OPEN LETTER OF A CROATIAN LAY THEOLOGIAN TO A »GERMAN« POPE: MARKO MARULIĆ TO ADRIAN VI[1]

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The document under consideration here is the rather lengthy, but fascinating *Epistle of Lord Marko Marulić of Split to Adrian VI, the Supreme Pontiff, Regarding the Current Misfortunes and an Exhortation to General Unity and Peace of All Christians*.[2] It is a unique document because it is the only *epistola* that Marulić addressed to a pope,[3] and it appears to be the very first letter to Pope Adrian concerning the misfortunes in Marulić's homeland and the proper role of the papacy for achieving unity and peace among all Christian nations. The *Epistola* is also the last text Marulić published during his lifetime,[4] if one disregards the reprints of his *Judit* that became available a month later in Venice, and the third edition published on 29 January 1523.

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[1] I am grateful to Vladimir Bubrin (Canada) for his reading and critiquing of the draft of the paper which was delivered on April 21 during the *Marulićevi dani* 2008 in Split. I am equally grateful to Bratislav Lučin and Neven Jovanović for their comments and suggestions for the publication of the revised and enlarged version of that presentation.

[2] *Epistola Domini Marci Marvli Spalatensis ad Adrianvm VI. Pontificem Maximvm de calamitatibvs occvrrentibvs, et exhortatio ad commvnem omnivm Christianorvm vnionem et pacem*. The Latin version with an English translation by Vera Andrassy on facing pages is provided in *The Marulić Reader*, ed. Bratislav Lučin (Split: Književni Krug Split/The Split Literary Circle, 2007), 90-108. However, I use my own English translation in close consultation with the English version provided on the facing pages; *The Marulić Reader* is quoted from here on as *MR*. References to *Colloquia Maruliana* are given with the abbreviation *CM*.

[3] The poem of 1523 addressed to Clement VII was probably not meant to be an *epistola*.

[4] See Mirko Tomasović, »Marko Marulić Marul«, in the Introduction to the 1994 edition of Marulić's *Epistola ad Adrianum VI. P. M. Poslanica Papi Hadrijanu VI. Epistle to Pope Adrian VI. 1522* (Zagreb and Split, 1994), 30.

There are numerous aspects that may be considered concerning this *Epistola*. Some of them are already covered from a literary-historical point of view,[5] or they are related to documents that emerged after Marulić's *Epistola*.[6] There are still other questions that arise when one investigates the *Epistola* from a historical-theological / church-historical point of view. Some of these issues are to be addressed here (in Part 1):

1. The use and non-use of the pope's name in the *Epistola* and its Cover Letter, which leads to the question whether the text or a draft of it came into existence at an earlier time than immediately after Adrian's election; and it leads to the further issue whether the document is really fully understood if it is considered only and exclusively in terms of »*antiturcica* genre«.[7]

2. The problem of the timing and printing of the *Epistola* in spring 1522 (when the new pope had not even arrived yet in Rome, coming from Spain), which promotes the idea that the *Epistola* is more of a timeless and theological document that is not to be considered out-dated because of its partially anti-Turkish content.

3. The *Epistola* as an Open Letter in the context of other sixteenth-century open letters.

In Part 2, we will see Marulić as one of several other lay theologians who are loyal to the Church of the Renaissance papacy on the eve of the Lutheran Reformation and its early stage.

Before we enter into these topics, we need to make a note on the notion of »nations« in the early sixteenth century, as our topic includes the designations »Croatian lay theologian« and »German Pope«. We should remind ourselves that »nation« in the modern sense did not yet exist at the time of Marko Marulić, which is a time of pre-nationalist identities. »Croatia« and »Dalmatia« are at times interchangeable.[8] For example, Marulić wrote to the pope on behalf of »our Dalmatia«.[9] And, according to the imperial *Edict of the Diet of Worms* of May 1521, Emperor Charles V was »by God's grace Roman emperor elect, ... king of

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[5] See Ruggero Cattaneo, »Sullo stile e la rilevanza culturale dell' Epistola a Papa Adriano VI di Marco Marulić«, *CM* 17 (2008), (91-115), 116-124.

[6] See Stanislav Marijanović, »The Epistles of Marko Marulić and Stjepan Brodarić to Pope Adrian VI«, *CM* 12 (2003), 84-92. Stjepan Brodarić (Brodericus, 1480-1539) appeared before Pope Adrian VI as a royal envoy in September 1522, i.e., shortly after the pope was enthroned.

[7] As *MR*, 19, has it. Cattaneo, too, focuses much of his study on this aspect, admittedly not an insignificant one.

[8] See David Nicholas, *The Transformation of Europe 1300-1600* (London, Sydney, Auckland: Arnold, 1999), 223; John V. A. Fine, *When Ethnicity Did Not Matter in the Balkans: A Study of Identity in Pre-Nationalist Croatia, Dalmatia, and Slavonia in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006).

[9] *Dalmatiae nostrae*, *MR*, 94.

Germany, Spain, the two Sicilies, Jerusalem, Hungary, Dalmatia, Croatia«.[10] The two entities, »Dalmatia« and »Croatia«, are listed separately. This imperial claim leads to the question: If the emperor was the ruler of Dalmatia and of Croatia and thus their protector, why then did Marulić not write directly to Emperor Charles V for help? We know that the young emperor felt obligated and was more than ready to provide military support against the Turks.[11] Yet, the Croatian nobleman wrote not to the emperor, but to the pope. The issue is not to be pursued here. Always seeing himself as a man of the Church (*ecclesiasticus*) Marulić had greater confidence in the papacy than in the empire.

As to the designation »German«: Was Marulić aware of the ethnic background of the new pope at the time of the election (9 January 1522) and at the time when he finalized and dated his *Epistola* (3 April 1522)? Was Marulić familiar with the notion »Cimbrian Nation«,[12] a contemporaneous expression which signaled the ethnic background of the new pope? »Cimbrian Nation« is a reference to an ancient German tribe, the Kimbers, usually mentioned together with the Teutons. Was Marulić aware that he wrote to a »German« pope?[13] Did Marulić have any inkling that the new pope was living in Spain and elected *in absentia*?[14] It seems not, as one may derive from the simple observation that not even the thirty-nine cardinals who entered the conclave on 28 December 1521 and eventually elected Adrian Florensz Boeyens really knew who this man was: »He was quite unknown in Rome, therefore he had at least no enemies.«[15]

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[10] James Robinson, ed., *Readings in European History*, vol. 2 (Boston and New York: Ginn & Co., 1904) see website: uk.encarta.msn.com/sidebar_761594139/edict_of_the_diet_of_worms.html. On the Turkish conquest of South-Eastern Europe, see for example, Daniel Waley and Peter Denley, *Late Medieval Europe 1250-1520* (London: Longman, 2001, third edition), 251-262. The »Kingdom of the Two Sicilies« was a territory that included the island of Sicily and all southern Italy almost as far a Rome, almost bordering on the Papal State.

[11] Especially after Charles V had learned of the attacks against the Island of Rhodos; see the letter of Charles V to Charles de Poupet, Lord of Lachaulx of 25 August 1522, in *Quellen zur Geschichte Karls V.*, ed. Alfred Kohler (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1990), 100-103 (no. 24).

[12] See copper etching by Daniel Hopfer (1470-1536) with the Latin caption: *Cimbricus*; depicted in Franz Posset, »The Mouse, the Frog, and the Unidentified Flying Object: Metaphors for 'Empires' in the Latin Works of the Croatian Humanist Marcus Marulus and of the German Humanist Ulrich von Hutten«, *CM* 17 (2008), **Fig. 6**.

