

*A n t u n L u č i ć*

PASSION IN MEDIEVAL MYSTERY PLAYS  
AND IN MARULIĆ'S VISION

The paper presents the relevant attributes of the morphology and implements of the Passion, as well as the characteristic features, or situations which »induce« meditative rise to consciousness in suffering, as the sign of renunciation of pagan world-view, and the reminder of what one has failed to do. Marulić apparently dramatised and (to some extent) paraphrased medieval stage productions, yet stressing individual ecstasy rather than the elements of pageantry. This was part of his humanist orientation and of his creative nature, but also had precise spiritual aim: He read carefully, appropriated palpably and combined purposefully the elements which build up to the attainment of Christian mystery.

Using comparative approach, the author examines Croatian mystery plays *Muka spasitelja našega* (*The Passion of Our Saviour*) and *Prikazan'je od muke spasitelja našega* (*The Mystery of the Passion of Our Saviour*), and relates them to Marulić's dialogue and dramatic texts *Od muke Isusove* (*On the Passion of Jesus*), *Od muke Isukarstove i odgovor* (*On the Passion of Jesus Christ and the Answer*), and *Svarh muke Isukarstove versi tako počinju* (*Concerning the Passion of Jesus Christ, the verse begins*). To these he adds selected examples from the *De institutione*, particularly those treating martyr-subjects which in the said work turn out to be quite numerous, and bear headings such as *On the Sufferings of Martyrs* or *On the Revelation of the Horrors of Hell*, not neglecting neither the »agony« place from *Judith* and warnings from Dante's *Hell*.

On the level of selected dialogue, answer, direct speech, prose and verse language, Marulić presents his view of the Passion. His message is primarily ethical: those who, serenely persist in suffering, unbowed by earthly powers, will surely achieve the Crown of Thorns. Both, the visions of the »Christian poet«, and his prophetic symbols, which goes beyond the shallow illusions of the world, are in line with what has been announced in the Scriptures. Consequently, the meaning of the Passion comes in for significant transformations: from the rhetoric modifications to the inner visions. Armed with rich sensuality, yet he cuts through the myriad shape of the world. His visions are there less to surprise than to offer a programme of »understanding«. That is why the presented register of agony assumes the appearance of a more likely, though diverse order, turning into visionary writing.