

LUPUS IN ELEGIA. ABOUT THE LITERARY CONTEXT OF MICHAEL VERANCIUS' *QUERELAE*

Péter Kasza

UDK: 821.124(497.5)-1.09 Vrančić, M.
Original scientific paper

Péter Kasza
Department for Classical Philology
and Neo-Latin Studies
University of Szeged
petrusfalx@gmail.com

In about 1528, the Croatian (and Hungarian) humanist Michael Verancius wrote two quite long elegies entitled *Querela Hungariae de Austria* and *Alia querela Hungariae contra Austriam*. What makes these poems interesting is that these are the first representatives of the Querela-genre in Hungary. Though at first glance they seem to be a simple school-exercise, surveying their literary context one can get a more refined impression. These elegies aim to defend the Hungarian king, János Szapolyai, against the accusations of his Habsburg counterpart. In the first poem, a wolf, as a positive actor, symbolizes King John. This identification is obvious since a wolf is featured in the coat-of-arms of the Szapolyai family. But is this the only reason? We can cite other poems from these years, written by pro-Habsburg poets (e.g. Georgius Logus or Valentinus Ecchius), violently attacking King John, common to all of which is their reference to Szapolyai as a wild and bloodthirsty wolf. The main aim of my paper is to put the origin of the elegies of Verancius in a literary context, demonstrating the influence of these pro-Habsburg poems on the Dalmatian humanist, whose writings were a reaction to these literary attacks.

Key words: Michael Verancius, wolf-symbolic, political propaganda, János Szapolyai, pro-Habsburg poets

In the present volume one can read a detailed interpretation¹ of two elegies by Croatian (and Hungarian) humanist, Michael Verancius entitled *Querela Hun-*

¹ See the study of György Palotás in this volume. See also Maria C y t o w s k a, »Les humanistes slaves en Pologne au XVI^e siècle. La poésie de Michel Vrančić«, *Živa antika*, 25 (1975), 164–173.

gariae de Austria and *Alia querela Hungariae contra Austriam*, probably written in 1528. At the time, Verancius was an approximately 15-year-old schoolboy and a pupil of the famous Polish humanist, Stanislaus Hosius. Though we can take it for granted that originally both elegies were written as a school exercise, and, as the interpretation of György Palotás demonstrated, they used the classical situations, topoi and commonplaces of the *querela* genre, there are two factors suggesting that we should regard them as more than the mere results of a well performed piece of homework. On the one hand, these poems are the first representatives of the genre *Querela Hungariae* in Hungary,² and on the other, the poems of Verancius can be read not only as simple *querelae*, that is a plaintive poem, in many occasions in the form of an epistolary poem following the model provided by Ovid's *Heroides*, but as invectives as well, fitting in with the political propaganda of the period. In my contribution I am going to demonstrate through the example of a special motif how the elegies of Verancius fit in with or rather react to contemporary political poetry.

At the end of Verancius' first *Querela*³ we can read the following distich:

Est lupus, est nostris in ovilibus, impia, qui iam
teque gregesque tuos cumque leone feret.
(67–68)

The personified Hungary turns here to the cruel (*impia*) Austria, warning her that there is a wolf (*lupus*) in her own sheepfold (*nostris in ovilibus*) who is going to drag away (*feret*) Austria together with her ally, the lion (*cum leone*). In the subsequent lines we can read that Hungary, with the help of this wolf, will form an alliance with her former enemy, the Ottomans, and together with this new friend will not only manage to protect her own borders:

Hoc duce, quos hostes habui, nunc utor amicis.
Iuncta quibus, nemo est, qui mea Regna petat,
(71–72)

but will also conquer Austria again and triumph over her.

² For a detailed and comprehensive survey of the history of the genre in Hungary and in Central Europe in the 16th-17th centuries see: Imre Mihály, »Magyarország panasza«. *A Querela Hungariae toposz a XVI–XVII. századi irodalomban*, Debrecen, 1995. It is, however, important to underline that Imre does not know and mention the elegies of Verancius.

