TRANQUILLUS ANDRONICUS' *DIALOGUS SYLLA* AND TWO POEMS BY MICHAEL NARDINUS

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This article studies the content, and the political and literary contexts, of Tranquillus Andronicus' *Dialogus Sylla* (1527). This text combines a discussion of the careers of Sulla and Caesar with moral-philosophical discourse on the burdens of power, human greed and vanity, and the fickleness of Fortune. The article argues that these themes are linked to the anti-Habsburg alliance between King Francis I of France and the Hungarian voivode János Szapolyai, in the wider context of the Ottoman advance. An examination of the professional and intellectual networks in which Andronicus operated clarifies why he dedicated *Dialogus Sylla* to the diplomat and scholar Janus Lascaris, while the dedicatory letter bears witness to Andronicus' careful positioning of himself, his dedicatee, and their respective homelands Dalmatia and Constantinople. Furthermore, this letter makes reference to a certain Michael Nardinus, whom the article identifies as a humanist from Šibenik, known to Lascaris from their shared involvement in the Roman sodality of Johann Goritz (Corycius). For this reason, two poems written for the *Coryciana* by Nardinus are also presented and translated. In literary terms, the article traces the debts of *Dialogus Sylla* to four dialogues by Lucian. Additionally, it considers four Quattrocento Underworld dialogues and so demonstrates that Andronicus also drew on Maffeo Vegio's *Palinurus*. Finally, the article suggests a potential intertextual connection with the works of Poggio Bracciolini.

Keywords: Caesar, Habsburg, Ottomans, Dalmatia, underworld dialogue, Lucian of Samosata

1. Introduction

This article has a simple aim: to analyse and contextualise *Dialogus Sylla* (1527), written by Frane Trankvil Andreis (1490/5–1571), who went by permutations of the humanistic name Tranquillus Andronicus Parthenius Dalmata.[1] *Dialogus Sylla* itself is readily available: the original is accessible online; it can be found transcribed at *Croatiae auctores Latini*; and an edition was published in 2017.[2] But no scholarly study devoted even in part to Andronicus' dialogue exists, nor are there more than passing references to the *Sylla* in articles about its author. This must be redressed, for *Dialogus Sylla* rewards attention not merely through its literary merits, but also because its origins and content can be connected closely to the politics and personalities of its day. One of these is the towering scholarly figure of Janus Lascaris, the *Sylla*'s dedicatee; another is Andronicus' Dalmatian friend Michael Nardinus, likewise mentioned in the preface, about whom by contrast little is known. This article therefore also sheds light on Nardinus, and includes translations of two poems written by him. In addition, it clarifies the *Sylla*'s political and moral-philosophical messages, establishes the dialogue's relation to a number of classical and humanistic models, and finally suggests how this work reflects Andronicus' hopes and fears for himself as well as for Dalmatia.

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[1] Andronicus' *Dialogus Sylla* was first brought to my attention by Luka Špoljarić, who has been a source of information on all matters Croatian since. I am also much indebted to Aleksander Sroczyński, a veritable font of bibliographical suggestions; to Keith Sidwell, for many stimulating conversations about Lucian as well as a preview of his forthcoming study; and to Jeroen De Keyser and Jan van Ophuijsen, who both scrutinised an earlier version of this text and made many fruitful suggestions. Remaining imperfections are, of course, my responsibility. One of these is that I have been unable to consult literature in the Slavic languages or Hungarian.

[2] The copy of Tranquillus Andronicus, *Dialogus Sylla*, n.p., 1527 held in Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, L.eleg.m. 58, can be consulted online and downloaded at https://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10184402-4. Two further physical copies are held in the Bodleian Library in Oxford, respectively Arch. B f.27 and Byw. J 4.24, and one in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, BM: 8° 24102-5 (frontispiece and flyleaf available at https://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb30020355w), while the National Széchényi Library in Budapest gives a catalogue entry for the book but does not appear to own it. The online-only transcription in *Croatiae auctores Latini*, curated by Neven Jovanović (2009, rev. 2014) can be accessed here: https://croala.ffzg.unizg.hr/cdb/static/croala-html/andreis-f-sylla.html. Note that, like the Paris copy, the transcription transposes a quire: 37r-38v of the Munich volume are inserted after 34v. The modern edition, which includes a minimal commentary, is Tranquillus Andronicus, *Dialogus Sylla*, ed. Zsótér Szabolcs, SZTE BTK Klasszika-Filológiai és Neolatin Tanszék, Szeged, 2017. Because the 1527 imprint is, in electronic form, more readily available than the 2017 edition, in what follows I provide references to both versions.

2. The *Dialogus Sylla*

The *Dialogus Sylla* is set in the Underworld, and purports to record a conversation between the Roman dictators L. Cornelius Sulla and C. Julius Caesar, with walk-on parts for Cn. Pompeius Magnus (Pompey the Great) and Minos as the judge in Hades. The dramatic moment is directly after Caesar's assassination: covered in stab wounds and bloody all over, he has been ferried across the river Styx by Charon, only to encounter Sulla on the other side. Neither man is pleased to see the other, and Caesar, in particular, is peeved to find that Sulla's henchmen, the Optimates, occupy higher seats in the Underworld than his own faction, the Populares. The dictators get engaged in an initially quite prickly exchange about their respective careers; as the dialogue progresses, it turns towards more universal issues. For the greater part of the text, Sulla lectures Caesar, who concedes a remarkable number of points, before returning to his initial grievance about the lower seating assigned to him. Then Minos appears, who vindicates Sulla and condemns Caesar to the bottom benches along with the other Populares, to be trod underfoot for a Platonic year.[3]

The text is preceded by a brief dedicatory letter to Janus Lascaris, in which Andronicus indicates what is the central question of his work: whether it is right to renounce power.[4] This argument was triggered, Andronicus writes, by the example of Emperor Diocletian's abdication, which he viewed favourably but his interlocutor at the time, Michael Nardinus, did not. In the dialogue, renouncement is advocated by Sulla, who likewise laid down power, against the protestations of Caesar, who famously did not. But it is fair to say that, whatever Andronicus asserts in this preface, the remit of *Dialogus Sylla* is much wider. It treats Roman politics in the first century BC and the civil wars of Sulla and Caesar, good and bad rule, the pleasures and burdens of power, the instability of human affairs, the difference between true glory and vainglory, and the curse of greed. In other words, it covers some of the key tenets of 'mainstream' Renaissance moral-political thought.

The argument of the dialogue is organised as follows. In response to Caesar's challenge, Sulla sets out to justify his own career, first of all the proscriptions. This is a necessary move for Andronicus, because the proscriptions had tarnished Sulla's reputation in antiquity as well as in the Renaissance, and therefore needed to be addressed before the dictator could function as the author's mouthpiece and as a moral guide.[5] Yet discussion of Sulla's political actions also provides an

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[3] T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 50r reads 'annum Plutonis'; emended in T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 57, to 'annum Platonis', an epoch of c. 25800 years.

[4] T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 1v; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 9.

[5] See for instance Guarino Veronese's interpretation of Plutarch's *Life of Sulla*, discussed in Marianne Pade, *The Reception of Plutarch's Lives in Fifteenth-Century Italy*, vol. 1, Museum Tusculanum Press, Copenhagen, 2007, 249–51.

occasion for ideological positioning, during which Andronicus demonstrates a strongly reactionary bent. When Caesar asks his opponent to explain the reasons behind his feud with Marius, the leader of the Populares, Sulla not only claims that Marius sought tyranny, but also points to the endemic conflict of the orders. He portrays the nobility as the natural ruling class while accusing the plebs of envy, and opines that although good stock may deteriorate, the reverse is very rarely true. This last point is granted by Caesar. Challenged, in turn, by Sulla about his own slaughters and theft, Caesar proclaims that power is worth every price, which introduces the question of Sulla's renunciation of his office. To Caesar's glorification of the intoxicating pleasures of power, Sulla responds with a defence of the rule of law. Order is necessary, he says, or else the multitude will aspire to the life of a prince; furthermore, Rome's founding fathers had not destined the city for single rule. Caesar counters this conservatism with an exposition on the variability of Fortune: nothing can last for ever, including Rome. While conceding the general point, Sulla asserts that it in no way excuses Caesar's subversion of the state and identifies his own aim as having been the reverse: the restoration of the republic. This achieved, he was more than happy to lay down the burdens of rule. Confronted with Caesar's incredulity, Sulla launches into a long exposition on the multiple evils of power. Caesar's objection that such hardships are a source of glory occasions a discussion of real glory and vainglory, followed by a comparison between the life of a prince and of a pauper. Finally, Sulla shows mankind's foolish quest for wealth to be a source of misery. At this point, Caesar regains his pugnacious spirit, declares himself unconvinced, and attacks Sulla for the vices of his youth, which is parried by a reference to Caesar's sexual improprieties at a more advanced age. But this foray into the protagonists' personal lives is cut short by the arrival of Minos. To this judge Caesar presents his (primarily military) achievements, which Sulla proceeds to belittle and contrast with his own defence of Rome's liberty. Then Minos announces his verdict, confirming that those who put the state first, as Sulla did, are to lord it over those who did the reverse. A table of contents might look like this:

	Tranquillus Andronicus *Dialogus Sylla*	1527 edition	2017 edition
0	Dedication to Lascaris	1v	9
1.1	Setting the scene: Caesar's arrival and monologue	2v–4v	9–11
1.2	Setting the scene: Sulla and Pompey converse with Caesar	4v–8r	11–15
2.1	Sulla's career: justifying the proscriptions	8r–12v	15–20
2.2	Sulla's career: against Marius and the plebs	12v–17v	20–25
2.3	Sulla's career: against Marius in favour of the nobility	17v–19v	25–28
3.1	Sulla's abdication: the lure of power	19v–26r	28–34
3.2	Sulla's abdication: the rule of law	26r–28v	34–36

3.3	Counterpoint: Fortune's flux	28v–30r	36–37
3.4	Sulla's abdication: the restoration of the state	30r–32r	37–40
4.1	Unhappiness of leaders: the burdens of power	32r–39v	40–46
4.2	Unhappiness of leaders: true vs false glory	39v–42r	46–48
4.3	Unhappiness of leaders: princely vs simple life	42r–46r	48–53
4.4	Unhappiness of leaders: greed	46r–46v	53
5.1	Paragon: private lives	46v–48r	53–55
5.2	Paragon: public lives and Minos' judgement	48r–50r	55–57

As is immediately apparent from the plot, the *Sylla* constitutes a philosophical comedy, or comedic philosophy, in the manner of Lucian. The dialogue's models will be discussed in a later section, but obvious intertexts are Lucian's *Dialogues of the Dead* and his *Tyrannus* or *Downward Journey* [*Cataplus*]. Andronicus' qualities as a humourist are especially evident in the opening pages of the *Sylla*, where he portrays an overweening and brash Caesar, who is however foolishly out of his depth in his new hostile environment, all the more so when compared to the seasoned shades of Sulla and Pompey. The quick back-and-forth between Caesar and Sulla is similarly funny and reminiscent of Lucianic dialogue. That being said, the longer discourses, Sulla's in particular, do not maintain the same light touch but instead offer sometimes plodding moralising.

Lucian of Samosata was a fashionable author at the time. His writings were used to teach Greek in schools, where he was usually the first literary author encountered by students.[6] But there were also numerous Latin translations of Lucian's works, not least those by Erasmus. Lucian's mode of *serio ludere* also inspired new philosophical explorations, the most famous of which are Erasmus' *Laus stultitiae* (1511), dedicated to Thomas More, and More's own *Utopia* (1516). Eight years prior to the production of the *Sylla* in 1527, Andronicus had endeavoured to make Erasmus' acquaintance (something of a rite of passage for aspiring German and

[6] For Lucian's Renaissance afterlife, see David Marsh, *Lucian and the Latins: Humor and Humanism in the Early Renaissance*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1998; Emilio Mattioli, *Luciano e l'umanesimo*, Nella sede dell'Istituto, Naples, 1980; Christopher Robinson, *Lucian and his Influence in Europe*, Duckworth, London, 1979; Keith Sidwell, *Lucian of Samosata in the Italian Quattrocento*, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Cambridge Repository, 1975; and the forthcoming study by Keith Sidwell, '*Lucianus Samosatensis*' in the *Catalogus Translationum et Commentariorum: Mediaeval and Renaissance Latin Translations and Commentaries*, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto.

central European humanists).[7] In spring 1519, the Dalmatian travelled to Leuven in the hope of meeting the Dutch scholar there. This plan did not come to fruition (Erasmus was in Antwerp), so Andronicus departed, leaving two indignant poems in his wake. But his efforts were not wholly in vain: in June of the same year, Erasmus responded with a polite letter, apologising for the missed encounter. And a few years later, he included a character named Parthenius, generally held to stand for Andronicus, in his *Convivium poeticum* (1523).[8]

Erasmus, however, was not the (primary) object of Andronicus' Lucianism in the *Sylla*. Recall that Andronicus dedicated the dialogue to Janus Lascaris. This Byzantine émigré was hardly less esteemed and well-connected than Erasmus: his learned network at the time included – besides the itinerant scholar from Rotterdam himself – humanistic circles in Venice, Rome, and Paris.[9] Previously, Lascaris had been among the entourage of Lorenzo the Magnificent in Florence. It was there, in 1496, that Lascaris, along with Demetrius Chalkokondyles, prepared the *editio princeps* of Lucian in Greek.[10] With *Dialogus Sylla*, thus, Andronicus composed a text that was tailor-made to appeal to the scholarly interests of its dedicatee, who, in turn, was well placed to advance the Dalmatian's ascent in the European republic of letters.[11]

3. Andronicus' Environment

The reasons for Andronicus' pursuit of Lascaris were not, however, exclusively literary. A career in the service of various ecclesiastical and secular dignitaries and diplomats also placed Andronicus on a path towards the Byzantine. Indeed, the

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[7] Bratislav Lučin, »A missed encounter: Tranquillus Andronicus and Erasmus of Rotterdam,« *Erasmus Studies* 38 (2018), 55–63, at 56–7.

[8] B. Lučin, *op. cit.* (7), 62–3.

[9] Massimo Ceresa, »Lascaris, Giano,« *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (Internet, November 1, 2024); Anthony Grafton, »Janus Lascaris,« in *Contemporaries of Erasmus*, vol. 2, ed. Peter Bietenholz and Thomas Deutscher, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1986, 292–4.

[10] The Greek *editio princeps* of Lucian was printed by Laurentius de Alopa. Although it is customary to refer to Lascaris as its sole editor, it is more likely that the work was shared by a team of Greek scholars headed by Lascaris and Chalkokondyles. I owe this information to Keith Sidwell, who kindly provided me with the relevant section of his *op. cit.* (6) forthcoming. Until this study is published, see K. Sidwell, *op. cit.* (6) 1975, 9–10; 61.

[11] Jacqueline Glomski, *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*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2007, 47–71, examines the quest for patronage of itinerant Central European writers.

overlap between the Dalmatian's professional and his scholarly interests arguably prompted the genesis of *Dialogus Sylla* and some of its features.

Andronicus' life has been well studied, yet nothing is known about his whereabouts in the years directly preceding the publication of the *Sylla*.[12] As a young man, he was probably a student in Dubrovnik, which was followed by sojourns in several Italian (university) cities: Padua, Bologna, Siena, Perugia. Then, in 1513–15, Andronicus served as secretary to Jan Łaski, the archbishop of Gniezno and primate of Poland, who was in Rome on account of the Fifth Lateran Council.[13] Afterwards, he frequented a number of Transalpine universities, matriculating at both Vienna and Ingolstadt in 1517, and at Leipzig the year after. In 1519, as discussed, he travelled to Leuven, but after this the trail goes cold until 1527. In that year, Andronicus reappears in Buda, among the supporters of the Transylvanian voivode and royal pretender János Szapolyai. The leading figure of Szapolyai's faction was Hieronim Łaski, the nephew of the Andronicus' former employer Jan Łaski.[14] In February 1527, Andronicus is found acting as secretary to the French ambassador Antonio Rincón, who represented King Francis I with Szapolyai. It was Rincón who, in September 1527, sent Andronicus to Paris, to report back to the French court.[15] Paris is where Janus Lascaris resided in that period, so it must be on this occasion that Andronicus presented the Byzantine with the dedication manuscript of *Sylla*, asking him (as it says in the prefatory letter) to support its dissemination.[16] Lascaris evidently granted his request, for although the colophon

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[12] For Andronicus' biography see Silvano Cavazza, »De Andreis, Francesco Tranquillo,« *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (Internet, November 1, 2024); Peter Bietenholz, »Tranquillus Andronicus Parthenius,« in *Contemporaries of Erasmus*, vol. 1, ed. Peter Bietenholz and Thomas Deutscher, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1985, 56–7; Gábor Barta, »Un umanista senza successo nel XVI secolo: Tranquillo Andreis,« *Rivista di studi Ungheresi* 10 (1995), 75-90; Ágnes Ritoók-Szalay, »Andronicus Tranquillus Dalmata und die *Vita Aulica*,« *Živa antika* 25:1–2 (1975), 202–9; B. Lučin, *op. cit.* (7), 56–7.

[13] Bratislav Lučin, »The *Iuvenilia* of Franciscus Tranquillus Andronicus in Gniezno,« CM XXIX (2020), 78–81, at 80.

[14] Maria Cytowska, »Hieronim ŁASKI,« in *Contemporaries of Erasmus*, vol. 2, ed. Peter Bietenholz and Thomas Deutscher, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1986, 294–6.

[15] In a letter dated 23 September 1527, Rincón informs marshal Anne de Montmorency that he is sending his secretary Andronicus to Paris, Kenneth Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204-1571)*, vol. 3, *The Sixteenth Century to the Reign of Julius III*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1984, 314.