[13] German historiographers/biographers prefer to speak of him as the German pope; see Else Hocks, *Der letzte deutsche Papst: Adrian VI. 1522-1523* (Freiburg: Herder, 1939); Johann Posner, *Der deutsche Papst Adrian VI.* (Recklinghausen: Paulus Verlag, 1962).

[14] See Valérie Pirie, *The Triple Crown. An Account of the Papal Conclaves from the Fifteenth Century to the Present Day* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, LTD, 1935), 55-61.

[15] Pirie, *The Triple Crown*, 58.

1. Some Issues that Arise from the *Epistola*

1. 1. The Use and Non-Use of the Pope's Name

It seems that Marulić was writing the *Epistola* not so much to a specific pope, be he Italian, German, Spanish, or whatever, but that he composed a sermon-like pamphlet, at least in parts on the religious role of the papacy. Marulić in writing the text had in mind primarily the moral authority of the institution of the papacy, or he hoped and expected it to become a positive moral force again, despite the series of »Bad Popes« (as later historiographers would view them).[16] This means that the *Epistola* can be read in large parts as a theological source that tells us something about the author's concept of the papacy and the Church. Thus, the document can be taken as a source text for Marulić's ecclesiology, as it does not reveal anything specific about Marulić's knowledge about the person of the newly elected pope. The reason for this lack of information in the *Epistola* may be that Marulić's focus was the scandal of disunity among the Christian »nations« in the »west« in facing the military threat of the Ottoman Turks. Both issues, the threat from the Turks and the wars among the Christian nations, are of course closely connected.

Marulić's primary purpose for writing the text appears to have been to motivate the leaders of Christianity in the West to put an end to their wars against each other, including the pope, but not the pope alone. This *Epistola* could have been meant for any pope of that time. This view is supported by the further observations that in his letter Marulić employs the spiritual titles of the popes without mention of the new pope's personal name, which is used only in the very last paragraph as a last minute »insert«. And at that point, the original Latin text does not read »Adrian VI« but only *Adrianus*,[17] i.e. his baptismal name.

It is equally conspicuous that in the text of his Cover Letter of 3 April 1522 Marulić employs only the papal title *Pontifex Maximus*, not the newly elected pope's full name.[18] At the time of writing the letter, Marulić most likely could not have known the biographical details of this »German« pope and that he breached »papal etiquette«[19] by retaining his baptismal name (Adrian) and not opting for a symbolic change of name as a new pope. When the humanist Enea Silvio Piccolomini (1405-1464, Pope Pius II [1458-1464]) was elected he chose »Pius« for his papal name which is a literary allusion to Virgil's *pius Aeneas*.[20] Cardinal

[16] E. R. Chamberlin, *The Bad Popes* (New York: Dorset Press, 1969) includes Alexander VI, Leo X, and Clement VII.

[17] *MR*, 106; the English version on face page107 has »Adrian VI«.

[18] *MR*, 90. One may assume that the wording of the title of the *Epistola* in the printed version as we have it today is probably the work of the printer or of Friar Dominik Buća who gave the text to the printer.

[19] Pirie, *The Triple Crown*, 58.

[20] See Johannes Helmrath, entry »Pius II« in *Dictionary of Popes and the Papacy*, eds. Bruno Steimer and Michael G. Parker, trans. Brian McNeil and Peter Heinigg (New York: Herder, Crossroad, 2001), 118.

Rodrigo Borgia (ca. 1431-1503) upon his elevation to the papal throne in 1492 demonstratively took the symbolic name »Alexander«, the name that belongs to the greatest pagan conqueror of pre-Christian antiquity.[21] In sharp contrast, Adrian decided to keep his baptismal name.

When we take the concept of the papacy as contained in the *Epistola* into consideration we get a glimpse of the author's ecclesiology and we must conclude that the *Epistola* is more than simply or exclusively a work of the »*antiturcica* genre«.[22] It is also and perhaps more so a document promoting Christian unity, written in the tradition of the earlier calls to unity against the Turks by Enea Silvio Piccolomini in 1453 and the congress of princes at Mantua in 1459.[23] The idea of a European crusade against the Turks runs like »a missionary leitmotif«[24] through the years of the papacy of Pius II. It is conceivable that Marulić wanted to compose a letter similar to the intentions of Piccolomini, a letter which would not have to be addressed to one specific pope such as Adrian VI to whom eventually the *Epistola* was directed. The text may concern any pope at that time.

That Marulić's text is not exclusively an anti-Turkish document may be argued still from another perspective, namely that the author is scolding all the Christian rulers for their wars against each other. However, Pope Adrian does not fit this mold at all as he was not even in office yet and had no opportunity yet to wage any war. Only with the other addressees in mind (the previous popes and contemporary princes that attack each other by military force) does it make sense that Marulić inveighs against them with offensive and sarcastic sounding passages like the ones to be quoted below. Evidently, Marulić had in mind primarily the scandal of Christian disunity. Here are some of the most provocative and poetic lines from his *Epistola* directed against the Western rulers, rearranged in a way that the poetic and dramatic quality may become apparent:

[*Resipiscite*] Come to your senses at long last,
[*Resipiscite*] Come to your senses, you lunatics!
[*Quousque*] How long will you [*uos*] persist in your madness?
[*Quousque*] How long will you ignore your [*uestram*] ruin?
[*Non*] You are not fighting for yourselves [*uobis*],
[*Non*] You are not winning victories for yourselves [*uobis*],
but you only are giving to him who is preparing to devour all of you [*uos*]
the chance of a future victory over you [*uobis*].[25]

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[21] See Chamberlin, *The Bad Popes*, 171.

[22] As *MR*, 19, has it.

[23] See Cattaneo, 121-123; Helmrath, 119. The congress of Mantua did not act against the Turks.

[24] See Helmrath, 19.

[25] *MR*, 100-101; Cattaneo, 97-98, arranged the lines in a different way to illustrate his point:

Resipiscite tandem, resipiscite insipientes!
Quousque ratio uos fugiet, quousque perniciem uestram ignorabitis?
Non uobis pugnatis, non uobis uincitis ... .

With these words and in using the plural forms (*vos, vestra, vobis*) he must have aimed most of all at the obnoxious behavior of the rulers of Europe, although this is found here in the letter to the pope.

As to the expression *resipiscite* (come to your senses) which Marulić uses here, it is noteworthy that Erasmus in his Greek-Latin edition of the New Testament (*Novum Instrumentum*, 1516) proposed that the central biblical Greek notion *metanoia* should be rendered with *resipiscentia*,[26] It is of course difficult to demonstrate whether or not Marulić had any knowledge of this.

The quoted lines may sound more like a Roman pasquinade which the new pope would not deserve yet, as he had done nothing, or had failed to do anything which would merit him any ridicule or satirical treatment. Could it be that this dramatic text passage once upon a time had an independent existence and was meant for and inserted into a draft of a text perhaps to a previous pope?[27] Was perhaps Pope Leo X on Marulić's mind when he wrote this part of the *Epistola*? Were some of the major parts of the *Epistola* already written at the time of the fall of Belgrade in 1521 during Leo's reign, or even before the fall of Belgrade? The fall of Belgrade is explicitly mentioned in the *Epistola*[28] (see below).

