

*Juraj Dragišić (Georgius Benignus), Život i djela* [Juraj Dragišić (Georgius Benignus), Life and Works], ed. Erna Banić-Pajnić, Bruno Ćurko, Mihaela Girardi-Karšulin and Ivica Martinović. Zagreb: Institut za filozofiju, 2016. Pages 429.

The Institute of Philosophy in Zagreb published the collection of studies on the life and most significant works of the Franciscan Juraj Dragišić (c. 1445-1520). His name is deeply inscribed not only in the annals of his Order, but in the spiritual heritage of philosophical and theological thought of the Renaissance in general. Renowned for his theoretical work as apologist, preacher, teacher, independent philosopher and professor at the universities of Florence, Pisa and the Sapienza of Rome, he was just as successful in dealing with practical matters as high administrator of the Church, provincial of the Conventuals of Tuscany, head of the High Franciscan Collegium in Rome, bishop of Cagliari, archbishop of Nazareth, and a would-be general vicar of Archbishopric of Dubrovnik. This list alone fully justifies the decision of the scholars of the Institute of Philosophy to embark upon a team effort to honour “one of the rare Croatian philosophers of the Renaissance to have been tackled so far by several authors in Croatia and abroad” (from the Preface signed by the editors collectively).

Their studies are supplemented with carefully selected passages from Dragišić’s works in the Latin original, with parallel translations in Croatian. Expert translators have been chosen for this task. Fr. Stjepan Krasić, former Professor at the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas in Rome, translated a passage from *Artis dialectices praecepta vetera ac nova*. Irena Bratičević, lecturer at the Department of Classical Philology of the University in Zagreb, translated the treatise *Fridericus, De animae regni principe*, collaborated on the translation of *De natura caelestium spirituum quos angelos vocamus*, and also redacted it philologically, while her colleague from the same Department, Šime Demo, collaborated on the translation of *De natura caelestium spirituum quos angelos vocamus*, whilst the *Defensio praestantissimi viri Ioannis Reuchlin* he translated himself. Finally, the philosophers Ana Mrnarević and Bruno Ćurko gave their contribution to the translation of *De natura caelestium spirituum quos angelos vocamus*. Apart from the reprint of the older translation of *Propheticae solutiones* by Stjepan Hosu, these new texts have been prepared especially for this edition and are accompanied by footnotes and additional explanations. The fact that the editors included select originals and translations into this collection of essays testifies to their aim to provide a comprehensive survey of Dragišić’s work, whose complexity called for a team of translators.

Although this volume deals mainly with Dragišić’s philosophical and theological works, the introductory part brings a detailed account of his life, as in the essay by Erna Banić-Pajnić entitled »Juraj Dragišić (c.1445-1520)—life and works« (*Juraj Dragišić (c. 1445-1520) - život i djela*, pp. 11-18), and »Juraj Dragišić’s exile years in Dubrovnik (1496-1500)« (*Dubrovačko prognaništvo Jurja Dragišića (1496-1500)*, pp. 19-48) by Ivica Martinović. By drawing attention to the fact that an accurate form of Dragišić’s surname and his year of birth are still obscure, Erna Banić-Pajnić provides a succinct and precise survey of the meanderings of Dragišić’s turbulent path, from native Bosnia, across numerous Italian cities, from the Holy Land and Dubrovnik, and his final years in Rome. By emphasising “his interest in the issues of divination, predestination, determinism, free will and prediction of future (prophecy)” (p. 15), aspiring at the same time towards spiritual restoration and reform of Christianity, about which he lectured at several Church councils, among which the Fifth Lateran Council (held from 1512 to 1517) should be noted, the author prepares us for an interesting chapter on Dragišić’s involuntary stay in Dubrovnik, where he fled after the conflict with Francesco Sansone, general of the Franciscan Order, and where he found refuge from other adversities previously experienced in Florence. When the general deprived him of the active

and passive right to vote, banned entry into the monastery of St Cross in Florence, and finally, banished him from the entire Tuscan province of the Order on pain of life imprisonment and excommunication, all because Dragišić's followers refused to recognise the newly elected provincial in the Tuscan province in the spring of 1495, devastated, he devoted himself to scientific work.