[16] 'Itaque mitto tibi hunc dialogum, ut … si probaveris, te authore exeat in manus hominum, et noster Diocletianus vindicetur a calumnia. Vale', T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 1v; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 9; 'And so I send you this dialogue, in order that … if you approve, it may go out into people's hands with you as supporter, and our Diocletian may be redeemed from slander. Farewell.' All translations are my own unless otherwise stated.

of the printed edition gives no place of publication, the book comes from the press of Jean Vidoue in Paris.[17]

Andronicus' employments must be briefly contextualised. First, as primate of Poland and, previously, royal secretary and Grand Chancellor of the Crown, Jan Łaski had long been among the most important Polish public servants. He had, for instance, negotiated the marriage between the Polish King Sigismund I and Barbara Szapolyai, the younger sister of János, which was celebrated in Krakow in 1512.[18] This wedding, which united the Polish crown with the richest and most powerful family of Hungary, was part of the construction of an anti-Habsburg alliance in central Europe. The Habsburgs responded in kind at the First Congress of Vienna (1515), where the famous double marriage alliance saw crown prince Louis II of Hungary, Croatia and Bohemia wed Mary of Habsburg, while his sister Anna was betrothed to one of Mary's brothers – either Ferdinand or Charles V. This dynastic manoeuvring bore fruit for the Habsburgs in the aftermath of the Battle of Mohács.[19] There, on 29 August 1526, the Ottoman army resoundingly defeated the Hungarian forces, and King Louis II drowned in an attempt to escape. The Sultan briefly occupied Buda, yet for the time being did not move to bring Hungary under his direct control. János Szapolyai claimed the throne, but was contested by Ferdinand of Habsburg as brother-in-law of the deceased king. On 11 November 1526, Szapolyai, who drew on the support of a great number of the lesser Hungarian nobles, was crowned King of Hungary by the nation's senior prelate, István Podmaniczky. However, on 16 December, the Hungarian Diet convened in Pozsony (now Bratislava in Slovakia) and elected Ferdinand as king, sparking a civil war. After defeating Szapolyai in battle in September 1527, Ferdinand was crowned, also by Podmaniczky, on 3 November, with the result that there were now two legitimate Hungarian kings. Countering Habsburg military muscle, János Szapolyai signed an alliance with the Sultan in February 1528.

Second, just two months before the disaster of Mohács, on 22 May 1526, France, Milan, Venice, Florence and the Papal States formed the League of Cognac

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[17] In the secondary literature, the place of publication is sometimes given as Strasbourg or Augsburg. However, a handwritten note on the flyleaf of the copy of *Dialogus Sylla* held in Paris, *op. cit.* (2) BM: 8° 24102-5, identifies the press as that of Jean Vidoue in Paris, based on the typesetting.

[18] Maria Cytowska, »Jan (I) ŁASKI,« in *Contemporaries of Erasmus*, vol. 2, ed. Peter Bietenholz and Thomas Deutscher, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1986, 296–7; Jan Dabrowski, »ŁASKI, Jan,« *Enciclopedia Italiana* (Internet, November 1, 2024).

[19] Good introductions are Géza Pálffy, *Hungary Between Two Empires, 1526–1711*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2021, 7–51; James Tracy, *Balkan Wars: Habsburg Croatia, Ottoman Bosnia, and Venetian Dalmatia, 1499–1617*, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, 2016, 51–143; with the maps in sections 8–9 and 19–20 of Paul Robert Magocsi, *Historical Atlas of Central Europe: Third Revised and Expanded Edition*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2019, 23–30 and 59–66.

against Charles V. War between Charles and the League followed in September, leading to the Sack of Rome by the imperial troops on 6 May 1527 and an occupation of the city until 1528.[20] Both Mohács and the Sack of Rome were events of worldview-changing significance. At Mohács, for the first time, a Catholic (as opposed to an Orthodox) Kingdom fell to the Ottomans.[21] During the Sack of Rome, the centre of Western Christendom and the imperial capital itself was taken – ransacked by the army of its own Emperor. Besides timing and impact, what these events had in common was the involvement of the Habsburg brothers Ferdinand and Charles V on one side of the conflict. Naturally, then, the powers on the other side sought to make common cause: specifically, in order to ensure containment of the Habsburgs on their eastern front, Francis I of France reached out to secure a deal with Szapolyai. The main diplomat engaged in this endeavour was Rincón: he concluded the Franco-Hungarian alliance with Szapolyai in 1528.[22] Later, still aided by Andronicus, Rincón also undertook the French missions to the Ottomans with the same anti-Habsburg aim.[23] Although Andronicus himself had also courted Habsburg patronage (he dedicated an oration against the Turks to Emperor Maximilian at the Diet of Augsburg in 1518), his diplomatic career prior to and at the time of the *Sylla* was, as far as can be told, wholly in the service of opponents of the Habsburgs.[24]

A French connection through diplomatic service can likewise be demonstrated in the case of Janus Lascaris. When the French invaded Italy in 1494, after the expulsion of the Medici from Florence, Lascaris had placed himself in the service of King Charles VIII of France.[25] He retained his role under Louis XII and followed his court back to Paris. From 1504 to 1509, the Byzantine served

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[20] Michael Mallet and Christine Shaw, *The Italian Wars, 1494–1559: War, State and Society in Early Modern Europe*, Pearson, Harlow, 2012, 155–64.

[21] The shock of Mohács lessened over time because the Ottomans did not occupy the whole of Hungary and precisely because the Sack of Rome overtook it in the European collective imagination, Péter Kasza, »The Two Lives of an Oration. Additions to the Origins of Tranquillus Andronicus' Anti-Turkish Speech from 1541,« CM XXVI (2017), 288–9; see also Kenneth Gouwens, *Remembering the Renaissance: Humanist Narrations of the Sack of Rome*, Brill, Leiden, Boston, Cologne, 1998 and André Chastel, *The Sack of Rome, 1527*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1983.

[22] De Lamar Jensen, »The Ottoman Turks in Sixteenth-Century French Diplomacy,« *The Sixteenth-Century Journal* 16:4 (1985), 451–70; Victor-Louis Bourrilly, »Les diplomats de François Ier. Antonio Rincón et la politique orientale de François Ier, 1522–1541,« *Revue historique* 113 (1913), 64–83 and 268–308.

[23] D. L. Jensen, *op. cit.* (22); V.-L. Bourrilly, *op. cit.* (22); S. Cavazza, *op. cit.* (12).

[24] Tranquillus Andronicus, *Oratio contra Thurcas ad Germanos habita*, In officina Iohannis Miller, Augsburg, 1518. Andronicus delivered another oration on the same theme in 1541. Both are discussed by P. Kasza, *op. cit.* (21), 287–98.

[25] The information in this paragraph derives from M. Ceresa, *op. cit.* (9).

as the French ambassador to Venice, combining diplomatic duties with cultural initiatives. After the election of the Medici Pope Leo X in 1513, who was known to Lascaris from his Florentine days, Louis XII posted him to Rome; in 1515, the pope in turn employed Lascaris as his personal letter-bearer to the new French king, Francis I. In the following years, Lascaris moved between Rome, Paris, and Venice. In 1525, the new Medici pope, Clement VII, commissioned him to plead with Charles V for the release of Francis I, imprisoned in Madrid since the Battle of Pavia; Lascaris received a French stipend that year. In the next year Lascaris moved back to Paris, where he remained in contact with Francis I, seeking in 1527 (and eventually prevailing in the 1530s) to persuade the king to fund a series of royal lectures.

As such, the Byzantine scholar whom the humanist Andronicus strove to impress was not only a cultural figure. He was also a veteran leader of diplomatic missions in the same political milieux traversed by Andronicus as secretary, and Lascaris was employed around the time of the *Sylla* by the same ultimate patron as Andronicus, namely King Francis I. For all these reasons, Lascaris was an attractive object for Andronicus' attentions. How these political affiliations played out in the *Sylla* will be discussed in the next but one section. First, however, we must consider the second person mentioned by Andronicus in the prefatory letter to Lascaris: Michael Nardinus.

4. Michael Nardinus

In the first line of the dedication of *Dialogus Sylla*, Andronicus recalls an earlier conversation between himself and a learned friend named 'Michael Nardinus'. Further information about Nardinus' identity is provided in the same line, when Andronicus refers to the Roman emperor Diocletian as 'a man of our nation'.[26] Diocletian was born in the Roman province of Dalmatia, probably in Salona (present-day Solin), and built a palace nearby which was to become the city of Split. Since Andronicus' family seat was Trogir, a city on the coast c. 25 kilometres west of Salona/Split, the nationality he shared with Diocletian was not one of citizenship: rather, they were fellow Dalmatians. Michael Nardinus therefore was also a Dalmatian, and he can be identified as Mihovil Nardin from Šibenik, a coastal city c. 50 kilometres north-west of Trogir. Very little is known about him, but we find a 'Michael Nardinus from Šibenik' matriculating to study

[26] 'Cum Michaele Nardino meo necessario viro ingenioso et docto longa mihi disceptatio fuit de nostrae nationis homine Diocletiano Imperatore', T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 1v; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 9, 'With my friend Michael Nardinus, a talented and learned man, I had a long conversation about a man of our nation, Emperor Diocletian'.

medicine at the University of Montpellier in 1529.[27] Furthermore, in 1540, a 'Michael Nardinus', identified as a doctor, recommends the work of the French poet Hugues Salel – in other words, he was a medic touched by the Muses.[28] This, in turn, makes it likely that the 'Michael Nardinus' who authored a poem in the *Coryciana* (published in 1524) is the same man.[29] It is worth lingering over this for a moment, for it demonstrates that Nardinus was familiar with an elite circle of Roman curialists and humanists, and participated in their rituals.