³ The manuscripts of the poems were preserved for us on the pages of the Polish document collection, *Acta Tomiciana*. The elegies were printed at first time in the 19th century, when the first volumes of the *Acta Tomiciana* were published. See: *Acta Tomiciana*, Vol. IX, fol. 199–200 and 200–203. – This edition, however, contains some minor mistakes, which could be corrected based upon the most reliable manuscript now kept in Biblioteka Jagiellońska, Cracow. See: 6551 III, fol. 890–897.

Hoc duce tu nostrum decorabis maesta triumphum.
(73)

The image, a wolf in the stable, in the sheepfold or in general among domestic animals regularly appears in Roman and Christian⁴ literature. But the way Verancius uses it is quite audacious or at least highly unusual. In the works of ancient authors, whenever we see a wolf among the lambs it is very rarely that it has positive connotations. I would like to illustrate this with two citations from Vergil. It is found in *Eclogues*:

Triste lupus stabulis, maturis frugibus imbres,
Arboribus venti, nobis Amaryllidis irae.
(Verg. *Ecl.* III, 80–81)

That is, a wolf in the stable is just as dangerous or sad and as devastating as a storm is for fruit trees or when Amaryllis is angry with us. Another comparison, from the *Aeneid*, runs:

ac veluti pleno lupus insidiatus ovili
cum fremit ad caulas ventos perpressus et imbris
nocte super media: tuti sub matribus agni
balatum exercent, ille asper et improbus ira
saevit in absentis;
(Verg. *Aen.* IX, 59–63)

Here we can see a cruel (*asper*) and evil (*improbus*) wolf trying to massacre the lambs in the sheepfold (*in ovili*). But we could also cite the famous example from Phaedrus, where the sheep-wolf meeting at the brook ends in tragedy.⁵ In ancient literature, the wolf is usually a dangerous animal, a robber or a thief. Therefore the young Verancius, when he portrays the wolf in a favorable role, seems to set himself boldly against the ancient tradition. The question arises: how come the wolf is portrayed as a protector in the elegy?

The wolf obviously symbolizes Szapolyai in the poem, while the lion most probably represents Ferdinand of Habsburg. This kind of identification has heraldic roots. It is well known that the coat of arms was of high importance; when it came to representation in the early modern period, it symbolized, identified and represented its owner and his family. The problem is that the Habsburg coat of arms is the double-headed eagle and not the lion. In Verancius' poem the lion does not symbolize Habsburg-Austria but rather her ally. Given the fact that Ferdinand, Archduke of Austria, was already crowned king of Bohemia in 1528, and that Austria attacked Hungary in an alliance with Bohemia, the national coat of arms

⁴ See John, 10,1–10.

⁵ See Phaedr. I, 1.

of which is the lion indeed, we can assume that the king of animals here represents Ferdinand, as the king of Bohemia.

Using similar heraldic arguments, we can identify Szapolyai as the wolf. Originally, the Szapolyai family used two animals in their coat of arms: on the coat of arms of István Szapolyai, the father, and that of Imre Szapolyai, the uncle of King John, both a wolf and a unicorn are shown. However, on the one hand, there is no doubt that the wolf was the original, earlier symbol; on the other hand, King John himself exclusively used the wolf only, omitting the unicorn.

When Szapolyai was crowned king in 1526 the symbol of his coat of arms became more emphasized, as the »Szapolyai wolf« was used on coins as well as the official state seals of King John, and not just on family funeral monuments and family seals.⁶ This means that his coat of arms became rather widely used in just a few years. Therefore when the young Dalmatian poet mentioned the wolf he could take it for granted that his readers would easily decode the allusion. But were the coat of arms symbols the only reason driving our poet to break with the traditional representation of the wolf, inherited from Roman authors? Not at all.