Underlining the confidence Dragišić enjoyed on behalf of the highest bodies of the Dubrovnik Republic, which is documented by the facsimiles of the decisions passed by the Senate and Minor Council, Ivica Martinović warns that Dragišić had seven books published during his life, two from the Florentine period, four from the Ragusan, and one from the Roman period of his life (p. 29), while, for the sake of comparison, poet Ilija Cerva lived to see only six of his epigrams printed. Of the works composed in Dubrovnik, least known until recently was his funeral oration in honour of Junije Giorgi, father of Sigismund, Dragišić's favourite Ragusan student. Not only is it an important contribution to the consolatory literature, but he also chose an unusual approach by praising the son while formally referring to the father. We have to agree with Martinović's conclusions from this short essay on Dragišić's days in Dubrovnik: by drawing a parallel with other great figures of the Croatian *Quattrocento*, Ivan Stojković, Benedikt Kotrulj and Nikola Modruški, Dragišić, "having picked Dubrovnik as a blessed place of his exile, is the only among the four Croatian philosophers of the fifteenth century who created his work on Croatian soil, and what he created on Croatian soil, he published abroad (because Dubrovnik of his day did not have a printing house" (p. 46). Yet, his connection with the native land, along with a most fruitful production on the local soil are not the only features that distinguish the protagonist of our story from some of his prominent contemporaries.

Among the texts composed during his five-year exile in Dubrovnik is a treatise on logic, *Artis dialectices praecepta vetera ac nova*, a direct "outgrowth of his teaching of Ragusan noble youth", (p. 38) who always addressed him as "teacher" (*praeceptor*). Together with the treatise *Dialectica nova*, published in 1488 in Florence (which, at the same time, is "the oldest published philosophical work of a Croatian author", as warned by Ivica Martinović on p. 53), this work, which the author finally redacted and published in Rome in 1520, represents Dragišić's valuable contribution to logic. This issue has been tackled here by Mihaela Girardi-Karšulin and Srećko Kovač. While Girardi-Karšulin's argumentation draws attention to unjust neglect of Dragišić's work in the modern logic syntheses of Western Europe (such as *Geschichte der Logik im Abendlande* by Carl Prantl, published in Leipzig in 1870), Kovač examines Dragišić's contribution to the field of terministic logic, and the two authors conclude that Dragišić "with some of his specific solutions as well as the quality of presentation and argumentation contributes to contemporary literature on logic", and is just as interesting "from the standpoint of modern non-consistent logic" (p. 75).

This certainly is not his only contribution to modern humanities and social sciences. Namely, a developed natural interest in philosophical issues encouraged Dragišić, like Marsilio Ficino and other thinkers with whom he collaborated in Florence and elsewhere in Italy, to devote himself to the field of political theories. He thus wrote the work *De animae regni principe*, in this volume addressed by Erna Banić-Pajnić. In the mentioned dialogue, dedicated to *condottiere* Guidobaldo, son of the eminent Federico da Montefeltre who owes his reputation to the beautiful palace and famous library in Urbino, free will is the central topic. In the dialogue between Federico (the voice of Dragišić himself, defending Scotus's doctrine) and his nephew Ottaviano (advocating Thomistic views), Scotistic views tend to prevail gradually, by giving priority to will over mind. The author concludes that Dragišić, "by insisting on free will, approaches Renaissance philosophers who in various ways, from different aspects, persisted on emphasising this essential determinant of human activity whose foundation rests in the will" (p. 88).

However, *Propheticae solutiones*, or “Prophetic solutions” is still considered Dragišić’s best work, which was also composed during his stay in Dubrovnik, moreover, “upon the prompting of the representatives of the Dubrovnik Republic” (p. 89), as emphasised by Erna Banić-Pajnić. Promoted in the mentioned dialogue is the idea that ancient prophets surpass the new ones, although the latter should not be easily discarded either, thus alluding to Dragišić’s stay in England, and John’s biblical prophecy is being paraphrased as a topic of the forthcoming decline of the Ottoman rulers, of which Dragišić, according to his own statement, often sermoned in Urbino and Florence (p. 97). It is noteworthy that in the second part of this text Dominican Girolamo Savonarola is praised as an authentic new prophet, with which Dragišić’s collocutor, Ubertino Risaliti, ultimately agreed. Risaliti was Dragišić’s former student and follower from Florence, who helped him in the publishing of the famous *De natura angelica*.

