

ZORICA JOKSIMOVIĆ
FROM WATER AND STONE
TO STORY AND STORYTELLING
After the Motifs of Budvan Legends

Original title

OD VODE I KAMENA DO PRIČE I PRIČANJA
Po motivima budvanskih legendi

Translated by

Dragan M. Vugdelić

Historic material prepared by

Goran Bubanja

Publishers

JU Narodna biblioteka
Budve/Public Library Budva
NVO/NGO *Talas* Budva
Association of Literary
Translators of Montenegro

For the publisher

Mila Baljević

Book illustration

Romana Pehar

Design and Prepress

Nikola Joksimović

Reviewer

Božena Jelušić

Cover design

Tijana Dujović Liščević

Printed by

DPC - *Grafotisak* Podgorica

Circulation

1000

©Dragan M. Vugdelić

Patron

Tourist Organisation of Budva



The original is dedicated to the author's sons Nikola and Matija

CONTENTS

One Reading of the Motifs of Budvan Legends by Božena Jelušić	7
Instead of a Foreword	13
Gavan's Water	15
Jegor's Road	21
Cadmus	27
Košljun	31
St. Nicholas Saves Army from Plague	35
Tunja	41
The Fairy of Maine	45
Snake	49
Miloš and Jagoda	55
Handsome Mogren	61
Radoslav's Rock	67
Santa Marija in Punta	71
St. Petar and Three Oak Trees	77
Concord Built Sveti Stefan	81
<i>On Of Water and Stone to Story and Storytelling</i> by Branka Bogavac	87
About the Author and Translator	89
Acknowledgements	90



ONE READING OF THE MOTIFS OF BUDVAN LEGENDS

The book by Zorica Joksimović *From Water and Stone to Stories and Storytelling* comprises fourteen stories based on motifs of Budvan legends, beginning with mythical stories of the city's origins, to traditions related to certain toponyms, places, people, the old city of Budva, the regions of Paštrovići, Grbalj, Maine, etc. Although the author reveals the sources she used for these stories, it should be noted that her aim was not to treat them in a critical or investigative manner. Therefore, one finds in these stories a number of modern elements, ranging from the artistic transposition of the Budvan cycle of myths in the past and contemporary literary creations, to some arbitrary mystifications created primarily for the purpose of promoting tourism in the area.

The familiar literary treatment is present, for example, in the story *Yegor's Road*, which was provided with "legendary vital juices" and the present-day "conviction" that everything had developed in that very way by Vida Ognjenović's homonymous play. On the other hand, the mystifications dating from the nineteen-eighties, then created for the

purpose of promoting the Budvan Riviera, are apparent in the finishing touches of *Cadmus*, and particularly in *Miloš and Jagoda*. One should therefore be especially attentive and embrace *From Water and Stone to Stories and Storytelling* primarily as a personal act and commitment, where the emphasis is on universal human situations rather than on a precise and reliable “reading” of the traditions and legends of the region. After all, legends are based on archetypes and “standing places” – the entire inherited experience of generations which allows their “migration”, regrouping and repetition, as it happens in these fourteen stories.

Choosing instead of a foreword a quote from Ivo Andrić’s well-known *History and Legend*, the author has clearly indicated her motives, as well as the perception of the essence and purport of her narratives. A teacher of literature who has devotedly taught children language and literature for two and a half decades, she has now felt the need to make a creative contact with the past of Budva and its surroundings, with the language and customs, with the fabled absorbing traditions, and also with the “tradition” that emerged in the meantime. Therefore, her stories are not material for researchers and historiographers, but rather an effort to invoke the magic of traditional narratives in the time of the “net” which is rapidly losing touch both with written and oral narration.

The author has opted for a linear succession of motifs and for the attractiveness of fables. The stories are imbued with the fantastic and with elements of the magical, particularly those with a Christian religious background containing a certain religious “moral”. The stories are not arranged in a possible “chronological” order, but follow the author’s inspiration. In them one can also discern Joksimović’s professional orientation. Thus, the use of certain linguistic units, such as less frequent verbal forms, almost constitutes a specific source of teaching material. It is similar to the different features of the local environment and typical situations with which the author fills in the “places of indeterminacy”.

It should be pointed out that Joksimović’s book can also serve as a possible source for creating stories to supplement the tourist lore of the region. In that case, we must consider what is fact and what is fiction, especially bearing in mind Andrić’s quote given here instead of a foreword. Namely, Zorica Joksimović has in the first place found “the soil that feeds” her quest for the truths of life, and devoted herself

with the love, warmth and affection of someone who is passionate about language and literature, who deals with the young and the educational values of “stories and narration”.

Božena Jelušić

Budva, June 2015



INSTEAD OF A FOREWORD

"All of us who write, in this country and in this language - from the unknown novices to those who already have a work more or less realized to their credit, we all know the importance and the role of words. And if we do not know, or if we forget, it is necessary to frequently remind ourselves. If we fail to do so, the words themselves will rush to remind us. And language - it is the people's life, both conscious and unconscious, both visible and hidden. Outside life, there is only silence. There is no word without a connection with life, as there is no plant without a soil to feed it. It means that one should be close to people and their lives, listen to their speech, immerse oneself in it, reflect upon it, live with it as a brother with a brother. And then we will be able to achieve what is needed, namely to tell the people, in a language familiar to them, our own and the new artistic truth."

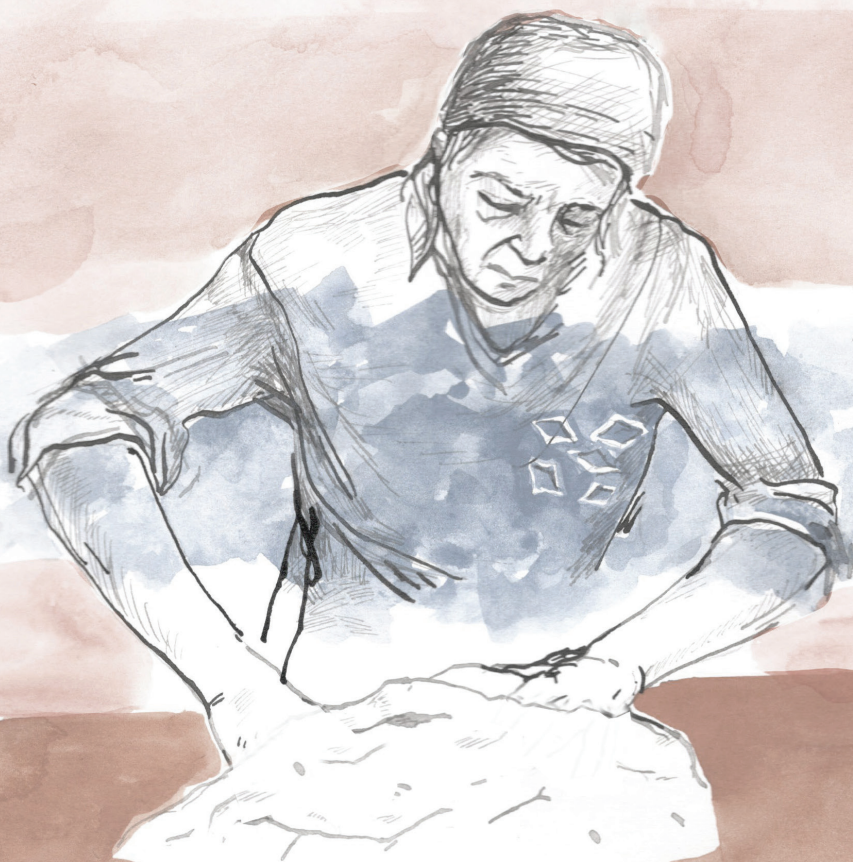
From: Ivo Andrić, *History and Legend: A Note on Words*.

(*Istorija i legenda: Beleška o rečima*)

ZORICA JOKSIMOVIĆ

FROM WATER
AND STONE
TO STORY AND
STORYTELLING

*After the Motifs
of Budvan Legends*



GAVAN'S WATER

In the fertile Grbalj plain there was a large estate of a good-standing landowner by the name of Gavan. He was hard upon his in-laws as upon strangers, upon his workers as upon the day labourers. He paid for his arrogance in that the sea swallowed up a large part of his estate, and on the stretch that remained, a spring of water gushed forth. People named it Gavan's Water.

On the broad flat land that stretches all the way to the Jaz beach once lay the large estate of landowner Gavan. So big it was that according to those who remembered it, it took a man "a half-day walk to cross the length and breadth of it".

Gavan had such vast tilled fields, large vineyards, plenty of livestock and barns full of grain - enough to feed a battalion of soldiers. All day long, his farm was a hive of activity, and there was no time to rest or slow down. Many of the servants and day labourers were hired locally, but witnesses said that only those who really had to worked for him. For his haughty nature, arrogance and possessions acquired as a result of full commitment to the land and to work, he had no match; and because of his talent for making two pennies out of one, Gavan was often the talk of idle villagers. They said he had no concern for his kin, and did not observe any saint's day or Sunday.

Those were lean, hungry years, but with Gavan there was food available in abundance. But that vast fortune had not been manna from heaven. Passionately and drudgingly working, he would not allow even a handful of straw to be wasted. He would get down to gruelling work from early morning to dusk and mercilessly force all his workers to do likewise. His estate was both his obsession and his passion.

It so happened that at the height of the season, the proprietor's younger brother Stevan suddenly became ill and died. Gavan did not attend his funeral because just at that time the clouds darkened the sky and he had, as he himself said, to harvest the grain with the day labourers to save it from getting soaked. When asked by the neighbours why he had not seen his brother off to his last home, he only tersely answered: "I can't raise my brother from the grave, but I can save the grain from going to the dogs".

Stevan left behind a young wife, Katna, and a string of five small children. Katna was silent and pious, a diligent housewife and a good mother. She had shared with Stevan the passions of the hard times. Upon her husband's death, she knew that she had to cope with the weight of life's burden. She used to say that the last thing she would do was to work for Gavan as a day labourer. But, then, where could she go and what could she do? "The sky is high and the sea is deep", and the hungry mouths needed feeding. "Had I been alone, I would've easily passed judgment

on myself. Rather plunge headlong from the highest cliff into the sea than to beg that nobody to work for him to feed my children”, Katna would say in despair.

Right after her husband’s funeral she knew that she had to set to searching for a job. Humbled, she roamed from door to door, just would a wealthy landowner take her as a servant, but to no avail; it was a lean year when everyone minded their own troubles. Walking around, she only wore out her pampooties. In the end, the poor woman had no choice but to knock on her brother-in-law’s door as on a stranger’s and beg him to give her work.

Gavan knew how diligent Katna was. He certainly would not have taken her on just because she was his sister-in-law, nor because his brother’s children were hungry, and even less out of compassion for those seeking help. He took her on knowing that she was a strong and hard-working woman, from whom he would profit.

Katna worked in the field, and about the livestock, and when farming work was at its most intense, she would knead and bake bread for Gavan’s numerous servants. When the children ran out of food, the mother would bring them the meagre chunk of bread that she had received as a day labourer’s ration. However, that would be far from enough for five hungry mouths.

Then the idea came to Katna’s mind not to wash her hands after kneading bread but to take home what dough was stuck around her fingers and palms. Then she would scrape off every bit of dough, mix it with stinging nettles, wild cabbage or soft roots and thus bake bread for the children. So heartily would they eat it that it was a pleasure to hear the munching and the joy of those frail fledglings, to whom only the mother can give strength to take wings.

One day Gavan noticed that his brother’s wife did not wash her hands after kneading bread. Although Katna told him why she had been doing so, he ordered her to wash off the dough from her hands right there before him and to take the slops to the pigs. Weeping, the poor woman did so, while the relentless Gavan, unconcerned about the cause of her pain, was glaring at her and, with his forefinger raised, threatened to fire her if he ever saw her do that again.

On the way from the farm to the house that day, her cheeks did not dry from all the tears she shed. The hungry children eagerly greeted their mother. In unison, the five of them asked for bread. The children's voices echoed far, and Katna could not think of a way to tell them that she had nothing to make dinner from. She went despondently out of the house so that the children would not see her cry; then, she put in a baking pan some excrement of the donkey that was tethered to a pole, picked some grass that was still green and mixed it with the animal dung. She kneaded the "bread" with her tears, and put it secretly under the sač¹ so that the children could not see what she had made it with, just to pull wool over their eyes. It took long for the "bread" to bake. One after the other, the starving children kept coming to their mother, asking to be fed, and she, in the hope that they would fall asleep before learning the truth, would answer: "Soon, the firewood is wet, just when the fire burns well".

As she was sitting in despair and thinking about what to tell the children when they would see what was being baked under the sač, someone knocked. At the door appeared an old, grey-haired man with a long beard. He had a wooden staff in his right hand that he used to help him walk. He asked the lady of the house to allow him to come in and, as he said, rest his bones from a long journey. He sat by the fire to warm up and the little ones, with wide open eyes, made a circle around him. The old man stroked all of them on the head, and they soon became quiet. On the round children's cheeks, the old man saw tiny tears that were glowing with the reflection of the firelight like fine crystals in the night.

"I have nothing to treat you with except some water that I brought from the spring this morning", the woman tearfully said to him. Offering the unknown guest a cup of water, in a very low voice so that that children could not hear, Katna told him why she was crying inconsolably. The old man was listening attentively as she was talking about her torments, and he, having heard the story, quick as a young man in his prime, rose from the little tri-legged stool, walked over to the fireplace, made the sign of the cross over the sač and said: "Woman, give the little ones this bread so that they do not to weep any more".

"But you do not know what is under the sač!", Katna wailed.

1 baking bell

“I certainly do. But you do not worry, lift the sač and give the children bread so that they do not go to bed hungry”, the old man softly uttered.