Pasquinades usually sprung up at the time of a papal interregnum[29] when »socially Rome was a dead city«,[30] and gambling was at an all time high in the city's gambling-dens, where the odds on the candidates to the papal office could run very high. Some gamblers would not shy away from trying to ruin the chances of the opponents. Bad-mouthing and ridicule were also useful: »Scurrilous pamphlets, lampoons and pasquinades flooded the town, always anonymous of course, as backing the wrong horse openly might result in one's losing a good deal more than one's money.«[31] This was the milieu in Rome outside the location where the electors stayed. They usually were well informed about what was going on, as much of this »edifying literature was smuggled into the conclave with the object of influencing the cardinals' votes, and no doubt afforded their Eminences and their conclavists [service personnel] a few moments of hilarity at one another's expense«.[32]

The passage against the »lunatics« (who fight each other) would correspond with Marulic's specific view of the »wrath of God«.[33] He saw it directed against

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[26] See Heiko Oberman, *The Roots of Anti-Semitism In the Age of Renaissance and Reformation* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 53, note 23.

[27] The question of the literary unity of the *Epistola* is beyond the scope of the present investigation.

[28] See *MR*, 96.

[29] See Ludwig, Pastor, *The History of the Popes, from the close of the Middle Ages. Drawn from the secret archives of the Vatican and other original sources* (London: Routledge and K. Paul, 1898-), vol. 9:8-10 (Lampoons and Pasquinades).

[30] Pirie, *The Triple Crown*, 14.

[31] Pirie, *The Triple Crown*, 14.

[32] Pirie, *The Triple Crown*, 14.

[33] *MR*, 98.

the Christian disunity vis-à-vis the Turkish menace.[34] Once one shifts from the exclusive fixation on the *antiturcica* aspect of the *Epistola*, a whole new range of ideas opens up and the *Epistola* can be understood as a document for the promotion of Christian unity and peace among the Christian »nations« with the pope as their spiritual leader. Thus the document can be used as a source of information of Marulić's concept of the papacy and the Roman Catholic Church.

All this is suggested, first, by the initial impression that Marulić most likely did not have the specific personal or political qualities of Adrian in mind when he composed the *Epistola*, and secondly, by the observation that the new pope's name »pops up« only at the very end of the *Epistola*. Thirdly, Marulić's use of Aesop's fable of the Frog and the Mouse, of Sallust's insight that »unity makes small things grow«, of Plutarch's story of Scilurus' »united bundle«, and the numerous biblical references to peace, unity and fraternity[35] point to the possibility that his *Epistola* may not only be classified as an *antiturcica* text, but also as a document of a loyal lay theologian's concept of political ecclesiology.

1. 2. The Problem of the Timing and the Printing of the *Epistola*

We do not really know whether Marulić's *Epistola* was conceived originally as a private letter that was to be delivered to the papal court in Rome assuming that the newly elected pope was in residence there already, or as an open letter. And the question still remains: how could Marulić have known that the new pope was not present at the conclave, but was elected *in absentia* and had never set foot on Italian soil before? All we know is that Marulić instructed Friar Dominik Bućа to »dispatch it [*Epistola*] to Rome at once«.[36]

Dominik Bućа (also known as Dominicus Buchia Catharensis, or Buchius, 1480-1560) of Kotor was a Dominican friar and an (occasional?) preacher in Split. Franciscus Martiniacus (Frane Martinčić, ca. 1480-1527?) dedicated a poem to Fr. Dominik, who apparently was giving an exegetical lecture series on the Penitential Psalms in Split,[37] but we do not have any dates about his preaching. Marulić refers to Fr. Dominik's »sermons to the people« in his Cover Letter of 3 April 1522, in which he also indicates that Fr. Dominik was a professor of theology.[38]

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[34] On this aspect, see P o s s e t, »The Mouse, the Frog, and the Unidentified Flying Object«, 143-144.

[35] See *MR*, 102-106.

[36] *...continuo Romam mittendum*, *MR*, 90.

[37] *Ad reuerendum in Christo patrem fratrem Dominicum Buchium Catharensem ordinis praedicatorum, sacrae theologiae professorem integerrimum, dum in ciuitate Spalatensi contionando poenitentiales psalmos exponeret. Carmen*; the carmen is edited by Neven Jovanović in *Carmina Latina amicorum Maruli*, *CM* 15 (2006), 175-197, here 189.

[38] *Reuerendo patri Dominico Buchiae Catharensi ordinis praedicatorum, theologiae professori, M. Marulus in Domino salutem. Cum tuis ad populum sermonibus, Dominice*

However, we do not know where he was teaching; evidently not in Rome, as he was instructed to send the manuscript of the *Epistola* to Rome. There are two possibilities:

(a) To the printing shop of Bernardinus de Vitalibus in Rome (Bernardinus had a print shop not only in Venice, but also in Rome). At the shop in Rome, Bernardinus previously had printed Ptolemy's *Geography* in 1507/1508).[39] However, his workshop does not seem to have been open for business in Rome in the spring of 1522 because there appears to be no other print from his Roman press that is dated around that time (1522), except for Marulić's letter. Rome as the location of the printing of the *Epistola* remains itself somewhat of a puzzle.

(b) Directly to the papal court. However, we do not know why there would have been such urgency of forwarding the *Epistola* to the pope in Rome »at once« or »immediately« (Latin: *continuo*). It seems that if the letter was meant to be delivered to Pope Adrian in person, the letter writer or the letter carrier was not aware of the fact that the newly elected pope was not even on Italian soil yet and that therefore there was no urgency at all for the personal and direct delivery of this mail. To whom could or would the letter have been delivered in April 1522, at the time of an interregnum? The vacancy of the Holy See in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was usually a time of lawlessness and license in Rome. Would any messenger know where to deliver the letter in times of confusion and interregnum chaos? Here is a description of the situation:

> The criminals, who had been liberated at the late Pope's death, when it was customary to proclaim a general amnesty, roamed the streets in gangs, breaking into unprotected houses, plundering, raping and murdering as they went. Unchecked by fear of punishment, the princely houses renewed their feuds, drew chains across the streets to defend their palaces, armed all available retainers and hastened to pay off old scores. The mob attacked the cardinals' palaces, but all precautions had usually been taken by those prelates, their most valuable possessions removed to a place of safety and armed guards stationed within their mansions. It was the traditional privilege of the populace to loot the new pope's residence, being the reason which prompted them always to clamour for a Roman Pope.[40]

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pater, frequenter interfuissem (delectabant enim me plurimum)..., MR, 90. Buća published a book on the original meaning of the Seven Penitential Psalms: *Etymon elegantissimum satisque perutile in septem psalmos penitentiales* (Venice: Aurelius Pintius, 1531). In the same year, the same printer published Johann Eck's anti-Lutheran book, *Enchiridion locorum communium adversus Lutteranos* (Venice: Aurelius Pintius, 1531).

[39] This publication was the first edition of the *Geographia* to include European voyages of exploration to the New World, see Sally E. M o s h e r: http://www2.xlibris.com/bookstore/book_excerpt.asp?bookid=11791

[40] P i r i e, *The Triple Crown*, 13-14.

It is very unlikely that the letter writer knew that it would take the new pope almost eight months after his election to travel from Spain to Rome, to be crowned on 31 August 1522, immediately upon his arrival in the Vatican.[41]

The urgency to which Marulić refers arguably may have been caused by the immediate threat of the advancing Turks. However, the Turkish menace had closely hit home in Split already in the summer of 1521 with the fall of Belgrade on 29 August 1521, when Leo X was still in office. The fall of Belgrade is mentioned, as said, in Marulić *Epistola*.[42] If by the said »urgency« the military defense was meant, then one could argue that the idea of appealing to the pope must have or should have come to Marulić's mind already at the time of the fall of Belgrade. This line of argumentation would support the assumption that Marulić's *Epistola* was originally intended already for Pope Leo X and the other Christian rulers at the time who deserved the mentioned invective more than Pope Adrian (although one should not forget that Leo X called for a crusade against the Turks, but this had come to nothing).

