

F r a n z L e s c h i n k o h l

MARULIĆ'S *JUDITH* AROUND THE WORLD

By the mid-nineteenth century Marulić's works were pretty well known in Germany. As early as 1568, the sales catalogue of the bookseller and publisher Georg Willer from Augsburg was offering, for the autumn fair in Frankfurt on the Main, the first German translation of the *De institutione*, published under the German title of *Der Catholischer Christen Spiegel* (the *Catholic Christian Mirror*), and printed that very year in Köln. Another catalogue of the same publisher, the one for the year 1577, offered the edition of the *Dictorum factorumque* printed in Antwerp, while his catalogue for the year 1582 offered another German translation of the *De institutione*, *Sechs Bücher*, printed by Johannes Mayer in Dillingen. Yet, of *Judita*, printed in Venice in 1521, there is no word before 1892, when in the *Vierers Konversations-Lexicon*, in the section dedicated to Croatian literature, Marulić comes first among the poets. The *Meyers Great Conversational Lexicon* in 1907, in the part dealing with Dalmatian literature, described as spanning the period from the mid-fifteenth till the end of the seventeenth century, quotes Marulić as the first important poet of the period and author of *The History of Saint Judith*. In the 1927 edition of the *Meyers Lexicon* Marulić is again referred to as the earliest exponent of Renaissance poetry in Dalmatia and author of the *History of Saint Judith*.

About the middle of the last century the knowledge of the *Judita* spread, swiftly, in the scholarly circles thanks to two editions, both published in 1950. They were the *Libar Marka Marula Splicićanina* (*The Book of Marko Marulić from Split*), which was a facsimile edition of *Judith* of 1521, and another *Judith*, with the original woodcut illustrations and initials from the second edition (1522). In the sixties and seventies *Judith* became in Germany the symbol of Marulić's poetry. That *Judith* brought to Marulić international repute is attested by his appearance in the *Harenberg's Lexicon of World Literature* (1989).

His *Judith* has had thirty editions to date and has brought him the honourable title of the »father of Croatian literature«. The history of its Croatian editions has been paralleled by its diffusion beyond the national frontiers. In the end, I would like to stress that the 109 copies of *Judith* (of an overall of 1047 copies of Marulić's works that I have found in libraries world-wide) show that its editions of 1869, 1901, 1950 and 1970 were, by far, the most important for its diffusion around the world, to places as far-flung as Washington, New York, Vienna, Paris, Berlin, Amsterdam, Göteborg, Geneva, Copenhagen, Mainz, Prague, Zürich or Utrecht.