The *Coryciana*, as is well known, is a collection of 399 poems by over a hundred poets dedicated to Johannes Goritz, who was registrar of supplications in the curia of Pope Alexander VI and papal protonotary under later popes.[30] Humanists Latinized his German surname (Goritz was a Luxembourger born near Trier) to 'Corycius' or 'Coritius', invoking the contented old gardener of Virgil's *Fourth Eclogue*, as well as the Corycian cave of the muses on Mount Parnassus.[31] These were fitting allusions, since Goritz owned a garden (*vigna*) between Trajan's forum and the Tarpeian rock, which, it was claimed, he tended to with his own hands. To this Arcadian setting he invited literati to dine together, exchange poetry, and

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[27] Giovanni Busini, »Italiani all'università di Basilea dal 1460 al 1601,« *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 20:3 (1958), 497–526, at 499, n. 2.

[28] Phillipp Becker, *Zur romanischen Literaturgeschichte: Ausgewählte Studien und Aufsätze*, Francke, Munich, 1967, 718.

[29] Blosius Palladius, *Blosius Palladius Ro. Iano Corycio Lucumburgen*, Impressum Romę apud Ludovicum Vicentinum et Lautitium Perusinum, 1524. This edition is accessible via the Internet Archive: https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_M_V8gq_9wW4C/mode/2up. The Nardin family produced another published poet in the second half of the sixteenth century: Petar Nardin, whose *Carmen ad regem Philippum* is included in Petar Lučić's Latin miscellany. I owe this reference to Luka Špoljarić.

[30] For Goritz's life, see Massimo Ceresa, »Goritz, Johann, detto Coricio,« *Dizionario Biographico degli Italiani* (Internet, November 1, 2024). For his humanist sodality and their celebrations, see Julia Haig Gaisser, »The Rise and Fall of Goritz's Feasts,« *Renaissance Quarterly* 48:1 (1995), 41–57; and Phyllis Pray Bober, »The Coryciana and the nymph Corycia,« *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 40 (1977), 223–39; for the *Coryciana* anthology see Luke Roman, »*Coryciana*. The Spaces of the Collection,« *Renaissance and Reformation* 45:3 (2022), 103–140; Julia Haig Gaisser, »Poets at the St. Anne Altar: Self-reflection in the *Coryciana*,« in *Studia Humanitatis – Essays in Honour of Marianne Pade, Nordic Journal of Renaissance Studies* 18 (2002), 73–90; Josef IJsewijn, »Poetry in a Roman Garden: The *Coryciana*,« in *Latin poetry and the classical tradition. Essays in Medieval and Renaissance literature*, ed. Peter Godman and Oswyn Murray, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1990, 211–231; Rosenna Alhaique Pettinelli, »Punti di vista sull'arte nei poeti dei *Coryciana*,« *La Rassegna della letteratura italiana* 90:1–2 (1986), 41–54; and for an interdisciplinary study of the fresco, sculpture, and poetry of Goritz's altar, see David Rijser, *Raphael's Poetics: Art and Poetry in High Renaissance Rome*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam, 2012, 177–241.

[31] Verg. *Georg*. 4.125–38.

pay homage to the shared ideals of humanistic *otium*. Among them one finds, in Josef IJsewijn's assessment, 'the most illustrious names of the age': Pietro Bembo, Baldassare Castiglione, Marco Girolamo Vida, Angelo Colocci, Paolo Giovio, Ulrich von Hutten, as well as lesser luminaries such as Pierio Valeriano, Francesco Sperulo, and Janus Vitalis.[32]

The yearly highlight of Goritz's humanist sodality was the feast day of St Anne (26th July). In 1512, the sculptor Andrea Sansovino completed for Goritz a statue of St Anne, the Virgin Mary, and the Christ child.[33] This sculpture group was embedded in a column of the church of Sant'Agostino in Rome, in a niche facing the nave. On the column above the niche, in 1511–1512 Goritz employed the painter Raphael to produce a fresco depicting the prophet Isaiah. Below, on the stone pedestal supporting the statue where it protruded from its recess, a Latin inscription asked that the donor's generosity be recompensed with a place in heaven: at the foot of St Anne's altar was to be Goritz's grave.[34] This column-chapel was the first meeting place for Goritz and his *sodales* on the day of St Anne's feast, the humanists bringing epigrams dedicated to the sculpture and its patron, as well as hymns (prayers) addressed to Goritz's patron saint. These poems were affixed to three wooden panels placed around either the column or (as seems more fitting) the statue's protruding inscribed base. This done, the troupe would decamp to Goritz's *vigna*, where a lavish banquet was the occasion for yet more poetry (punningly called *Annales Dies*), now celebrating the host's hospitality.[35]

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[32] J. IJsewijn, *op. cit.* (30), 215. For wider studies of this cultural milieu, see e.g. Paul Gwynne, *Patterns of Patronage in Renaissance Rome. Francesco Sperulo: Poet, Prelate, Soldier, Spy*, 2 parts, Peter Lang, Oxford, 2015; Ingrid Rowland, *The Culture of the High Renaissance. Ancient and Moderns in Sixteenth-Century Rome*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998; and John D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome: Humanists and Churchmen on the Eve of the Reformation*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore & London, 1983.

[33] For the construction of Goritz's altar see Virginia Bonito, »The St. Anne altar in Sant'Agostino in Rome: Restoration and Interpretation,« *Burlington Magazine* 124:950 (1982), 268–76 and ead., »The St. Anne Altar in Sant'Agostino in Rome: A New Discovery,« *Burlington Magazine* 122:933 (1980), 805–812.

[34] 'Vestra locum ut pietas aliquem post reddat in astris / has dedit in terris Corycius statuas': 'So that your [sense of] obligation may afterwards give back [to him] a place among the stars, Goritz has given these statues on earth', on eye level. Above this is a longer inscription recording the date and content of his donation, cited in J. Haig Gaisser, *op. cit.* (30), 47, n. 20. The ensemble may be seen *in situ*, except for Goritz's earthly remains, as he died in Verona, *en route* to Luxembourg after the Sack of Rome.

[35] The order of the day's events is reflected in the Coryciana's three-book structure, devoted respectively to *Epigrammata*, *Hymni*, and *Annales*.

The feast was, as Luke Roman argues, a multi-media event which constructed spatial and intellectual identities through, among other means, poetry.[36] The column-chapel itself was a permanent and multilingual site of writing. The Latin inscriptions on the sculpture's pedestal were complemented by a painted Hebrew scroll unrolled between Isaiah's hands, and a Greek titulus above his head.[37] Annually, these writings were 'reactivated' through their juxtaposition with the seemingly ephemeral poems in manuscript pinned onto the wooden boards (partly echoing, partly obscuring the existing installation) – which prior to their affixation were surely recited orally. Many of these temporary fixtures were, in turn, granted permanence in the printed edition of the *Coryciana* curated by Goritz's friend Blosius Palladius [Biagio Pallai].[38] It should be noted, furthermore, that Blosius was not the first to collect the Corycian poems.[39] Goritz had flaunted the idea as early as 1515, and a first gathering, comprising poems 1–269, appears to have been undertaken c. 1519 by the poet Silvius Laurelius.[40] This was extended before the death of Pope Leo X (d. 1522) by Janus Vitalis and Caius Silvanus, an otherwise unknown German poet.[41] In this version, the collection is preserved in two manuscripts.[42] One of these, now in the Vatican, shows rigorous textual editing and, at times, reorganisation or expurgation of the poems in the hand of the

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[36] L. Roman, *op. cit.* (30), esp. 103–5; 112–7; 132–34.

[37] Isaiah 26:3: 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee'. Only the first part is legible on the scroll. The titulus' mock inscription in Greek capitals reads 'To Anne, Mother of the Virgin, to the Virgin, Mother of God, and to Christ the Redeemer. Jo[hannes] Gor[itz]' (tr. cited from J. Haig Gaisser, *op. cit.* (30), 47, n. 20).

[38] The arrangement is reminiscent of the speaking statue on the other side of Piazza Navona relative to the Sant'Agostino: Pasquino, where from 1501 poems were (and still are) affixed; the first known printed edition of *pasquinades* is *Carmina quae ad Pasquillum fuerunt posita*, Mazzocchi, Rome, 1509, after which they appeared annually, bar some exceptions, until 1536. These ritual festivities were overseen by Cardinal Carafa, see Anne Reynolds, »Cardinal Oliviero Carafa and the Early Cinquecento Tradition of the Feast of Pasquino,« *Humanistica Lovaniensia: Journal of Neo-Latin Studies* 34A (1985), 178–208. The difference is that Goritz's poets addressed a statue, whereas Pasquino purportedly speaks in his own voice.

[39] The genesis of the *Coryciana* is reconstructed by José Ruysschaert, »Les péripéties inconnues de l'édition des 'Coryciana' de 1524,« in *Atti del Convegno di studi su Angelo Colocci*, ed. anon., Amministrazione comunale, Jesi, 1972, 45–60.

[40] J. Ruysschaert, *op. cit.* (39), 49–50; 57–8; 60.

[41] J. Ruysschaert, *op. cit.* (39), 58–9.