If parts of the *Epistola* are written before or after the fall of Belgrade, then one could further argue that the *Epistola* was not composed for one specific pope, but that it represents more of a timeless document about the role of the papacy, as the text would not necessarily have to be considered as having been directed to one specific pope, but was already conceived, perhaps in its basic outline, during the reign of Leo X at the time of the fall of Belgrade and of the various wars that were waged all over Italy. However, since Leo X died on 1 December 1521, Marulić could no longer send his *Epistola* to him; he needed to redirect it to his successor whose name Marulić may have inserted, as argued above, at the last moment before dispatching it. This chain of arguments would make it more plausible (1) that the mention of the name Adrian appears marginal and seems to have been added at the end at the last minute; (2) that a substantial part of the *Epistola* is dealing with the theological concept of the papacy regardless of who the recipient on the papal throne would be; and (3) that the document at times speaks to all the princes of Western Christianity with the pope's leadership role being stressed in the efforts of securing unity and peace within Christendom. This view of a largely general Open Letter to a pope about the papacy and its role would explain (4) that the letter as we have it now (as addressed to Pope Adrian) would not have had to come into existence only after Leo's death, or so very shortly after the election of Adrian in January.

By dropping the idea that the text was conceived exclusively for Pope Adrian, we no longer need to look for an answer to the question why there is nothing in that refers directly to Adrian as regent of Spain and as one of the most significant imperial politicians with considerable, if not decisive, influence upon the young emperor Charles V, whose tutor he once was. If Marulić really would have known

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[41] P i r i e, *The Triple Crown*, 58.

[42] See *MR*, 96.

these political circumstances and the biographical details of the new »German« pope, one would have expected him to make ample use of them in his *Epistola*. The document is conspicuously unspecific as to the new pope's former role as an imperial politician. All this does not enter into the train of thought of the *Epistola*.

Therefore, it is more likely that the *Epistola*, originally composed as an *exhortation about unity and peace*, was redirected at the last minute »to Adrian«. Thus, the challenging idea suggests itself that the *Epistola* was drafted originally as a general text to fit any pontiff, being written as a reminder of what the proper papal duties are. And, in all likelihood the document was meant originally for Leo X and other Christian rulers rather than exclusively for Pope Adrian VI. Or, the *Epistola* was simply meant to influence the new pope whoever he may be.

As to the timing of the letter, some observations as to the length, depth, and style of the *Epistola* also come into play. There are fluctuations in style as one notices the alternating from the second person singular to the plural form[43] which is reason to suggest not that it is written impulsively in a quick moment of anxiety, but pieced together from various drafts and that it had a long gestation period.[44] This time period may have stretched at least from the time when Marulić learned of the threat to or the actual fall of Belgrade at the end of August 1521 to the day when he became aware of the death of Leo X on 1 December 1521 and of the election of a new pope early in January 1522.

All in all, it is also not unlikely that the *Epistola* was designed from the beginning as an Open Letter and intended to be printed immediately, i.e. at a time period which happened to coincide with the celebration of the Feast of Pasquino on April 25, which is St. Mark's Day, when poets and writers were prepared to vent anger and frustration concerning higher authorities. In all likelihood Marulić the literate was familiar with the Roman custom of producing pasquinades. It is conceivable that this awareness was part of his reasoning that the manuscript should be delivered to Rome for publication at about that time, i.e. the high time of literary activities of the year. The aggressive parts of the *Epistola* may have been meant to mimic the popular pasquinades. Other parts of the *Epistola* better fit the other suggestion: that Marulić adhered to the custom of writing open letters out of frustration caused by the lack of unity among the Christians vis-à-vis the Turkish conquest. His text certainly matches contemporary documents that dealt with this issue, one of which was known to Marulić, i.e. the first one to be reviewed here:

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[43] Use of the second person singular in the opening sentence: *Sanctissime pater*; use of second person plural in the paragraph with the words *Resipiscite*; use of second person singular: *Pater sancte, ... caput es*; *MR* 92 and 100 etc.

[44] The suggestion that Marulić's shifts from the second person singular to the plural form and back may be a clever rhetorical device for the purpose of achieving variety is a possibility, but perhaps too far-fetched for an Open Letter.

1. 3. The *Epistola* as an Open Letter to the Pope in the Context of Other Documents Pertaining to the Issue

In May 1512, in the presence of Pope Julius II, Archbishop Bernard Zane (c. 1450-1527) of Split delivered a speech on behalf of Viceroy Petar Berislavić (*ban* from 1513-1520) at the Fifth Lateran Council, which is extant in a print of November of that year.[45] This speech was known to Marulić who had received it from the editor, Thomas Niger (1450/60-1531), a higher prelate and a diplomat.[46] He let his cry of alarm be heard all over Europe, especially before Leo X.[47]

On 27 April 1513, Bishop Simon Begnius (Šimun Kožičić Benja 1460-1536) of Modruš (*Modrusiensis*, located in the mountains of Croatia),[48] delivered his speech on the issue in the presence of Pope Leo X.[49] At the seventh session of the Lateran Council, on June 17 1513, Baldassare del Rio, chamber servant of the pope (*cubicularius*, no dates known), gave a speech in favor of the war against the Turks, in the presence of Pope Leo X.[50] Bishop Simon Begnius again turned to Pope Leo with his speech *On the Desolation of Croatia* in 1516.[51] In 1518 Bishop Erasmus Vitellius (Erazm Ciolek, 1460-1522) as the speaker for King Sigismund of Poland (1506-1548) delivered a speech against the Turks to Pope Leo X.[52] Thomas Niger spoke before the same pope twice, in 1519 and 1521.[53]

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[45] *Oratio Reverendissimi D. Archiepiscopi Spalatensis habita in Prima Sessione Lateranen. Concilii* (Rome: Iacobus Mazocchius, 1512); *Govori protiv Turaka / Orationes contra Turcas*, ed. Vedran Gligo, *Logos* (Split, 1983), 423-439 (facsimile), hereafter quoted as Gligo. This printer also published the speech of Balthasar del Rio.

[46] See Preface by Thomas N i g e r to Marulić, Gligo, 419-422; on Niger see Stanko Josip Š k u n c a, »Toma Niger Mrčić«, *Radovi Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Zadru,* No.43, Listopad 2001.

[47] See Hrvatin Gabrijel J u r i š i ć, »A Time for Re-Examination«, in the Introduction to the 1994 edition of Marulić's *Epistola ad Adrianum VI*, 18.

[48] Modruš is a village in the mountainous part of Croatia. This now small village is historically known as the see of a medieval Catholic bishopric.

[49] *Simonis Begnii Episcopi Modrusiensis Oratio in Sexta Lateranensis Concilii Sessione* (May 1513); Gligo, 589-602.

[50] *Baltasaris del Rio Pallatini archidiacono Cesenat. sanctissimi d. nostri Leonis papae decimi cubicularii oratio ad eundem dominum nostrum papam & Sacrosanctum Lateranem Concilium de expeditione contra Turchos ineunda habita Romae in Basilica S. Io. Lateranen in septima sessione celebrata dic XVII Iunii MDXiii* (Rome: Jacobus Mazochius, 1513); from the Hungarian website: mek.oszk.hu/03500/03560.

[51] *Simonis Begnii Episcopi Modrusiensis de Corvatiae Desolatione*, Gligo, 605-610.

[52] *Orationes reverendi patris domini Erasmi Vitellii episcopi Plocensis. Inuictissimi & uictoriosissimi Regis Poloniae Sigismundi ad sanctam sedem Apostolica[m] & sacram Imperiale[m] maestate[m] oratoris. Habitae per eum in facto generalis expeditionis contra turchos. Vna romae coram Leone Papa. X. altera Augustae coram Maximiliano cesare. Anno Domini. M. D. XViii.*; as posted on the website of Biblioteca Universitaria de Santiago de Compostella. The speech to the emperor is found separately on the Hungarian website (see note 50).