On 29 August 1526 the Hungarian army suffered a tragic defeat by the Ottoman troops on the field of Mohács and the young King, Louis II, trying to escape from battlefield, was drowned in a flooded brook. Having died without an heir, he left the thrones of Hungary, Croatia and Bohemia empty. But only a few weeks after his death, two candidates appeared on the stage. The first was that of the Hungarian nobility, János Szapolyai, former *woiwod* of Transylvania, and the second was the Archduke of Austria, Ferdinand of Habsburg, the brother-in-law of the deceased king. Since between November and December 1526 both candidates were elected king, the prospect of civil war loomed on the horizon. By the summer of 1527, all the negotiations had failed and a war broke out between Ferdinand and Szapolyai. The fighting was not restricted to the battlefields: even before the outbreak of war, a propaganda struggle had started to influence and win over public opinion. The pro-Habsburg humanists played an important role in this struggle trying to discredit King John in different poems and in different ways. One of the devices they used was the symbol of the wolf. Let us look now at a few examples of this and try to find which one could provide the model for Verancius.

The first text I would like to refer to is a quite distant example, in both time and space. This is a poem written by the famous Polish humanist Joannes Dantiscus (Jan Dantyszek), entitled *Ad Clementem VII. Pontificem Maximum et Carolum V.*

⁶ More about the coat of arms in the representation of the Szapolyai-family see: Éva Gyulai, »Farkas vagy egyszarvú? Politika és presztízs megjelenése a Szapolyai-címer változataiban« (Wolf or Unicorn. The Appearance of the Politics and Prestige in Szapolyai's coat of arms), *Tanulmányok Szapolyai Jánosról és kora újkori Erdélyről*, Miskolc, 2008, 125–163.



Fig. 1. Double-headed eagle in the Habsburg coat of arms



Fig. 2. Lion, in the national coat of arms of Bohemia



Fig. 3. Original coat of arms of the Szapolyai family depicting a wolf



Fig. 4. Another coat of arms of Szapolyai family depicting a wolf and a unicorn



Fig. 5.
Coat of arms of King John on a coin



Fig. 6. Coat of arms
of King John on the state seal



Fig. 7. The emblem
of Szapolyai created by Stephanus Brodericus

*Imperatorem Augustum de nostrorum temporum calamitatibus Sylva.*⁷ This is a long poem in elegiac distichs in which the author exhorts the Pope and the emperor to confront together the crucial issues of Christian Europe, that is, the spread of heresy in Germany and the impending Ottoman danger. Making efforts to convince the Pope, the Polish poet uses quite common metaphors. He appeals to Clement VII as the good shepherd of the shattered sheep-fold (*bone pastor laceri ovilis*), whose duty it is, together with the Emperor:

Haec reputa, laceri, Claemens, bone pastor ovilis,
 Qui nunc cum magno Caesare iunctus ades.
 (225–226)

to rebuild of the damaged sheep-fold (*corruptas caulas*) and to lead the flock to fertile fields:

Corruptasque novo repara munimine caulas
 Et duc palantes ad sata laeta greges.
 (231–232)

Since if the flock is unified, there is no wolf so powerful as to be able to avoid the trap of the Christian rulers.

Non Lupus est tanti, modo sit gregis una voluntas,
 Incidet in casses bestia crassa tuos.
 (233–234)

Though the wolf appears in this image, since the metaphor evidently has Biblical roots, this wolf has a universal referent, symbolizing mythological and biblical Evil rather than Szapolyai, the Hungarian king. A few lines later, however, the poet turns to the Emperor Charles trying to convince him not to return to Spain yet, for, although it is waiting for him, it can spare him for a while, given the fact that Charles has already two sons ensuring the security of Spain.

Non te detineat quod Iberia tam procul absit:
 Quodque tuum reditum vota per ampla petat!
 Te poterit levius nunc quam prius illa carere,
 Quum natos habeat, pignora cara, duos.
 (473–476)

But Charles owes a debt of gratitude to God for his sons, since God presented him with a successor to enable him to restrain the ferocious wolf.

⁷ See the digital edition of *Dantiscus*: Anna Skolimowska, Magdalena Turska, Katarzyna Jasińska-Zdun, *Internet publication of Corpus of Ioannes Dantiscus Texts & Correspondence*, <<http://dantiscus.al.uw.edu.pl>> (accessed January 15, 2014).