[42] Rome, Biblioteca Corsiniana: MS Niccolò Rossi 207, and Vatican City, Biblioteca Vaticana: MS Vat. lat. 2754 (https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.2754). The Vatican manuscript contains Vigil's editing. The manuscripts are described in J. Ruysschaert, *op. cit.* (39), 49–51; and Joseph IJsewijn's edition of the *Coryciana*, Herder, Rome, 1997, 17–19.

erudite Fabius Vigil.[43] It is Vigil's version of the Vitalis-Silvanus collection that underlies Blosius' edition. None of these assemblages are complete: for example, neither the manuscripts nor the print include the Greek poems which are known to have been among the handwritten submissions.[44] The additional selection criteria for the printed edition can only be guessed at: the quality of the poem, the fame of its author, and the latter's relationship to Goritz and/or Blosius-Vigil are all conceivable candidates – perhaps in ascending order of likelihood.

Goritz, a German whose acceptance by Roman high society must have benefited greatly from his cultural feasts, was unusually international in his outlook. He appears to have conceived of his sodality as a gathering of like-minded men of letters of all nations, united by religion and a fervour for Roman culture, if not by Roman birth. This appears borne out by the immediate Biblical context of the Isaian passage, which speaks of God's 'righteous nation' as including all those on earth who believe.[45] Sansovino's statue, which provides a classicising form for the cult of Saint Anne and her two generations of offspring that was particularly prominent in the Rhine-Meuse area ('*Anna Selbdritt*' in German; '*Sint-Anna te Drieën*' in Dutch; '*Anne Trinitaire*' in French) constitutes a fitting embodiment of this ethos. It also seems to be reflected in the presentation of the poets in the *Corcyciana*, whose names are commonly followed by epithets indicating their places of birth: Roman, Italian, and non-Italian alike.[46] But this inclusive attitude was not shared by all. So much is indicated by the Christophe Longueil affair, in which Blosius, Valeriano, and other Roman humanists staged a very public mock trial of this Belgian scholar for having (a decade previously) delivered a speech on the inferiority of Italy to France.[47] One of the cards wielded against Longueil was that he was no Roman citizen, since his city of birth, Cambrai, in Caesar's day had been part of Germany, not France. While Longueil was a member of Goritz sodality, his poems do not feature in Blosius' collection. Latent xenophobia can also be detected in the viciousness with which a number of Goritz's *sodales* turned on him when his fortunes declined during the pastorate of Pope Adrian VI (r. 1522–23). With supercilious superiority, they put the dour Dutchman and their former Maecenas on a par as fellow-barbarians.[48]

Membership of Rome's cultural elite, in short, was coveted and contested, all the more so for those from abroad. If admission to the printed pages was guarded

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[43] J. Ruysschaert, *op. cit.* (39), 54.

[44] 'Sequuntur mox graeca' is written in Vigil's hand in *op. cit.* (42) MS Vat. lat. 2754, f. 88r, cited in J. Ruysschaert, *op. cit.* (39), 55.

[45] J. Haig Gaisser, *op. cit.* (30), 45–47, with bibliography.

[46] J. Haig Gaisser, *op. cit.* (30), 47.

[47] For the Longueil affair, see J. Haig Gaisser, *op. cit.* (30), 48–49, with bibliography.

[48] J. Haig Gaisser, *op. cit.* (30), 50–54.

by Blosius-Vigil, doubtlessly access to the wooden tablets placed at the column, and to the celebrations there and in the *vigna*, was likewise restricted. We may imagine that an invitation to Goritz's feasts was a golden ticket, especially for foreign scholars seeking to build a network and find patronage in the Eternal City. But its receipt will have depended on meeting the most exacting standards of humanistic cachet, be it in terms of learning, literary skill, or social standing.[49] In their verses, many Corycian authors invoke the poetry already in existence as an obstacle to knowing what to write – an understandable sentiment, when hundreds of epigrams and hymns are being dedicated to one and the same sculpture. Yet these references to the panels' over-crowdedness are also evocative of poems and their poets jostling for position, with previous verses blocking newcomers.[50]

This, then, was the scene into which Michael Nardinus sought entry, and he proved equal to these challenges. He was accepted by Blosius-Vigil into the *Coryciana*, where he is represented by the following distich devoted to Sansovino's sculpture group in Goritz's column chapel:[51]

> Annae aviae, Mariae matri, Nato atque nepoti
> Harum aram hanc Corytus, et statuas statuit.
>
> For grandmother Anne, mother Mary, and the child and grandson
> of these, Goritz established this altar and statues.

While Nardinus' acceptance at the feast and inclusion in the collection is an undeniable feat, it is perhaps not too grudging to observe that with this two-line epigram the Dalmatian carved out the smallest possible space for himself in the *Coryciana*. Nor was this honour granted without labour. In fact, the distich represents but a fraction of the verses that Nardinus dedicated to Goritz's sodality.

The manuscripts of the Vitalis-Silvanus collection contain a much longer poem by Nardinus immediately preceding the distich. In the Vatican codex the longer poem was crossed out by Vigil, and hence excluded from Blosius' edition.[52] Here, in 31 lines of hendecasyllabic verse, Nardinus complains that he has been unable to laud Goritz for lack of space on the three boards. He inveighs against

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[49] As Julia Haig Gaisser notes, 'no club is interesting if it lets everyone in', in »Seeking Patronage under the Medici Popes: A Tale of Two Humanists,« in *The Pontificate of Clement VII: History, Politics, Culture*, ed. Kenneth Gouwens and Sheryl Reiss, Ashgate, Aldershot, 2005, 293–309, at 297. See also Groucho Marx.

[50] L. Roman, *op. cit.* (30), 117–24, discusses this particular form of writer's block.

[51] Nardinus' distich (Latin text only) is #228 in *Coryciana*, *op. cit.* (42), 166; and (with facing French translation) *Coryciana. Livre Premier. Épigrammes. Epigrammata (1524)*, ed. Lydia Keilen, Les Belles Lettres, Paris, 2020, 154, with a comment on 354.

[52] *Op. cit.* (42) MS Vat. lat. 2754, ff. 50r–51r (hendecasyllables) and f. 51r (distich).

the inferior (he says) poets who have thereby effectively silenced him, while not singing sufficient praises themselves. He then demands, under the threat of further poetic invectives, that a fourth panel be set up for him. This done, instead of invectives, he will pay tribute to the Corycian poets:[53]

Natam cum genitrice, et hinc nepotem
Matre ipsa atque avia vetustiorem,
Quis nunc id Parium dedere marmor
Lapsis ferrea ferre coela coelo,
Admiror, veneror, rogo, oro, adoro.
Nasicam pereuntis huius aevi
Legi Corytium senem beatum,
Quem vix Euganeum feret volumen,
Complexum minimis tribus tabellis
Treisque uni statuas Deo dicantem:
Cumque ipsum merita sonare laude
Vellem, non habui locum, et tacendo
(Quod numquam mihi contigit) recessi.
Sed si non sacer hic locus fuisset,
Omnes vos taciturnitate turpi
Multassem bene, pessimi poetae,
Nostris qui numeris locum negatis.
Quare id commonitorium notate:
Ni vestris tabulam mihi locetis
Quartam sumptibus, undecim tabellas
Vestris carminibus dicabo pictas
Vesicis, raphanis ciconiisque:
Mox ronchos sine fine rudientes
Ructans vociferatione vincam
Captum Stentora, sauciumque Martem,
Et (si sim Cluvienus ipse) dicens
Vos omnes Baviosque Maeviosque.
At mi si dabitur locus, Catullos
Non tantummodo vos fuisse dicam,
Sed doctas Heliconidum catervas,
Bacchos Mercuriosque Apollinesque.

[53] Nardinus' hendecasyllabic verse is #227A in *Coryciana*, *op. cit.* (42), 164–5, where IJsewijn emends several corrupt readings found in *op. cit.* (42) MS Vat. lat. 2754, and includes a brief commentary; and *Coryciana*, *op. cit.* (51), 154–5, with a more fulsome commentary on 352–4. My English translation preserves the hendecasyllabic line.

A child with her mother, and hence a grandchild,
older than his own mother and grandmother,
whom, fallen from heaven, now iron chisels
have given this Parian marble to bear:
I worship, admire, beseech, pray, adore them.
A Nasica of this age now in passing,
Corytius, blessed old man, I have read
(whom a volume of Livy will scarce contain),
embraced by the three tiniest of tablets,
while setting up three statues for the one God.
And when I wanted his name to resound with
deserved praise, I had no space, and without speech
(never does this befall me!) I slipped away.
But had this place not been sacred I would have
meted out proper punishment to you all,
namely shameful silence, most wretched poets,
who to my metred verse are denying space.
So, on this score, do pay heed to this warning:
Unless, at your own cost, you raise me a fourth
board, I will dedicate eleven tablets
to your versifications, bearing paintings
of bladders and horse-radishes and storks: soon
belching forth snarls that roar forever-lasting
with my vociferation I shall defeat
Stentor when captured and Mars who was wounded,
and calling (if I may be Cluvienus)
you 'Baviuses' and 'Maeviuses' all.
But if you give me place, I shall not merely
say that 'you have been Catulluses' but call
you 'learned throngs of Mount Helicon dwellers
and Bacchuses, Mercuries, and Apollos'.

If there is any truth to this conceit, these fiery hendecasyllables functioned as Nardinus' calling card: through them, he asserted his poetic persona and staked his claim to a place among the Corycians' ranks. Entrance granted, Nardinus produced his second poem, a distich more modest in sentiment, style, and size. Indeed, both the different length and the change in tone might explain why the latter, but not the former, survived Vigil's cut.