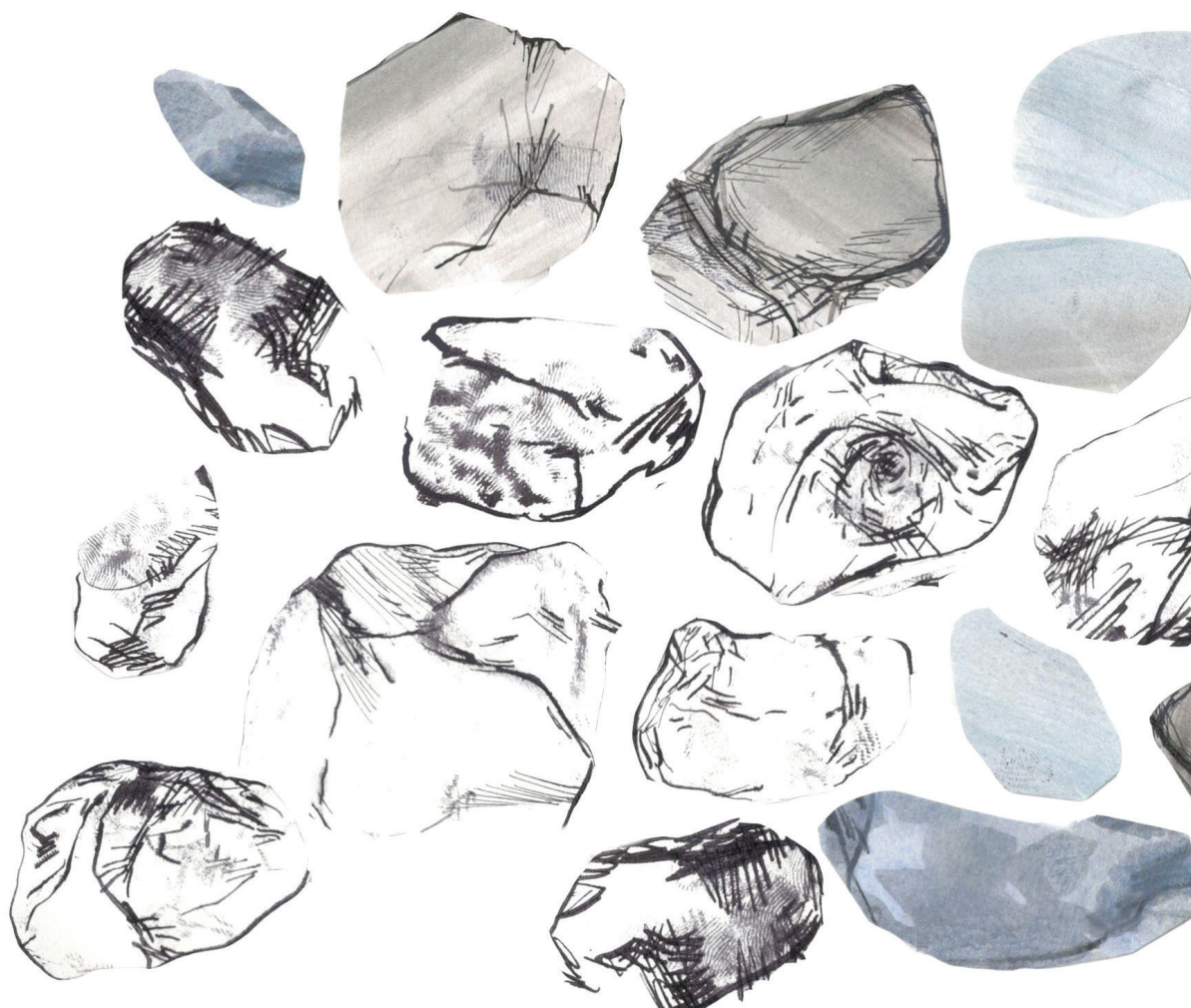
And lo and behold! Under the sač, yellow like a gold coin, lay a baked bannock. Just how the children’s eyes danced with joy, and the mother, although believing that she had cried out all the tears, now let out tears of joy.

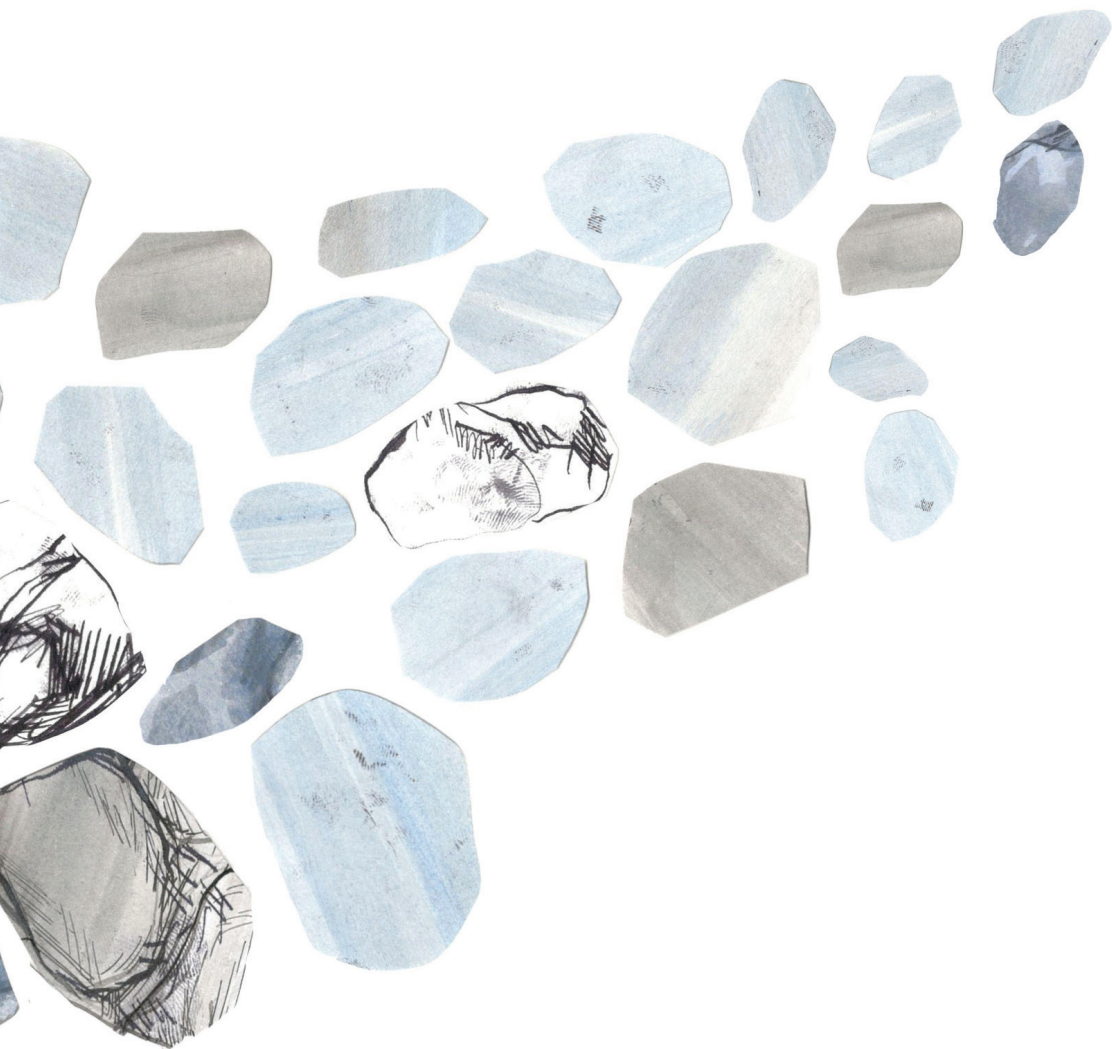
Upon leaving the house, the grey-bearded man gave his blessing to the mother, the children and their home. On the threshold, he told them that his name was Sava, to which Katna replied: “May you be holy and blessed a hundred times, you well-intentioned wayfarer!”

She showed him where she had been day-labouring, how large Gavan’s estate was and how far his possessions extended. Then, the old man was gone.

Throughout that night, thunder tore the skies and the earth. An unprecedented storm swept the area. In the morning, after the squall had subsided, Katna left for work, but what a sight she saw! The sea had swallowed all the land that until the day before had been called Gavan’s, and on the part of the estate which was not flooded a spring gushed forth to testify to the story of one’s haughtiness and another’s charity.

Where Gavan’s estate had once lain, near the Jaz beach, a spring gushed forth which the people named Gavan’s Water.





JEGOR'S ROAD

According to a tradition of the Paštrovići region, in late 18th century, by a ship from St.Petersburg, to the coast of Budva came a senior officer of Imperial Russia, Yegor Stroganov. Unannounced he made his way to the monastery of Praskvica in Paštrovići. It was the last point on his journey, which started by a duel and continued in an ascetic life and the vow of silence to the last hour. For ten years he was building a road from the small beach in Miločer up to Čelobrdo in an attempt at resolving in silence the fateful knot of a parental decision and the defense of honour, and thus bring back his only daughter.

Čelobrdo is a village settled on Paštrovska Gora above Miločer and Sveti Stefan. There stands the Praskvica Orthodox monastery built in the 11th century, exactly in 1050, on a gentle hill, turned to face the open sea. It got its name because it was located near a spring the waters of which smelled of *praskve*, as the locals then called peaches. Through times the monastery had been destroyed by numerous armies but restored by the monks and the people with the aid of the Imperial Russia, and has ever been since its origin to this day a sanctuary for martyr and restless souls.

That year, the Imperial army captain Alexei – a blue-eyed dandy of gentlemanly manners, to whom every word was “on the tip of his tongue” – wanted to abuse the love of Yegor’s beautiful daughter Elisaveta Stroganova. Young, inexperienced, she fell in love. Carried away by the honey-tongued talk and the epaulets of the captain’s rank, while the sly dandy had been already engaged for two years with another girl. He needed an affair that would quickly catch fire and die.

The news of the deceit soon reached Yegor, a strict but just officer and father. Without hesitation, he challenged his would-be son-in-law to a duel to defend the human and family honour.

As the custom was, the first to shoot was the fickle captain, and with the first flick of his hand he wounded Stroganov in the arm. But Yegor’s sound right hand did not shake or miss – the captain fell fatally shot. The man’s left side is the side of the heart, and the right is governed by the head, the reasoning side. Thus Yegor’s reason had spoken and the right hand passed the judgment.

The wound on his left arm would not heal even after a long time. Treated by doctors and healers, but that arm – as if no longer belonged to his body. Doctors in Moscow amputated his wounded arm to prevent the blood from poisoning, and the time of recovery somehow passed. While still being in the hospital, he was thinking about what the meeting with his daughter when he would have returned home would be like.

As soon as his wounds healed, Yegor shoved the empty sleeve into the pocket of his officer’s uniform and returned home in Petersburg. There he did not find his only daughter. It had happened as he feared and it brought chill into his chest as if being a viper. Elisaveta’s love for Alexey

was pure, girlish. She used to say that their love was like the air you breathe, like the water you drink.

For full seven years Yegor has journeyed from monastery to monastery seeking his beloved daughter. He did not know where she had taken refuge, whether she was alive or dead, or if maybe her sinful father, having slain her chosen one, killed her, too?

Empty and torn, and burdened by his own torment, Yegor Stroganov took a ship from St. Petersburg and disembarked at the piers of Budva and headed for the monastery of Praskvica. The Abbot there then was Savo Ljubiša, a learned Paštrović, who for seven and a half years served as a priest at the court of Empress Catherine II of Russia. Yegor told him that he was Russian, and that he wanted to work in the monastery and stay there. The wise Abbot did not fail to notice the noble bearing of Stroganov, and welcomed him and hosted him warmly. In a correct Russian, Yegor told him, as to a blood brother, that he would take a vow of silence until the end of his own life, after those words were said. He additionally asked that the cause of his misfortune not be told and the secret ever revealed.

Accommodated in a small monastery chamber, Yegor lived a lonely life, and yet felt a special bond with the region and the Abbot, who understood his silence. There were few people like Sava Ljubiša, who knew when a guest were not be asked questions, who was aware of when of rude words one may turn speechless so that only silence speaks. So got into habit of watching motionless and silent how the stone and water had firmly joined, how the horizon was opening up full of beauty and how the eye can dive deep into the open sea.

Yegor assigned himself a task: "I will connect the coast with Čelobrd, which overlooks Sveti Stefan, and the monastery of Praskvica by a stone road". According to the biblical tradition, stone is often associated with water. Like Moses who, upon entering and leaving the desert, made water gush out by striking the rock with his staff, while constructing the road Yegor was laying the stone slabs along a slope thereby opening the source of his pains and parental decision.

Every morning, except on Sundays or holy days, while taking rest brooding, with a small bag on his back containing only a piece of bread

and a long-necked butternut of water, the hermit would go into the forest of shrubs to clear the overgrowth with one arm. On the slope above the sea, armed with an iron will, he was breaking stones: rolling the larger ones to the side, and paving the step-like path with the smaller ones so that the soil from the hillsides would not slide down. With an old sledgehammer from Constantinople he was smashing the hard coastal rocks with the desire to connect the beach with Čelobrd above the monastery, so as to possibly aid the believers to access the sanctuary situated in that chosen natural environment.

Then, at the sunset of a summer day, another Russian arrived in Praskvica – a young beardless boy with a melodic voice about whom nothing was known. He told them that he had stayed in the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, the Caves Monastery, and that his monastic name was Yelisey. His arrival to the monastery was attended by the old hermit Yegor. Seeing the old man, tears rolled from the newly arrived young monk's eyes which no one noticed because, truly, he was a person with a sad and distant look. During the liturgy, the young man's chanting impressed everyone present at the monastery. He learned our language in a very short time and started gladly to teach the young Paštrovičs reading, writing and singing. He became popular and beloved. The Abbot wanted to propose to the Metropolitan to ordain him Hieromonk, which he clearly refused saying that he was not ready yet and that he needed more prayers to expiate his sin. Almost every morning he would follow with his eyes old Yegor, the tireless road builder, leave for work.

In the fourth year since his arrival, the young Yelisey became ill. He started withering away. Fading like a candle burning down on a grave. Then he fell to a sickbed without any hope of recovery. They would bring him herbalists, prepare ointments, but without any improvement. The illness was wearing out his handsome face and his eyes sunk into the sockets. As if he "had already drunk up his glass". Realising that his last hour was approaching, he asked for his fellow-countryman Yegor be brought to his cell and the two of them be left alone.

Yegor sat down beside the sickbed, and stroked Yelisey's hair with his calloused hand removing by that the monk's cap, which was covering a birthmark of the size and shape of a coffee bean on the left temple. In Yelisey's extinguishing tearful eyes he recognised his only daughter, his Elisaveta, for whose sake he had at one time set out into an unknown

world to live in silence by the sea and cure by constructing a road the wounds that would not heal.

The young man's life expired on an early winter morning, when the day was breaking away from the night. The monks were astounded when at the ritual of bathing the dead man, in the body of the young, dear Yelisey, whom they had loved and sincerely mourned, they saw a female.

They buried her the same day and vowed that it would remain a secret kept within the walls of the monastery as the holy objects are safeguarded. Broken and tormented, and already decrepit old man, Yegor continued to cut the stone path without uttering a single word. He worked for another year or two, until setting the last stone of the stair-path on Čelobrd. The work into which he had carved ten years of hard forbearing work was finally completed.

For ten years lasted the process of clearing the slope, cutting stones into slabs, making stairs and retaining walls, and above all, of remorse for a parental fault. There appeared a serpentine stone-paved path, into which the one-armed Yegor had also incorporated his own pains. However, it did not plague but blessed. The villagers named the path after him. Yegor's Road connected Miločer with Čelobrd. It was some time just before the arrival of Napoleon's army to the area.

On completion of the construction, Yegor would not come out of his chamber. Sensing the impending death, he confided to the monk who had cared for the sick Yelisey, that it was his Elisaveta, thus breaking the vow of silence. He told him that he had been a senior officer of the Imperial Russia. He had wanted to dedicate his life to his state, to the service and to his only daughter. He had wanted to be a good parent. Shortly thereafter he went to bed at night but did not live to see the morning. Drowned by his own grief and pain.

Yegor was buried in the churchyard of the Praskvica Monastery, same as had been his only daughter Elisaveta. There, to this day stands a stone plaque into which their names were carved.

This is a story of suffering and remorse for the parental decision and about the grief built into each slab at making the path between the land and water as a link between an exploit and a weakness.





CADMUS

As the story goes, the town of Budva (Bouthoe - the city in Illyria) was named after Cadmus, who had come with his wife Harmonia from Thebes in an ox cart among the Illyrians and founded the town there. In his tragedy "Oikles" Sophocles mentions the name of Butoa as a testimony of Cadmus's rule of two and a half thousand years earlier.

