

# Renaissance Poetry in Print and the Role of Marin Držić

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*The paper proposes that the first printed edition of selected plays and the collection of poems by Marin Držić from 1551 played a pivotal role in emancipating the printing of poetry in Renaissance Dubrovnik and the broader context of the Croatian Renaissance in a process similar to processes in other cultures at the time.*

Keywords: Croatian literature / literary history / Renaissance / poetry / drama / history of printing / Držić, Marin

Book history, as it has developed since the publication of Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin's *L'apparition du livre* in 1958, has offered not only new and interesting topics to literary history, but also many new perspectives on old questions. At a very specific level of singular examples (a particular author or a particular author's works) these new ways of looking at old problems have helped reintroduce and analyze certain neglected topics in a new manner; think, for example, of the question of historical transmission of versions of a text. This was usually seen as a question from the bibliographical or philological domain, and verdicts coming from those disciplines were not questioned in literary history, whose primary task was interpretation of the edited text. Whereas bibliographers at the beginning of the twentieth century declared that their task was to analyze literary texts as writings on "so many sheets of paper" regardless of their meaning (Pollard 54), literary historians' duty was to interpret, and evaluate to a certain degree, precisely those symbols written or printed on so many sheets of paper.

Although they all saw their duty in an evenly distributed deciphering of various levels of meaning, they had some habits in common. Literary historians, just like their philological or bibliographical counterparts, usually operated with categories of their own time as though they were historically universal. It is no surprise then that literary histories swarm with anachronisms. Book history might sometimes serve as an antidote for anachronisms, an inspiration for a reassessment of the many notions in literary history that were more often than not anachronistic projections of contemporary views on the past.

One such notion is the view held by nineteenth- and twentieth-century literary historians about the printing of literary texts in earlier periods such as the Renaissance. It was usually taken for granted, at least by Croatian literary historians, that authors were eager to publish their works in print. However, numerous analyses, which were enabled precisely by the influence of book history in the last few decades, have demonstrated that the printing press was controversial, to say the very least. In general, during the first decades or century after its invention, the printing press was admired and praised, but also something that raised concerns and suspicions (see Lowry 22–34).

In the first century—perhaps even longer, deep into the eighteenth century—after the invention of print, manuscript circulation seems to have remained the preferred medium of publication for certain kinds of literature. The longevity of manuscript circulation depended on different factors—such as genre or the author’s social background defined by rank or religious affiliation—that conditioned different attitudes towards printing. During the first hundred years after the invention of printing, there were authors that more or less actively evaded printed publishing for certain groups of text, while willingly publishing other sorts of texts in print.

This ambiguous status of printed publishing is especially clear in the case of printed publications of lyric poetry. In an article from 1950s, the literary historian J. W. Saunders proposed the hypothesis of the “stigma of print,” referring to the reluctance of certain Tudor poets (courtiers and aristocrats) to publish their lyric poetry in print precisely due to the ambiguous status of printing in their social circles. He thus connected attitudes towards printing to social rank, in which he saw the main reason that many poets left their love poetry unprinted: “Gentlemen, then, shunned print” (Saunders 140).

In recent decades, there were some analyses in a similar vein. According to Arthur F. Marotti, Renaissance literature witnessed a process of gradual affirmation of printing of lyric poetry, a process that was far from over by the end of the sixteenth century. His analyses of printing of lyrical poems in Renaissance England reveal a slow emancipation that he compares with similar processes that took place in other literatures, especially in the Italian Renaissance centers (209).

Such insights are corroborated by broader analyses of conflicting attitudes towards printing in its beginnings. It might not be too bold to say that a certain pattern appears that can best be described as a process leading from initial prejudices to gradual acceptance of printing as a means of publishing texts in general and literary texts in particular. If one is to follow a clue suggested by Marotti, it would be tempting to see whether

this pattern is repeated in cultures that have not been as fully explored as English or Italian culture.

The process of gradual affirmation of printed publishing seems to be framed by various factors in various European cultures of the time. One of them is the different treatment of printing by living authors compared with posthumous printing, and another one has to do with the authors' social and professional status, which varied between amateurism and professionalism. There are some other possible factors, which depend on various circumstances that conditioned literary production in cultural ambience such as the literary culture of Renaissance Dubrovnik. Moreover, the transformation of the attitude towards printing was usually catalyzed by certain authors that delved into something others had not dared to. In the case of Renaissance Dubrovnik, one such candidate might be the poet and playwright Marin Držić.