Hos deus ergo tibi viridi concessit in aevo
 Ut per te rabidi frangeret ora Lupi.

(477–478)

In this case we can assume with more certainty that the wolf mentioned here can be identified with Szapolyai.

This poem was first published in December 1529 in Bologna, with a second edition appearing a few months later, in February 1530 in Cracow. The timing makes the aim of the Polish humanist clear. It was published after the Ottoman siege of Vienna, which greatly alarmed European public opinion, and, on the other hand, just a few months before the coronation of Charles as Emperor. Dantiscus could see the possibility of reconciliation between the secular and spiritual leaders of Europe, and although he was generally in favor of an alliance, after the siege of Vienna it became an urgent necessity to confront the Ottoman. And to secure Central Europe from Turks meant to ensure Habsburg control over this territory; to achieve this, a reckoning with the Wolf, that is, with Szapolyai, was required.

Clearly, the poem of Dantiscus could not have offered a pattern for Verancius, since he wrote the two *querelae* in 1528, *before* the publication of the elegy of Dantiscus. Citing this example I only wanted to demonstrate how widespread was the wolf symbolism in that period. A Polish poet who had already spent a number of years at the Imperial court, that is, at a huge distance from the events, could afford to refer to the public enemy as a wolf, certain that his readers would be able to decode this identification.

The second example comes from Georgius Logus (Georg von Logau). The Silesian humanist wrote four lampoons against Szapolyai.⁸ The first imitates the 29th Carmen of Catullus and makes a comparison between Caesar's and Pompey's destruction of Rome due to their desire for power and Szapolyai's consent to the king's death and the fall of the kingdom so that he could seize the throne. The second one mocks Szapolyai's defeat in the battle of Tokaj in the autumn of 1527, and the third one describes the crimes of the Szapolyai family. All are interesting in a way, but from our point of view it is the fourth that is of real importance.

In this poem (*In eundem*), neither Szapolyai's name nor any of his titles are mentioned, and yet it is apparent that he is the target. The poem tells about a predatory wolf (*raptor lupus*) who lives in the mountains and usually loots vile stables:

⁸ These poems were published in May 1529 in the collected works of the author. See: Georgi Logi Silesii, *Ad inclytum regem Ferdinandum hendecasyllabi, elegiae et epigrammata*, (Viennae, mense Maio 1529. Excudebat Hieronymus Vietor). More about Logus see: Gustav Bauch, »Der humanistische Dichter George [!] von Logau«, *Jahresbericht der Schlesischen Gesellschaft für Vaterländische Cultur* 83 (1895), 5–33.

Praedam agere assuetus raptor lupus et stabula alta
Lustrorum, et solitus densum habitare nemus,

(1–2)

But now this thief (*fur*) has stepped into the territory of the noble lion (*magnanimus leo*) and stolen his sheep (*pecus*):

Debita magnanimo invasit fur regna leoni,
Et pecus in praedam verterat omne suam.

(3–4)

This angered the lion who took up arms against him:

Indignum ob facinus generosa percitus ira
Obvia magnanimus cui tulit arma leo

(5–6)

The wolf did not deny his nature and ran away like a coward:

At non ipse sui solitae est oblitus et artis,
Sed celer in silvas fugit et antra lupus.

(9–10)

At the end of the poem the author states: if someone believed that running away is shameful, he would be right. It would be a shame for a lion but it is the virtue of a wolf, which steals and runs away like a coward:

Turpe putas factum, turpis fuga foeda leoni est,
Ista lupi est virtus, quod rapit atque fugit.

(11–12)

As the poem talks about the lion being at war with the wolf, which has to flee, it must have been written either after Szapolyai's defeat at Tokaj (27 September 1527) or after the decisive battle at Szina on 8 March 1528, which resulted in the final victory of Ferdinand. But what is of real importance for us is that we can see here two elements of the Verancius image, that is Szapolyai as the wolf and Ferdinand as the lion, though Logus, following the ancient pattern, portrays the wolf in a negative role as cowardly thief.

