838);²⁰ *Osman* was also important for the so-called Illyrian Movement, a pan-Slavist nationalist initiative of Southern Slavs with its center in Zagreb, where the third and the fourth edition of the epic in original language were produced in 1844 and 1854, by the publishing house of Ljudevit Gaj, a main figure of the movement.

6.

Ghetaldi's Latin *Osmanides*, as printed in Venice in 1865, introduces the translation by a poetic *Nuncupatio* to the city of Dubrovnik itself and by a *Ratio operis ab interprete reddita*. The *Ratio operis* presents two reasons for a Latin rendering – it aims to reach the learned European public, and it is Ghetaldi's contribution to the tradition of poetic Latin translations in Dubrovnik, the tradition of Giorgi, Cunich, Stay, Zamagna, Ferrich, Gagliuffi:

Cupiens tamen, quantum in me situm est, maiorem huius clari operis diffusio-
nem et cognitionem provehere, maxime inter doctos Europae coetus, a quibus
latina lingua magnopere colitur, quaeque adhuc apud illos florens in tanta
linguarum diversitate habetur una tamquam communis hominum conciliatrix
ac veluti quoddam doctrinae vinculum, exemplo insuper et aemulatione meorum
concivium inductus, qui variis poeticis latinis versionibus clarum sibi nomen
peperere, aggressus sum Osmanidem heroico carmine primus interpretari
(*Osmanides, Ratio operis*, p. XI)

The introduction also proudly informs that the translator, through his grandmother, can count himself among the descendants of the poet of *Osman*, and that the translation is a work of Ghetaldi's old age and retirement:

Post diuturna augustissimi Caesaris stipendia rude clementer donatus in
patriam secessi, ibique senili aetate otium nactus gaudeo ipsi meorum laborum

²⁰ Nikola Jakšić (Zadar, 1762-1841) was Ghetaldi's colleague in the bureaucracy of Austrian Dalmatia, while Marc-Antonio Vidovich (Šibenik, 1795 – Zadar, 1868) was a lawyer in Zadar. – There were attempts at a Latin translation while *Osman* was still in manuscript: in 1803, Appendini's *Notizie* included a hexameter translation of vv. 5, 21-56 by Bernardo Zamagna (pp. 265-266; Ghetaldi); the preface to Vidovich's *L'Osmanide; poema epico* (p. 34) cited a letter by Gagliuffi (Genova, March 7, 1821), announcing Gagliuffi's intention to undertake a Latin translation of *Osman*, a 'grande travaglio che potrebbe farmi onore più che l'Ossian non ne ha fatto a Cesarotti, se io potessi cavare dall' Illirico un buon Poeta Latino'. There is no proof that Gagliuffi ever actually started working on that project. – Ghetaldi takes into consideration both Latin attempts (Zamagna's fragment is incorporated into his *Osmanides*), and mentions both translations into Italian.

fructum tamquam publicum meae dilectionis et existimationis monumentum posse nuncupare. (*Osmanides, Ratio operis*, p. XI)

We would expect, therefore, that the translation was composed after 1853. However, in the Archive of the Order of Friars Minor in Dubrovnik (ms. 2305) there survives a working version of Ghetaldi's translation, labelled, in the translator's hand, *Primi manoscritti dalla versione latina dell'Osmanide*; among the materials we find both a Latin and an Italian version of a different *Operis ratio / Ragione dell' opera*, dated Zadar, November 15, 1846.²¹

The introduction from 1846 tells a detailed story of what brought the translation into being. During a visit to Vienna, in September of 1845, Ghetaldi noticed the first edition of *Osman* among the books of his noble compatriot, the Austrian general Bernard de Caboga (1785-1855); Ghetaldi wondered that Caboga, a busy man who left Dubrovnik many years earlier, was interested in Gundulić's epic, and Caboga – so claims the introduction – suggested that Ghetaldi could turn *Osman* into Latin 'quo facilius intelligi posset, magis magisque innotesceret.' Having returned to Zadar, one night the following month Ghetaldi remembered Caboga's suggestion, and tried to improvise a translation of several stanzas from the first canto of *Osman* that he knew by heart. It went well beyond all expectations, claims Ghetaldi; 'tanto animi ardore, tantaque constantia rem sum persequutus, ut unius anni spatio opus integrum ad finem perduxerim.' So Ghetaldi's *Osmanides*, or at least its first version, stems from the years 1845-1846. The adaptation of the introductory texts reflects a change of purpose of the text itself. The earlier *Operis ratio* suggested that the translation was a private enterprise, in its last sentences stating explicitly that it was done not to be published, but to serve as a memorial gift to the translator's sons, in the first place to Sigismondo, who was thirteen in 1846. The *Operis ratio* also reveals that the beloved Sigismondo was intended by his father to study law at the Theresianum in Vienna, so both the translation and the role assigned to Caboga in the preface could have been moves to indirectly ensure goodwill of the powerful compatriot towards the future Viennese student.