When Zeus, in the form of a bull, on a cold winter day, abducted Europa, her father, King Agenor of Tyre, was distressed. Nothing could comfort him. Then he called his three sons: Phoenix, Cilix and Cadmus and gave them the task to go out to the world and search for Europe. He enjoined his sons under the threat of severe punishment, and even death, not to return home without their sister. The brothers swiftly set off in quest.

The winter has drawn to an end, then the spring after it. The hot summer was hiding her, and the brothers kept searching without any indication or clue. They searched everywhere, even among bird nests. They became tired of not knowing, and then, when the hope of finding the sister sank like a pebble thrown into deep waters, then Phoenix and Cilix decided to abandon the unsuccessful search, to leave Cadmus and founded two kingdoms: Phoenicia and Cilicia.

Cadmus continued to look for his sister alone. He knew that the sources of their relationship may not peter out. He wandered for a long time over the world inquiring about Europe, peered into fields, mountains and seas, associated with the stars just to find a way to see her, but she was nowhere to find. She had disappeared, just like an underground stream. It was obvious that Zeus had hidden her well from everyone. Having lost all hope and fearing at the same time of his father's threat and of brotherly powerlessness, he decided to remain in foreign parts. But, where and where to?

He would ask the oracle of Delphi to tell him in which land he should settle and where to establish a town. Apollo's priestess Pythia immediately replied to Cadmus: "On a desolate field you will see a cow that has never been yoked and has a sign of a half moon on her flank. Follow her. Where she lies down, build the walls of a town". Having received such a response Cadmus swiftly left Delphi. Passing through Phocis he came across a white cow with the same mark as the Oracle had said that was tended by some poor man. Cadmus offered him so much money that he could buy a whole herd. Having bought the cow, he followed it until the early evening. When the sun hid behind the mountains, the cow lifted its head towards the sky, mooed loudly and fell down on all four legs from exhaustion. Cadmus knew that at that spot he had to erect an altar with the statue of the goddess Athena and to sacrifice the cow to her. But he also knew that the sacrifice could

not be made without water. So he sent his Sidonians to find the cave in which a spring was gushing and bring water.

The spring with crystal clear water was guarded by a dragon, the son of the god of war, Ares. When Cadmus's servants dipped the vessels into the icy spring water, out of the cave, wriggling its huge body among smooth rocks, there came out the dragon and slew them before anyone could even think of fleeing or defense.

All day long Cadmus was waiting for the servants to return. The sun was setting, but they were nowhere in sight. Impatient, he quickly headed after them. The path took him along the river bank. Water was hissing, and he imagined that it was the echo of calling voices. Soon he arrived and by the spring saw the familiar but torn apart bodies, and over them a dragon, that was shrieking contentedly. Unhappy and furious, Cadmus then cried out: "My faithful servants, I will be your avenger!" Carried by the provoked anger, he lifted a stone from the rolled down hill and threw it at the dragon. To make sure that he had killed it, he pierced the dragon's heart with a spear. When he heard its last agony, the Zeus's beloved daughter Athena Pallas appeared. She instructed him to pull out the dragon's teeth and sow them, like seed, in the field. Cadmus obeyed the words of the Goddess of Wisdom and War. As soon as he sowed the dragon's teeth in the ground there sprang a race of armed men with armors and spears. There ensued a fierce battle to death, until there remained only five, the bravest ones. Aware of the meaninglessness of fighting, one of them threw his arms down as a gesture of peace, and the warriors concluded fraternal friendship and swore allegiance to Cadmus. Cadmus soon founded a big and powerful city of Thebes. The gods of Olympus gave him the beautiful Harmonia, the daughter of Ares and Aphrodite, as wife. The marriage was celebrated in the presence of twelve gods of Olympus.

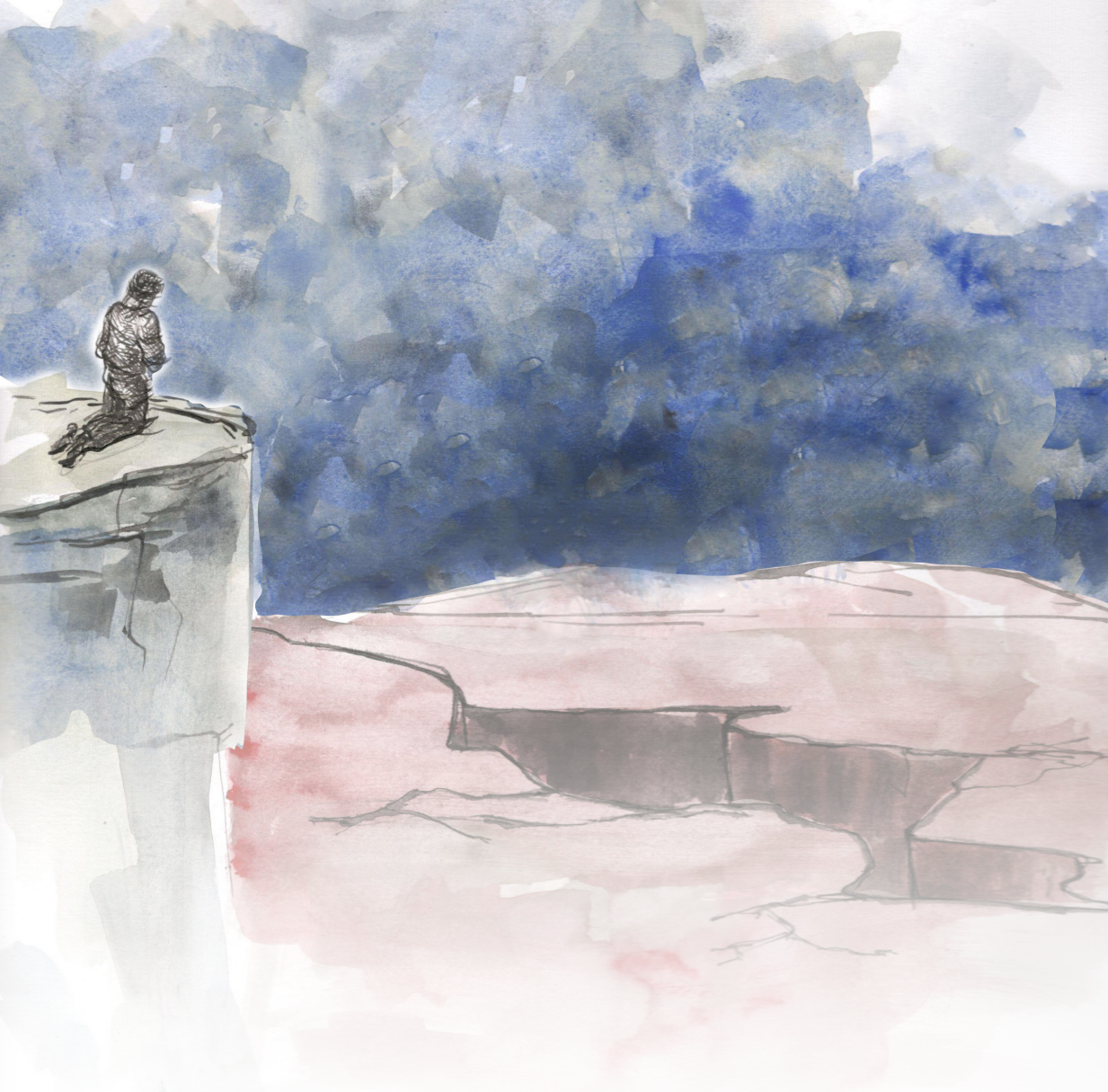
He ruled long and happily. He gave laws to the people and regulated the state. He became one of the most powerful Greek kings, had great wealth and an invincible army led by those warriors who sprang from the ground out of the dragon's teeth. Often would Cadmus, in the long sleepless nights, feel the weight of the burden that pressed him down to the ground because of the failure to perform the task assigned to him by his father, of the fraternal longing for his sister and of killing the dragon that was Ares's son and brother of his beautiful

and unassuming Harmonia. Unable to bear the burden of conscience, without the harmony of his own being, in the old age when many find peace, Cadmus and Harmonia unexpectedly left Thebes.

Long lasted their odyssey through foreign lands before they arrived in Illyria among the Encheleans and settled there. Oxen dragged the cart that carried Cadmus and Harmonia to Bouthoe, in the land of the Illyrians. The Encheleans had been told that they would defeat their neighbours if they chose Cadmus as their leader, because the story of his kingdom had been heard before he arrived there. When they heard the prophecy and made him their leader, Cadmus had gained a victory after victory over many Illyrian tribes and ruled over their lands.

Then, when he was most blessed by the people and gods, Harmonia bore their son Illyrio. Even then, Cadmus could not find peace. Again and again, his conscience, like a bird pecking a tree, was constantly ringing and saying that he was weak. Then he asked himself: "What kind of a hero am I if did not find my sister, and was that dragon that I had killed (as a reflex to deep resentment and an act of weakness) a message sent to me? If I am so heavily punished by the gods for its death, I'd better turn into a dragon myself!"

No sooner had he uttered these words, his body began to stretch and cover with scales, his legs stuck together and turned into a tail, that started twisting like a serpent's. In a weak voice that turned to squealing, Cadmus called Harmonia for the last time and she, seeing the transformation, thereupon begged loudly: "Gods, turn me into a dragon, too. The wife is to be with her husband both when he eats honey and when he drinks gall". The gods granted her plea and turned her into a dragon as well.



KOŠLJUN

In the winter nights while Bora is blowing, the elder people recount that miracles were occurring on the Košljun Hill. It would thunder in the middle of a clear day, and thunderbolts would crash straight at the threshing floor. There, they say, the earth once opened and swallowed an infidel and his oxen. The old saying was going among the people: "He who defies nature, he should beware!"

Košljun is a hill near by Budva. It watches the city when the sun rises and sets. Some Budvans had beautiful little tilled fields there that they assiduously cultivated them just to scrape any yield to feed their frail children. Along its sides there is a grove of oak trees, the kind overgrown with ivy that people call pregorac, yule log, which the head of household fells in early morning and brings into the house to burn on Christmas Eve.

Right below the grove, on a hot spring day one could hear the familiar ojs! – the sound of a hoarse voice of someone shouting at the oxen pulling the plough.

“It’s Petar”, said Djuro, “but what is he doing, the devil take him, doesn’t he know that today is the patron saint’s day, has anyone told him that!?”

“Don’t yell, Djuro”, Gospava uttered in a low voice from the edge of the field wearing a kerchief and all in black, “he’s self-willed and will make noise, and your talk goes to no avail. There’s his brother Mitar, he goes to church every Sunday, and let him tell that”.

Petar was a middle-aged man, standing erect and straight as an arrow, with black mustache, big blue eyes, thin face and high forehead with prominent cheekbones, almost without a wrinkle. Of an odd character he was. Little he communicated with anyone, but was not on bad terms with anyone either. If a neighbour passing by his house would wish him a good day, they would remain without a response. Mitar would then only slightly nod his head as a sign of silent reply.

The story goes that he had had the only son, who died fighting for Venice, in a foreign land – a “gall-land”. He simply perished. There were no tears of mourning in his eyes as in his wife’s, who would often hide behind the house, as if stealing something, and lament over him when no one was watching. In Petar’s soul a void opened that, as a huge pit, was just gaping and aching.

He would often sit on a tree stump, right there on the Košljun Hill, and stare blankly. Within the plot croft by the house there was a cultivated garden where some cabbage, onions and potatoes were grown – “not for a real benefit but that the field doesn’t get overgrown”, as his father used to say. Making company to Petar were the scent of the sea brought by

the maestrale and the afternoon restlessness. He was the exact antithesis of his brother, Mitar.

His younger brother had been – although of delicate health and physically weak since an early age – a cheerful spirit and often ready for joking. “The illness”, as the locals used to say, “has taught him not to live for a day, but for a moment of a day”. He was a devout man, and the faith in God was solving all the puzzles of his own being. He went to church regularly, and would not miss any liturgy offered for major religious holidays. Mitar would then put on a formal suit – certainly not to be seen as a dandy, or that some young pretty Budvan girl would set eyes on him but out of respect for God and of his aboriginal Christian beliefs. Early in the morning he would leave for the church and almost always arrive first at the liturgy. It was so on that morning when Mitar went to church so flamboyant. Wiping the sweat off his forehead since the sun was already heavily hitting down announcing that by about noon both soil and stone would burn. Walking out of the house, he heard a loud shouting: “*Ojss*, beasts, faster, don’t be plodding”. Mitar was startled, clearly recognising the voice of his brother. He climbed up the hill and saw Petar plow like Marko Kraljević (medieval national hero, a personification of people’s strength, courage and liberation spirit – transl. note) had with the Turkish imperial roads. He cried out at the top of his voice so that his brother could well hear him: “Oh, poor Petar, don’t you know that it’s the Lord’s Ascension Day today? And you set to ploughing today of all days as if there were no other days for that job?! Do you want to incur the God’s wrath upon yourself? The Lord is above all!”

Petar only whipped the oxen as if having not heard a word of reproach, and after taking a few steps along the furrow, stopped and answered to Mitar: “You just keep on your way, brother, go where you are headed to. I’m not afraid of God. Let him plough his fields in the heaven, and I’ll work mine here in Košljun!” No sooner had he said that, a crashing noise was heard, a strange roar, and the earth began to shake. Petar, as if by command, stood in the middle of the field and started calling his son. As if he was ready for the last judgment. Louder and louder was becoming the strange echo until the earth under Petar’s feet started opening. The oxen became agitated and began stampeding forward-backward, but in vain. The earth opened in the size of the field and Petar, together with his oxen, disappeared in the jaws of the deep pit.

Dumbfounded, Mitar was standing on a rock mutely watching the scene. A moment after it he took off his hat, kneeled on the ground by the abyss that had opened up by the God's will, and started to mourn his brother. As the sad news spread quickly, in a short time the locals flocked to see this divine miracle. All were crossing themselves and commenting, each in their own way, this sign from the Almighty. Some said that God takes and gives, others that He warns and punishes, and then Gospava spoke in a comforting way: "God takes the best for himself". Only Mitar was silent, motionless on his knees and crossing himself at the mouth of the huge pit.

Three days later some fishermen found Petar's body near the reefs. It has been a long talk that man with virtues should receive the grace of God, and if he does not, he will invoke the wrath with his defiance and receive some kind of punishment. Petar defied God and life. Only Gospava knew that her husband had not cared for the popular customs and that it was not the punishment, but rather salvation that befell him.



SAINT NICHOLAS SAVES ARMY FROM PLAGUE

At the time when plague ravaged, the crusaders arrived in Budva by the way of the Alps and Dalmatia. They were led by the renowned French nobleman, Raymond. Due to the disease they were camped there, and buried their dead on the island off the Old Town. Believing that the disease will be eradicated, they built a church on the island dedicated to the saint patron of travellers and seafarers. So they named the church after St. Nicholas, as well as the island on which it lied.

According to the story told by a wise and eloquent monk, it is known that just before the First Crusade, in 1096, there lived a very devout and rich Frenchman by the name of Raymond, whose origin was the south of France, the city of Toulouse. He was an exemplar to many Frenchmen for his war morale and humane conduct. He was a person with the highest reputation when compared with previous leaders. Deservedly awarded the Order of the Knight of Saint Peter, and also fought in Spain against the Turks. There he lost an eye, when in a knightly duel that day, the opponent suddenly turned him in the direction of the sun so that the light blinded him and with his sharp sword cut him across the right temple reaching the white of the eye. Although at first sight it looked like being just a superficial scratch, the eye was filling with tears and bleeding under the bandages. Despite the application of compresses soaked in the saps of plantain and other medicinal herbs, it soon after closed and he could see nothing, absolutely nothing on it. Although knowing about the physical defect of the renowned Toulousan, it did not prevent the Pope from giving him the blessings and appointing him the leader of the crusaders in the First Crusade.