[53] See Darko N o v a k o v i ć, »Marulić and the Metaphysical Dimension of History«, in the Introduction to the 1994 edition of Marulić's *Epistola ad Adrianum* (Zagreb and Split: 1994), 47.

Marulić could have joined this chorus that made itself heard since 1512. One may assume that Marulić being aware of at least one of these speeches addressed to the pope did not feel the immediate urge to chime in with that chorus of these official cries of alarm. What could he as a layman have added anyways? Others kept reminding the pope of the grave situation such as Prince Stjepan Posedarski who approached Leo X in 1519.[54] The urgency to finish a draft of an *Epistola* and to have it printed presented itself soon and much more forcefully after he had learned of the fall of Belgrade at the end of August 1521. Yet, he still may have been too humble as a layman and after all, he was not an official speaker of any political authority like the others mentioned here. He also may have felt that plenty of cries of alarm had been uttered already. In any case, the pope was already well informed from various sides. Noteworthy (in terms of a historical footnote) is the fact that after the end of the imperial diet of Augsburg in 1518, Pope Leo X received from the imperial court the negative *Responsio* formulated as an answer to various speeches that had been delivered there in favor of a war against the Turks and the taxation that came with it.[55] These hints at the imperial diet and the pope demonstrate that there was no general indifference in the West concerning the fate of Croatia. The West did not turn »a deaf ear to appeals for help«,[56] but the West did not bring decisive help either to those under attack.

All these considerations on the *Epistola* and on the issues that surround it lead one to postulate that Marulić's *Epistola* is an Open Letter (into which he may have incorporated a Pasquinade-like passage) with which he as a private person grasped the opportunity to make his out-cry heard, which is the reason that he had printed it promptly and made it available to the general public as early as 30 April 1522 in Rome.[57] Marulić may have started to write it as a letter to Leo X, but ended up redirecting it as an *Epistola ad Adrianum VI*. It was probably never meant to be private correspondence, but more likely an impressive instrument of mass communication in order to shape public opinion regardless whether the old pope was

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[54] See N o v a k o v i ć, »Marulić and the Metaphysical Dimension of History«, 47.

[55] *Responsio principvm Germaniae, data reuere[n]dissimis dominis, Legatis sanctissimi domini nostri Leonis X. & caeteris Oratoribus in Augusta Vindelicorum, Anno M. D. XVIII. Per eruditissimum uirum dominum Richardum Bartholinum Perusinum, Capellanu[m] Reuerendiss[imi] Cardinalis Gurcensis in literas relata* (Basel: Froben, 1518); website: Országos Széchényi Könyvtár – National Széchényi Library; see Wilhelm K ü h l m a n n, »Der Poet und das Reich – Politische, kontextuelle und ästhetische Dimensionen der humanistischen Türkenlyrik in Deutschland«, in *Europa und die Türken in der Renaissance* eds. Bodo Guthmüller and Wilhelm Kühlmann (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2000), 193-248, here 211. On the Turk Tax, see Antonio L i e p o l d, *Wider den Erbfeind christlichen Glaubens. Die Rolle des niederen Adels in den Türkenkriegen des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt, Berlin etc: Lang, 1998); Gerhard B e n e c k e, *Society and Politics in Germany 1500-1750* (London: Routledge, 2006), 288-293.

[56] As Mirko T o m a s o v i ć stated »then and now« in »Marko Marulić Martul«, in the Introduction to the 1994 edition of Marulić's *Epistola ad Adrianum*, 31.

[57] See colophon (facsimile edition): *Impressa Romae Per B. V. Anno D. M. D. XXII. pridie kalendas maii feliciter explicit.*

dead or the new pope was in Rome or not. By looking at it as an Open Letter, this document can be read not only as an appeal to an individual pope, but also and more so as an exhortation to all the princes of Western Christianity, including the pope, who were all insulted (rightly so, except for Pope Adrian who was not enthroned yet at the time) as »lunatics«. Their mutual hate is actually a primary, if not the major, concern of the letter writer.

Marulić's *Epistola* perfectly fits the category of the Open Letter in the sixteenth century. It also may be called a »circular letter« for it was meant for circulation to a wider readership for the purpose of influencing public opinion. Most often, the Open Letter of the time around 1500 was addressed to a powerful person who could not be reached easily in any other way -which was the case with Pope Adrian VI still in Spain; and the Open Letter may provoke a specific reaction only by being published. At times one encounters the designation *Sendbrief* in German, as it is the case with Martin Luther's Open Letter in the summer of 1520 to the newly elected Emperor Charles V and to the German nobility, under the title *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate*, of which 4000 copies were sold within the first eighteen days.[58] If a text of this sort reaches such proportions in terms of circulation, it becomes an instrument of »mass media« or agitation.[59]

Open Letters may be classified as *Flugschriften* in German,[60] which is an eighteenth-century term with the meaning of leaflets or pamphlets. If a document is addressed to a specific person in a high office, but is never meant to be delivered to that person, and even if the text calls itself a *Sendbrief* or *Epistola*, it probably is an Open Letter in the sense of a *Flugschrift*.

We do not know how many copies were printed of Marulić's *Epistola* or who would have purchased one. We also do not know whether a print actually reached the pope, unless we assume that the diplomat Thomas Niger had one and would have delivered it in person to the newly elected pope in Spain. However, this would require, first of all, proof that Niger was in Rome when the *Epistola* came off the printing press at the end of April 1522, and secondly, that soon afterwards he would have departed for Spain with the printed *Epistola* in his travel bags. There is room for further research on this. Be this as it may, the fact remains that the *Epistola* was printed before the new pope arrived later in summer of 1522. This means that the printing made it a *Flugschrift* for a wider readership. Only at a later date could the print have reached the newly elected pope.

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[58] See Heinrich B o e h m e r, *Martin Luther: Road to Reformation* (New York: Meridian Books, 1957), 321. Luther's Latin *Epistola ad Leonem decimum* is translated into German as *Sendbrief*.

[59] On this, see Hans-Jörg K ö h l e r, ed., *Flugschriften als Massenmedium der Reformationszeit* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1981).

[60] See entry »Flugschriften« in *Lexikon der Reformationszeit*, eds. Klaus Ganzer and Bruno Steimer (Freiburg, Basel, Vienna: Herder, 2002), 244-246.

The issues that rose here from one document in Marulić's epistolary corpus hopefully help us to polish a few more of the *tesserae* of the »mosaic of Marulić«,[61] the lay theologian. And, the entire »mosaic of Marulić« (which admittedly is not yet finished) needs to be shown together with other sketches of contemporary Catholic lay theologians, to whom we turn our attention in Part 2.

2. Marulić in the Context of European Lay Theologians

Before we place the nobleman of Split into the context of other lordly lay theologians of the Renaissance, we need to be reminded that »lay theologians« were usually not part of the picture of the Renaissance scene. Our image of Renaissance Men is most likely dominated by the types presented by Eugenio Garin in *Renaissance Characters*, such as the prince, the military captain (condottiere), the cardinal, the courtier, the merchant, the banker, the artist, the voyager, and the philosopher and magus,[62] but not the lay theologian.