7.

There is no way to tell which stanzas of *Osman* Ghetaldi knew by heart and translated *ex abrupto* on that sleepless night in October 1845. To

²¹ An edition of the Latin text of this *Operis ratio* can be found in the Appendix of this paper.

demonstrate his approach to translation, we will here present the passage with which the epic opens – stanzas which are still taught and read in Croatian schools – and two more passages: a duel of warrior maidens, and a brief retelling of the story of Hero and Leander. As Croatian is neither a world language nor a supra-regional language, we will cite Gundulić's poem in English translation: Ivan Gundulić, *Osman*, tr. Edward D. Goy (Zagreb : Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts, 1991). Goy's work 'makes no claim to be poetic', but rather aims to provide 'a clear and reasonably accurate' rendering; therefore readers have to be aware that Goy did not reproduce the most prominent poetic qualities of Gundulić's poetry: sound effects, rhymes, choice of words. Moreover, in several places we had to adapt Goy's translation to fit our interpretation of Gundulić's words.

This is the beginning of *Osman* in English and in Ghetaldi's Latin:

Oh why have you praised yourself,
Vain, human pride?
The higher you spread your wings
The greater your fall thereafter!

No firm thing under the sun
Is eternal and without end,
For in the heights the mountain peaks
Are the first to be struck by lightning.

The world's constancy is fleeting for all
Without aid from heaven above.
Mighty and powerful empires
Bear within them their own destruction.

The wheel of fate spins about
And about ceaselessly:
He who was above is cast down
And he below turns up on high.

Now a crown hangs above the sabre,
Now the sabre falls upon the crown,
Now the slave rises to an empire
And the erstwhile emperor becomes a slave (*Osman* 1, 1-20)

Quidnam te, demens humana superbia, iactas?
Quo mage celsa petis, ruis ocyus impete ad ima.
Sub sole aeternum, vel non mutabile nil est.
Ante alios feriunt excelsos fulmina montes.
Ni Deus adfuerit, vis quaeque et firma labascit,
Grandia regna suis delentur viribus ipsis,
Assidue in gyrum fortunae volvitur orbis,

Arduus evehitur delapsus vertice summo,
 Et qui sublimis, iacet en detrusus ab alto.
 Iam nunc regalis pendet super ense corona,
 Iam iam lapsurus regis capiti imminet ensis.
 Nunc solium scandit qui ferrea vincula gessit,
 Captivusque gemit nuper qui scepra tenebat.

(*Osmanides* 1, 1-13)

Examination of MS. 2305 reveals four working versions of Gundulić's opening (one of these is dated '15 Septembris 1858'; at least two were shown to others, and bear their marginal notes and corrections; all of them have additional corrections by the translator); a comparison shows how Ghetaldi gradually freed himself from the original – an earlier version of v. 2, for instance, reads 'Quo magis auratas protendis turgida pennas', but the image of winged pride is relinquished in the published text, while vv. 10-11 previously had the wording 'Nunc super ense micans pendet dyadema supremum, / Nunc super aut strictus diademate decidit ensis' (there were several attempts to improve it). The biggest challenge seem to have been Gundulić's sharp, condensed antitheses – precisely that which makes the verses in Croatian so memorable, and difficult to recast in English too.²² On the other hand, Horatian echoes in Ghetaldi's v. 4 and (especially) 6 not only make the hypotext more easily detectable, but lend Latin more clarity and epigrammatic succinctness than the original has.