The military campaign of the Christians from Europe was launched with the primary goal of aiding the Byzantine Empire in repelling the Seljuk Turks, whereby ultimately recapture Jerusalem and regain the Holy Land. Availing himself of the previous and present glory, with his own authority, the one-eyed leader then mobilised knights, peasants and serfs alike, for a great campaign by land and sea, for the First Crusade.

To this war Raymond of Toulouse travelled with his wife and son, which was not customary for a military leader at that time. He went with a pure heart and intentions, ready to sacrifice his wealth and the comforts of life for the eternal glory. He wanted, as he himself would say, “to die, since death comes to everyone anyway, right there in the Holy Land, the cradle of the Birth of Christ”.

They journeyed across the Alps and through Dalmatia, and came to Budva, where, tired of the long voyage they set up a camp in the field surrounding it. But immediately upon arrival they were struck by plague, a disease of wild rodents transmitted to humans by way of bites of infected fleas living on rats’ skin. The soldiers were dying on a massive scale as the epidemic was spreading from Southwest Asia via Europe and

swept almost the whole world. Millions of people perished from the disease. Among the people a curse remained ever since: "Plague take you!", said in the moments of anger.

From respected Budvans there came the order to bury the deceased on the island just off the city. Among the crusaders also was Antun, an old monk who joined the crusaders to fire with enthusiasm by way of prayers the tired warriors whenever their courage faltered. He was invigorating sick soldiers with warm words and the healing skill. The story goes that in these parts more than twenty thousand people died from that malignant disease.

Raymond called the priest into his tent feeling the latter's purity of intentions and his ability to see beyond the present. Asked him to pray to God to protect the people from the "Black Death". The priest replied that he had never ceased to pray and that he knew that there had come a proclamation by the Pope and Christian dignitaries that, in order to prevent the spread of disease, churches should be built at the gates of the cities along the Adriatic coast. He explained to Raymond that the construction of such sacred objects was linked to the tradition that at the entrance of the church there usually stood the protector, who restrained the woman with long hair dressed in white from entering the place and sowing death. For making that evil bypass the crusaders and for the disease to soon be wiped out, the monk suggested: "You see that little island where all these dead are buried. Let's build a church there and dedicate it to St. Nicholas, the patron of travellers and seafarers".

What the old monk proposed, the commander of the crusaders carried out. He ordered that the church be built as fast as possible. The island got the name after St. Nicholas, the saint to whom the just erected church was dedicated. And by some miracle, upon the inauguration of the church the disease was gone, and those slightly ill recovered and were able to continue the journey.

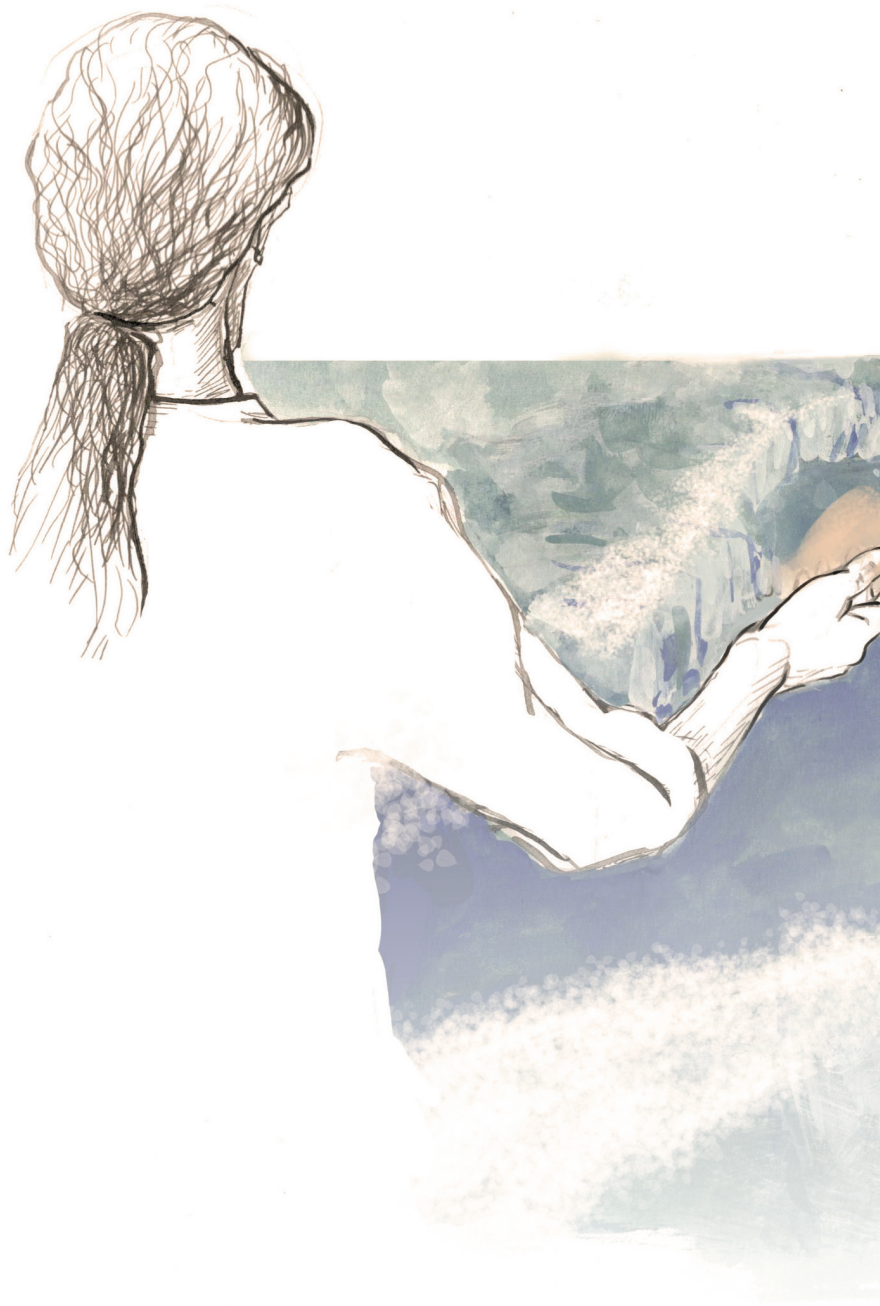
Passing Reževići, the Crusaders came to a mount where a stone column was erected with a recess in the middle which the locals called *panjega*, "niche". At that place the inhabitants of the surrounding villages used to leave a full jug of wine as a sign of welcome and hospitality for roadfarers, that is, for those "who mean no evil and do no evil".

Seeing this odd sight, and knowing that the French were citing the old Latin saying *in vino veritas* – in wine, truth, Raymond dismounted his horse, took the jug and drank a few draughts of wine. He paused a bit and said: “Take it, drink, this is the blood of Christ. Refresh yourselves, I have never tasted a wine like this. I know that this is a good omen that will bring us victory”. With the taste of wine from Paštrovići they reached their goal and recaptured Jerusalem.

Raymond of Toulouse was offered the crown of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, but refused, from profoundly religious reasons because, as he said, he was reluctant to rule where Christ had suffered.

Passing through these parts, and travelling to his father-in-law, the Venetian Doge Enrico Dandolo, the Serbian King Stefan the First-Crowned also stopped by that stone pillar. Tired and thirsty, he was warmed by the sun and intoxicated by the good Paštrović wine. Unable in such a state to continue the journey, he stayed in Paštrovići overnight, that he could continue his travel rested. That night the Mother of God came to his dream. Before he resumed the planned journey, he related his dream to his retinue, and they concluded that they need to read the signs on their way and suggested to him that it would be good to build a church at the place where there was the stone pillar and dedicate it to the Dormition. And that happened in the year of 1226.

“Every nation in the world venerates their place of worship: the Orthodox Christians and Roman Catholics their churches, the Calvinists and Lutherans their chapels, the Turks their mosques, the Jews in their synagogues, the idolaters their pagodas, and each is beware, as of leaping flames, of not taking anything from those God worshiping places in which the name of the Almighty is glorified”. (Petar I Petrović Njegoš: *Epistles to the Nyegush Clan*)





TUNJA

In all the bird's-eye view pictures taken from the Košljun hill and Brajići, clearly visible is a whitish strip, called tunja. It got its name probably after the long fish of spindle-shaped body and a narrow and pointed head. The Budvans remember that in the days of very low tide one could walk along this isthmus, its width being 15 to 30 metres and one mile in length, "by the see up to one's knees" from the island of Saint Nicholas all the way to the Slovenska beach. And it was created, people relate, when Saint Sava visited his nephew Đurđe on his trip to Mount Athos and anchored the boat near the /shore of the island of St. Nicholas. Due to a heavy storm, unable to reach the boat because of huge waves, he threw a handful of sand in its direction. The sea was then split by an isthmus. He passed that way on foot to the boat and continued the journey.

When it starts raining, the whole area of Budva shrinks, huddles like a child in the mother's womb. It pours from the sky, from the earth, and it would not be dry – as the village people say – “even under the armpit”. God-brought flood of waters!

It was the time of heavy rains, in autumn, when the nature is most fraught, and when the sky turns dark blue above the Jaz beach and blackens above the Spas hill – great fear grips people's hearts. Then, in the combat with the wind the sea seethes and boils like milk. Grayness darkens the sky already at noon and every person retreats into their house and recounts clearly and lively despite the bad weather.

Deacon Petronije would usually engage in long conversations with his uncle Mitar and debate about the great medieval lords. Mitar was a learned and respectable man, who was working as a municipal clerk to whom the book was both service and company. The uncle told Petronije many stories on that rainy evening, and mostly those about St. Sava.

Interesting was his narration about how after the funeral of his brother, King Stefan, Sava called to Žiža Monastery Stefan's oldest son, Radoslav, to crown him the king. On the wall of the Great Church, through the open new door, the King entered knowing that it was the crossing from the regions of the profane to the realms of the sacred. While relating staring at the light of a kerosene lamp, Mitar also mentioned how Radoslav had passed through the new door and was received by his uncle with affection. Sava instructed him to follow his father's and grandfather's steps, and swore him to be a consistent Christian in faith and conduct, and crowned him king in the presence of people and dignitaries.

Petronije interpreted to Mitar that doors symbolise places of transition between two states, between two worlds, between light and darkness; and that the royal oath should be sealed and stored within the church before the Lord.

“Sava knew”, by the words of the learned narrator, “that with the new legitimate king peace and order would be settled in his state. Then a thought came to his mind that before going to the Holy Mountain he could satisfy his long-standing desire to set forth along the Adriatic

coast, where the ruler was his nephew, the Grand Prince (*župan*) Đurđe, son of Vukan. So he did, and arrived in Budva". He said that Đurđe had already prepared a boat at the dock for his uncle, although Budva was caught in a raging storm in those days. Because of the fierce winds and huge waves the fishermen could not sail out and pull out their nets from the sea for days. The boat that Đurđe had prepared for his uncle was anchored near the island of Sveti Nikola and the namesake church on it. He knew that it would be safest there because Saint Nikola was the patron saint of seafarers and travellers.

"Father Sava", one of the younger monks approached the old man with a long gray beard and in a modest monastic robe, "this bad weather raging over us will not stop. As if some evil forces have learned of our journey". Sava did not lift his head, allegedly not having heard the said words, and after several minutes of silence, looked him full in the face and uttered in a low voice: "If you have faith of the size of a pea, you can command the mountain to jump into the sea and it will jump". The young man then felt the power of faith and the penetrating gaze of the saintly figure, lowered his eyes and asked the father for forgiveness. With a gentle smile Sava told him: "Never mind, my son, the time is before you, but I pray you, gather the monks in the morning and let us be gone with the Lord's help".

Throughout that night it rumbled around the island, lightnings flashed as if the heavens and earth were in a state of war. Neither in the morning the storm subsided, and the seemed to have been brewing more severely than in previous days. The divine turmoil!

On the landing, like slashed warriors lay several overturned fishing boats. The boatmen did not dare take anyone across the rough sea. The monks grumbled, and one of them inspirited himself and spoke boldly: 'The Almighty sees that we can not sail from the pier to the boat, as there is no boat that can withstand this force of the sea'. And people began to gather, and in less than an hour Đurđe also appeared and said: 'Uncle, I beg you in the name of God and the gathered people, do not go out in such a terrible weather! Your presence in this settlement gives us confidence and grace, and therefore I implore you to stay here until after this deluge'. Sava thanked them for the kind words, lowered his head and prayed to God. Then he took a handful of sand and three little stones and threw them to the direction of the boat that was supposed

to take them across. As is by ordinance, the sea waters were divided. A path or *tunja*, as the locals later called it, was created, stretching out for a quarter of a mile from the Budvan Zavala to across the St. Nikola's on the island. As if someone had rolled up the sea on one side and on the other, and in the middle – a road sign, of the lavender colour, speaking that man must be of a strong faith and that it was exactly the faith that had safeguarded the man and the humanity. The people began to cross themselves in wonder, praise the Lord and beg the saint to stay in Budva. However, Sava did not waver in his intention. He blessed all the present and together with his disciples passed the dry rocky isthmus. He came to the boat, boarded it and set on the long journey to the Holy Mountain.

In those long rainy days, words, stories and storytelling were in abundance.



THE FAIRY OF MAINE

The villagers of Maine related that a fairy used to appear in their parts. And it was not a good fairy but an ugly female figure in black, from whom everyone would flee and fear. One day she appeared before Dostana, a diligent local resident, while she was tending sheep holding a baby in her hands. From fear she dropped the child, and at that place, on a rock, until this very day remained a red mark to testify of the tragic fate of a mother at the appearance of the Fairy of Maine.

In the village of Maine, near Budva, the locals were engaged predominantly in agriculture and animal husbandry. Less frequently would they go fishing, because, as they say, it did not agree with them – because their pasture lands and fields had tied them, and would descend down to the coast only for the holy days or when one had to attend to something in the Town Hall.

At the foot of a steep mountain, there are numerous pasture lands of the Maine clans. Along the edge of the mountain, somewhere about midst of the cliffs, one can see a weird cave. It is believed that caves often hide monsters, brigands and even the gates of hell. The people of Maine are reluctant to talk about this mysterious Fairy Cave, as a place of sacrifice, suffering and punishment, the area of invisible borders and the abyss from which monsters come out. Only the old man Nikola would talk when he wanted and who he wanted to. He would sit in front of his dilapidated house when there were bright rays of day and talk to passers-by, who would usually stop to rest from a long journey and hear a kind word. He would thus smoke tobacco and contemplate for hours. He did not move anywhere from home, but knew everything that was happening in the village and beyond. One should to see his rituals – slowly taking a tobacco poach from his pocket and starting to roll it up patiently and leisurely as if bandaging a wound on a finger and not hurting it. Then he would pull out two small stones from his pocket. On one he would put tinder and strike it with the other until the small piece of tinder catches fire, and then place the ember on top of the already rolled cigarette and take the first smoke with such a contentment that almost half of it would be burnt down. He would cross his legs, wipe the ash off his trousers and begin to relate the strange local story to an unknown woman, who stopped there to rest when passing below his house carrying water from a nearby spring.