One encounters lay theologians throughout the two thousand years of Church History. Tertullian of Carthage (c. 160-c.220) and Origen of Alexandria (c.185 - c.254) were the two most known in the early Church. Great and original theological thinkers, such as the Irishman John Scotus Eriugena (c. 800-c. 850)[63] or the Spaniard Raimundus Lullus (Ramon Lull, 1232-1316)[64] were laymen. The latter had grown up in close proximity to Islamic dominated regions; he was married and had two children.[65]

Lay theologians generally have not found due recognition or have not been studied thoroughly, especially not in terms to their 'lay theology'. Should the history of the contributions of lay theologians be written, it would have to include the one from Split, Marko Marulić. In the following, several highly sophisticated laymen (philosophers/theologians) who lived during Marulić's life time (1450-1524) will be sketched briefly. However, we will disregard the pamphleteers in southern Germany during the early period of the Reformation who may also be called 'lay theologians'.[66] They are men and women who occasionally vented their

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[61] Branko Jozić, »The Biographical Elements in Marulić's Epistolary Texts« (English summary), *CM* 17 (2008), 156.

[62] *Renaissance Characters*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

[63] *Ein Laie*, Ulrich Köpf, ed., *Theologen des Mittelalters. Eine Einführung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2002), 13; on Eriugena, see for example Giulio D' Onofrio, *History of Theology II: The Middle Ages* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2008), 82-98.

[64] See Günter Biemer, »Laientheologe im Mittelalter, Ramon Lull (1232-1315/116)«, *Katechetische Blätter* 114 (1989), 145-148; D' Onofrio, *History of Theology II: The Middle Ages*, 423-429.

[65] D' Onofrio, *History of Theology II: The Middle Ages*, 423.

[66] See Paul A. Russell, *Lay Theology in the Reformation: Popular Pamphleteers in Southwest Germany, 1521-1525* (New York: Cambridge: UP, 1986).

opinions in short pamphlets with religious and theological content. They include »housewives« and »journeymen« who were more or less inspired by the rising reform movements of Luther and Zwingli.

2. 1. Giannozzo Manetti

One of the earliest lay theologians of the Renaissance was Giannozzo Manetti[67] (1396-1459) who became known as a gifted speaker. His great speeches as envoy before Pope Nicholas V (reigned 1447-1455) and before the Doge and Council of Venice were events to be remembered.[68] On the occasion of the death of his young son, he wrote the autobiographical *Dialogus consolatorius* in 1438. Manetti was a classical trilingual man with a good knowledge of Greek and Hebrew, besides Latin. He translated anew the Hebrew psalms into Latin, which he defended in an anti-Jewish text known under the title *Apologeticus adversus suae novae Psalterii traductionis obtrectatores*. Manetti is best known for his work of 1451/1452 on the dignity of man: *De dignitate et excellentia hominis*, written at about the time of Marulić's birth. Manetti's life and work was recently recognized as belonging to »The Mature Stage of Humanist Theology in Italy«.[69] Marulić the theologian is still waiting for such recognition.

2. 2. Wessel Gansfort

In the Netherlands of the fifteenth century (the place and time of the Modern Devotion) there was Wessel Gansfort (Basilius Gansfort, or Frisius, 1419-1489)[70] (see **Fig. 1**) who »was neither a priest nor a monk, and had no intention of becoming one.«[71] He learned Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic, and is an example for the

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[67] On Manetti, see Paul B o t l e y, *Latin Translation in the Renaissance. The Theory and Practice of Leonardo Bruni, Giannozzo Manetti and Erasmus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

[68] See Jacob B u r c k h a r d t, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1995), 152.

[69] See Cesare V a s o l i, »The Mature Stage of Humanist Theology in Italy«, in *History of Theology III: The Renaissance*, 188-247; 204-206.

[70] See Edward Waite M i l l e r, *Wessel Gansfort: Life and Writings* (vol. 1) and *Principal Works* (vol. 2), trans. Jared Waterbury Scudder (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1917), 76, 90-92, 153; *Wessel Gansfort (1419-1489) and Northern Humanism*, eds. Fokke Akkerman, Gerda Huisman, and Arjo Vanderjagt (Leiden: Brill, 1993).

[71] M i l l e r, vol. 1:80; Arjo V a n d e r j a g t, »Wessel Gansfort (1419-1489) and Rudolph Agricola (144?-1485): Piety and Hebrew«, in *Frömmigkeit - Theologie - Frömmigkeitstheologie. Contributions to European Church History. Festschrift für Berndt Hamm zum 60. Geburtstag* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 159-172.

combination of several theological and spiritual traits as he intertwined in his life and work elements of humanism, scholasticism, and mysticism under the impact of the Modern Devotion, not unlike Marulić.[72]

2. 3. Johann Reuchlin

In late fifteenth-century Swabia (south-western Germany), there emerged one of the greatest humanist lay theologians of all times, who was about the same age as Marulić, and who became the father of Catholic Hebrew and Greek scholarship. It was Johann Reuchlin (1455-1522), a lawyer by profession, but a polyglot scholar by inclination and interests. The emperor made him a nobleman.[73] Like Marulić he was a versatile humanist. However, while Reuchlin was the trilingual man (*vir tri-linguus*) in the classical meaning of the three sacred languages, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, the »sacred philology«,[74] Marulić was a trilingual author in a different sense. He wrote in Latin, Croatian, and Italian.

Marulić was never married. Reuchlin, the lay theologian, was married twice, and his only child died in infancy. An entire episode of the early sixteenth century is called after him: 'The Reuchlin Affair', which designates his battle for the preservation of Hebrew books, including the Talmud.[75] He was the orator of his territorial lord, Elector Philip (1448-1508) of Palatinate and Duke of Bavaria, and »chief disciplinarian«, i. e. educator, of his seven sons.[76] As ambassador Reuchlin delivered an oration on behalf of the elector before Pope Alexander VI, on 7 August 1498.

Orators were knowledgeable in philosophy, theology and foreign languages and as humanists like Reuchlin they were indispensable to princes and popes because they were in charge of the official correspondence and of making speeches

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[72] See Franjo Šanjek, »Marulić and the Spiritual Movements of Humanism and the Reform«, in Dossier Marko Marulić, *Most/The Bridge. A Journal of Croatian Literature* (1999), 133-136.

[73] Ludwig Geiger's nineteenth century biography of Reuchlin, in German, is still so much in demand that a reprint of the 1871 edition is being offered in 2008: *Johann Reuchlin: Sein Leben und seine Werke* (Boston: Adamant Media, 2008). Note that **Fig. 2** does not depict a real portrait of the famous humanist from Pforzheim, Germany; it is the only contemporary one that is known. Similarly, there is no contemporary portrait of Marulić either.

[74] Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic, and Humanistic Strains* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961), 79.

[75] See Erika Rummel, *The Case Against Johann Reuchlin. Religious and Social Controversy in the Sixteenth Century* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2002).

[76] On Reuchlin as educator and speech-writer, see Udo Friedrich, »Johannes Reuchlin am Heidelberger Hof. Poeta – orator –s paedagogus«, in *Reuchlin und die politischen Kräfte seiner Zeit,* ed. Stefan Rhein (Sigmaringen, 1998), 163-185.

Fig. 1. Wessel Gansfort of Groningen, »Light of the world« (M. WESSELVS GANSFORTIVS GRONINGENSIS LVX MVNDI VULGO DICTVS).

Fig. 2. »Patrons of Liberty.« Detail of a woodcut (attributed to Hans Weiditz), found on the title page of the »Story of the Four Heretics of the Order of Preachers«, printed in 1521 in Strasbourg. Reuchlin, at the far left, is a member of the group of »Patrons of Liberty« along with Ulrich von Hutten and Martin Luther.

on public and solemn occasions.[77] Orators of that time appear to have required a well-rounded education that included philosophy and theology. This was the case also of our lay theologian *Marcus Marulus Spalatensis*.