Dragišić’s *De natura angelica* has been meticulously examined by Ivica Martinović, placing focus on the philosophical themes elaborated in this work (pp. 103-172). Martinović divided his approach in determining the philosophical layer in this work into nine stages, among which are the issues of Dragišić’s attitude towards the prominent Church Fathers (primarily towards Augustine and John of Damascus), towards the leaders of medieval angelology (with emphasis on Thomas Aquinas, Henry of Ghent and John Duns Scotus), towards the contemporaries Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, as well as towards Plato and Aristotle (p. 115). Martinović’s assessment generally agrees with the earlier submitted opinion of Erna Banić-Pajnić, by which Dragišić aimed to reconcile Thomas Aquinas and Scotus, while the mutual interaction between the two leading figures of ancient Greek philosophy is best displayed in the fact that in his works he leans on Aristotle in the most part, yet often composes his texts in the form of dialogue, as result of apparent Platonic influence (p. 16). Dubrovnik benefitted from Dragišić’s treatise not only by gaining a valuable account of direct communication with the Ragusan noble youth (information just as important to any historian focusing on late-fifteenth century history of Dubrovnik), but also by learning of the author’s doctrine on hierarchies, orders and duties of the angels, which, according to Martinović, “offers Dragišić’s specific ‘social philosophy’ of the angelic world” (p. 153). The fact that the Republic authorities allowed commoners to attend certain discussions in the cathedral between Dragišić and young noblemen speaks of the importance the government attached to this issue.

Despite proven abilities and talent, Dragišić never abused his influence in demagogic terms, and has thus remained known as “preacher of the learned”, unlike his celebrated contemporary, Dominican Savonarola, who was known as “preacher of the desperate” (here underlined by several authors, pp. 14, 30, 89, 98). As proof of his activity beyond academic circles is his rich apologetic work, in which Ivana Skuhala Karasman discusses the apology of Johannes Reuchlin (*Dragišićeva obrana Johannes Reuchlina*, pp. 173-188). The famous text in defence of Reuchlin, German philosopher, humanist and author of Kabbalistic works, was even among Dragišić’s contemporaries rightly perceived as defence of religious tolerance and understanding of Jewish spirituality and culture, advocating for “compatibility between Talmud and other Jewish books with the Christian faith” (p. 184). As proof of its great popularity is the fact that in German lands alone the work was published in one thousand copies, all of which were immediately sold out (p. 185).

Omnipresence of the digital media in today’s scientific research has been tackled by Bruno Ćurko in his contribution »Presence of Juraj Dragišić in the digital world« (*Prisutnost Jurja Dragišića u digitalnom svijetu*, pp. 373-396). He has submitted the results of the research carried out from 2009 to 2015, which include not only Dragišić’s numerous digitised works accessible online or available freely in PDF format, but also the treatises on Dragišić by other authors, written from the sixteenth century until the present. With a concluding remark that, at an average, “every

two years one article on Juraj Dragišić is being published” (p. 396), we hope that this collection of essays will truly encourage new researchers to embark on the yet unknown elements of Dragišić’s prolific opus.

Future research could develop along two routes: critical evaluation of Dragišić’s comprehensive legacy and edition of the remaining works, moreover, because here too it has been emphasised that “Dragišić has left some twenty works, the bulk of which are still in manuscript” (str. 15). The second route should develop towards the assessment of his work in the light of other humanistic careers that marked his day. For instance, mentioned in the study accompanying his *Propheticæ solutiones* in this collection is also the work *Apocalypsis nova*, as ascribed to him, and whose real author is probably the Portuguese, Joao de Silva y Menezes. He was Dragišić’s contemporary, in Italy known as Blessed Amadeo. His followers, the so-called Amadeists, were protected by Cardinal Bernardino Carvajal. Similar to Dragišić, they propheted the restoration of Christianity and final victory of Christianity over the Muslim world, as cited by Erna Banić-Pajnić (p. 101). Apparently, philosophers who shared Dragišić’s views were not rare, and a parallel analysis would doubtless contribute to our knowledge of these turbulent times in general.

Well furnished and richly illustrated, supplemented with exhaustive bibliographies at the end of each study, in addition to a long summary in English (pp. 397-414), accompanied by a separate bibliography, this collection is an invaluable cornerstone on the long research path yet to be trodden.

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