Before proceeding to the question of the role Držić might have played in printing Croatian Renaissance literature, a few facts should be given in order to provide the relevant bits of biographical data and cultural context.

Držić is certainly one of highly interesting figures in the history of Croatian literature.<sup>1</sup> Much controversy follows him, wherever literary historians happen to look, and this controversy is not only literary. Držić started his career as a playwright fairly late in his life. It is believed that he was born in 1508 (Rešetar xlvii), whereas his first pastoral plays were performed when he was already around forty. The exact date of his birth is not known and the date accepted in literary history was calculated on the basis of a document stating that in 1526 Držić, as a cleric, received an ecclesiastical function for one of the churches in Dubrovnik (or *Ragusa* in Latin), for which he must have been of full legal age. The trouble is that it is not known today whether the required age limit was eighteen or less, or perhaps even twenty-one. That does not necessarily mean that he had not written anything before the late 1540s; his lyrical poems are believed to have been written earlier.

In the 1530s, he left for Sienna, Italy to pursue his studies funded with the scholarship endowed by republic's authorities. In Italy he probably became acquainted with the new vogue of *commedia erudita* plays, and he must have read contemporary Italian literature while studying canon law or theology. It is known that during his student days in Italy he was present at the enactment of a forbidden theatrical performance in Sienna, probably some *commedia erudita* play (Rešetar lix). This is deduced from a document—issued by the city authorities in Sienna—about fines for some citizens that watched a play performed in a private house. Držić was mentioned among the members of the audience.

However, what proved to be really intricate for literary historians had to do with Držić's political activities late in his life. In his last years, he left his native Dubrovnik Republic and returned to Italy, where he eventually died in Venice in 1567. Shortly before that he spent some time in Florence, where he was involved in some kind of political conspiracy. This is mostly known from his letters (six of them have been discovered so far, the latest discovery being very recent) addressed to the Florentine government and aiming to persuade Florentines to help the conspirators from Dubrovnik overthrow the Dubrovnik government. This completes the picture of a Marlowian character, a playwright involved in espionage and political plotting. Earlier in his life, he served for a while as the interpreter for Austrian Count Christoph von Roggendorf during his travels. Držić is known to have spent some time following Count Roggendorf in Vienna, and afterwards in Istanbul, where the count pleaded with the Ottoman Court to intervene in his dispute with the Habsburg king and emperor, Ferdinand I.

Conspiracy letters, written in Italian and signed with the Italianized version of his name (*Marino Darsa Raguseo*), gave considerable impetus for political interpretations of his plays in twentieth-century literary history. Once the first bundle of letters was discovered in 1930 (Rešetar lxvi, note 3),<sup>2</sup> they became unavoidable in any interpretation of his oeuvre. Even scholars of more textualist or formalist inclinations had to take into account his political views expressed in those letters, and read his plays in the key of political allegory.

In addition to his political activities, which attracted much critical attention, there is another notable fact that was largely neglected or simply taken for granted by Croatian literary historians: the printing of his works in Venice in 1551. This first edition was known only through reports from other historical sources of questionable reliability. It was deemed nonextant until a few years ago, when it was discovered in the Braidense National Library in Milan (Stipčević 1059). This first edition consists of two separate volumes. The first volume contains Držić's pastoral comedy *Tirena*, and the second volume contains a collection of his lyrical poems and some other plays or parts of plays: *Venera i Adonis* (Venus and Adonis), *Novela od Stanca* (The Dream of Stanac), the second prologue to *Tirena*, and Ljubmir's lamentation from *Tirena*.

As with many Renaissance authors, it is hard to establish the chronology of Držić's oeuvre; yet in some works (e.g., in the subtitle of newly discovered first edition of *Tirena*) there are dates that can serve as an orientation. The question of chronology is not relevant just for itself, but has direct consequences for any attempt to explain Držić's decision to print his works, and among them lyrical poems.

Because there are few dates available, historians have been forced to propose different hypothetical scenarios concentrating mostly on his theatrical works. This is due to the fact that, until recently, the dates of first performances of any of his plays were open to debate and archival records are also meager.

Two propositions have been put forward. One is that as a playwright he gradually developed from verse towards prose, so that the earlier plays are in verse and later ones in prose (Rešetar lxxxvi). A hypothesis on writing lyrical poetry in the days of restless youth would also fit into this scenario.