In canto 5 of *Osman* there is a duel between warrior-maidens. Krunoslava, from the Polish side, comes to Osman's tent and challenges the sultan, whose soldiers a little earlier had captured Krunoslava's fiancé Korevski; Krunoslava's Turkish opposite number, Sokolica, is the first to offer herself as sultan's substitute in the duel. Both ladies are in disguise, wearing men's clothes and combat gear, so nobody knows they are women (both of them believe they are fighting against a man as well). In action both lose their helmets; struck by their beauty, both armies immediately fall in love with them. Here is that key scene and Ghetaldi's translation of it:

Both stood in their stirrups;
 Now, should their great strength not fail,
 They boasted, by a single blow
 The conflict will be ended.

²² Vv. 15-20 in Croatian, with opposed terms in bold: 'tko bi **gori**, eto je **doli**, / a tko **doli gori** ustaje. // Sad vrh **sablje kruna** visi, / sad vrh **krune sablja** pada, / sad na **carstvo rob** se uzvisi, / a tko **car** bi, **rob** je sada.' Most of unemphasized words are functional (prepositions, pronouns, connectors, copula).

But the sweep threatens one thing,
 And the blow does something else:
 Off flew their helmets,
 The see-through bulwarks of their faces.

Gold was scattered, locks fell down,
 Their eyes flashed, their faces shone:
 And the two knights were revealed
 As the two maidens in their prime.

So as the sun from behind clouds
 Reveals its sweet brightness,
 In that way, from behind their gear,
 There dawned these two suns of beauty.

Who could look at them without a sigh
 And bereft of passion,
 He is either formed of ice
 Or has no heart in his breast.

At this unexpected dawning
 Of such choice beauty
 On both armies, everywhere,
 Arrows flew and wounds poured down.

A multitude turned up there
 Of new slaves, of new servants,
 So in each army there arose another,
 An army of the infatuated.

Sighs fly in clouds,
 Armies of glances flow,
 Every heart quakes,
 Lest evil befall either maid.

And so much did every man yearn,
 That arrow-swift horses were mounted,
 And two thickets of slim lances
 Charged out from both sides.

The sabres shine, the arrows rain,
 The trumpets blow, the horses neigh,
 And by force of sudden force
 The maids' encounter was broken off.
 (*Osman* 5, 385-424)

Præruptoque loco stans quaeque, et viribus ardens
 Uno ictu pugnae meditatur ponere finem.
 Ast aliud minitans, aliud dum perficit ictus,
 Nexibus effractis procumbunt bucula, cassis,

Aurea caesaries per colla effusa renidet,
 Lumina blanda micant, species resplendet et oris,
 Ambo belligeri pulchrae nituere puellae.
 E nube adversa sol ut fulgentior exit,
 Sic veluti soles ambae fulsere sub armis.
 Illas qui spectat, trahit et suspiria nulla,
 Aut numquam exarsit, gelido est aut frigore cretus.
 Insolita attonitae specie obstupere catervae,
 Circumfusa cohors glomeratur et undique amantum,
 Tela utrinque volant, et corpora vulnere foedant.
 Iam metuit quisquis, referant ne damna puellae,
 Hinc instructa ruunt equitum bina agmina contra:
 Scintillant enses, volitant et spicula missa,
 Iam clangunt litui, hinnitusque auditur equorum,
 Foemineum tandem per vim cessitque duellum.

(*Osman* 5, 212-230)

Except for an imprecise paraphrase of ‘stirrups’ (*praeruptoque loco*), until 222 the translation follows the original quite closely. Then, however, Gundulić gets carried off by the possibilities of *conceiti* that the – admittedly precious – situation offers; Ghetaldi disagrees and classicizes the passage, resolutely leaving out (or condensing to simple ‘amantum’ in v. 224) the metaphoric armies of slaves to love arising out of the armies of warriors, as well as typically baroque ‘clouds of sighs’, ‘downpours of wounds’, ‘armies of glances’, and even ‘thickets of lances’.²³ Though the passage as a whole functions in Latin very well, such ‘de-baroqueizing’ was later seen as problematic. In 1919, judging Ghetaldi’s translation in the introduction to a critical edition of *Osman*, the Croatian philologist Đuro Körbler (1873-1927) found it ‘of no particular value, because it is full of phrases, even whole verses, taken from Virgil’s *Aeneid*, sometimes used less appropriately’.²⁴ The *obiter dictum* is somewhat imprecise and impatient. Körbler, a trained classical philologist and author of important contributions to the history