Both Reuchlin and Marulić remained loyal to the Church of Rome. Under the given circumstances in the German-speaking lands of the time, this may be a bit surprising as far a Reuchlin is concerned, especially because Reuchlin's nephew, Philip Melanchthon, turned out to become a formidable Lutheran. Only Marulić seems to have been frustrated by the Christian discord in facing the Turkish menace, something that may not be detected in Reuchlin's opus.

2. 4. Paulus Ricius

Still another lay theologian was the physician and family man, Paulus Ricius (Paul Ritz, Paolo Ricci, ca. 1480- ca. 1541) from Tyrol, Austria.[78] Born into a Jewish family in Grub, Tyrol, he converted to Christianity as a young man in 1505. He taught philosophy and medicine at the University of Pavia (then in the duchy of Milan) before he became the personal physician of the prince-bishop of Brixen in Tyrol, later of Cardinal Matthew Lang (1468-1540) of Salzburg. Since 1514 he was the physician of Emperor Maximilian I (reigned 1493-1519), and later also of King Ferdinand I (1503-1564). He sided with Johann Reuchlin in the great controversy over Jewish books.[79] In 1529/1530 Ricius was elevated to the rank of a baron, now known as Paul Ritz von Sprinzenstein (in Upper Austria), a title he passed on to his sons after his death in 1541. This physician and lay theologian published numerous theological works in Latin, including on the holy name of God (*Tetragrammaton*) and Christian-Jewish Cabala.[80] At the time when Marulić's

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[77] See B u r c k h a r d t, 146. On the development of embassies since about 1450, see David N i c h o l a s, *The Transformation of Europe 1300-1600* (London, and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 218-220.

[78] See Gundolff K e i l and Marianne H a l b l e i b, »Biobibliographisches zu Paulus Ricius«, *Würzburger medizinhistorische Mitteilungen* 7 (1989), 233-236; Susanne S i e b e r t, art. »Ricius, Paul« in *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon* 8 (1994), 255-256; Bernd R o l i n g, »Mediatoris fungi munere. Synkretismus im Werk des Paolo Ricci« in *Christliche Kabbala*, ed. Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann (Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2003), 77-100. – His castle, *Schloss Sprinzenstein*, is located in western Mühlviertel in Upper Austria. *Sprinz* means 'hawk' in the local dialect; see website »Sprinzenstein«. Ricius is not an Italian, as is assumed occasionally, as in *Johannes Reuchlin Briefwechsel, Band III 1514-1517*, ed. Matthias Dall' Asta and Gerald Dörner (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 2007), p. XLV.

[79] See the letter of 20 August 1516 by Hieronymus R i c i u s, son of *Paulus Ricius Israelita*, to Reuchlin, in *Johannes Reuchlin Briefwechsel, Band III 1514-1517*, 298-303 (no. 288).

[80] *In cabalistarum seu allegorizantium eruditionem isagogae* (Pavia: Jacob de Burgfrancho, 1510; Augsburg: Johannes Miller [?], 1515); *Lepida et literae undique concinna in psalmum Beatus vir meditatio: concisa et archana de modo orandi in nomine*

»Song about the Teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ Hanging on the Cross« was published in Erfurt, Germany, in 1514, Ricius' book on the Apostles' Creed was printed at Augsburg.[81]

Both Marulić and Ricius were concerned about the Turkish menace. Ricius in his speech/sermon for the Diet of Speyer in 1529 called for the mobilization against the Turks. He placed his oration under the biblical theme of Ezekiel 33:6 (»But if the watchman sees the sword coming and fails to blow the warning trumpet, so that the sword comes and takes anyone, I will hold the watchman responsible for that person's death, even though that person is taken because of his own sin«). It was printed in Augsburg in 1530.[82]

2. 5. Gasparo Contarini

Another layman who like Marulić lived in the Republic of Venice was the patrician Gasparo Contarini (1483-1542) (see **Fig. 3**), thirty-three years younger than Marulić. He contributed to the debate on the mortality of the human soul.[83] He was a significant representative of the religious renewal in Italy, known as *evangelismo italiano*.[84] When this lay theologian was serving as a Venetian dip-

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tetragrammaton responsio (Augsburg: Grimm and Wirsung, 1519); *De anima coeli compendium. Responsio ad interrogationes de nomine Tetragrammaton* (Augsburg: Grimm, 1519).

[81] *In apostolorvm symbolvm Avgvstini* [*sic*] *Ricii orathoris* [*sic*], *philosophi et theologi ocvlatissimi a priori demonstrativvs dialogvs* (Augsburg: Johannes Miller, 1514); see website: Austrian Literature Online. It is not clear why the title has Augustinus Ricius and not Paulus Ricius. There is the similar title under Ricius' name: *In apostolorum simbolum (juxta peripateticorum dogma, dialogus per plane ac summo ingenii ac[u]mine lumini gratiae lumen concililians nature* (same location, date).

[82] *AD PRINCIPES, MAGISTRATVS, populosque Germanię, in Spirensi co[n]ventu PAVLI RICII Oratio* (Augsburg: Alexander Weyssenhorn, 1530); see website: Austrian Literature Online. *Statera Prudentum. Ipse est pax nostra … Christo Nazareno regni celoru[m] Duci / Tribunis, Antesignanis, et Cohortibus Crucis Co[m]pendiariu[m], et o[mn]i attentione dignum hoc Pavlj Rjcjj Opus desudat* (Augsburg: Philipp Ulhart, 1532); a copy is extant in Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich. Among Ricius' other works are *De sexcentum et tredecim Mosaicae sanctionis edictis* (Pavia: Jacob de Burgfrancho, 1510; Augsburg: Johannes Miller, 1515); *Apologetica ad Eckiana responsa narratio* (Augsburg: Grimm, 1519). On the order of Emperor Maximilian I he translated four tracts of the Talmud into Latin in his *Talmudica nouissime in latinum versa periocunda commentariola* (Augsburg: Grimm and Wirsung, 1519); against Johann Eck: *Naturalia et prophetica de anima coeli omni attentione digna aduersus Eckium examina…* (Augsburg: Grimm and Wirsung, 1519/1520); *De coelesti agricultura* (Augsburg: Steyner, 1541).

[83] *De immortalitate animae*, see Cesare V a s o l i, »The Crisis of Late Humanism and Expectations of Reform in Italy at the End of the Fifteenth and Beginning of the Sixteenth Centuries«, in *History of Theology III: The Renaissance*, 371-457, here 382.

[84] See Paolo S i m o n c e l l i, *Evangelismo italiano del Cinquecento: Questione religiosa e nicodemismo* (Rome: Istituto Storico italiano per l'età moderna e contemporanea, 1979).

lomat at the papal court in 1535, as a layman at the age of 42 he was made a cardinal by Pope Paul III (who reigned 1534-1549). The challenges of the Reformation in Germany absorbed much of his energies. He was defamed later on as a Lutheran.[85] Like Marulić he deliberated on the role of the papacy which resulted in his publication *De potestate pontificis* (1529, 1534). However, the issue of the political unity of the West against the Turkish advances did not seem a concern for him as it was for Marulić.

2. 6. Ioannes Ludovicus Vives

As the final example of lay theologians in the Renaissance we mention the Spaniard Ioannes Ludovicus Vives (Juan Luis Vives, 1492-1540) (see **Fig. 4**), forty-two years younger than Marulić. His Jewish family was converted forcibly to Christianity. Due to the threat of the Inquisition, the convert Vives left for Paris in 1509, where he studied arts and humanities. In 1517 he became tutor to the French nobleman Guillaume de Croy (1498-1521), who at nineteen was a cardinal and archbishop of Toledo. In 1524 Vives married a wealthy woman, Marguerite Valdaura. He admired Erasmus of Rotterdam and Thomas More as he developed an interest in philosophy and theology. He lived in Bruges, Belgium, on a pension from King Henry of England. There he continued to write and revise many works until his death in 1540.