Although it is very tempting in its neatness, such an explanation is disturbed by several clues. Its attraction lies in its evenness, which presumes a gradual acquisition of artistic mastery that starts off with brief love poems in verse and develops into more complex forms of drama, breaking new paths by completely abandoning verse in his mature comedies, which were praised by subsequent literary historians. However, this hypothesis does not go along very well with the presumed chronology reconstructed from the known (albeit numerically few) dates of performances alluded to in subsequent plays. In the case of *Hekuba*, a tragedy in verses based on Italian adaptations of Euripidus, the date of performance (1559) is known due to the fact that the first planned performances were forbidden twice (in 1558) by the republic's authorities. *Hekuba*, one of the most complicated plays in Držić's canon, has puzzled literary historians for generations because it seems strange for a writer of comedies to turn to tragedy and verse at—as it turned out—the end of his active literary career and the beginning of his political activities. It is worth mentioning that for a long time, until the 1930s, *Hekuba* was thought to be written by one of Držić's contemporaries, Mavro Vetranović, but the attribution was denied and *Hekuba* entered Držić's canon.

It would seem then that Držić—and this is the second proposition—mixed prose and verse from the very beginning of his literary career (Rešetar xciv).<sup>3</sup> Because only verse plays saw the light of day with the first printed edition, one must conclude the following: either this handful of known dates and the majority of supposed dates of completion and performances of the plays are wrong, or some other reasons were instrumental for the appearance of exclusively versed poetry (plays and poems) in print.

If it could be suggested that Držić, busy with engineering his reputation and securing his authorship,<sup>4</sup> seized the opportunity and rushed into print with everything he had at hand, this would mean that in 1551 none of the prose comedies for which he is best known today were finished yet. In turn, that would corroborate Milan Rešetar's calculation that 1550, as a date of the performance of Držić's most renowned comedy, *Dundo*

*Maroje*,<sup>5</sup> was a scribal blunder in the manuscript in which the majority of his prose comedies were preserved until the nineteenth century.

Rešetar proposed 1556 as a possible date of performance of *Dundo Maroje* because the scribe could have easily confused six with zero. However, this would imply a rearrangement of almost all the other works. For example, the lost *Pomet*—a play referred to in the “Prologue” to *Dundo Maroje*—could in no way be Držić’s first performed play because according to that “Prologue” the performance of *Pomet* should be dated 1553 in this case. However, even if this were correct, it is beyond dispute that *Tirena* was indeed performed in 1548 (the year on the title page of the recently discovered first edition), and there is general agreement among literary historians that *Pomet* and *Tirena* must have been performed in the same year, or at least within a few months (Rešetar xciv).

If, on the contrary, and according to the proposition based on the hypothesis that Držić mixed prose and verse from the beginning, some prose comedies (particularly *Dundo Maroje*) were finished at the time of the first edition’s printing, then there must have been some other reasons that led Držić to refrain from printing prose comedies. If this was the case, then it would seem that an important criterion for Držić was whether a work was in verse or prose. Judging by the oldest edition and scant dates of performances, this would imply that the opposition between the work conceived for stage performance and some lyric or epic verses was not as essential to Držić as it was to the Renaissance authors in other cultures. For example, English Renaissance scholars suggest that Shakespeare probably took much more care in the printed editions of his narrative poems while showing, as it would seem, no such concern for his plays, which appeared in very different editions with varying degree of textual and literary quality (Kastan 5–6, 21).

It seems then that the decisive factor for Držić would not be the prestige of a genre, but the prestige of a medium of expression (verse or prose) closely tied to the changing habits and mediums of publication (print or manuscript). So much so that, as was already mentioned, none of his prose comedies were printed before the nineteenth century, and that all of them were preserved only in manuscript.

As Milan Rešetar commented on the absence of prose comedies in print: “[H]e has done this probably because the readership of his time—and maybe even he himself—did not give much merit to the very best of his products precisely because they were not in verse!” (Rešetar xx). In one of his articles from the 1960s, Svetozar Petrović (7) stressed the importance of this convention as well.

It is curious that none of these comedies resurfaced in the 1607 or 1630 printed editions of Držić’s works. This is especially so when one

considers that these editions were posthumous, and that—posthumous editions aside—it was all too easy in the Renaissance to publish something that might not have been the author's first choice. These comedies were either completely unknown and buried for centuries in manuscript form, or deemed undeserving of the costs and efforts of printing in Venice.