We do not know the nature of Nardinus' contacts with Goritz, nor whether he was a permanent member of his sodality or a one-off visitor to St Anne's feast. His name does not appear on the list of the sodality's deceased members drawn up in 1548, possibly by Paolo Giovio (who, as noted, was one of the Corycians),

but this may merely indicate that Nardinus was still alive by that date.[54] Either way, Nardinus' submission of not one but two poems signals a connection of some duration, and their inclusion in the very first stage of the collection indicates that contacts commenced in or before 1519 – but not much before, if José Ruysschaert is right that the first 269 poems are preserved in their original chronological order.[55] With c. 45 published poems per year between 1514 and 1519, Nardinus' distich (#228) falls in the 1518 cohort. Certainly the hendecasyllabic poem in particular demonstrates Nardinus' intimate knowledge of the *sodales*' habits and style. For instance, his demand for a fourth board may appear rhetorical, but in fact prefigures a similar request by Silvanus: in poem #271, the German notes that four (!) boards have now been filled, and bids Goritz to erect a fifth.[56] In poem #297, the poet Delius Hieronymus likewise bears witness to the existence of four panels, while speaking of a fifth in the future tense.[57] Another example is Nardinus' reference to the Corycians as aspirant Catulluses. This ironic compliment is well-considered, since the Catullan model of 'literary conviviality, polymetric alternation, and playful improvisation' was indeed an important inspiration for the Corycian project.[58] Nardinus' remark may be read as a jab at Pierio Valeriano in particular, whose first poetry collection, the *Praeludia* (1509), contained verses in most of the Catullan metres, and also featured discussions about metre, including an attack on Pliny's critique of Catullus' hendecasyllables.[59] Valeriano went on to deliver his 1521 inaugural lecture course at the University of Rome on Catullus: he was the first major figure to tackle this controversial subject.[60] Last but not least, Nardinus' own poetic choices present him as outperforming the Corycians at their own game, in as much as he proves himself to be an emulator of Catullus.[61] The hendecasyllable

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[54] This inventory can be found in Federico Ubaldini, *Vita di Mons. Angelo Colocci*, ed. Vittorio Fanelli, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City, 1969, Appendix IV.

[55] J. Ruysschaert, *op. cit.* (39), 53.

[56] Discussed in J. Ruysschaert, *op. cit.* (39), 47–8; and L. Roman, *op. cit.* (30), 118. See also *Coryciana*, *op. cit.* (42), 21–2, where IJsewijn uses Nardinus' poem #227A as evidence in his consideration of the number of boards.

[57] Discussed in J. Ruysschaert, *op. cit.* (39), 47–8 where the poem is however ascribed to Silvanus; and L. Roman, *op. cit.* (30), 118.

[58] L. Roman, *op. cit.* (30), 118.

[59] Julia Haig Gaisser, *Catullus and his Renaissance Readers*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1993, 121.

[60] J. Haig Gaisser, *op. cit.* (59); for Valeriano and his lecture series on Catullus, see ibid., 109–45.

[61] By assuming the guise of Cluvienus, Nardinus also flaunts his affinity with Juvenal, whose *Sat.* 1.79–80 reads 'si natura negat, facit indignatio versum / qualemcumque potest, quales ego vel Cluvienus'. The pairing of Stentor and Mars likewise derives from Juvenal, *Sat.* 13.112–3. Conversely, Bavius and Maevius were proverbial as spiteful poetasters, Verg. *Ecl.* 3.90.

is, after all, the metre most associated with Catullus, and what is more the ancient poet had himself in poem 12 threatened to unleash a hendecasyllabic invective if his demands were not met – significantly, perhaps, *à propos* the return of a stolen gift bestowed on him by his *sodalis*.[62]

Nardinus' apparently fairly close association with Goritz's sodality in these years is significant for our purpose. As discussed above, Lascaris spent the first years of the pontificate of Leo X in Rome, where he remained until he moved to Paris in September 1518. While in Rome, Lascaris befriended the antiquarian Angelo Colocci, who was one of Leo X's papal secretaries and, as noted, a member of the Corycians, as well as being the host of another comparable sodality.[63] Whether through Colocci or otherwise, Lascaris came to know the papal protonotary Goritz, and joined the Corycians. Although no poetry from his pen is preserved in the *Coryciana* (presumably because the Byzantine wrote in Greek), Lascaris' name is included on the list of the sodality's deceased members drawn up in 1548.[64] Lascaris and Nardinus thus frequented Goritz's sodality in the same period: 1518 is the most likely year for their joint attendance at St Anne's festival.

When, therefore, in the dedication of *Dialogus Sylla*, Andronicus informed Lascaris of his conversation with his 'learned friend Michael Nardinus', he did not offer just an explanation of the genesis of his text. Rather, Andronicus adduced his and Lascaris' mutual friend Nardinus to ease his own introduction to this pre-eminent scholar and diplomat. Following good patronage practice, he avoided an unpromising 'cold call' by first identifying a connecting figure between himself and his prospective patron, who thereby acted as an implied recommendation.[65] We may speculate about the possibility of continued contact between Lascaris and Nardinus after their Roman encounter, or even about a French employment for the latter, seeing that the humanist from Šibenik is attested in France during the next thirteen years.

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[62] Cat. 12, vv. 10–11, 'Quare aut hendecasyllabos trecentos / exspecta'; and v. 13, 'verum est mnemosynum mei sodalis'. It may be worth mentioning that a number of the Corycians also shared a strong interest in Lucian: Von Hutten authored Lucianic dialogues; Valeriano produced a Latin translation of *De mercede conductis*; Vigil a version of *Longaevi*; and Giovanni Maria Cattaneo dedicated *Quomodo conveniat historiam scribere* to Goritz in 1507. See K. Sidwell, *op. cit.* (6), forthcoming.

[63] For Lascaris and Colocci, see M. Ceresa, *op. cit.* (9); for Colocci and his sodality, see anon., 'Colocci, Angelo', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (Internet, November 1, 2024); anon. ed., *op. cit.* (39); and more generally P. Gwynne, *op. cit.* (32), and I. Rowland, *op. cit.* (32).

[64] F. Ubaldini, *op. cit.* (54), Appendix IV.

[65] J. Haig Gaisser, *op. cit.* (49), 305–6, stresses the importance of securing one or more intermediaries when approaching a patron in these circles.

5. The *Sylla*'s (Anti-)Politics

Having established how Andronicus cultivated Lascaris through Nardinus, and the intellectual and political networks in which these men moved, we can turn to whether and how their affiliations play out in *Dialogus Sylla*. Are the events of the day reflected in the dialogue? In particular, is the content of the *Sylla* somehow relevant to the Franco-Hungarian alliance for which Andronicus, as secretary to Rincón, was labouring at the time of writing? The answer to these questions is positive. While the *Sylla* is certainly not, or not primarily, a piece of propaganda, there are a number of allusions and identifications that intertwine contemporary affairs with the dispute in the Underworld.

The most obvious of these is the figure of Caesar himself. Of course, Charles V of Habsburg was literally Caesar in his role as Holy Roman Emperor. In the dialogue, Julius Caesar is the anti-hero. He is lectured by Sulla, who shows that his interlocutor was over-ambitious, lusted after power, conducted unjust wars, and generally acted like a tyrant. In terms of characterisation, as discussed before, Andronicus manages to make Caesar dangerous and overbearing as well as somewhat silly in his pomposity. This does not mean that Caesar 'is' Charles V, but simply that, with this interpretation a constant possibility, *Dialogus Sylla* becomes a funnier, indeed occasionally mordant, piece.

In certain instances the association of Caesar with Charles V is more pointed. At the very end of the dialogue – a strategic position for lasting impact – Sulla inveighs against mankind's misguided quest for riches, which hinder rather than help in living a good life. He discusses with distaste the lengths to which people foolishly go for mining gold. At this point, he makes the following observation:

> Ad latus Nigritarum declives campi sunt haud magno negotio penetrabiles: ibi omnis metalli venae plurimae, praecipue tamen auri solis ardoribus depurgati, gens autem simplex, nuda, citra vanas cupiditates, in specubus naturae tantum inserviens agit. Istuc olim venturum Tiresias vates praedixit ex ultimis Europae finibus hominum genus inhians auro perinde ac summo bono.
>
> On the side of the Black people there are sloping fields which can be pierced without much effort: here there are many veins of all metal, but especially gold, cleansed by the heat of the sun, but the people are simple, naked, beyond vain desires, they live in caves serving only nature. To this place the seer Tiresias once predicted a breed of men would come from the furthest territory of Europe, gaping at gold as though it were the greatest good.[66]

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[66] T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 46v. I have not followed the emendation of 'Ad latus' to 'Allatus' in T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 53, nor do I agree with Szabolcs' identification of the location as Africa, 53, n. 64.