“Here in Maine there was a young woman named Dostana, married to Andrija, the son of Pero. People say that her beauty was unmatched far and wide. The face white as cottage cheese, shapely and energetic. One her moment was worth another’s lifetime. Dostana would graze cattle at the foot of the mountain slopes where grass was juicy, and would carry along her newborn son wrapped in a swaddle. She was one of those housewives who liked to see everything done – in the house, in the field, in the meadow – in the best possible way.

Thus she would, at noon, when the livestock was lazing, eat a little rye bread called *brašenica*, which she had baked at dawn and then sheltered by a rock would breastfeed the baby. It was a fine-growing boy with big blue eyes and black hair, as long as in a year's old. When a shepherd or shepherdess from the village was going that way, she would not let them hold it even for a moment. She used to cover the baby's face with a scarf when someone approached – 'not to be bewitched by evil eyes', as the country womenfolk would say.

Sometime about the Holy Transfiguration she was sitting on a rock, right below that strange cave while the cattle was resting and she found the time to play with her child and enjoy his beauty. She uncovered his face and started to tease him sweetly. The baby was joyfully laughing so much that the mountains echoed with the child's laughter, which spread all the way to the next village. As if then meadows, and cattle, and the mountain above were also laughing.

At that moment, out of nowhere, as if coming from the earth, a woman appeared in front of her: black, long-haired, sharp look and somewhat unusually white face.

'Give me that baby, Dostana, to have a look at him,' the stranger addressed her. Dostana started at this, quickly covered the child's face and replied tersely:

'I will not give him! And why should you have a look at him!?'

The mother, feeling that some unknown force started to haunt her, stood up with the baby in her arms and began to climb up the cliff towards the cave while the other woman followed. She was calling her, uttering something unintelligible that was not reaching Dostana. An odd power of faith was carrying and exalting her.

Just when she reached the cave, at its very entrance the strange woman in black appeared before her. This time she did not utter a word, just silently stretching out her arms towards the mother with the child. Tightly holding her son to herself Dostana realised that she would rather sacrifice him with the help of God, than to give him over to call that black crow his mother. 'Or not', she whispered haltingly, 'perhaps it's God sending his envoy in the likeness of this woman for my son?'

This decisive moment, when she should lift her head and hear the benediction that could make her blessed for her love, turned her fear into faith – as an encounter of the present with the eternity. It is not known exactly whether it was out of fear that Dostana dropped the child from the small woolen blanket, or if she deliberately sacrificed to God her most beloved possession as Abraham had sacrificed Isaac. And Dostana, like Abraham, remained strong in her faith, for ‘he who cherishes the best hopes for eternity, shall grow old cheated by life, and he who always prepares for the worst, early becomes old, but he who believes, shall preserve the eternal youth.’”

The old man finished his narrative saying: “With her man, in faith and love, Dostana has given birth to another eight children, all like golden apples”.

From this story of the old man Nikola one learned that at the very place where the child had fallen out of his mother’s arms there remained to this day a red mark, and the Black Fairy of Maine has never showed herself to anyone ever since.



SNAKE

The story went all over Budva that some Austrian called Schlange knew how to communicate with snakes. He stayed in the Old Town as one of the Austrian soldiers of the garrison that had been deployed there. He knew how to create confusion, but among the Budvans he was remembered by good deeds because he had been saving people from snakes.

The serpent has a very significant place in the traditions of the peoples throughout the world, and also has import in folk literature. Since ancient times, with the peoples of the Semitic and Greek cultures, snake had a very complex symbolism. It was a sign of life, of fertility, of immortality, rejuvenation, healing, but also a symbol of fear and death. In the old times, many believed that every house had one snake called “house guard” or “home watch”. This snake, unlike others, would not bite the house folks, and in return they would feed it on milk: in the evening, the lady of the house would leave the milk in an elliptic wooden bowl, and in the morning she would find just a few drops at the bottom. It would then be taken as yeast or rennet for making cheese, kaymak and other dairy products. The snake, they say, lived in the foundations of the house or under the threshold, and thus she was on watch, and it is well known that “the house stands erect on its foundations”.

It was also related that there lived three sisters who had only one brother, and when their brother died, all the three lamented over him so much that even God became annoyed. Therefore, the God turned the oldest sister into a cuckoo – to perpetually wear a black garments and never make her own nest; the second sister into a swallow – to be constantly on the move; and the third he transformed into a home snake – to guard the home.

Like vipers, so in the area of today's Budva and the Seaside many armies were replacing one another: Venetian, Turkish, Austro-Hungarian. The Austrian occupation was at that time more relentless than the Venetian. The older Budvans related that the people were nationally oppressed then, and the spread of culture and education was not provided in the national language. After the uprising, they say, the Austrian army admitted its defeat, and Emperor Franz Joseph stayed in Budva and Petrovac in May 1875, in order to somehow re-establish the lost authority among the people. One of their military garrisons was stationed right in the Old Town. Military like military – got feel at home there and stayed until the outbreak of World War I.

In this garrison there was a rather short soldier named Schlange (the German word meaning **snake**). He was a man with red hair and mustache, somewhat bent in shoulders and taciturn; one of those who preferred listening to talking. None of the soldiers knew his real name

since everybody called him Snake, and he accepted that name and would often present himself under it. It was rumored in Budva that he knew the animal language, used to tell the rosary and knew how to conjure snakes, and thus had saved many households from the deadly vipers.

At the time when the soldiers gathered around the fire, before going to sleep, there was talk about many topics. Snake would particularly absorb the narratives of a learned officer, whose relating was so lively and interesting. He was telling one night about the Sun that in the form of a snake crossed the path of the earthly and underground worlds every day to ensure its own birth, and thus the solar ark would in the daytime cross the desert plains full of serpents, and after that itself transform into a serpent. Snake listened attentively to the story about Moses and his people with whom he walked from Sinai towards Pinion in Arabia, where the biggest bauxite mine in the 13th century had been located, and where the archaeologists have later dug up bronze snakes. Snake was absorbing every word of the narrator about Moses, as the founder of the Jewish monotheism, to whom the snake was not only a magical and mythical creature, but a sign of the ability of the one who can heal his own people.

“The bronze serpent that Moses made and set it on the standard somehow miraculously survived all the wanderings and all the battles of the people of Israel for more than 700 years”, the officer related, remarking that the snakes that had bitten the Israelites were a symbol of death, and the one put upon the pole was a symbol of cure and healing. The garrison doctor added: “The Greeks believed that the Asclepius’s snake had brought medicinal herbs and therefore was entwined around the staff as a symbol of medicine and healing”.

On the Spas hill, where the local people had settled, it would often happen that at the beginning of the summer one found a snake curled up to look like a lump right at their threshold. That year they appeared much earlier, somewhere in spring, on the wide road that goes from Spas to Košljun. It would have been less evil had not children played on that road all day long, from early morning hours to late evening.

“I’d ask you what you would do if your kid run over or even, God forbid, stepped into the ball of those do-not-say-their-names?”, said Đuro to Lazar, seeing two serpents that were entwined at the edge of the road,

being himself afraid of their size.

“This does not bode well”, Lazar replied briefly, “if we see them of this size on the roads, what will happen to us in the yards and homes where there are small children and livestock?!”.

“How can we deliver from this evil?”, Đuro further wondered, and like a traveler who had just set on a long journey then getting back to take what he had forgotten, came to a foot close before Lazar and almost in a whisper said: “I just remembered the recent grandma Stana’s telling that down there in the Old Town there is a soldier, an Austrian called Snake, who frightens other soldiers by holding a serpent around his neck. I have myself seen him hold one in his hands and talk to it. Well, let’s call him, there’s no other way out?” He was trying to use the word “snake” as little as possible. He addressed it with “the not-to-mention one”, because it was believed that “to the one who utters its name, more often it will come before his eyes”.

At dusk there came Snake carrying a rope of some kind, as if going to fish. When the neighbours told him what it was all about, he then made a noose on one end of the rope, while holding the other as a leash. He was uttering something unintelligible, as to himself, when lo and behold, serpents began appearing one by one. Like soldiers in a file; they came out by tens, slowly slithered to the rope and as if by command, lay their heads on the loop that Snake had previously made. He took hold of the other end with the serpents tightly stuck to the rope, just like when a magnet sticks to metal, then walked away pulling it behind like that. He was descending slowly from Topliš to Mogren, while people were watching the miracle. Just how the snakes came, they disappeared somewhere in the woods under his guidance.

But the serenity of the Budvans did not last for long. One morning, Mare went to milk the cow but there, in front of the stable, basking in the mild morning sunshine, a viper was stretching in full length. Out of fear, the wooden milking pot fell from her hands and she, in panic, hastily scurried into the house as fast as her legs could take her. Her husband, hearing her scream, ran out with a rifle but did not see anything except the tail of a snake, that quickly slipped under the stone wall of the cowshed.

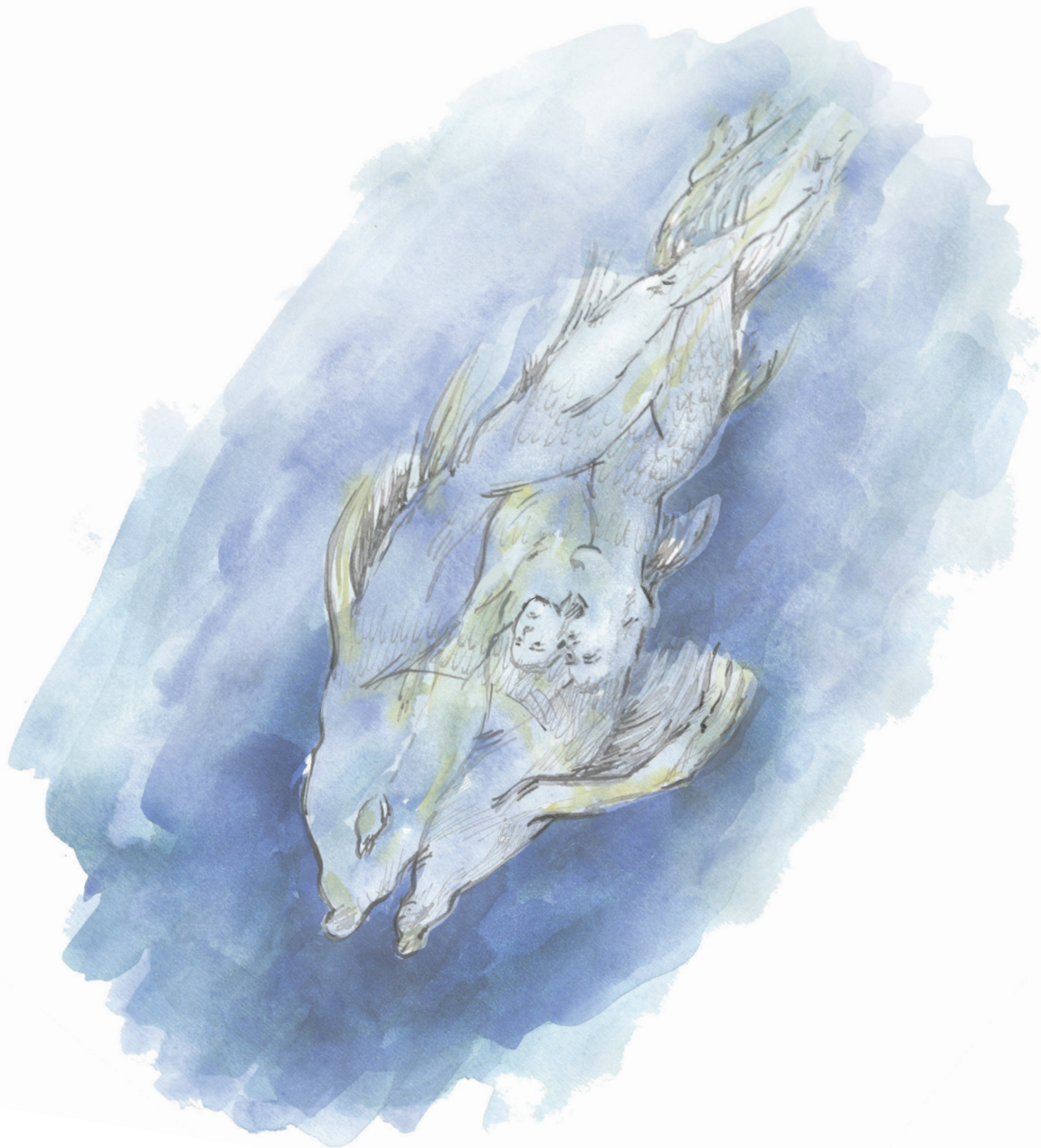
“That cow feeds our children, and we may find it stiff in the morning”, anxiously said the husband. “Shall we call in Snake?”, Mare suggested after a prolonged silence.

So the Austrian came again and prepared the same rope as in spring. Started to murmur, when, lo, as if going to a gathering, a snake came out from each house. People could not cease wondering over the miracle. Just like the first time, the snakes had laid their heads on the noose of the rope. At the same time then there came a great roar and a crashing sound from somewhere about Topliš. The people present were gripped by fear and began to flee homes, and Snake himself was astonished not knowing whence such a roar, like an earthquake. He threw away the rope that he was holding until a little earlier and fled towards the Old Town. The roar grew louder, the locals were so frightened that nobody dared to poke their head around the door; only Đuro ventured and went out to see what kind of force it was. All of a sudden a huge black serpent with the head like a small barrel crawled to that rope to which the snakes were stuck. It crumbled the rope together with the attached snakes, turned and vanished with the roar in the direction from whence it had come.

“This must be the dragon Cadmus that the old people said to have seen him around here”, said Đuro to his wife.

Since then, Snake has no longer appeared among these people. The Austrians soon left Budva, and snakes became a rare sight near the houses and barns.

The story was recounted for long about the odd foreigner who summoned snakes in his own language. Who knows, maybe he himself has transformed into a snake emperor – perhaps the very one that had swallowed an elephant and whom an artist from Budva, like the Little Prince, will draw in the shape of one’s hat or military officer’s cap.



MILOŠ AND JAGODA

This is a story of love born in water and stone, a story of love that had been born despite religious and social differences, and that was preserved in the clear Budvan waters.

The old man spoke to his grandson Miloš while cutting a stone: “This is a hard trade, my child, this is the bread with seven crusts”. Miloš, holding a chisel in one hand and a hammer in the other, started to process a round stone in order to make an oil vessel, called *pilo*, which a merchant from Kotor had commissioned last spring.

He was growing up with his grandfather, who was a stonemason. They made gravestones and were making good earnings from it. No matter how hard the times were, they were living a decent life. People were dying, and everyone was buying gravestones and monuments. They used to say that it was shame that a grave remained unmarked. Miloš has attentively listened to each Grandpa’s word believing that “between the soul and stone there was a close bond”, as the latter often used to say. He well remembered the story telling of people, and even the God-man Christ, being reborn from stone after the deluge, and of the stone being transformed into bread.