Printing in Venice was not unusual; all the books by the authors from Dubrovnik were printed in Italian centers (Venice, Padua, Ancona, or Rome) because there was no printing shop in Dubrovnik until the eighteenth century. This is a sort of riddling historical curiosity because, by the sheer number of authors and works from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Dubrovnik was one of the cradles of Croatian literary culture. The existing solutions refer to either political or commercial circumstances, but they remain unsatisfactory. According to the political explanation, the government of a small aristocratic republic that balanced on the clashing edges of huge empires and political powers (the Ottoman, Habsburg, and Venetian states) probably feared the potential of print for counterpropaganda and actively suppressed its introduction into the republic. The commercial explanation finds reasons in vicinity of such a huge printing centre like Venice which precluded opening of printing shops in Dubrovnik (Breyer 339).<sup>6</sup> Be that as it may, authors from Dubrovnik were forced to go to Italy if they wanted their work to be printed.

The almost unsolvable issue of chronology of Držić's works is even more acute in the case of his lyrical poems. Almost by default, an analogy with the plays imposes itself. If one is to accept the first, "neat" proposition—the gradual development from verse to prose—then it is necessary to conclude that he wrote lyrical poems during his youth, even before leaving for Italy. On the other hand, if he mixed prose and verse from the very beginning, then it becomes plausible that he continually wrote lyric poetry and made some sort of selection for publication.

It is impossible to definitively answer whether Držić wrote poems before leaving for studies in Italy or during all of his life, even after his firm establishment as a dramatist. However, what seems beyond dispute, but curiously enough has not attracted much critical attention of literary historians, is his printing of lyric poetry, which seems to be more of an exception to the rule.

One of the reasons why this fact was not given its due weight in Croatian literary history is probably the anachronism mentioned at the very beginning of this article, a tacit belief twentieth-century historians usually held about printing of poetry in the Renaissance. The quote from Rešetar illustrates the point. Držić did not print prose comedies—if he wrote any at that time—because he and his contemporaries gave no merit to prose works.

In fact there are two suppositions in that statement. First, that verse was more valued than prose and, second, that authors, judging by Držić's example, were very keen to publish in print. As for the first, there is no room for its thorough consideration in this context. Suffice it to say that it seems convincing enough given that verse used to be, and sometimes still is, equated with poetry, and that verse genres generally preceded prose forms in ancient literatures for various reasons, which could be named (from mnemonics to artificiality). However, the second supposition is not as self-evident as Rešetar takes it to be. Although it makes a connection between the value of a genre or a medium of expression and the selection criteria for publication, it neglects to question the status of print, treating as a proven fact the assumption that everyone wanted to publish poetry in print and that accordingly printing necessarily imposed a qualitative selection of works. Although the novelty and therefore suspect value of the prose genres is not overseen, the purportedly self-evident factuality of the second supposition rests precisely on the overseen novelty of print as a medium of literary communication in the Renaissance.

To really assess the role Držić might have played in the printing of lyric poetry, one must compare him with his contemporaries.<sup>7</sup> If one is to look at what and when the authors from Dubrovnik printed during the sixteenth century, there is one conclusion that imposes itself—they almost exclusively printed religious or scientific treatises in Latin and Italian or spiritual and religious poetry in Latin, Italian, and Croatian. It seems very conspicuous that notable authors and Držić's contemporaries such as Nikola Nalješković or Sabo Bobaljević did not print their vernacular verse. In addition, there are Dominko Zlatarić and many other authors that never did print their love poetry even though they printed plays, or others (e.g., Nikola Dimitrović and Marin Buresić) that probably wrote amorous verses but never printed them (Dimitrović and Buresić printed only religious poems or translations and adaptations of Biblical poetry).

Why is it that some of Držić's contemporaries such as the commoner Nalješković and the patrician Bobaljević left their vernacular love poems in manuscript form? Maybe the reason was that they did not succeed in printing them, which would be the usual answer to this question not even posed in the tradition of Croatian literary history. However, there is another possibility that was not entertained precisely because it did not fit into the anachronistic modes of thinking in the literary history of the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth. While historians usually took the desire to print literature in general and lyric poetry in particular as something that in its obviousness required no special

attention, one could propose that Renaissance poets from Dubrovnik did not even want to print amorous verses.