²³ Ghetaldi’s omissions, both in this passage and in the one we will be discussing later, contradict his programmatic statement in the *Ratio operis*: ‘quisnam ausus esset textum, quod attingi nequit et tam simplicitate quam magnificentia utique emicat, ex minima parte immutare? Sit hoc mei grati animi, et obsequii erga immortalem poetam luculentum testimonium’ (*Osmanides*, p. XVII).

²⁴ Ivan Gundulić, *Osman Dživa Frana Gundulića*, ed. Đuro Körbler (Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska, 1919), p. 27. Körbler may have taken on face value the following statement of Ghetaldi: ‘Ducem, et magistrum habui summum Maronem, quem a prima iuventute mihi semper ut exemplar proposui, meque fortunatum arbitratus sum illius textui consonos numeros suis locis referre, ubi Gondula illos pene ad verbum imitari non dubitavit’ (*Osmanides*, p. XVII).

of Croatian neo-Latin literature, knew perfectly well that an epic in Latin cannot be written without using Virgilian diction (and, besides, I have not noticed significant influence of *Virgil* in *Osmanides*, which cannot be said for other Roman poets). The main reason for Körbler's hostility must have been elsewhere; I believe he disagreed with Ghetaldi's paring down of Gundulić's baroque.

The reception of classical antiquity in *Osman* reaches its most prominent point in Canto 7, when Osman's Kazlar-aga, the Chief Black Eunuch of Sultan's harem, travels through Greece to find a wife for Osman (in Canto 8 Kazlar-aga will abduct beautiful Sunčanica from the Serbian Smederevo). Famous places of classical antiquity offer to Gundulić a range of examples for the main moral theme of the epic – the futility and perils of human ambition. At the Hellespont, Xerxes and Leander are remembered:

He looked towards the northern lands,
At the waves of the narrow sea nearby,
To which Helle gave her name
When she perished before Phrixus' eyes,

And to which the bold Xerxes once
Taught obedience
When, above the beaten sea,
He leaned a great bridge.

Oh, unthinking pride,
Where have you not spread yourself!
Do you reckon that your power
Can tame the anger of the mighty sea?

Of the mighty sea that consumes
Cities and kingdoms whole,
When it leaps in waves,
Leaving its normal course?

Young Leander, smitten by love,
Handsome beyond all others,
Following his nymph's loving ray,
Once swam these waves.

But the angry billows closed
His eyes with their wayward force,
When they drowned him midway
With their merciless and angry power.

Then he did not hesitate
To pray to wind and sea for consent

That they might carry him to his destination,
And drown him on the way back.

But as he began to pray
To the angry sea, to the wayward winds,
Spilling dreadful tears,
Heaving endless sighs,

His sighs made the wind grow stronger,
His tears made the sea grow higher;
So he, desiring to escape death,
Brought it on himself by his own actions.

(*Osman* 7, 41-76)

Prospicit ad boream dictum Helles nomine pontum
Quae tranans Phryxi mersa est ante ora gementis.
Hunc olim docuit XERSES parere, tumentes
Imposito fluctus immani ponte coercens.
Quid linquis demens, humana superbia, inausum?
Viribus anne tuis compesces aequoris iram,
Gurgite qui vasto vorat urbes lataque regna,
Quum tumet unda furens volvitque ad litora fluctus?
Hoc pelago nabat iuvenes pulcherrimus inter
Virginis egregiae succensus amore LEANDER;
Illam dum sequitur, medio absorbetur ab aestu.
Auxilium a ventis clamans poscebat et alto:
Mergite dum redeo, properanti parcite Sestos;
At frustra pelagum ventosque in vota vocabat,
Quos lacrymae haud tangunt, corde et suspiria ducta.
Hinc fato cessit spumantibus obrutus undis.