Miloš knew how painstaking the craft of stonemasonry was, but also that all his ancestors had practiced it since time immemorial: his great-grandfather and grandfather and father, and so will he, he used to say. He liked to grapple with a solid rough boulder that he would tame and pacify by giving it life. He felt that “bond” as a challenge – as stone and man having a two-way motion of ups and downs. He remembered his grandfather saying that “the cone-shaped stone represented the male element, and the cube-shaped the female, and thus when the cone is placed on the stand, as the male and the female principles, they are reunited”; and then life is created.

Miloš, the son of Mitar, was tall, stalwart young man in his twenties whose handsome appearance attracted looks from many a girl in the city. In vain were the sighs and timid views of those who hoped, and his father Mitar’s insisting that “it was the time for him to get married and that Stanica was from an upright family and the girl had an unblemished reputation”. But for him there was only one – Jagoda.

She was the daughter of a wealthy merchant Luke and niece of the coast-based Bishop Don Franjo. She has lived with her father and mother near the church of St. Ivan in the heart of the Old Town. Jagoda could have had any man she desired, but she wanted and loved only the stonemason Miloš. She liked his craft and understood the creative art of his being.

Love flared on the Budvan waterfront like when a sparkle falls on dry hay and can not be easily extinguished.

Jagoda was a girl of unusual beauty, dark-complexioned “like from Arabia”, with a long dark hair, that she usually wore loose, reaching all down to her waist, so when she would walk in a faster and finer steps it would coil around her thin waist like alive as about to cut her in half. Always smiling and having a resonant voice, she was, as the old people would say, “born to live and enjoy”. Jagoda was her father’s pet. From his travels Luka would often bring her expensive silk garments, gloves, hats. All the upper-class attire. But she was not happy then as many girls would be in her place. She would usually on such occasions pretend joy at receiving the gifts just to momentarily meet her father’s expectations, then put them aside and run as fast as she could to the arms of her artist. She knew that her father would not give blessing to their love, but despite that, some force was attracting them to each other ever more.

They have been secretly meeting for more than a year, seeing each other in hiding and made promises to one another. But, as the proverb says: “Three things can not be concealed: love, cough and poverty”, so the rumour spread around the city about their love although not aloud, since it was known how quick-tempered Luka was and sharp-tongued that one could talk to him only about what he wanted to hear, and whom he wanted to talk with.

On his trips to Dubrovnik her father would gladly chat with Ivo, the son of a wealthy local merchant. Through laughter in one of the conversations with that frolicsome, stylish young man, Luka: “I have a daughter of your age, and God willing, in a few years you’ll be my son-in-law”.

Upon his return from that journey he told his daughter how he had met there a wealthy and good merchant, handing her a silk sash that he had brought her as a gift. He meaningfully looked at his daughter and said: “I promised him your hand, and God willing, next year, at Easter, there will be the wedding. I’ll make such a feast that everyone along the coast from Skadar to Zadar will be talking about the wedding of Luka’s Jagoda”.

Jagoda paused, the gift that she had not even opened fell down from her

hands, and she turned pale as a ghost. "I, Father ...", she began to stutter, "I can not, I love Miloš".

Luka's face became distorted, his eyes bulged as in the beast shot by a steady-handed hunter, and gave a bellow of rage: "What, father?! Have I lived to see such disgrace, that my daughter marries a simple, dusty stonemason?! Get away from me, don't come before my eyes again!"

With tears in his eyes, Jagoda ran out of the house. She walked fast up and down the waterfront as if carried by those winds that bring only rain and storm from the rocky island. She knew that Miloš would be waiting by the east entrance of the city walls when the lighthouse emitted the first light.

He had long waited for her, and when she finally appeared, Jagoda threw herself around his neck saying: "My father, he ... he had promised me to some merchant, Ivan, and you know that I'd rather give myself to the black earth than be separated from you". Miloš said nothing, only embraced her firmly and shrouded her in his arms like a hen hiding its chicks at the swoop of an eagle. So huddled, as one, they listened to the silence that was hurting, but it did not last for long. From a distance, there was a loud calling: "Jagodaaaa!" They recognised Luka's penetrating voice, that was tearing the quietude of the night. Carrying a lit torch, that was rather smoldering than burning and leaving behind a trail of black smoke in the narrow streets of the Old Town, Luka was looking for his only daughter. He was aided in that by Mare, a talkative shameless woman, always positioned by that window with the view of the street. She knew who was having an affair with whom and where the adulterers and cheaters were. She pointed her finger to the highest part of the walls: "That's where she often used to meet Miloš, the stonemason". Her words, like a wave dashing against the cliff, struck Luka severely and he uttered through clenched teeth: "What you hold closest to your heart is what can be most easily cut off from the heart. I'll kill her, take my word!"

Shouts and murmurs commotion of the people who joined the search came to these two prisoners of love. "What should we do, I have no place away from you?", frightened but sure of her own feelings, Jagoda asked. "We'll jump. Only in the sea we can be safe. There is no other way. Together, we'll swim to the island. Then to the other island, and there, in the Robinson's way, we'll build our new, more beautiful world in

which harmony will reign”.

Had he come just a minute earlier, the father would have got hold of his daughter's hand, but he was too late. She, together with Miloš, plunged into the sea, just like a ball of thread that suddenly falls down from the weaver's hand. Some who were watching this scene saw them swim like fish baptized in water, and out of the water, they said, a voice was heard: “As one let there be two – NEKA **BUDU DVA!**” Two for Budva, born out of water and stone as a symbol of coexistence of the two faiths originating from one cross, a dualism upon which the entire dialectics, every struggle and every movement rest.

It is related that then, at the same time, the bells were ringing from both the churches: St. Ivan's and St. Nikola's. They also related that after the two had left they found in Mitar's house a relief carved by Miloš's hand, a relief in stone, and on it two human figures swimming like two fishes with crowns on their heads. How did he know and carved it?

The belief persisted that whoever comes to Budva and searches between the Catholic and the Orthodox churches in the Old Town for the well with a masonry wall around, and throws a coin into it and makes a wish, they will hear the voices of Miloš and Jagoda, and provide for their own love to become as solid and durable as stone.





HANDSOME MOGREN

A lover of the sea and travel, Spaniard Mogren experienced a shipwreck. He had been attacked by pirates and by some miracle was saved. The sea washed him onto a sandy beach of Budva as the only survivor. As a token of his gratitude to the Almighty, Mogren built a church above the beach, and the people named that beautiful beach after him - Mogren.

A Spanish caravel, equipped with “Latin” (triangular) sails and of shallow draught (to have less problems with landing alongside coast) had efficiently sailed many seas. A story was going around that it was steered by the finest and most experienced sailors. When the sail ship was approaching a port, many girls from the place would rush to flock at the waterfront to see the unbelievable pageantry of the broad-shouldered “seagulls” with bright eyes and dark complexion. Standing out by his particular handsomeness and strength was the sailor by the name of Mogren. He was a tall and well-built young man of athletic frame with the origin in a noble aristocratic family. His father, an ocean-going shipmaster has taught his son foreign languages since the latter’s early age. He would often stress his own life formula: “How many languages you speak and how much of the world you see, so much you’ll be worth”. He kept repeating this as *the Our Father*. He also related to his son of his own adventures and many fights with pirates and Mogren, driven by the challenge of travel, easily decided to set out on a long journey with his friends sailors. That day, when he was departing from his place, a priest presented him with a rosary for good luck and his beloved girl gave him a silk handkerchief, on which she had with her own hand embroidered the initials of their names, the hand with which she waved long while the galley was sailing away from the coast. The young man pledged then before the vast sea and with the faith in God that he would marry her as soon as he returned, and that their wedding would be the talk of the whole region.

Travelling by merchant ship was for the people of that time not only for earning but for great experience and the seafaring skills learned. For a sailor it meant frequent struggles with himself and his own solitude as well as with everything around him. But what they could not fight on equal terms was the adverse character of the sea, that knew how to surprise and deceit. Unexpectedly, like a huge fleece of wool, that summer, just when Mogren was setting out, fog would not lift for several days. It astonished all who were sailing. It was unusual for that time of the year that it was there, and so thick to obscure the entire horizon like a heavy drapery pulled over the window-panes plunging everything into darkness. A finger in front of one’s eyes could not be seen, only grayness sinking into infinity.

“Strange are the ways of man”, uttered Mogren standing on the deck in such obscureness. “It’s summertime, and such a fog!?! Who knows

for how long we will be going in circles and how long it will take us to get back on the right track! It the third day that we've been shrouded in this fog. As if clouds have merged with the sea and some cold and damp reality took over the reign. I remember my father saying that fog precedes some important discoveries, that it is the period when we settle accounts: both us and our Mother nature. As if this is an omen, and I'm not sure that we can always read the signs on our journeys!"

The next morning the fog dispersed as if it had never been. The sun appeared bright and clear which was telling that the coming day would be very warm. Mogren witnessed its birth. Awake, he was standing on the deck. The rosary in his hands, he remembered the priest from the home town and his blessings at the parting. Looking at it, he recollected that it had been the 13th of June – the votive day of his family and many benevolent people. As the ship was sliding along the open sea as on oil, in his thoughts Mogren sailed to his native parts and as if having felt the scent of women mixing with the odour of the sea. He also felt the festive mood and the atmosphere in the cathedral, where numerous people would gather to celebrate the great Christian saint, St. Anthony of Padua.

From his thoughts he was aroused by a loud call of the captain: "Fernando Mogren, immediately hoist the sails!" His voice rang like the bell on the home-town cathedral that summoned for the mass. He twitched from his reverie and clearly discerned that on their left side an unusual ship with the pirate flag had approached unnoticed. The first cannon fire roared soon. The first salvo hit the central mast and sailors began hurriedly to run and panic around the deck. To no avail was the captain's trying to calm them down; the next salvos followed immediately. The ship, hit at several places, started to sink like a wounded man. Mogren was gripping the railing with one hand and, as in a delirium, was ready to receive the assault of the pirates with the drawn sword, but the very next salvo hurled him into the sea. He swam to a fairly large piece of the mast, which was floating, and turning his head saw the ship sink and the remaining sailors diving in panic into the water trying to save themselves.

Still warm, Mogren did not feel that he had been wounded until the water before him turned red and he felt the salty taste of his own blood in his mouth. He gripped firmly the floating wood. It was the last thing

of which he was aware. He did not clearly recall what time of the day it was, whether it was dark or a longer loss of consciousness? Waking up, the first thing that the castaway saw was the starry sky, which was promising a beautiful sunny day. Then, when the night was giving birth to the new shining day, Mogren briefly regained consciousness, gathered enough strength to swim backstroke to make it less tiring, and when he saw the land he let the water and waves carry him, half dead, and wash him up on the shore.

He woke up early next morning on a beautiful sandy beach surrounded by steep cliffs and bathed in the warm rays that even heal wounds. For a long time was the surviving sailor watching that magnificent place, so much beauty of contrasts – “the wild beauty”. On his hand there was still the rosary, and on his mind the remembrance of Saint Anthony. Still weak, he slowly stood up and turned towards the west. Then he knelt and prayed with thanks to St. Anthony of Padua for having survived. He vowed then that exactly there, at that place, he would build a church dedicated to the savior saint.

Thus, this beach was named after the courageous and handsome Spaniard, the sailor Mogren. At the place of his deliverance a church was founded and named after St. Anthony of Padua – dedicated to the notable Franciscan and Catholic saint, who had been born in Lisbon and died in Padua.

There Mogren crowned his love, keeping the promise that he had made to himself on the day when he left home. The only thing that he had not known was that his marriage would take place miles away from his native parts, at the place of his rebirth – a beautiful Montenegrin beach above which he had previously built a church. More than ten of ornate boats with wedding guests witnessed with songs and joy the act of marriage, the union in love of a man and a woman as Christ and the Church, as God and his people. They were the first to consecrate the church by the bond of marriage.

After that, from Budva and the surrounding places, many believers were coming by boats to that place on important Christian holidays and there, with the sounds of the organ and choir singing Mass would be celebrated, often on the beach because of little room inside. Remembered as amazingly beautiful rituals were church weddings of

young Budvans, who were crowned their matrimonial paths right here, at the St. Anthony's.

During the period of communism, the church was demolished, and the Old Budvans have for long adhered to the tradition of not swimming in the sea before the thirteenth day of June.



RADOSLAV'S ROCK

The Katič islet near Lastva (present-day Petrovac) was named after King Radoslav, who, sick at heart, fled pursued by his son's Časlav's legions. It was right there, on the sharp rocks of the small island, where he found salvation and refuge. The locals had seen it, and they named the islet Radoslav's Rock after the honourable and good ruler.

King Radoslav was the son of Stefan the First-Crowned, from his first marriage with Eudokia Angelina, daughter of the Byzantine Emperor Aleksios III Angelos, who was repudiated from the country on grounds of adultery. The father appointed his oldest son, the crown prince, to govern the Principality of Zeta. Upon coming to power, King Radoslav became one of the reputed rulers of his kingdom. He respected man - a ruler and a beggar alike. He respected man's good deeds and would often understand and forgive his weaknesses and vice.

He married Anna, the daughter of Theodore Doukas of Epirus, despite the opposition by the church and the people. The rumour was that he had been in a blood relation with her, the seventh degree of kinship. Unconcerned about it and proud of his Greek heritage, Radoslav knew that through family relations with the Despot of Epirus he would consolidate his rule. Among the people there was the tradition that it was not good to marry a blood relative as they will bring forth children insane or crippled, either their own or their children's children. It had been related and then it ceased. As people say: "Each evil for two days".

In his marriage with Ana Radoslav had his first child, son Časlav, who even as a little boy was self-willed, stubborn and somewhat odd for a child of a younger age; and besides, hostile towards his father. Časlav had early learned many warfare skills – riding unsaddled horses, shooting a rooster at the top of its comb. He respected his mother, but often contradicted his father. The story was going then with the birth of Časlav, Radoslav received punishment for his own sins and the sins of his ancestors. The priest whom the King believed, when he complained about his son's nature, would tell him: "Devilishly strange is your boy, my King, but what can you do: to spit upward is spit upon yourself".

Several years later, when the boy has already grown into a young man, when the Ban of White Croatia rebelled, King Radoslav assembled the army. He entrusted one part of his legions to the command of his young son Časlav, and he himself led the other part. Father and son, as prearranged, had besieged the rebels from all sides and readily defeated them and took many soldiers captive.

Soft-hearted, Radoslav pardoned the rebels and gave them freedom – a somewhat unusual act in the era of warrior exploits. Časlav did not

follow suit of his father but delivered the captives to his warriors as slaves. Those soldiers who had been with the king and came out of the battle victorious, conspired against the King's unusual decision, and stood to the side of Časlav. Eager for fame and self-affirmation, the young prince took the advantage of his own warrior ascent and the moment of his father's weakness to overthrow his maker from the throne. He needed not much effort to persuade the soldiers, the warriors, to depose the King. Fleeing, Radoslav spoke: "My people, is there a more painful lesson than that when you feed a bitch and it bites you, and does it right at your heart... But, "of all wounds near the heart the gravest is the one in the midst of the heart", i.e coming from the people closest to you.

Fleeing from his son, from himself and from his own passion, the King reached Lastva. To hide – was not proper; to run away – he was unable. Realising that it was not possible to escape the fate, that he would die from the hand of his own son, he wished to plunge down from the nearest cliff. But some force and anger forced him to go forward, towards the sea. So he came to the shore of Kastel-Lastva.

