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Città Vecchia and Lesina – Everlasting Animosity on the Island of Hvar

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ABSTRACT

This paper is focused on the manifestations of inter-community animosities and campanilistic rivalries in the treatise Faria – Città Vecchia e non Lesina. Pietro Hektorovich – Cittavecchiano e non Lesignano (1873) written by Hvar's scientist and historian Šime Ljubić (1822–1896). In his scientific argumentation we can find descriptions and comparisons that are more typical of creating stereotype views and campanilistic rivalry, than they are for a scientific discourse. This treatise is a confirmation of the oldest campanilism on the island that still exists between Stari Grad and Hvar, two largest island's towns.

Key words: Šime Ljubić, campanilism, island of Hvar, Stari Grad, Hvar

In the research on the local identifications on the island of Hvar, apart from spatial and cultural divisions of the island and the islanders into western and eastern part of Hvar, another research topic emerged: the splits among the neighbouring island communities and their mutual rivalries which are best embraced by the term of campanilism. The campanilism (in Italian *campanile*, bell-tower) is a system of values that evaluates the greatest number of facts and events through the extreme standards of one's homeland¹. In such identifications, primarily subjective features and stereotypes are being used which, due to the pronounced simplification and seemingly evident comprehensibility, represent a favourite repertory in the interactions of communities. Campanilism focuses upon inter-community differences and defines them as both significant and of considerable magnitude², but it is also a boundary mechanism that is strongly connected with the closeness and commitment between villages³. Three circles of campanilistic rivalries and relationships on the island of Hvar have been observed: 1) villages of Stari Grad Plain and towns of Stari Grad and Jelsa as administrative centres towards which the villages gravitate; 2) villages of Brusje, Velo Grablje, Malo Grablje, i.e. Milna and town of Hvar; 3) villages on the east of the island. It is thus confirmed that a place per-

ceived as neighbouring does not exceed a distance greater than 10 kilometres⁴.

The interest of this paper is focused on the manifestations of inter-community animosities and rivalries in the literary-historical and historiographical works of Hvar's authors and scientists. Among Hvar's authors who introduced island's local stereotypes into their works or gave stereotypical accounts of certain inhabitants of Hvar the most famous Hvar's renaissance writer Petar Hektorović is not to be found. In Hektorović's works there are no confirmations of spatial and cultural split of the island and the islanders, or the inter-community antagonisms of Hvar. However, in the literary-historical works dealing with his work and creative opus, the elements of firm local identifications and centuries-old animosities which sometimes prevailed over scientific arguments can be found. Such a phenomenon is observed in some of the works of Hvar's historian Grga Novak. My interest in exploring Hvar's campanilism was influenced by the treatise of one Šime Ljubić on home town of Petar Hektorović. Also, the results of my own field research conducted on the island of Hvar between 2006 and 2008, which included 100 people of different ages from all permanently populated island settlements, can be viewed as an addition to his treatise.

The Old and the New Hvar of Petar Hektorović

Literary circle in renaissance Hvar consists of Hvar's noblemen, good acquaintances and friends who communicate with each other and with authors from that era from Dubrovnik, Dalmatia and Europe as well. They are well informed about the works they create, they dedicate their writings to each other, exchange praises, announcing and glorifying literary achievements of their fellow writers also in their own works. Petar Hektorović (1485–1572) and Hanibal Lucić (1485–1553) are the two most famous and the most researched Hvar's renaissance writers. Their biographies are very similar, and analogies between them extend even to their creative work. They were both descendants of Hvar's old families; they belonged to Hvar's pre-communal nobility and were members of the Grand Council. Their origin linked them directly to the most significant proprietary, political and social features of the island they lived on. Although they were of the same age, no correspondence, praises of literary work or data on any kind of greater social interaction between these two quite eminent Hvarians were preserved. Maybe this phenomenon can be explained as deliberate concealment, regardless of the nature of their relation, because they both made an effort to make sure that at least their memories of poets with whom they nurtured friendly relations remain preserved⁵. They both wrote epistles to a great number of writers and intellectuals from Hvar, Dubrovnik, Dalmatia and Italy, and among them no epistle addressed or dedicated to the famous Hvar's colleague is to be found. Contrary to disputes over Hektorović's biography, particularly the debates over his birthplace, Lucić is, by his birth and life, undoubtedly related to the town of Hvar. In his literary works, the distinction between Stari Grad and Hvar, more often mentioned in Hektorović, can be found only in one passage, where he calls them »the Old and the New Hvar« as does Petar Hektorović⁶.