(*Osmanides* 7, 20-35)

Ghetaldi again tones down Gundulić's baroque extravagance. This time, however, the pathos of sighs which reinforce the wind, and of tears which deepen the sea, is important for Gundulić's idea: even in his prayer to the elements young Leander (young, as Sultan Osman is young) remains arrogant, therefore he cannot but bring about his own destruction. Ghetaldi does not want to retain the *concetto*, though he finds a substitution capable of conveying Leander's arrogance: the translation quotes the point from Martial's *Liber spectaculorum*, epigram 25b:

Cum peteret dulces audax Leandros amores
Et fessus tumidis iam premeretur aquis,
Sic miser instantes adfatus dicitur undas:
'Parcite dum propero, mergite cum redeo.'

This time the Latin version expresses the epigrammatic point more sharply and clearly than the original.

8.

Thinking about the history of neo-Latin literature in the Ottocento, we are inclined to accept Jürgen Leonhardt's diagnosis that it is difficult 'to delineate the individual steps in the retreat of Latin or to describe any particular moment in the eighteenth century when the customs of communication in Europe changed. One of the reasons is that far too little is known about what Latin texts were published in the eighteenth century.'²⁵ We know now that at different stages of the nineteenth century, over six decades apart, in Dubrovnik, a tiny city-state that functioned as a contact point between East and West, there were two writers who published translations of poetry into Latin. One turned Italian sonnets and anacreontics into Latin epigrams; the other composed a Latin version of a celebrated Croatian epic. To a certain extent, the purposes of these translations were different. One hinted at a career move, the other displayed the fruits of an *otium cum dignitate*; one challenged its original, the other replaced or re-created it. While a parallel edition of witty Italian and Latin poems may have been used as a classroom sourcebook, helping students to realise the neohumanistic ideal of cultivating the whole person, a de-baroqueizing Latin version of a baroque epic may have offered to the wider European public a Dubrovnik, or Croatian, or South Slav, poet who was canonical to the highest degree – a local poet in the guise of Virgil, in the guise not exotic, but *classical*.

There were also similarities. Both translators proved to be perfect products of the education system of their age (and proved that in a small college on the periphery of the Western world that system worked admirably).²⁶ Turning poetry into Latin verse, both translators strove for conciseness, which their time recognized as the main quality of Latin poetry and Latin in general – somewhat later, in 1889, Nietzsche expressed it like this: 'this mosaic of words, in which every unit spreads its power to the left and to the right over the whole, by its sound, by its placement

²⁵ Jürgen Leonhardt, *Latin – Story of a World Language* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2013), p. 245.

²⁶ On fundamental changes to classical education in the 18th and 19th Europe, see Bas van Bommel, *Classical Humanism and the Challenge of Modernity: Debates on Classical Education in 19th-century Germany*, Philologus. Supplemente, 1 (Berlin - München - Boston: De Gruyter, 2015).

in the sentence, and by its meaning, this *minimum* in the compass and number of the signs, and the *maximum* of energy in the signs which is thereby achieved'.²⁷ Both projects entailed a bit of circularity: starting from texts already containing prominent classicizing components, their Latin versions further emphasized these components – they made the texts even more classicizing – at the same time suppressing their other aspects. In this, as well as in trying to keep Latin alive as the perfect artistic medium, both projects tried to turn back time, both took the direction opposite to modernity. Oblivion into which both projects fell shows that time was, as always, implacable.

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APPENDIX

This is an edition of the first preface to Biagio Ghetaldi's translation of Gundulić's *Osman*. Source: Dubrovnik, Archive of the Order of Friars Minor, ms.2305 (a volume of unbound quires and folios). The interpunctuation is modernized in accordance with Klaus Sallmann, *Normae orthographicae et orthotypicae Latinae* (Romae: Academia Latinitati Fovendae, 1990); peculiar Latin spellings are retained.

Operis Ratio.