When Marulić was working on christological themes around 1520, Vives was writing a commentary on St. Augustine's *City of God*. While Marulić's *Evangelistarium* was printed in Basel in 1519 by Adam Petri, Vives' Commentary on Augustine was reprinted by Froben in the same city in 1522.[86] Vives also composed an Open Letter to Adrian VI on the troubles of Europe and the Turkish menace, but half a year later than Marulić, on 12 October 1522; it was printed in Louvain titled *Ad Adrianum de Europae statu ac tumultibus*. In it Vives saw in an ecumenical council the 'saving medication' (*medicina*) for these tumultuous times,[87] unlike Marulić who set his hope on the papacy.

Vives wrote on many things, including political pamphlets against the Inquisition.[88] In 1527 he fell out of favor with King Henry by opposing the royal di-

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[85] See Elisabeth G. G l e a s o n, *Gasparo Contarini: Venice, Rome, and Reform* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Franz P o s s e t, »Contarini, Gasparo«, in *New Westminster Dictionary of Church History* (Louisville and London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), vol. 1:169.

[86] V i v e s, *Commentarii in XXII libros De Civitate Dei Divi Aurelii Augustini* (Louvain: 1521; Basel: Froben 1522).

[87] See *Joannis Ludovici Vivis Valentini Opera Omnia*, vol. 5:171-172.

[88] Among his numerous works are: *Christi Iesu Triumphus. Virginis Dei Parentis Ovatio* (Paris, 1514); *Meditationes in septem psalmos, quos vocant poenitentiae* (Louvain, 1518); *De Institutione Feminae Christianae* (Louvain, Oxford, 1523); *De subventione pauperum* (Bruges, 1526); *De Europae dissidiis et bello turcico* (Bruges, 1526); *De con-*

Fig. 3. Bust of Gasparo Contarini.
From: *Embassies and Ambassadors in Rome*
(Milan and Rome: Casa Editrice D'Arte
Bestetti & Tumminelli, no date), 57 (**Fig. 22**).

Fig. 4. Ioannes Ludovicus Vives.

vorce from Catherine of Aragon, and was imprisoned for six weeks, after which he left England for the Netherlands to devote himself to writing. He died in 1540 when he was undertaking a literary defense of Christianity, *On the Truth of the Christian Faith* (*De Veritate Fidei Christianae*), published posthumously.

The theology and philosophy of these laymen of the Renaissance (and others not mentioned here)[89] represent so-to-speak all the colors of the rainbow. On the eve of the Reformation and its early years, a time aptly characterized as the years of theological »wild growth« (*Wildwuchs*),[90] they felt at home under the then very wide roof of Catholic theology.

The fact that lay theologians around 1500 are underexposed in historical-theological research may help explain why also Marulić, the Croatian church man and theologian, is so little known. These men - including Marulić - belong to the elite of European lay theologians. If ever a book were written on the history of loyal lay theologians in the Catholic Church, Marulić undoubtedly would take a place of honor.[91]

3. Conclusion

The *Epistle of Lord Marko Marulić of Split* is an unusual document in that it was written by a Croatian layman to a »German« pope who himself was a rather strange, alien figure on the papal throne during that time. True, Marulić with his *Epistola* was not »the first Croat to ask a Pope for help«,[92] but he was, indeed, the

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ditione vitae Christianorum sub Turca (Bruges, 1526); *Sacrum diurnum de Sudore Domini nostri Jesu Christi* (Bruges, 1529); *Meditatio de Passione Christi in psalmum XXXVII* (Bruges, 1529); *De Veritate Fidei Christianae*, Bruges, 1540). See Carlos M. N. Eire, entry »Vives, Juan Luis«, in *New Westminster Dictionary of Church History*, vol. 1:669.

[89] Another fine example of a lay theologian from the Venetian-Croatian region was the much younger Matthias Flacius Illyricus (Matija Vlačić, 1520-1575); on him, see Oliver K. Olson, »Matthias Flacius Illyricus, 1520-1575«, in *Shapers of Religious Traditions in Germany, Switzerland, and Poland, 1560-1600*, ed. Jill Raitt (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1981), 1-17; idem, *Matthias Flacius and the survival of Luther's reform* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002).

[90] Helmar Junghans, »Plädoyer für 'Wildwuchs der Reformation' als Metapher«, in idem, *Spätmittelalter, Luthers Reformation, Kirche in Sachsen. Ausgewählte Aufsätze*, eds. Michael Beyer and Günther Wartenberg (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2001), 261-267.

[91] Future research will have to find out whether these lay theologians had contact with each other. Marulić most likely had no contact with them. - A whole different social group of laymen were the lay cardinals that existed at his time. They would require a monograph of their own. There were four classes of cardinals: cardinal-bishops, cardinal-priests, cardinal deacons and lay cardinals. All but the lay cardinals had the right to vote at a conclave; see Pirie, *The Triple Crown*, 2.

[92] Novaković, »Marulić and the Metaphysical Dimension of History« (see above note 53), 47.

first layman[93] (unless further research proves me wrong) to address the new pope with these concerns, that is, a pope who had been elected *in absentia* and who was not even enthroned at the time of the publication of Marulić's *Epistola* in Rome. In contrast (but according to proper etiquette), Brodarić and also Krsto Frankopan presented their pleas after the pope's enthronement, in September 1522 (Brodarić) and in July 1523 (Frankopan).

As an Open Letter Marulić's text presented itself as a sermon-like exhortation, based on the author's understanding of the spiritual and political nature of the papacy. His admonition concerned the general unity and peace among all Christian nations vis-à-vis the Turkish menace. An earlier draft (including a Pasquinade-like passage) could have come into existence already at the time of the fall of Belgrade in 1521 during the reign of Leo X. The insertion of the name »Adrian« only at the very end of the letter would support such a thesis. Evidently Marulić had no similar expectations of the rest of the political leaders of the Christendom of his time, be it the doge of Venice[94] or the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.

The *Epistola* may serve not only as a peculiar church-historical document written by a layman. Marulić was clearly aware of his non-existent rank in the church hierarchy. When he says that he is aware of his »smallness«, he most likely meant his low status in the Church as a layman in the pew, as compared to the hierarchy and the papacy. At the beginning of the Open Letter he states that he has »no authority whatsoever« to speak up and to address the pope. He means to say that he has no mandate from any political or ecclesiastical ruler or from any interest group.

However, this document is also a theological source text for the further investigation of the ecclesiological concepts (the Church and the papacy) of the prolific lay theologian of Split. He is best situated within the context of other lay theologians loyal to the papacy during the Renaissance. His Open Letter reveals a certain self-understanding as a man of the Church and a humble and supplicant (*humilis et supplex*)[95] sheep of the papal flock. The historical-theological study of his *Epistola* may contribute to the further illumination of his theology for piety and of his life as a Catholic lay theologian of European stature.

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[93] This is contrary to Novaković, 47, who wrote that Marulić was not »the first layman to address his plea to Adrian VI«. More correctly one could say that he was not the only layman who addressed the new pope.

[94] In the summer of 1521, Ivan Statilić of Trogir (Statilius, 1472-1542) was sent to the doge in Venice as envoy of King Louis II of Croatia and Hungary in order to beg for help; see Novaković, 45-46.

[95] Used in the title of the *Epistola*, *MR*, 92.