The most famous literary work of Petar Hektorović is *Fishing and Fishermen's Talk*, written in 1556 and published during the author's life, in Venice in 1568. The great number of literary-historical publications on person and work of this Hvar's writer puts him among the most researched writers of older Croatian literature. There are two questions related to the poetics and life of Petar Hektorović around which the greatest number of the debates and contestations is concentrated. The first is related to the genre determination of *Fishing and Fishermen's Talk* and the second is biographical and comprises disputes over Hektorović's birthplace. More interesting for this paper is the question related to biographical data on birthplace of Petar Hektorović: was it Stari Grad or Hvar? The question wouldn't present an exception in older Croatian literature if it didn't include the oldest Hvar's campanilism between the two island's town centres. Moreover, the debate included most of the literary critics, scientists and historians who were born on the very island of Hvar. What is also interesting is the incorporation of the elements of local patriotism and sub-

jective emotions into writings that primarily should be scientifically objective, or at least should tend to be. In the work *Fishing and Fishermen's Talk* itself, there are four passages where both town centres are mentioned. Hektorović calls the town of Hvar »the New Town« while he speaks of Stari Grad as »the Old Hvar«. The mentioning of the two towns in the same form is also present in his *Epitaph to Frane Hektorović, my dearest cousin*⁶.

There is only one more passage in *Fishing* where Hektorović gave spatial indications regarding his location in Stari Grad. The geographical distance and natural barrier (the hill), which he mentions while writing to Jeronim Bartučević who is over in Hvar, present the main obstacle, preventing him from sending the freshly caught fish to the latter⁶. With this statement the author positions himself spatially in the »Stari Grad's perspective« according to which Hvar is quite remote (today, it is 15.3 km by road), separated by the hill. Apart from such passages which suggest only the space and the position within island's space, in Hektorović there are no value attitudes or local stereotypes. However, in the literary-historical publications accompanying his creative opus and his biography it is possible to find plenty of such, sometimes even markedly subjective, writings. Interestingly, yet expectedly, the local perspective and the echoes of local views are most commonly found in scientists born on the island of Hvar.

The Treatise of Šime Ljubić

The first among them is Šime Ljubić (1822–1896), parish priest, historian, biographer, archaeologist, founder of Croatian Archaeological Society, originator of modern numismatics in Croatia, born and deceased in Stari Grad. It is this versatile intellectual from Stari Grad who deserves credit for discovering and publishing Hektorović's work, and first scientific data on his life and work. Particularly interesting for this research is one of Ljubić's treatises, *Faria – Città Vecchia e non Lesina. Pietro Hektorovich – Cittavecchiano e non Lesignano*, published in Italian language in Zagreb in 1873, translated to and published in Croatian language in 1996, on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of his death. The treatise is translated by archaeologist Marin Zaninović, also born on Hvar, co-islander of Ljubić⁷. In the first part of his treatise, Ljubić deals with disputes over location of Grek Pharos, and in the second he reflects on the views and studies on Hvar as the birthplace of Petar Hektorović. Zaninović, along with praises to Ljubić's scientific arguments and to his knowledge of the ancient sources, adds a remark: *From today's perspective, we can say that in some of his claims he exaggerates a little bit in his local patriotic fervour, denying almost any importance to the town of Hvar, which, however, is not the case*⁸. Following the trail of the »local patriotic fervour« into Ljubić's writings, we will come across the following passage:

Now we are wondering if the plain around today's Hvar could offer an archaeologist at least another similar monument? I dare to say, resolutely, not a single one. It

can not be any different. Hvar with a steep and treeless hill in its background, hasn't really got any kind of proper plain as it is situated between rocks, therefore it most certainly could not have had one in ancient times. Indeed, if that small patch of dried soil, which today serves as a town square and on sides of which there are some buildings with cathedral and bishop's palace, was, from times immemorial, covered with sea (it is known that our Adriatic coastline is gradually expanding at the expense of the sea), then what could one say about its plain in the most ancient of times, here in question? Whoever contradicts us, arguing that it is possible to find old coins in the soil even in the area of Hvar, can justifiably be told that this fact is of no particular significance, for there is no place in whole of Dalmatia, on islands in particular, where occasionally some old coins do not surface. On the other hand, in those flourishing times, more so than today, positions facing seaward might have had some kind of dwellings here and there, as to facilitate fishing or agriculture, especially in coves protected from bigger waves and thus refuges for ships. I can not, however, think of a single find of Greek Farian coins in Hvar, while there are quite a few newer, Venetian finds. So even if there were some individual finds, those might have originated from transportation of finds from Stari Grad, only to disappear in Hvar later⁷. (pp. 75-76)

If we were to come across such descriptions of Hvar in any of today's tourist guidebooks, »Adriatic Madeira«, as 19th century Austrian climatologist Julius Hann referred to it, probably wouldn't prosper on tourism. Ljubić questions all which renders town of Hvar one of Croatia's top tourist destinations: its position and climate, main town square (»Pjaca«) as well as its historical monuments.

As to conclude the treatise on the location of Greek Faria and its development on the territory of today's Stari Grad, he quotes passages from *Fishing* where Hektorović makes a distinction between the Old and the New Hvar. To this he adds how inhabitants of the island never accustomed to the idea of Hvar as the main island's town centre and how they, particularly the nobles, had to be forced to go to »new town« by way of various regulations.

In conclusion to this historical treatise of mine, I finally bring forward some irrefutable testimonies, which suggest, among other things, as to how of little significance Hvar had always been. Inhabitants of our island were never quite fond of this new main town, i.e. Hvar. Strict regulations and means of special coercion had to be used in order to force them to stay in the new town and thus ensure the governing of the island according to the regulations of the Statute. Even before 1331, regulations providing penalties had to be issued, which obliged councillors to permanent residence in Hvar, as written in the Statute⁷. (p. 104)

In this final part he also questions the very sustainability of Hvar as a town and island's administrative centre without the Venetian help, thus mentioning the notion of stealing the primacy away from Stari Grad, still very present today.

Strict regulations indeed had to be imposed as to keep Hvar on its feet. If it wasn't for Venetia's particular interests in Hvar, the town would no longer exist today, and Stari Grad would regain its justice⁷. (p. 108)

In the second part of his treatise, entitled »Petar Hektorović – Resident of Stari Grad, and not of Hvar«, Šime Ljubić engages in dispute with all those who wrote about Hvar as of Petar Hektorović's birthplace. However, his opponents in this polemics aren't scholars like Ljubić, but a local clerk (Mashek), a teacher (Ivan Novak) and a municipal secretary Giambatista Machiedo (1775–1851), *The Illustrious*, as Ljubić names him in his treatise. He holds a particular grudge against *The Illustrious*, mentioning the fact that he »came from beyond the sea«⁷, incorporating into the figure of »scientific« rival also a category of a foreigner, a newcomer who is not only scientifically incompetent to such discussion, but is not even a »proper« Hvarian, since his ancestors were settlers. *The Illustrious* states, in number 65 of *Dalmata*, dated August 17th 1872, that the proof of Petar Hektorović's Hvar and not Stari Grad origin is the proper spelling of his surname, which is 'Ettoreo' and not Hektorović, and that the only evidence on which Ljubić grounds his claims of Hektorović as of resident of Stari Grad are those to be found in the poem *Fishing*⁷. After quoting these claims, Šime Ljubić brings forward a long, scientifically substantiated treatise on all variations of Hektorović's signature, together with accurate data and documents on his life as well as lives of his family members. Ljubić introduces himself, at the beginning of the treatise in the first person, also as a scholar who is competent to speak of Petar Hektorović, giving very strong arguments of his scientific research regarding this Hvar's writer. He finishes his treatise by claiming that Stari Grad had always been more important and more significant than the town of Hvar. In this part he presents data on the number and the structure of inhabitants in both towns, together with yet another remark which, alongside scientific elements, bears those of typical local rivalries.