Departing from this proposition, one could further suggest that two parallel sets of factors were the constraints observed by Dubrovnik poets at the time. Both sets should be given their due weight.

One set was the division between religious verse and amorous poetry. The latter was probably seen as too frivolous or too explicit—not for today’s standards certainly—in its eroticism to be acceptable for the public “pudeur” of the conservative milieu of Renaissance Dubrovnik and published in print. This also fits well with the contours of Renaissance habits of avoiding printing of poetry that analyses like Marotti’s have discerned. Similar reasons, dictated with social rank, were at work for English authors that “shunned print.”

Lyric poetry was a favorite pastime, often reserved for private use, circulation among friends, and various purposes—such as sporting in poetic artistry or intimate overstepping of boundaries in courting and flattering—that were not to be publicized widely (Marotti 2, 8–9). The contents that authors might have judged potentially too compromising for them was buried in manuscript form (44, 49). Such was the case with John Donne, as many of the literary historians that dealt with his oeuvre were prone to conclude (Wollman 85). In many cases, lyric poetry was left to posthumous publication.

The other set of factors is the division between languages. A new bit of historical information is needed here. All official documents of the Republic of Dubrovnik (such as minutiae of the meetings of various councils of the republic, or litigations at court) were in Latin. Latin was the official political and juridical language. In everyday communication, especially in commerce and navigation, Italian was used. Curiously enough, however, most of those that wrote poetry chose Croatian, the language they referred to as “Illyric” or “Slavic,” or simply the idiom they saw as the vernacular. Thus, because some of them were writing in all three languages that were in use, they would choose Latin to write “treatises,” for plays enacted during festivities and to write lyrical poems they would mostly use “Illyric” and some of them Italian. It is no surprise then that almost every author from that time has an Italian name as well as a Latin one.

This deserves further elaboration. In such authors as the patrician Bobaljević there may have been ingrained some sort of cultural elitism that saw Italian as superior, or they saw wider circulation that printing enabled harmful. Didactic genres such as “scientific” treatises on astronomy (Nalješković) or philosophy (Nikola Gučetić) were not a problem. They were written in Latin or Italian and even printed with the help of authorities

because they were probably considered notable cultural achievements for such a small community. The same is true for vernacular poetry that was modeled after Biblical matters, in the guise of either translations and adaptations or individual poetical attempts on religious subjects. This was orthodox and uncontroversial, something that might be even perceived as useful in enlightening simple folk or in infusing obedience to God-fearing citizens.

It was much different with plays and love poems. Love poetry that could be lascivious was also something that transgressed moral constraints. Whether it was written in the context of poetic sporting or courting, it was always frivolous and designed for private or intimate communication and therefore not intended for the general public. That many authors—while choosing Croatian as a medium of expression—left such poetry unprinted points in this direction as well.

Similar conclusions could be drawn for plays. They were morally unquestionable in two possible situations. One was when the subject and its orthodox treatment qualified the play for staging, which was the case with religious and hence didactic plays. The other was the temporary protection provided by the context (e.g., carnival), which offered an opportunity for licentiousness in a subject or its treatment. However, in both cases it is very doubtful that plays were valued or even accepted as literature because many of them were left in manuscript form. This holds especially for the comedies which were not even, like Držić's, using verse.

In such a complex web of interplay between moral and cultural codes that weave the literary decorum in the selection of genre and its appropriate language on the one hand and communication channels on the other—channels with degrees of public availability varying between the wide reach of print and the secluded nature of manuscript communication—there emerged an author that probably pushed the limits.

What becomes visible in the contours of the culture of Renaissance Dubrovnik is something that was for a long time overseen by Croatian literary historians. Držić was not only the first author to print a collection of lyric poetry in the Croatian sixteenth century, which might—to borrow the phrase from Amir Kapetanović (419, note 2)—seem to be an unimportant detail. He was the first Renaissance author from Dubrovnik to print plays written not as literature in itself (to show off his mastery as one might do with love poems), but as social amusement on different occasions. Držić, as much as can be concluded, drew a line between verse and prose—as suggested by Rešetar and stressed by Petrović—and decided not to be so bold as to print prose plays. Nonetheless, unlike many of his contemporaries, he decided to print at least some of the plays that he saw as something that deserved to be printed. Furthermore, his decision to

print amorous verse (i.e., lyric verse that was not religious) was also unprecedented among his contemporaries. Finally, there is a last point that should not be overlooked about his choice to print his works: he decided to print poetry written exclusively in the vernacular idiom.