The Silesian poet used the wolf symbolism not only in poems written expressly against Szapolyai. In another poem (*Ad Georgium Wernerum et Valentinum Ecchium*) he praises the virtues of two of his friends, Georgius Wernherus (Georg Wernher) and Valentinus Ecchius (Valentin Eck). And the wolf appears in this piece again. Both Wernherus and Ecchius were living in the northern part of Hungary threatened by Szapolyai's army: Wernherus in Eperjes (now Prešov), Ecchius in Bártfa (now Bardejov). According to the poem, their main merit is that though

the vicious wolf (*lupus scelestus*) as an executioner (*carnifex*) troubled them and their cities several times:

Ecquid vos lupus ille, carnifexque
 Ille erro fugitivus et scelestus
 Vexat [...]

(6–8)

due to their courage and wisdom neither Eperjes nor Bártfa surrendered to the essentially timid wolf (*lupus fugax trepidusque*).

Sed laus haec erit urbium perennis
 Vestrarum [...].
 Vestra namque opera, et pio labore
 Ausu, et consilio, et pio favore
 [...]
 Lupo fortiter obstitere et hosti
 Fugaci trepidoque perditoque.

(13–14; 16–17; 19–20)

Finally let us consider one of the addressees of the last poem, Valentinus Ecchius. He studied in Cracow, and later worked as a schoolmaster in Bártfa. Since his studies were supported by the Thurzó family, Ecchius remained a lifelong faithful servant to the basically pro-Habsburg family.⁹ He dedicated many poems to the leading member of the Hungarian branch of the family, Alexis Thurzó. Among these there is an *Exhortatio* addressed to the Hungarian nobility.¹⁰ This poem was written for the coronation of Ferdinand and the poet exhorts the Hungarian noblemen to accept and support Ferdinand of Habsburg as their legal ruler. The *Exhortatio* is a kind of panegyric which, on the one hand, tries to persuade its readers by enlisting the virtues and merits of Ferdinand: he is the flower of Austria (*Austriacae stirpis flos*) and the heir of Holy Roman Empire (*inclytus haeres Romani Imperii*) who combines in himself the bravery of Achilles, the goodness of Titus, the severity of Cato, the carefulness of Fabius etc.

[...] Achillem

Corde refert magnum, tetrica gravitate Cathonem,
 Consilio Fabium, prudenter rebus agendis

⁹ More about Eck see: K l e n n e r Aladár, *Eck Bálint, Thurzó Elek humanista pártfogoltja*, Pestszenterzsébet, 1939, and Jacqueline G l o m s k i, *Patronage and Humanist Literature in the Age of the Jagiellons. Court and Career in the Writings of Rudolf Agricola Junior, Valentin Eck and Leonard Cox*, Toronto, 2007.

¹⁰ Ad proceres Hungariae [...] Valentini Ecchii Lendani Bartphensis reipublicae praefecti Exhortatio, 1528 [sine loco].

Pompeium, bonitate Titum, rectum statuendo
Traianum, [...]

(55–59)

On the other hand, he contrasts these virtues with the bad habits of Szapolyai. Szapolyai (this time he gets named!) is a plague on his homeland, who endangers his miserable fellow-citizens

Ille lues patriae, quae tempore longo
Protrusit miseros in aperta pericula cives.

(28–29)

But this beast (*Zapola belua*) tried in vain to seize the throne he clearly did not deserve, either by origin or by merits, since Ferdinand was able to expel him:

iacet regali pulsus ab aula.