When Časlav with his horsemen neared his father, Radoslav dived into the sea and his faithful companions followed him. "I would rather be prey to hungry fishes than to die from the hand of my only son. Is there a more tragic death?", thus spoke the King while submitting himself to the vastness of the sea. As if being ignorant and without fear, they swam to a ridge far from the coast. They climbed up onto a small island and thus saved clung firmly to the sharp ridge of the rock.

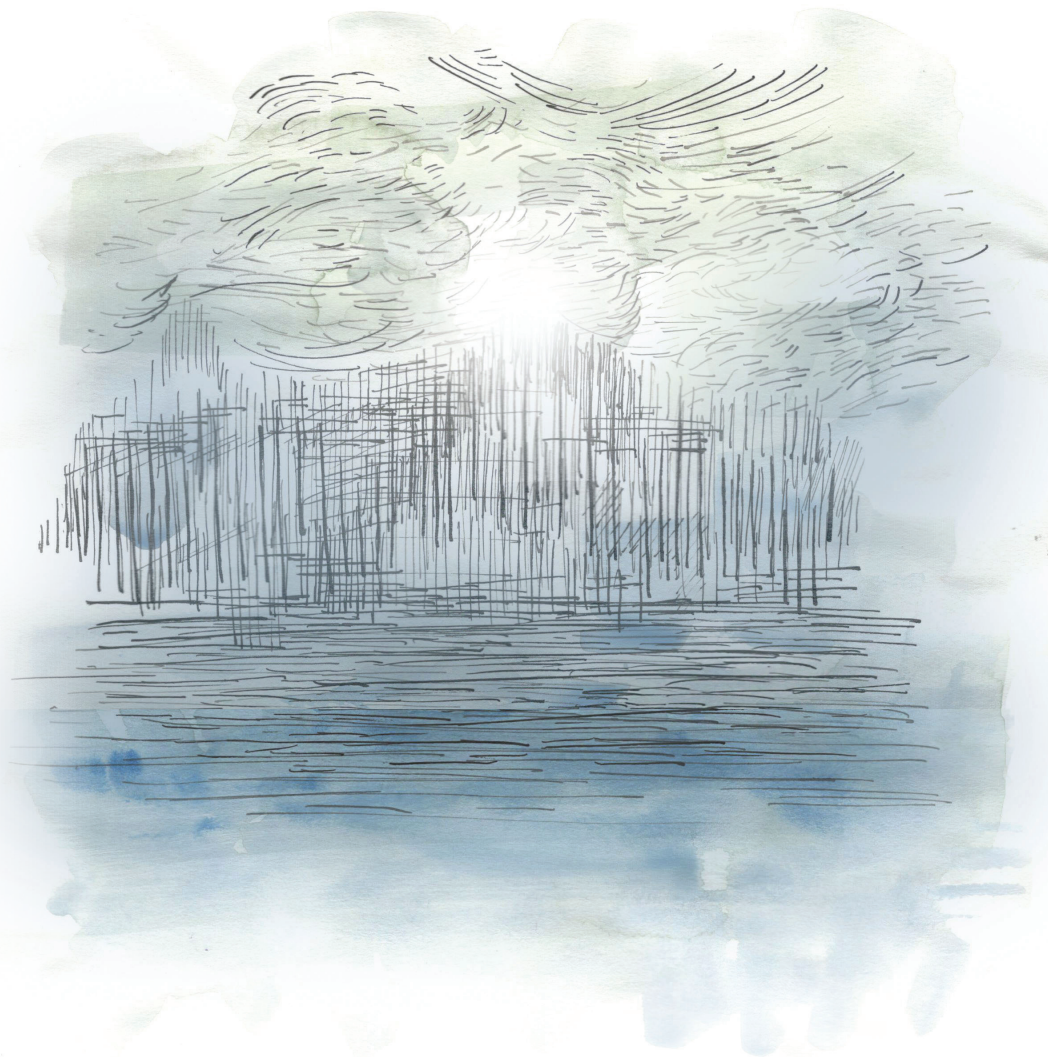
By some miracle, or the will of God, not much later there sailed a ship from Apulia. Then the soldiers who had survived with the King began to shout and call out. The King was speechless as if it did not concern him. Just kept stuck to the rock like a statue and silent. Not knowing whether those were castaways or exiles, the sailors rowed to the islets where the survivors were. They approached to see what was happening on there. When they in the end found out what it had been all about, they brought the King and his companions to their city of Siponto and received them there with the greatest honour. With deep gratitude to the hosts, the King then left for Rome, to the home of the Apostles Peter and Paul to pray. He was aware of the burdened of his grim fate and that he had been exiled by the one whom he had made and gave birth to. In the moments of solitude he would be scratching beneath the surface

constantly wondering what he had done wrong, because “the apple does not fall far from the tree”. He offered his parental forgiveness for everything, saying: “Lord, you forgive him, too, for he does not know what he is doing”.

In one of the military campaigns Časlav was unexpectedly attacked and captured by the Hungarians. When they put him in heavy fetters, then he thought of his own father and of the moment when Radoslav had granted freedom to his prisoners. Only then he realised his greatness, the greatness of a man who was forgiving when hardly anyone else was doing it. He repented, but it was too late for that. There are mistakes made in one's life that remain irreparable. They tied him, and so bound threw him into the River Sava that the parts of his body be broken in the muddy river bed and never be recomposed, and that his soul may never find peace.

Almost at the same time, in Rome, King Radoslav died. He was buried in the basilica of St. John Lateran with the greatest honors.

The islet of Katič off Petrovac, according to the relating of the wise Simeon based on the testimony of the Doclean priest, the people named *Radoslavov kamen* (Radoslav's Rock).



SANTA MARIA IN PUNTA

The story goes that an odd galley was sailing along the marine environments and reached the coast of Budva. From it, people with long hairs and beards brought out the icon of “Madonna in Punta” and placed it on the mainland with two lit candles beside it. They wanted to check whether there were Christians in the city and if there were, they would accept the icon. And there, where they had left the icon, on the Punta Cape in the southwestern part of the Old Town, the Church of Santa Maria in Punta was built – the place of enlightenment and education of many Budvans.

A strange galley with the emblem of a golden dove was sailing the distant seas of the Mediterranean. On the open sea it looked like a little floating island, and when it came closer to the shore then one could clearly see a chapel with a cross on top at the front part of the vessel. It was an unusual ship structure, with the hull of some twenty meters in length and a modest chapel made on its deck for several monks, Spaniards of the Benedictine Order who in their travelling were spreading the cult of St. Benedict and turning disbelief into faith. They represented the shrine of the *Black Madonna*, the oldest monastic order in the Catholic Church. Their teaching was significant not only for the spiritual but also for the general history of Europe. They opened schools and libraries, built churches, copied books... They were spreading Christianity, culture and literacy among the Slavs and played a crucial role in the reconstruction of Europe, which was going through a difficult period after the collapse of the Western Roman Empire.

The night was falling slowly like a curtain drawn over the barren window panes. On the deck, two monks were talking breathing in the freshness coming from the open sea.

“How long have we been sailing these waters, how many months have passed since we set out from Spain?”, asked monk Lucian in an undertone.

Tucked into a loose clerical habit, he travelled with his eyes along the marine expanses. As if looking for an answer there. But instead the bells tolled for the evening prayer. The monks entered the narrow chapel, where the other seafarers and the captain of the ship had already taken their places. Gathered around the icon of the Mother of God, alight with burning candles, they were saying the prayer. Their motto *Ora et labora* (pray and work) has been used in a military-like manner – without doubt and objection.

Upon completion of the prayer, Lucian returned to the deck to enjoy a little longer the beautiful, clear night. Across from him, by the ship's railing on the left, sailor Federico would be standing while it was still visible from the three-quarter moon. Every evening, at the same time that one could wind his watch by him, he was there with a sharp pocket knife in his hand carving a sizeable piece of olive wood. He was making sculptures of different forms demonstrating a true mastery of movement.

Many sculptures with Christian motifs that adorned the interior of the galley were the products of his hands. The story also went that there has been no Spanish galley which he had not visited or sailed in it along the broad oceans. While the ship rolled gently on the calm sea, one of the monks broke the silence by asking:

“What is this land we’re approaching? We have been travelling these seas for a good deal of time”.

Federico cut a deep groove into the piece of wood he has been carving, raised his straw hat with his left hand so that his eyes could reach farther, and said loudly:

“This is the land of Illyria, I believe the Romans had called it so. And there”, pointing the blade toward the coast, which had already appearing, “the place that stands out illuminated as if flown over by glowworms, is Butua. There lies the oldest city in these parts. Some say that it is protected by a dragon called Cadmos, and the others that there are no dragons or monsters, but that the city is guarded by the bravery and courage of its soldiers”.

The story sounded interested to the old monk, who climbed the deck to breathe in the freshness, and hearing the conversation quietly added:

“And just if they are Christians, the Mother of God would stand as the object of hope and defend them from evil forces and defilement”. He turned in the direction of the light and asked: “But, are they Christians, for goodness sake?!” Federico straightened up to face the old man so that the latter could hear him better, and answered by saying:

“Reverend, I have related the story that I knew. The truth is that you represent the oldest church order founded by Saint Benedict. Your cult is widespread in the East and in the West. You have the place among The Selected in the Catholic Church and make the intellectual and spiritual elite of Europe. You travel around the world and convert the unbelieving into the true faithful, and therefore it is on you to tell me”.

Leaning on his cane, the monastic elder replied: “How are we to say that when we have sailed here for the first time? You see that we did not even know the name of this land. To dock - we can not, because if they’re pagans I’m afraid we could perish there and no one will ever find

any trace or grave of ours". As he said that he made a few paces back and forth, as if measuring the length and width of the deck letting the silence to listen, and seemingly remembering a forgotten story said: "There is only one way to find out. We'll anchor the galley late after midnight at this point, and you, father Lucian, with three other monks take a boat, candles and the icon of Our Lady. Leave the icon in a cove near the coast and light the candles beside it. If they are Christians, they will accept the icon, and if not, they will destroy it, either they or thunders and storms".

What the elder said, they did. Lucian took the icon, another monk the candles and the other two dragged the boat. As they were approaching the city walls, the light grew stronger and the city larger and more mysterious. They landed on the shore timidly and with fear.

Nothing was heard, it just seemed that from the bowels of the earth an indistinct whisper of stone, thornbush and grasses was coming. In the distance houses were yawning. Nowhere a single human head to be seen. Reminiscent of the time when after a heavy storm all animals hide deep in their lairs holes and the nature whispers. Only the barking of dogs in a distance heralded that there was life. The youngest monk then asked his companions where to place the sacrament. Lucian's eyes scanned the distance. The clouds in the sky were performing a strange play around the moon – there was daylight in one moment and then darkness again. When the surrounding became rather visible, Lucian's eyes rested on the glassy-whitish light that illuminated the cape. He stood up, and holding the icon in his hands hurried in that direction, saying: "This light is a sign from God and that's where we should leave the icon".

The uninvited guests that had landed at the cape Punta were being watched by a young soldier, Marko, who was standing guard on the walls of the ancient Butua. He was aware that he had never before seen such creatures set foot on his native land, and at that hour and so secretive. He decided to tell the city's overman what he had seen. He ran as fast as he could and in a few steps was already before the city's father. Drowsy and heavy-eyed, the latter asked: "What's the good of your coming to me, soldier, waking me up at this hour?" Marko, still panting from running to quickly carry the news, turned pale, and uttered in an intermittent voice: "I saw... a little ago...in the moonlight... some unknown people with long hairs and beards...in monastic robes... going towards the cape Punta... carrying an icon of the Mother of God... They seemed to me...

somehow enlightened and blissful... As if they are God's people". The city's lord listened to him with attention, and to those words wisely said: "Let them do what they are up to. Let the night give birth to a new brighter day, and we will tomorrow see what we are to do".

From the shore, the monks slowly climbed up the steep rocks and at the top found a small hollow looking like a child's cradle, and there they placed the icon. The place was illuminated by a miraculous gleam. Lucian lit two candles there, kissed the icon and without turning they started back down the rocky slope.

The next morning, at the crack of dawn when the guard was changing, people had already begun to gather around Punta; they were coming from everywhere to see the miracle – the icon of the Virgin Mary and two candles burning out. By noon, not a needle could fall down to the ground from so many gathered at Cape Punta.

"This is God's miracle, this is a sign!", said the priest, who had earlier heard the story about the strange sailors from the city lord's mouth. "At this spot a church should be built to worship Our Lord and the Mother of God, that will protect us from now and forever!"

The locals supported it with one accord.



SAINT PETAR AND THREE OAK TREES

With his own hand St. Petar planted three oak trees while staying in the Stanjevići monastery. He planted them near the sanctuary, on the path from Peraj hill to Podbrastić and farther to the Big fountain. He had planted them to be watching them grow and enjoying in long walks with the like-minded and thus affirm the Holy Trinity.

According to historical accounts and the recollections of gifted individuals from Pobori and Maine, it is known that Petar I Petrović Njegoš has stayed in the monastery of Stanjevići for a good part of his life. The monastery rests on the southern slopes of the Mt. Lovćen range. Its one side is in the direction of Budva, and the opposite looks in the direction of Grbalj and Kotor. It was the place where even before him the rulers of Cetinje had been staying. When the Austrian army occupied Boka, Petar I Petrović managed to obtain from the Austrians the right that the monasteries of Stanjevići and Podostrog remain the property of Montenegro.

At that time several meetings were held at Stanjevići, where the first Montenegrin Code was laid down. The *Vladika* (Prince Bishop) addressed his people in those troubled times, saying:

“Montenegrins, do not be anybody’s broom and shovel, do not lick other people’s hands, do not solicit charity from door to door, do not let yourselves be deceived, do not let yourselves be bought, do not be someone else’s joy, turn to yourselves and your own people, I beseech you with bread and water – do not dig early graves for each other, do not act for your own doom”!

The eye-witnesses related that in the immediate surroundings of the monastery, Bishop Petar I planted with his own hands three oak trees as a symbol of belief in the Holy Trinity. He planted the first on the Peraj Hill, to the west of the monastery buildings. The second - at the entrance to the very monastery complex, known by the name of Podhrastić. The third oak was planted near the spring called the Big Fountain, southeast of the monastery. They were planted at no more than a kilometer and a half from each other. It was not at random that St. Petar planted these oak trees, because it had been the sacred tree of the ancient Slavs. It is synonymous with resistance and firmness. A symbol of durability, highness and power in both the spiritual and material senses.

There remained the testimony of the captive Miraš, who was doing time right there in Stanjevići during the Bishop’s stay. He related how the Bishop would be spending his free time walking between the Peraj Hill - Podhrastić – Big Fountain. “He toured”, the man said, “and watched his plants grow, in the same way that a mother enjoys watching her own children grow up”. “He walked”, Miraš continued his relation,

“accompanied by a close friend and his personal Secretary Franjo Dolci de Vicković, a Catholic priest and a learned man of that time. This man enjoyed complete confidence of his Lord. It turned out later that in the Bishop’s absence, through some odd Austrian and Russian intrigues, Franjo was captured and sentenced to life imprisonment. Here, in this prison in Stanjevići, we were doing time and tortured together. ‘Talking has kept us alive, we’re grateful to it!’ And Franjo’s talking at the speed of a mountain stream would be flowing into my soul like into an estuary.