This reference must be to the Spanish exploitation of the New World, for several reasons. First, the notion that gold was abundant in the Americas and could be effortlessly collected was promulgated already in Columbus' account of his first voyage.[67] Contemporaries estimated the vast wealth extracted from 'the Indies' for the Spanish crown, and in 1520, the Aztec treasure received by Charles V was a source of excitement around Europe.[68] Second, Andronicus' description of the indigenous populations as naked and simple people, far from vain desires, conforms to an ethnographical stereotype regularly applied to the Amerindians.[69] Such innocents' indifference to gold, as foil to Europeans' enslavement to it, was a common trope, developed for example in More's *Utopia*.[70] Third, the 'furthest territory of Europe' foreseen by Tiresias clearly points to the Iberian peninsula. In the dialogue, Sulla concludes this diatribe by asserting that Pluto, angered by greed, punishes the covetous particularly harshly. Caesar – and here his name is significant – merely replies that, recalling the pleasures brought by his power, he is happy to stick to his old views.[71]

An even more topical reference occurs earlier in the dialogue, when Sulla sets out the founding principles of the Roman state, which he implies are immutable. Caesar counters:

> Porro quis tot conversiones, tantam temporum instabilitatem non admiretur ac obstupescat? Hi Graeciam occupaverunt, illi Asiam; alii in Sicilia consederunt, ab aliis Hispania possessa est. Quae demum natio Italiam suae ditioni vendicare non tentaverit? Fortasse posthac eveniet ut aliquae gentes incognitae ex Scythicis nemoribus in Italiam migrent iusque Romanis ac Italicis populis ex Capitolio dicant.
>
> Again, who would not marvel and stand in awe at so many upheavals, such changeability of the times? These men have taken Greece, those Asia; some have settled in Sicily, Spain is held by others. And which

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[67] Christopher Columbus, *The Journal of Christopher Columbus*, ed. Clements Markham, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2010, 15–193.

[68] For the sums, e. g. Peter Martyr, writing c. 1516, and Gaspar Contarini, writing in 1525, cited in Clarence Haring, »American Gold and Silver Production in the First Half of the Sixteenth Century,« *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 29:3 (1915), 433–79, at 434–5; for the treasure, e.g. Albrecht Dürer, who viewed it in Antwerp in 1521, cited in Julie Jones, »Gold of the Indies,« *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 59:4 (2002), 3–4 at 4.

[69] See e. g. Ángel Delgado-Gómez, »The Earliest European Views of the New World Natives,« in *Early Images of the Americas: Transfer and Invention*, ed. Jerry Williams and Robert Lewis, University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 1993, 3–20.

[70] Thomas More, *Utopia*, ed. George Logan and Robert Adams, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002, 60–3.

[71] T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 46v–47r; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 53.

> nation might not eventually try to claim Italy for its dominion? Maybe hereafter it will come about that some unknown tribes from the Scythian forests move into Italy and give laws to the Roman and Italian peoples from the Capitol![72]

With uncanny future vision, Caesar sees that even Rome is not immune to the geo-political reversals wrought by time. The foreigners whom he indicates as having appropriated parts of the Roman Empire remain unidentified, but it surely is no coincidence that, in actual fact, both Greece and Asia had been conquered by the Ottomans, while the Habsburgs controlled Sicily as well as Spain. This being so, the reader is prompted to wonder, with Caesar, which of these two new empires might go on to annex Italy. Andronicus' ethnographical denominator is, perhaps deliberately, ambiguous. 'Scythae' was a common term to describe the Ottomans using classicising language in Hungarian sources from the later fifteenth century, following earlier Italian practice.[73] Caesar therefore may envisage the Ottoman run that saw the capture of Belgrade (1521) and Buda (1526) to culminate at long last in Rome. More immediately, however, the Italian Wars, intermittent since 1494, left no doubt that the Spanish did seek to bring Italy under their influence.[74] 'Scythae' was also a frequent humanistic ethnonym for the Germanic tribes, and Charles V's army of predominantly German *Landsknechte* had entered Rome in May 1527, not departing until February 1528. Piquantly, thus, as Andronicus was writing, the modern-day Caesar had effected the barbarian take-over prognosticated by his ancient namesake.[75]

The anti-Habsburg slant of *Dialogus Sylla* is as such beyond doubt: the potential identification of Caesar with Charles V shimmers below the surface. It remains to be considered whether these associations also work on the opposing side, that is to say, if there is something of János Szapolyai in the figure of Sulla. It pays to revisit Sulla's account of his own career from this perspective. In the dialogue, as discussed, Sulla positions himself as an indomitable enemy of the plebs and champion of the nobles.[76] This is, of course, in line with the historical Sulla's Optimates-platform during the civil war with Marius. Even so, Sulla's

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[72] T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 29r; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 36–7.

[73] Emőke Rita Szilágyi, »Teucri sive Turci. History of an ideologically laden designation in fifteenth-century Latin works,« in *Identity and Culture in Ottoman Hungary*, ed. Pál Ács and Pál Fodor, De Gruyter, Berlin, 2017, 327–46 at 344.

[74] See M. Mallet and C. Shaw, *op. cit.* (20).

[75] Retrospective prognostications regarding the Sack of Rome, and assessments of its significance in the larger scheme of history, are discussed in A. Chastel, *op. cit.* (21), 115–48.

[76] T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 12v–19v; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 20–8; Margaret Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 2008, esp. 65–154.

repeated apportioning of blame to the plebs for their conflict with their superiors, and his insistence that some are born to rule and others to serve, is striking.[77] These passages serve a purpose when read as a reminder of Szapolyai's signal military achievement. In 1514, Hungary had witnessed a Peasants' Revolt, during which c. 40.000 peasants plundered noble manors, took control of the land, and laid siege to castles and towns. It was Szapolyai's army that relieved the siege of Temesvár (now Timişoara in Romania) and defeated the main leader of the peasants, György Dózsa, who was punished with great brutality. This victory considerably strengthened the position of Szapolyai as champion of the nobility. On the losing side, the peasants' rights were further curbed, ending their freedom of movement, and obliging them to serve their lords in perpetuity.[78] The fiercely reactionary message of the *Sylla* vindicates this outcome.

If the first part of Andronicus' dialogue justifies Sulla's career, the second part glorifies his abdication (this change of tack is arguably one of the less successful aspects of *Dialogus Sylla*). Defending his decision to stand back from power once his work was done, the dictator invalidates all earthly striving. In this respect, he clearly cannot be seen as a stand-in for the ambitious János Szapolyai. Rather, as stated in the dedication letter, Sulla now functions as a mouthpiece for the author. This does not make his arguments less pertinent to Hungary's contemporary political situation. Sulla's dissection of the deceptive lure of power, the unhappiness of those who hold it, his praise of life away from court, as well as Caesar's observations on the instability of fortune, all provide philosophical arguments against the pursuit of rulership.[79] In the context of the ongoing Hungarian civil war, these lessons might be deemed instructive for either of the two royal pretenders. Were Ferdinand or Szapolyai to take heed (a wholly counterfactual proposition), hostilities would cease, and the state might be saved. In this regard, therefore, Andronicus' message is not so much partisan as anti-political.

This anti-political position is also why the *Sylla* is set in the Underworld. After all, the dead have a certain clarity of vision that the living lack: with all extraneous distractions stripped away, they learn what truly matters and what does not. In the dialogue, this is brought out by the different perspectives of Sulla and Caesar. Caesar, who has just arrived, is still entranced by power and riches, but Sulla, who at the dramatic moment has been in Hades for many years, takes a more considered view: he informs Caesar that in the Underworld nothing helps

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[77] Esp. T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 14r–v, 16r–v, 19r; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 22–4; 27.

[78] Pál Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen: A History of Medieval Hungary, 895–1526*, I. B. Taurus, London, 2001, 362–7.

[79] T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 19v–26r, 32r–39v, 42r–44r, and 28v–30r; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 28–34, 40–6, and 36–7.

you but 'good deeds'.[80] In terms of this bottom line, *Dialogus Sylla* is effectively a Christian morality play, like its contemporary *Everyman*.[81] But the form chosen by Andronicus borrows from Lucian, who also used the peripheral view from the Underworld to induce a critical examination of the world above.

6. Models Old and New

As noted previously, the two most obvious models for Andronicus' *Dialogus Sylla* are Lucian's *Tyrannus* or *Downward Journey* [*Cataplus*] and his *Dialogues of the Dead*. In addition, the text demonstrates Andronicus' engagement with Lucian's *Charon* or *The Observers* [*Charon sive contemplantes*], and *Menippus* or *Descent into Hades* [*Necyomantea*]. The Dalmatian was not the first Renaissance author to compose an Underworld dialogue in the manner of Lucian: at least four such works were written in the quattrocento. Since humanists not merely emulated ancient authors, but also borrowed from each other's writings, the possibility that Andronicus drew on his quattrocento predecessors in addition to Lucian must also be entertained. However, precisely because of this potential layering of influences, it is sometimes impossible to identify with certainty the ultimate source of a particular trope: one can only establish that it belongs to a tradition. Nevertheless, juxtaposing the *Sylla* with, first, the relevant dialogues by Lucian and, second, a number of humanistic works, will throw Andronicus' manner of imitation into relief while also revealing probable fifteenth-century intertexts.