And yet, as we have seen in reports from highest Venetian officials in Dalmatia, Hvar was falling behind, from 17th century onwards in particular, in every each aspect, especially since there had no longer been a main harbour for Venetian Adriatic fleet, and it isn't any different today, either⁷. (p. 124)

These arguments would probably be more scientifically sound if there weren't for certain adjectives and comparisons that are more typical of creating stereotype views, and campanilistic rivalry and quibble, than they are for a scientific discourse.

Slobodan Prosperov Novak also reflected on this treatise in his presentation »The Limits of Ljubić's Campanilism« dedicated to Šime Ljubić, given in Hvar in 2007. He speaks of Šime Ljubić as of »a great man who remained a symbol of a stubborn parochialism due to his campanilistic writings«, calls him »a small-town cosmopolitan«, »forefather of all domestic campanilists«, speaks of him as of »one of the most keen Croatian campanilists« and characterises Ljubić's treatise as a »campanilistic ex-

cess«, calling it a polemics with »provincial dilettantes about trifles«, »a verbal spite which suggests that Stari Grad is all there ever was on the island of Hvar, and remains to be«, admitting, however, that »Šime Ljubić, even when tending to campanilism, was one of the greatest people of his time«⁹. Novak reflected also on modern Hvarian campanilism, very much still alive today, which I confirmed through my field research conducted on the island of Hvar.

Andro (Hvar, 74): *Hvar had always been a town, while Stari Grad was merely a village...*

Ante (Stari Grad, 79): *I know that there were complaints from guests staying in Hvar that they didn't get any kind of information on Stari Grad, or Jelsa for that matter, nobody from Hvar instructed them. It is, like, in the tiny states of the Middle Ages, everybody kept to themselves, wouldn't give you anything.*

Campanilism still applies also to these two largest island's towns: Stari Grad and Hvar. It is less grounded in

history, although history is being referred to in arguments, but more so in competitions and rivalry in tourist offer as well as in reproach on local administrative and governing level. Herman Tak, in his paper on campanilism in Tuscan mountain villages, pointed out that the processes of change did not destroy this cultural complex, because people appear to need forms of self-identification and one strong form of self-identification is with one's own community¹⁰.

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CITTÀ VECCHIA I LESINA – VJEČNO NEPRIJATELJSTVO NA OTOKU HVARU

SAŽETAK

U ovome radu interes je usmjeren na pojave međumjesnih animoziteta i kampanilističkih rivaliteta u raspravi hvarškoga znanstvenika i povjesničara Šime Ljubića (1822.–1896.) *Faria – Città Vecchia e non Lesina. Pietro Hektorovich – Cittavecchiano e non Lesignano* (1873.). U njegovoj znanstvenoj argumentaciji možemo naći opise i usporedbe tipičnije za izgradnju stereotipnih predodžbi i kampanilističkih nadmetanja nego za znanstveni diskurs. Ova je rasprava potvrda najstarijeg otočnog kampanilizma koji još postoji između Staroga Grada i Hvara, dvaju najvećih gradova na otoku.