Quum mense Septembri anni 1845 Viennae essem apud Com. Bernardum de Caboga, mecum patria, amicitia et sanguine junctum, inter ejus libros mihi contigit animadvertere Osmanidem, Poema Epicum Illyricum, a Ioanne Francisco Gondola Patricio Ragusino sub saeculi decimi septimi initium compositum, quod ab auctore privatis scriptis relictum, anno 1826 Rhacusae tandem fuit in lucem typis editum. Ego mirabar equidem quod hoc poema ille versare identidem oblectaretur; namque domo puer profectus Illyricae linguae non poterat satis ediscere lepores, nec deinceps, utpote armis tractandis deditus, satis temporis habere videbatur hujusmodi studiis animum intendendi. Ille tamen adfirmabat se semper patrium sermonem in deliciis habuisse omnemque dedisse operam nedum ne oblivisceretur, sed ut in dies ejusdem augeter cognitionem. Imo interrogabat utrum ipsemet ejus elegantias et dulcedines persentiscerem meque in illa scribendo exercerem. Quoniam autem illum non latebat me interdum in versibus Latinis componendis operam impendere, me operae pretium facturum ajebat si

²⁷ *Twilight of the Idols, or, How to Philosophize with a Hammer*, cited in Joseph Farrell, *Latin language and Latin culture from ancient to modern times* (Cambridge, UK - New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 115.

Osmanidem in Latinum idioma verterem quo facilius intelligi posset magis magisque innotesceret. Cui ego opposui hanc esse multae operae et laboris rem, quam ideo nullus nostrorum civium, etsi sermonis Latini peritissimorum, unquam tentare ausus est; praesens aevum ad id minime accommodatum, quippe quo lingua ac praesertim poesis Latina vulgo parvi penditur; mihi denique nec vires nec tempus suppetere ad opus tam arduum tamque incerti exitus adgrediendum. His dictis sermoni finis est impositus; et sicut mihi fuit persuasum res a me prolata nequaquam a veritate abhorrere, ne cogitabam quidem amplius operi manum admovere.

Iaderam reversus quadam nocte sequentis Octobris ad finem vergentis somnum forte capere nequibam. Inter varias cogitationes, quae tum mentem occupabant, fortuito superior cum Comite Caboga habitus sermo occurrit. Quemadmodum nonnullas primi Osmanidis cantus strophas memoria tenebam, quasi periculum facturus per jocum in exametros Latinos redigere caepi. Haud exigua sum admiratione affectus quum id in duabus tribusque strophis non male cecidisse cognoverim. Hic non paenitendus primi tentaminis exitus mihi fecit animum ut opus, quamvis difficillimum multarumque salebrarum plenissimum, perficiendum mihi sumerem. Majus quoque addidit calcar et vivissimus patriae amor, qui penitus meo pectore semper inhaeret, et quadam insita laudis exstimulatio, et consilium mihi a Viro tam praeclaro tamque familiarissimo datum. His stimulis igitur actus tanto animi ardore tantaque constantia rem sum persequutus ut unius anni spatio opus integrum ad finem perduxerim. Nulli quidem industriae nullique pepercit studio ut labor mihi bene eveniret. Sed non est tamen diffitendum in illo multa desiderari, prouti etiam multa desideravi ego ipse, qui tot tantisque publicis negotiis distentus operi bene perficiendo non omne meum tempus ast, quantum a pergravi meo officio subsecivi supererat, tantum transmittere potui.

Meam versionem, qualiscumque illa sit, diligenti correctione et lima egere perbene sentio. Hanc me posthac adhibiturum et unius alteriusve viri noti linguae Latinae studiosi consilii usurum stat meo immotum animo, dummodo Omnipotens longiori vita majorique otio me frui sinat.²⁸

Hoc demum mihi declarandum restat non esse hoc opus eo elucubratum fine ut aliquando in lucem prodeat, quia nec id mereri videtur nec fortasse, prouti sunt nunc tempora, hominum conspectum subire illi daretur venia. Verumtamen tamquam memnosinon relinquendum putavi meis doctis civibus meisque filiis carissimis, praecipue Sigismundo natu maximo qui, quum in Vindobonensi Teresiana Nobilium Academia ad legis civilis studia incumbere teneatur, satis amplam Latiae linguae cognitionem acquirere valebit. Alter eorum Ioannes, utpote qui ad castra sequenda vocatus nunc ceu alumnus in C. R. Academia Vindobonensi Mathesi ac Scientiae Architectonicae militari adjicit animum, hujusmodi vacat commodo. Ambos Deus sospitet diuque servet incolumes.

Iaderae 15. Novembris 1846

B G

²⁸ *Corr. auctor ex longiorem vitam majusque otium largiatur.*