“He was one of the most educated men of the time. The Bishop used to spend hours walking with him. Thus Dolce would tell his friend that walking was beneficial for man’s both spiritual and physical health because, as he said, ‘fresh air purifies the mind’. Carried away by conversation, they would often fail to notice how easily they were making it from one oak to another. The Bishop related to his companion that the oak in the old Indo-European religions had been known as the tree of Perun, the god of thunder, sky and storm whom the ancient Slavs addressed at the time of drought. Perun, according to the Bishop’s narration, was described as a rough bearded man, residing in the Heaven. It was believed that during storms he was riding in a chariot on clouds and hurling lightning at earth, and thunder, as related by the Bishop, originated from the clattering of the chariot wheels. Supplementing the Bishop’s narrative Franjo Dolce would wisely add the fact that supported their story, that in the Latin language the same word was used for ‘oak’ and ‘strength’ - *robur*”.

In Miraš’s story mention was made also of the former Bishop’s secretary Simeon Orlović, whom St. Petar soon found to be the Austrian spy and ordered that he be arrested.

“Secretary Orlović was the Bishop’s Judas, and Franjo Dolce was his Apostle”, the former convict, who knew “the martyr apostle” well, used to say. Also interesting was Miraš’s relation about the construction of the Orthodox church in the Old Town of Budva: “What the builders had made in the daytime, at night it was demolished by fairies, like the ones that were tearing down the city of Scutari in the folk poem. Guards, composed of loyal people, were posted to protect what had already been built, but the fairies would seize the moment of their absence and do what they had in mind. Every morning the church founders and celebrities would gather to confer about what they do. Among them

was a devout childless old merchant, who bequeathed all his property to the new temple. He said that the other night none other but St. Petar of Cetinje had come to his dream and that, as he had suggested, it was him – the living saint – who should be invited to consecrate the foundation of the new church. Everyone blessed him and accepted the wise idea.

It did not take long before the Bishop came and consecrated the foundations, on the very day of the Holy Trinity, after which the church was named. Since then, the construction went unobstructed and in a short time the church was built and inaugurated (in 1804, on the Trinity Day)."

The three oak trees that Petar I Petrović Njegoš had planted symbolise the Holy Trinity as well as the Holy Trinity Church, whose foundations were consecrated by his hand. The same symbol represent the three wounds that the Bishop had received in battles with the Turks: at Ljubotinj, at Krusi and at Martinići. This is what made St. Petar of Cetinje a unique ruler in Europe who with the cross in one hand, and a drawn sword in the other, stormed the enemy and directly participated in bloody battles with the Ottomans.

The oak at the Peraj Hill survived longest – up to some fifteen years ago, when it burned down in a fire. It may be that it has been symbolising the glorious Crnojević dynasty, their cradle of lives and the birthplace of the most important among them, Ivan Beg, the founder of the town of Cetinje.



CONCORD BUILT SVETI STEFAN

The island of Sveti Stefan was settled after the tribe of Paštrovići had taken the spoils of war from the Turks and justly divided it justly among twelve clansmen, who built twelve houses on the island from it. It happened when they were helping their neighbours Bokelji to defend themselves against the intrusion of the Turks into Kotor, and returning home triumphant, not far from the Jaz beach they confiscated treasures from Turkish galleys.

There at the foot of the Mt.Lovćen spurs, where the sea and the land had intimately conjoined and thus remained in a motionless embrace, that is where it was created and survived, unique in this great world – the island of Sveti Stefan. As if having emerged from the sea holding a pearly crown of glory of merchants and warriors testifying and connecting these and those narratives, the past and the present.

In mid fifteenth century, homesteading in Paštrovići was Petar Lašković, a renowned warrior and hero. He had lost one eye in the war with the Turks at the edge of the Grbalj plain, when the Paštrovićs arrived to aid their brothers against the Turkish incursion into Kotor.

Petar had a one-floor stone house, small children and wife Mare, who was said to have been wise enough to “take one thirsty across the river”. She was of the prominent family of Novačićeвиć, and married Petar at the age of seventeen. She was slender, agile and eloquent – which was not customary for the women of that time. It was commonly said then that a good woman was the one who “has a mouth but not the tongue”. And Mare, by God, knew how to snap even at any reputed house master if he would step on her toes and if she would feel hurt by a wrong. Petar would then only shook his head, but he truly knew that his wife was just and that she “would not do anyone a bad turn.

At that time, a big Turkish fleet was sailing the seas and taking the cities and areas along the Adriatic coast. They collected taxes, taking mercilessly from all sides, sailing with the intent of ravaging and enslaving the rich cities of Boka. Fast came the news among the Paštrovići that the Turkish army was intent to storm and pillage Kotor. Lašković was then the first to rise and send out messengers, and instantly gathered the fast-and-ready from the surrounding villages to arrive before the dark and hurry to aid their neighbours Bokelji. He said to his relative Rajko: “If today a dog barks in front of my house, tomorrow it will certainly in front of yours! So let’s go and as soon as we can to help our beleaguered brothers”.

As one, many took up arms and they seemed to be more than a thousand souls. Petar was forward, leading. They agreed to take a shortcut over the Trojica pass, and surprise the Turkish army and thus help their neighbours to defend the city. They came in from the upper side of the

walls, by the side of the river entrance – booming and making big noise to demonstrate their warring skills, which were heard of throughout the seaside, the Venetian Republic and farther. Turkish heads were falling like crops in the fields when hails fall in mid summer.

“The Turks had thought”, Petar related, “that there was a huge army assaulting and they turned to breakneck fleeing that one could not even know the trace of them!” Later, the story spread that they had scattered to the villages of Upper and Lower Grbalj to square what they had missed to take from Kotor.

Satisfied and with singing and joking, the Paštrovićs were returning to their homes. Along the way, just off the Jaz beach near Budva, they saw Turkish galleons moored to the sand with the guard, who were resting at the dusk. They immediately attacked the guards and the rest of the crew and overcame them easily. Then they raised the sails and drove the galleys full of treasures and valuables in the direction of Drobni Pijesak, the beach and bay where they had been normally tying up their fishing boats, to unload the rich trophy.

When they sailed out, one of the Turkish crew members who had been well hidden below the deck, sneaked up to Petar, who at that moment was contentedly watching the horizon and thinking how his Mare would be happy when he relating to her about this great exploit. The Turk hit him with a blunt instrument at the temple so strongly that his right eye fell out. Petar howled at the top of his voice. His companions ran to his aid and killed the Turk on the spot, and Lašković, covered in blood, knelt down and lifted his eye from the deck. Holding it on the stretched palm of his right hand he said:

“The world can be viewed with one eye only, if we see it well and know how to see it. There are many who look with both eyes but see nothing”. The wise Paštrović has been turning his weaknesses into exploits, as then as further through his lifetime. Upon landing at Drobni Pijesak, the Paštrović clefts gathered to confer about what to do. They knew that the Turks, as soon as they will have learned about being left without the treasure, would resort to terror against the innocent people, women and children, because they had been defeated and felt disgraced. Petar suggested that the treasure be buried and hidden at a safe place, and that the galleys be sunken so to obliterate them. One by one, all of the

twelve representatives of the Paštrović clans splke wissely. They agreed that it was best to divide the spoils of war by building twelve houses on their small island, one house for each, and there, in safety, move their womenfolk, the old and the children.

They first erected the fort (to protect them from the enemy) on the sharp-rocked island that enclosed it by high walls, and on its highest point they built the church of Sveti Stefan, after whom the island got its name, and which became the guardian of the town and the spiritual refuge of the Paštrovići. Within the island, as the sown wheat, along the edges sprang houses built of carved or semi-cut stone and with the tiled floors and the rooms divided by walls; standing guard in the centre were wide doors, and windows, like bird nests, opened the view far to the open seas.

Mare also kept a few goats to make it easier to feed the children while Petar was warring. It was related that there was no housewife who could better make the *ruštule* (local pastry – trans. note) like her. At Christmas or Ascension, when there was a massive preparation for the holy days, the women used to come to her house in order to reveal the secret of her good recipe by watching her knead. And the handy Mare, her hands still in the dough, would ask that woman to bring dry fire wood from outside for a good fire, and in her absence would knead the dough in her own way so would keep the secret to herself.

When the creaking was heard at the central entrance to the island of the chain-driven gate, Mare knew that the enemy was far away. Then her husband would enter the house carrying the keys of the town that were jingling with the echo of honour. She knew that such an honour was bestowed only upon the most deserving, those of great reputation and of heroic heart.

At the area in front of the town gates, on the square, there was a place where sessions of the court of the righteous, which the Paštrovićs called *Bankada*, were taking place. There they have been conferring, coming to agreements, fraternally and justly resolving disputes on many issues for more than four centuries. Therefore, in folk poetry the town of Sveti Stefan was referred to as *Šćepan Grad*, and in the old records as the “Place of Justice”.

Old Petar Lašković has related this story to his eldest son before the latter's marriage, to remember and forget not the glorious history of his native land, and among the people there remained the saying: "in agreement like the Paštovićs".

OF WATER AND STONE TO STORY AND STORYTELLING

The great, hundred-years old Ernesto Sabato, the one who once set his his manuscripts on fire, said before his death: “Never stop writing, it is all that’s worth”. That covenant and testament can be recommended to all those who love words. Because words are big travellers and each good book carries in itself its own truth: the truth of its author and of the world it relates about.

This principle is adhered to by Zorica Joksimović when she wrote her collection of stories *From Water and Stone, to Story and Narration – after the motives of Budvan legends*. This highly educated lady, a teacher who has been living her her working life in Budva very well known to the cultural environment, and who has generated the idea to offer her fellow citizens her own truth, her gift for writing. Because her stories, that originate from legends, myths and history, are located in Budva and its surroundings so that from those short texts – small novels – she created a beautiful wreath for her city. But every flower that decorates the crown is different, of different colour and fragrance, form and beauty. Fascinating. As Frédéric Begbender, French writer who won popular throughout the world, says: “To write is to read from yourself”. Zorica managed to “read out” the pearls of language from herself that deserve special attention and analysis.

Branka Bogavac

Paris, July 2015

Bibliography

Chevalier Jean i Gheerbrant Alain:
Rječnik simbola, Zagreb, 1987.

Crnogorčević Mladen:
Crkve i manastiri u opštini budvanskoj, Zadar, 1901.

Duletić Vlado:
Budva od mita do stvarnosti, Budva, 2010.

Duletić Vlado:
Govor neostvarenih snova, Budva, 2013.

Đurašković Lucija:
Crkva Santa Maria in Punta u budvanskom Starom gradu, Pobjeda,
29. 08. 2005.

Đurašković Lucija:
Izvod iz monografije Budve, Beograd, 1996.

Grupa autora:
Bar, grad pod Rumijom, prilog barski rodoslov, Bar, 1984.

Kjerkegor Seren:
Strah i drhtanje, Beograd, 1989.

Luketić Miroslav:
Budva - Sveti Stefan - Petrovac, Cetinje, 1966.

Ljubiša Stefan Mitrov:
Pripovjetke i pričanja, Beograd, 1949.

Petrović Petar I:
Poslanice, Cetinje, 1993.

Srejović Dragoslav:
Izvod iz monografije Budve, Beograd, 1996.

Velimirović Nikolaj:
Žitije Svetog Save, Manastir Žiča, 2008.

Vukmanović Jovan:
Paštrovići, Cetinje, 1960.

About the author

Zorica Joksimović was born in Ivangrad/Berane.

She graduated in comparative literature and philosophy at the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo. She worked as one of the first associate journalists of *Radio Budva*, and in 1990 was in the editorial staff of the magazine *Krug*, that was the first private magazine for culture and information in Montenegro. Published, in the form of interviews, were her conversations with Miloš Šobajić, Izet Sarajlić, Matija Bećković, Milorad Ekmečić, Velimir Trnski and others.

She also wrote book reviews: *Utočište duše* (Sanctuary Of The Soul) by the poetess Gordana Sarić; *Ne tražim da znaš* (I'm Not Asking Of You To Know) by Radmila Knežević; *Čudesna moć žene* (The Miraculous Power Of Woman) by Trivo Zolak; as well as the review of the book of poetry by Stanka Rađenović.

She is a member of the Male morske pjesme i priče (Literature Festival For Children) Organisation Committee, the language editor of and contributor to *Krug mladih* Youth Magazine, a founder of NVO (NGO) Talas engaged in educating the young about the creative approach to literary works.

The first edition of *Od vode i kamena do priče i pričanja* (From water and stone to story and storytelling) was published in 2015 in Montenegrin/Serbian/Bosnian/Croatian.

She has lived, worked and taught in Budva for 25 years.

About the translator

Dragan M. Vugdelić, M.B.E. was born in 1946 in Andrijevisa, Montenegro. Retired English secondary school teacher/university lecturer and translator. Former Manager of British Information Centre in Podgorica and British Honorary Consul/Vice Consul in Montenegro. He has 16 published books of translations, twenty book summaries and hundreds of individual literary translations – short stories, poems, essays, etc.; four feature films; major parts in three monographs; over twenty artist catalogues; as well as thousands of pages of technical texts translated – both from and into English.

He also writes poems, short stories and anecdotes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to the Budva tourism industry for recognising this project as worthy of their attention and materialisation with the aim of promoting the intangible cultural heritage of our city.

The Translator is grateful to Mr John Rogers for his invaluable language editing of the initial parts of this translation.

Our special thanks are due to **TOB** (Tourist Organisation of Budva) as the general sponsor, as well as to the entities that by co-financing enabled the publication of this book in English. These include:

Adria DMC d.o.o. Budva

ADROVIĆ Hotel, Budva

AMC Budva

ANITA Hotel, Budva

ATENA BOHOR, Budva

BLANILA D.O.O., Pržno

CAFFE-CAFFE RESTAURANT PIZZERIA, Sveti Stefan

CASPER PRODUCTIO D.O.O., Budva

DRAGO APARTMANI, Sveti Stefan

El REY Café, Budva

ELEKTROJUG Hotel, Grbalj, Budva

EVROPA TRAVEL, Dubrava Hotel, Budva

EXTRA TAXI d.o.o., Budva

GARDEN Cafe, Budva

GEOTEHNIKA, MONTENEGRO, Budva

JADRANSKI SAJAM AD, Budva

JP ZA UPRAVLJANJE MORSKIM DOBROM (Maritime Domain

Management Authority), Budva
KADMO Hotel, Budva
KAIROS d.o.o. , Budva
KOMUNALNO D.O.O.(Municipal Services), Budva
KW-MONT d.o.o, Budva
LAZARET Café, Petrovac
LOVĆEN FILM, Budva
MARE TRAVEL Tourist Agency, Budva
MASHA RESIDENCE, Budva
MEDITERAN EXPRESS, Budva
MEDITERAN REKLAME, Budva
MEDITERAN TOURS, Mediteran Hotel, Budva
MEGAPROMET, Budva
MONTENEGRO HOLIDAYS Tourist Agency, Budva
PILON INTERNATIONAL Tourist Agency, Budva
PIVNICA Nik Gold Restaurant, Budva
REGINA ELENA Hotel, Budva
SILVER HOLIDAY Tourist Agency, Budva
SUPER AUTO D.O.O. Budva
SUR Branka, Budva
TALAS M Tourist Agency, Budva
VELŽON Hotel, Budva

CIP - Каталогизација у публикацији
Национална библиотека Црне Горе, Цетиње

ISBN 978-9940-9780-4-4
COBISS.CG-ID 33628176