(46)

After the direct sentences of the first verses, Ecchius describes the victory of Ferdinand over Szapolyai in a symbolic way as well in the sixth verse. Here we can read the following: the lion has recently left the Hercynian fields,

ille leo nuper digressus ab arvis
Hercinnis (101–102)

and his victorious arms expelled the ferocious wolf from the Hungarian sheepfold:

Horrendum feritate lupum victricibus armis
Fortiter Hungaricis ab ovilibus expulit.
(103–104)

As long as the vigilant lion keeps guard, no one has to be afraid any more of the wolf:

Nemo lupos metuat vigili vigilante leone.
(109)

Having read these lines, we would venture to indicate Ecchius' poem as being the main model for Verancius. We could see that the Ferdinand-lion and Szapolyai-wolf identification appears frequently in contemporary poetry, but as far as I know only in the case of the cited poem of Valentinus Ecchius does the third element appear as well, that is, the sheepfold symbol.

What is left to us now is to determine whether Verancius could have known the aforementioned poems. The first-quoted one, that is the poem of Dantiscus, can be excluded, as I have already said. But in the cases of Logus and Ecchius the

situation is different. Though the collected poems of Logus were printed not earlier than May 1529, since it was a collection, it cannot be excluded that single poems might have been printed separately¹¹ or might have been circulated in manuscript. Therefore Verancius could have been aware of the work of Logus.

With respect to the poem of Ecchius, we can be almost sure that his *Exhortatio* came into Verancius' hands. The poem, written for the coronation of Ferdinand, was published in Cracow twice: first in 1527 and then, without any changes, in 1528. Verancius was in Cracow from the spring of 1528, so he must have read Ecchius' work, responding in his poems to the lion-wolf-sheepfold image as a whole (which, as we have shown, comes up exclusively in the poem of Ecchius).

Therefore when the young Verancius depicts the wolf as a protector, and by doing so completely reinterprets the wolf image inherited from antiquity, it is more than an audacious innovation. The fact that he used the wolf symbolism in this way indicates a reaction to the attacks launched by pro-Habsburg poets. Therefore this symbol underlines the polemic attitude of the first *querela* as crucial for the proper interpretative frame.

And finally, a concluding contribution to this story. In 1559, the famous Italian humanist Paolo Giovio published a book of emblems, containing the emblems of the main actors of the century¹², including that of Szapolyai. The emblem depicts a she-wolf with the following motto: *Sua alienaque pignora nutrit*. That is: she nourishes her own children as well as those of others.

Szapolyai originally did not have an emblem. We know from Giovio's remarks that one of Szapolyai's most loyal servants, another well known humanist of Croatian origin, Stephanus Brodericus (Stjepan Brodarić), had created the emblem just for this book using the Szapolyai coat of arms. As I said, the emblem depicts a she-wolf, which is a clever solution. It refers to the animal in the coat of arms but transforms it into a she-wolf, which was well known to the European mind, and, more importantly, presented the only possible *traditional* way to depict a wolf as a favorable actor. The she-wolf nourished Romulus and Remus, and therefore

¹¹ Some data support this hypothesis. As I already mentioned, Logus had a poem imitating the 29th Carmen of Catullus which is also a lampoon against Szapolyai. This was also published among his collected poems. This particular poem was published, however, also at the beginning of the 20th century by a Hungarian scholar, Henrik Kretschmayr, based upon a source from the Viennese archive; the source perished afterwards. (See: Henrik K r e t s c h m a y r, »Adalékok Szapolyai János király történetéhez«, *Történelmi Tár* 4 (1903), 228–229.) Since Kretschmayr did not know either the name of the author or the origin of the poem, we can risk the hypothesis that the Hungarian scholar did not find and use the collected work of Logus, otherwise he would necessarily have known the name of the author. It seems more likely that he used either a damaged edition of the whole collection or a separate edition of this lampoon. Assuming that this particular poem was printed and circulated as a separate broadsheet, we can suppose it in the case of Logus' other lampoons against Szapolyai as well.

¹² Paolo G i o v i o, *Dialogo dell'Imprese Militari et Amoroze*, Lyon, 1559.

her role is crucial for the birth of the Roman Empire. Brodericus' interpretation suggests that Szapolyai is a wolf, too, and is as important for Hungary as the she-wolf was for Rome. This emblem, as far as we know, was published only after the death of Szapolyai. But its very existence highlights how much energy King John's humanists of Croatian origin invested in adapting the wolf metaphor, not only in words but in image as well, in order to present their ruler in a more favorable light, and to compensate for the malevolent propaganda of the pro-Habsburg humanists.

