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THE *IUVENILIA* OF FRANCISCUS TRANQUILLUS ANDRONICUS
IN GNIEZNO

1. Introduction

This paper focuses on the manuscripts of the Trogir humanist Franciscus Tranquillus Andronicus (Frane Trankvil Andreis, 1490-1571) kept in the Archiepiscopal Archives in Gniezno, previously noticed but little, and in Croatia totally unknown. They comprise five short pieces (two poems and three letters) that Andronicus composed during his stay in Rome, addressing them to the archbishop of Gniezno and primate of Poland Jan Łaski, who at that time (1513-1515) was in Rome to take part in the Fifth Lateran Council. The first (and incomplete) edition was published in 1962 by Bogdan Bolz. Before that it was known only that Andronicus was staying in Rome in the retinue of Łaski, and that his first work to be published in print (as far as we know) was written in Rome, in the context of the archbishop's activities: *Ode F. Andronici in triumpho reuerendissimi atque amplissimi domini Ioannis de Lasko, archiepiscopi Gneznensis, de uictoria inuictissimi Sigismundi, Polonie regis, contra Moscos habito*. The ode was published in the book *Carmina de memorabili cede scismaticorum Moscouiorum per serenissimum ac inuictissimum dominum Sigismundum, regem Polonie, magnum ducem Lituaniae, Russie, Prussie Sarmatiaeque Europae dominum et heredem, apud Aras Alexandri Magni peracta*, s. l., s. a. [Romae, 1515].

Bolz published four of Andronicus's writings, giving them the numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4; the appendix to this study publishes these texts as numbers **1, 2, 3** and **5**. Bolz missed out a text that is also kept in the archives of the chapter in Gniezno (text number **4**. in the appendix to this study). Notwithstanding its shortcomings, his work is useful, and the chronology he established is acceptable to this day.

2. Description of the manuscripts and their contents

The manuscripts comprise single leaves and bifolia that are kept in the chapter collection in Gniezno in volume II of the correspondence of Jan Łaski. All the texts are written in the same humanist cursive hand. All of them were clearly produced in Rome, in the period the archbishop was attending the Lateran Council.

AAGn [Archiwum Archidiecezjalne w Gnieźnie] 5/37, Nr. 14 (here text no. **1**). A poetical panegyric addressed to Jan Łaski, in 16 elegiac couplets. The young and unknown poet is attempting to draw the attention and obtain the support of the distinguished prelate, and Bolz concludes that it must be the earliest text addressed to Łaski (probably written in the second half of 1513, at the latest in early 1514).

AAGn 5/29, Nr. 15 (text no. **2**). Prayer to the Virgin, 12 elegiac couplets. Since the poet gives only his surname, Bolz concludes that he must be already known to the recipient (Łaski, in all likelihood) and so assumes that the poem was composed after the panegyric, in 1514, perhaps even in 1513.

AAGn 5/27, Nr. 13 (text no. **3**). The letter is a kind of apologia for poetry, superior, according to Andronicus, to prose. The text itself contains no clues as to the chronology.

AAGn 5/23, Nr. 16 (text no. **4**) (omitted by Bolz). A letter to Łaski with a review of ideas about fate (*fatum*) in classical and medieval authors. The text is a collage of literal or paraphrased quotations from the works of some thirty philosophers, poets, astrologers, etc. It is a demonstration of the learning with which Andronicus probably wanted to impress Łaski. A hint as to the relative chronology might be given by the change in the form of address: while in the texts **1**, **2** and **3** Andronicus extensively enumerates Łaski's titles, in the texts no. **4** and **5** he simply writes: *Domino suo gratiosissimo* and *Domino generosissimo*. In view of this considerably lower level of formality, text no. **4** probably succeeds text no. **3**.

AAGn 5/11, Nr. 17 (text no. **5**). The letter is a request from Andronicus to Łaski asking him not to deprive him of the room that he had previously assigned for his lodging. The writer reinforces his plea with a picturesque description of the imminent spring. This letter is much more personal and spontaneous, a miniature meriting a place in any anthology of humanist epistolography. It alone is dated by the author: 7. Cal. Martias 1515 (February 23, 1515). Since the archbishop left Rome after May 5, 1515, this piece should without doubt be considered the last in the sequence.

3. The Gniezno manuscripts are autographs

These Andronicus manuscripts are autographs, which can be borne out in several ways. First of all, they are kept in the collection of the recipient himself, Jan Łaski. Furthermore, they are private letters, two of which are signed, with two of them bearing the name of the writer in the heading. Finally, their autograph status is confirmed by a close comparison with other manuscripts of Andronicus's works, written not long after the Roman poems and letters. The earliest among them are a letter and a short encomium in elegiac couplets addressed to Joachim von Watt (Ioachimus Vadianus), written at the end of 1517 or in early 1518, probably in Ingolstadt. Another Andronicus's early manuscript is a poem to Conrad Peutinger, probably penned in 1519. For a comparison of the handwriting, cf. **Figs. 1-4** and the accompanying palaeographic analysis. **Figs. 5** and **6** give reproductions of Andronicus's signatures in the letter to Von Watt and the poem to Peutinger.