One might propose here that Držić was a transitional figure, a crucial author whose activities initiated a transformation of the attitudes on printing literature, particularly lyrical poetry, in the ambience of Renaissance Dubrovnik.

Držić's printing of vernacular love poetry as a collection might be viewed as a point that started the process of emancipating the printed publishing of poetry, a process resembling the processes that unfolded in other cultural environments. In this respect he could be compared to Philip Sidney, whose posthumous editions instigated the wave of printed poetry in late sixteenth-century England (Marotti 228–9).

Moreover, it should not be taken for granted, as it has been, that Držić printed his secular and vernacular Croatian poetry and plays during his lifetime. To his contemporaries, this might have appeared to be scandalous vanity, resembling the impression Ben Jonson made on his contemporaries because he printed his complete works practically by and for himself, including many trifles—plays—that, in his contemporaries' perception, did not really deserve a place in the *Workes* (see Barbour 509).

Why is it that Držić decided to print his literature and how did he manage it? Was he a visionary aware of the future importance of print as a medium, or did he notice the growing importance of printing while studying in Italy? Was he a bold author that moved the boundaries of the appropriate in literary communication, or was he just a boastful seeker of attention or patronage? These questions are something historians have yet to resolve.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Most of the information given in the following paragraphs is taken by Croatian literary history as given and proven facts.

<sup>2</sup> The letters were found in 1930 in the Florentine archive by French historian Jean Dayre.

<sup>3</sup> Milan Rešetar, however, thought it highly unlikely that Držić's theatrical debut could happen with a play in prose.

<sup>4</sup> It should be mentioned that he was not portrayed and perceived in that way by Croatian literary historians.

<sup>5</sup> An unfinished prose city comedy, obviously modeled after the Italian *commedia erudita* plays, usually described as Držić's masterpiece.

<sup>6</sup> Mirko Breyer briefly evokes both arguments, but by today's standards his account is biased.

<sup>7</sup> It is beyond the scope of this article to give a full list and a detailed analysis. Here, I can merely summarize the findings that could be explained in a more detailed fashion, and highlight certain habits in the treatment of printed publishing.

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## Renesančno pesništvo, tisk in vloga Marina Držića

Ključne besede: hrvaška književnost / literarna zgodovina / renesansa / poezija / dramatika / zgodovina tiska / Držić, Marin

Zdi se, da je v prvem stoletju po izumu tiska obtok rokopisov ostal najbolj priljubljen medij za objavljane lirskega pesništva. Izhajajoč iz analiz, ki odkrivajo proces postopnega uveljavljanja tiskanja lirskega pesništva (na primer Arthur F. Marotti), bo referat v kontekstu hrvaške renesanse skušal preučiti vlogo prve izdaje Marina Držića (1508–1567) iz leta 1551.

Osamosvajanje tiskanja lirskega pesništva v renesansi se je razvijalo prek ločnice med postumnimi tiski in tiski živih avtorjev. Pesništvo ita-

lijanskih prednikov je bilo v tisku objavljeno postumno, tako kakor pesništvo Philipa Sidneyja, ki ga Marotti vidi kot preobrat, po katerem se v Angliji uveljavlja tiskanje pesništva. Glede na hrvaško renesanso bi Držića lahko primerjali z Benom Jonsonom, ki je bil prvi angleški avtor, ki je objavil foliant svojih *Workes* še v času svojega življenja. S tem da je dal svoje igre v tisk, je Držić, prav kakor Jonson, dela priložnostne in začasne narave (uprizorjena so bila ob karnevalskih praznovanjih in porokah) preoblikoval v literaturo, ki ni odvisna od svojih izvornih okoliščin. Podobno kot je Jonson svoje lastne besede filtriral od besed drugih, je tudi Držić verjetno naredil izbor. Najpomembnejše dejstvo je, da je bil Držić prvi (ne le med renesančnimi pesniki v Dubrovniku, temveč verjetno tudi na Hrvaškem nasploh), ki je za časa svojega življenja natisnil zbirko posvetnega pesništva v ljudskem jeziku. Prispevek bo pokazal, da je imel Držićev tisk prelomno vlogo v osamosvajanju tiskanja lirskega pesništva v dubrovniški in širši hrvaški renesansi; ta proces je bil podoben procesom v drugih kulturah tistega časa.

Februar 2012