Péter Kasza

*LUPUS IN ELEGIA. O KNJIŽEVNOM OKOLIŠU U KOJEM SU NASTALE
QUERELAE MIHOVILA VRANČIĆA*

Mihovil Vrančić napisao je oko 1528. dvije odulje elegije koje obje nose naslov *Querela Hungariae in Austriam*. Zanimljivost ovih pjesama leži u tomu što su one prve predstavnice književnoga žanra *querela* u Mađarskoj. Iako se na prvi pogled čine tek školskom vježbom, uvid u njihov književni okoliš pokazuje da su posrijedi znatno zanimljiviji tekstovi. Elegijama je cilj obrana hrvatsko-mađarskoga kralja Ivana Zapolje od optužaba njegova habsburškog suparnika Ferdinanda Habsburškog. U prvoj pjesmi Vrančić se služi smjelom slikom: prikazuje vuka kao pozitivan lik, koji ovce u toru brani od lavljega napada. Takav je pristup vrlo neobičan s obzirom na to da u antičkoj književnosti nema mnogo primjera u kojima se vuk pojavljuje u pozitivnoj ulozi. Postavlja se pitanje kako je mladi humanist (koji je u tom trenutku tek petnaestogodišnji učenik) nadošao na tu iznenađujuću zamisao.

Vuk simbolizira kralja Ivana Zapolju, dok lava možemo identificirati kao Ferdinanda Habsburškog. Takva identifikacija temelji se na heraldičkim naznakama: u grbu obitelji Zapolja nalazi se vuk; Ferdinand se u pjesmi spominje kao kralj Češke, a u češkom grbu nalazi se lav. No je li to jedini razlog takvu Vrančićevu postupku? Postoji više pjesama iz toga doba što su ih napisali prohabsburški pjesnici, kao Ioannes Dantiscus iz Poljske, Georgius Logius iz Šlezije ili Valentin Eck, učitelj u gradu Bardejovu (danas u Slovačkoj), u kojima se žestoko napada kralj Ivan, a svim tim pjesmama zajedničko je da Zapolju prikazuju kao divljega, strašnoga, krvožednog vuka. Možemo li u kojem od njih vidjeti Vrančićev uzor? Dantiscus je svoju pjesmu napisao i objavio 1529, pa ga stoga treba isključiti. Logius je napisao i objavio mnogo pjesama protiv Zapolje; premda su one objavljene u zbornom izdanju tiskanom ne prije svibnja 1529, već prije su bile tiskane pojedinačno, pa su tako mogle doći Vrančiću u ruke. No samo je treći pjesnik, Valentin Eck, unio u svoje stihove ne samo vuka i lava nego i treći element Vrančićeva imaginarija – ovčji tor. S obzirom na činjenicu da je Eckova pjesma – zapravo *exhortatio* upućena poljskom plemstvu – tiskana 1527. te ponovno 1528, i to u Krakovu, gdje se u to doba mladi Vrančić školovao, možemo sa sigurnošću zaključiti da je upravo taj pjesnik utjecao na mladoga hrvatsko-ugarskog humanista.

Valja imati na umu da još jedan humanist rođen u Hrvatskoj, a djelovanjem vezan za Ugarsku, Stjepan Brodarić, stvara Zapoljin amblem, u kojem je prikazana vučica – a to je jedini način koji u tradiciji dopušta da se vuk prikaže u pozitivnoj ulozi. I iz toga je razvidno koliko su humanisti iz kruga kralja Ivana nastojali i riječju i slikom obraniti simbol vuka te prikazati svojega vladara u povoljnu svjetlu, da bi se tako suprotstavili propagandi prohabsburških humanista.

Ključne riječi: Mihovil Vrančić, simbol vuka, politička propaganda, Ivan Zapolja, prohabsburški pjesnici