4. Research after Bolz

The results of Bolz are briefly mentioned by Maria Cytowska (1969) and Ágnes Ritoók-Szalay (1975). Henryk Barycz (1981) showed an interest only in text no. **3**. He read Andronicus's advocacy of poetry in opposition to the views of Łaski, who valued prose above all, in the wider context of the archbishop's plans to find a writer to compose in Latin a history of Poland. In Rome, Łaski had encountered the works of Marcantonio Sabellico, Enea Silvio Piccolomini (Pope

Pius II), and Raffaello Maffei, in which, as the primate noted, the Poles and their history had been presented tendentiously, inaccurately and unfavourably, while unfounded praise had been heaped in contrast on the Germans. He concluded that this anti-Polish propaganda need to be counteracted by a work founded on the principles of humanist historiography, to provide the international intellectual public a different and more accurate image of the Poles and their history. Łaski advanced his criticism of Italian writers and his own plans for a new history of Poland in a letter that he sent from Rome on July 28, 1514, to Bernardinus Galleus and Maciej of Miechów (Maciej Miechowita). He told them that he had found in Rome a historian who had promised to write just such a work for him. Barycz concluded that behind this unnamed historian there was in fact Tranquillus Andronicus, and that he at a later date (in text no. 3) declined the archbishop's offer.

In his monograph about Jan Łaski of 2007, Piotr Tańkowski provides the important information that Łaski engaged Andronicus as his secretary (as can be seen from a letter that the archbishop wrote on February 3, 1515 to King Sigismund I). This information, as we shall soon see, can now be confirmed in an unexpected manner, not previously noticed.

Andronicus's stay in Rome has attracted little attention from scholars outside Poland, and has been briefly referred to by Mirko Breyer, Dušan Berić, Nikica Kolumbić and Silvano Cavazza.

5. Łaski's letter of July 28, 1514 and the enigmatic *quidam historiographus*

Barycz's claim that it was Tranquillus Andronicus that was the enigmatic historian mentioned by Łaski in his letter of July 28, 1514, was accepted, more or less circumspectly, by later writers. Here I would draw attention to the formulation in the archbishop's letter that to my mind weakens the hypothesis that it was Andronicus that was concerned. Łaski says: *compellatus sum Rome quendam historiographum, ut aliquid (rei veritatem sequendo) de rebus gestisque Polonicis, priusquam suum ederet opus, ad refellendum Pii falsas assertiones exararet* («In Rome I addressed one historian, for him, depicting the subject truthfully, to write something – before he published his work – by which the mendacious claims of Pius would be refuted»). The words highlighted, although they are not quite clear, can, I think, be understood only to mean that the man whom the archbishop addressed already had the status of historiographer, and at that time was preparing some work of his own, which he would now, in order to fulfil the commission, have to leave aside. It is rather unlikely that the young man of Trogir already had, during his stay in Rome, the status of historiographer and that he was already working on some major work.

With reference to this letter of Łaski another important and also unnoticed fact has to be put forward: the hand that wrote this letter, obviously dictated by the archbishop, was that of Tranquillus Andronicus (cf. **Figs. 7** and **8** as well as

the accompanying palaeographic analysis). At the end of the letter Łaski added a note in his own hand addressed to Maciej of Miechów and signed his name. Unlike Andronicus, who wrote in humanist cursive, Łaski wrote in cursive gothic (cf. **Fig. 9**). The excerpts from Sabellico and other historians that are given as appendices to the archbishop's letter were written by some third hand, one unknown to me (cf. **Fig. 10**). The fact that the archbishop was dictating his letter to Andronicus shows that the latter was at this moment (July 1514) his secretary. A situation in which the archbishop's sentence that he had found »some historian« would be written by the designated historian himself, i.e., by Andronicus, seems rather improbable. It is a circumstance that additionally weakens the assumption that by »quidam historigraphus« Łaski is thinking of Tranquillus Andronicus.

6. The early period of Andronicus's life and the chronology of his stay in Rome

Andronicus was born in 1490, and in all likelihood was first educated in his native Trogir, in which a humanist school already existed. He provided information about his education in Italy in his *Oratio de laudibus eloquentiae*, an oration given and published in Leipzig in 1518. Nothing reliable is known about the reasons for his arrival in Rome. Apart from educational and cultural promptings, it is possible that he was attracted by news about the beginning of the Lateran Council, or rather, the thought that it was a good chance to find a patron for himself among the gathered worthies. The chronology of the relations of Andronicus and Łaski in Rome is reconstructed from the available data (cf. **Table 1**).

7. About this edition

Since the manuscripts are Andronicus's autographs, in the edited text the original spelling has been retained, with all its inconsistencies, hypercorrectness and obvious errors (particularly in the writing of Greek words). Exceptions are: *i longa* (in the *ij* group) – in this edition an ordinary *i* is written; the minuscule initial *u*, which the author sometimes writes as *v*, sometimes as *u* – in this edition it is always given as *u*. Abbreviations are resolved without parentheses, and punctuation and the use of capital letters have been modernized. The part of the text that in the manuscript is missing and has been supplied by the editor is enclosed in angle brackets: <...>. In the prose texts, a division has been made into numbered paragraphs. The notes contain the critical apparatus (printed in bold) and the references to sources and allusions (in italics).

The new edition of Andronicus's manuscripts kept in Gniezno was necessary not only to correct the inaccurate reading of Bolz but also because his edition failed to include text no. 4, which is published here for the first time.

Key words: Franciscus Tranquillus Andronicus, Jan Łaski (the elder), Gniezno, Fifth Lateran Council, autograph, critical edition