Lucian's *Tyrannus* provides a model for the *Sylla*'s setting, for it takes place on or near Charon's boat. As such, the location of *Tyrannus*, while underworldly, is liminal: the deceased souls are in transit and, like Andronicus' Caesar, do not know the mores of Hades yet. This enables Lucian to show in real time the disillusion experienced by the recently living when they must come to terms with the rules for the dead. The focus is on the tyrant Megapenthes (whose name means 'great in sorrow'), who clings to life and to his earthly status; he learns that his still-warm corpse is being betrayed and his legacy squandered. He is contrasted to the cobbler Micyllus, who accepts his fate cheerfully. The vanity of worldly wealth and power, when considered from the vantage point of death, a prominent theme in *Dialogus Sylla*, is thus prefigured in *Tyrannus*, as is the characterisation of Caesar, who is another Megapenthes. As the story continues, Megapenthes is put on trial by Rhadamanthus for the murders, thefts, and sexual crimes that he committed as

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[80] 'Nemo implorantis opem miseretur praeter benefacta', T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 7v; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 15, 'no one takes pity on someone who begs for help without good deeds'.

[81] The *Somonyng of Everyman*, first printed in London between 1509 and 1530, and almost certainly a translation of the Dutch play *Elckerlijc*, written c. 1470.

a tyrant, and finally he is condemned to eternal enchainment – compare Caesar's punishment for a Platonic year.[82] An individual motif borrowed by Andronicus from Lucian is the emphasis on the Underworld's darkness and gloom.[83]

What *Tyrannus* does not offer, however, is a discussion between recognisable historical characters, as *Dialogus Sylla* does. In this regard, a precedent is provided by Lucian's *Dialogues of the Dead*, a collection of thirty miniature dialogues intermingling mythical and historical figures. Most relevant to the *Sylla* is the 25th dialogue, in which Alexander the Great and Hannibal (with a brief appearance by Scipio Africanus) vie for military primacy in front of Minos. Caesar's account of his many wars in *Dialogus Sylla* is reminiscent of Hannibal's in this *Dialogue of the Dead*, while Sulla's qualifications of Caesar's wars recall Alexander's retort.[84] Conversely, Alexander's bold claim to precedence with which Lucian's dialogue opens is mirrored by the repeated insolent demands of Andronicus' Caesar that Sulla yield to him.[85] This dialogue of Lucian's was refashioned in Latin by Giovanni Aurispa (1425) to have Scipio deliver a long justification of his own career. Since Aurispa's reworking became the most widely disseminated version of the text, it is very likely to have been known to Andronicus, who in that case may have drawn inspiration from it for Sulla's self-justification.

Two additional underworld-related dialogues by Lucian are relevant to *Dialogus Sylla*. In *Charon*, the protagonist, alongside Hermes, leaves Hades to observe the living on earth. The deities take a birds' eye view – the inverse of the Underworld perspective – which shows just how small and insignificant humans and their achievements are. A particular point is made of the decline of once-great cities, which chimes with Caesar's speculations in *Dialogus Sylla* regarding the future of Rome.[86] Like Andronicus' dialogue, furthermore, *Charon* features a discourse on gold as cause of wars, plots, and enslavement.[87] Besides, *Charon* argues that humans are wilfully ignorant of the futility of their striving,

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[82] Lucian, *The Downward Journey, or the Tyrant, in Lucian, vol. 2*, tr. A. M. Harmon, William Heinemann and G. P. Putnam's Sons, London and New York, 1915, 1–57, at 48–57; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 50r; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 57.

[83] Lucian, *op. cit.* (82), 4–5; 42–3; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 7v; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 15.

[84] Lucian, *Dialogues of the Dead: Alexander, Hannibal, Minos, and Scipio*, in *Lucian vol. 7*, tr. M. D. Macleod, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1961, 142–55, at 144–9; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 48v–50r; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 55–7.

[85] Lucian, *op. cit.* (84), 148–53; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 6v, 47r; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 14, 53–4.

[86] Lucian, *Charon, or the Inspectors, in Lucian, vol. 2*, tr. A. M. Harmon, William Heinemann and G. P. Putnam's Sons, London and New York, 1915, 395–447, at 442–5; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 28v–30r; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 36–7.

[87] Lucian, *op. cit.* (86), 418–25; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 46r–v; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 52–3. Andronicus was not alone in seizing on this element of

an attitude displayed by Andronicus' Caesar, who prefers to continue to err rather than accept Sulla's lessons.[88]

Whereas elements of *Tyrannus*, the *Dialogues of the Dead*, and *Charon* are thus directly traceable in *Sylla*, Lucian's *Menippus* is a somewhat less precise match. Here, the philosopher Menippus reports rather than experiences a visit to the Underworld, and a large part of the work takes aim at the inconsistencies on the issue of the afterlife between various philosophical schools; Tiresias – briefly referenced in *Sylla,* too – advises that the best life is that of the common man as opposed to the philosopher.[89] Still, Lucian also singles out the vainglorious, the big-headed, and the rich as targets for his satire: such men are punished especially harshly by Minos, just as Sulla claimed befalls the covetous in Andronicus' text (besides, Menippus reports a motion to the effect that the rich will be turned into donkeys).[90] More generally, *Menippus* scolds pretension and shows that underneath the gifts of fortune and the trappings of their bodies all people are but skulls and bones; in this respect *Dialogus Sylla*'s attack on vainglory, as well as its dressing down of Caesar's self-importance, shows affinity with this Lucianic work as well as with his *Charon* and *Tyrannus*.[91]

Andronicus' direct knowledge of Lucian is thus beyond doubt. The similarities between the dialogues discussed and the *Sylla* concern not only form but also content, and embrace both the general and the specific, so that any reader with even a passing familiarity with Lucian would have recognised Andronicus's debt. However, was he also familiar with, and perhaps inspired by, four Quattrocento Underworld dialogues, namely Leon Battista Alberti's *Cynicus* and *Defunctus* (c. 1430–43), Maffeo Vegio's *Palinurus sive de felicitate et miseria* (1445), and Giovanni Gioviano Pontano's *Charon* (1469)? The last of these, Pontano's *Charon*, is quite a different beast, in that it offers a panoramic tour of the Underworld in twelve scenes featuring diverse groups of shades; the topics of discussion, too, vary widely, from clerical misconduct to language and poetry.[92] As such it does not constitute a close parallel to *Dialogus Sylla* and will not be further considered here.

Charon: in the prologue to Bordo's 1494 edition of Lucian translations it is advanced as the central focus of the text, see K. Sidwell, *op. cit.* (6), forthcoming.

[88] Lucian, *op. cit.* (86), 436–9; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 46v; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 53.

[89] Lucian, *Menippus, or the Descent into Hades, in Lucian, vol. 4*, tr. A. M. Harmon, William Heinemann and G. P. Putnam's Sons, London and New York, 1915, 71–109, at 106–7; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 46v; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 53.

[90] Lucian, *op. cit.* (89), 92–3; 104–7; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 46v; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 53.

[91] Lucian, *op. cit.* (89), 92–103; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 39v–42r; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 46–8.

[92] Giovanni Pontano, *Dialogues, vol. 1: Charon and Antonius*, ed. and tr. Julia Haig Gaisser, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 2012, 2–121.

By contrast, the works of Alberti and Vegio are akin to the *Sylla* in their narrow cast of speaking characters, their static location, their uninterrupted dialogue, and their unified themes.[93] Alberti's dialogues did not circulate widely, and their first printed edition dates from the nineteenth century.[94] On the other hand, Vegio's *Palinurus* was printed numerous times before 1527, and frequently presented as an authentic work by Lucian in translation.[95] A priori Vegio, perhaps mistaken for Lucian, is thus the more likely candidate to have been on Andronicus' radar.

The content of the dialogues confirms this expectation. Alberti's *Cynicus* presents groups of souls to Apollo, Mercury, and the titular cynical 'Tuscan philosopher'. These judges decide, based on the collective flaws of each group, into which 'matching' animals the souls will be reincarnated.[96] The trio engage in some invective against avaricious clergy and oppressive and corrupt magistrates, but equally against poets, rhetoricians, and philosophers. The subject matter thus recalls most of all Lucian's *Menippus*; the tone of this short dialogue is light and humorous. Alberti's much longer dialogue *Defunctus* presents Neophronus ('new-smart'), who has just arrived in Hades, and Polytropos ('well-versed'), a soul of longer standing – a dynamic prefigured by Lucian's *Tyrannus* and repeated in *Sylla*. Indeed, *Tyrannus* is Alberti's model throughout. The disillusioned Neophronus recounts how people have responded to his death, which shows their pervasive hypocrisy, while events recalling Megapenthes' posthumous experiences demonstrate the disloyalty and greed of his family and associates. A typical Albertian touch is Neophronus' lament about the futility of his scholarly endeavours.[97]

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[93] Leon Battista Alberti, *Intercenales: Editio minor*, vol. 1, ed. Roberto Cardini, tr. Maria Letizia Braccali Magnini, Polistampa, Florence, 2022, in which *Cynicus*, 134–49, and *Defunctus*, 400–71; English translations in Leon Battista Alberti, *Dinner Pieces: A Translation of the Intercenales*, tr. David Marsh, Arizona State University, Binghamton, 1987, in which *The Cynic*, 74–9, and *The Deceased*, 98–125. There is currently no modern edition of *Palinurus sive de felicitate et miseria*, but Jeroen De Keyser and Keith Sidwell are preparing an edition and translation of this and other works by Vegio.

[94] L. B. Alberti, *op. cit.* (93) 1987, 5; L. B. Alberti, *op. cit.* (93) 2022, 526.

[95] This attribution is made in editions published in Rome (1470), Avignon (1497), Bologna (1502), Paris (1505), Venice (1517), and Lyon (1519/20). Data from the *Incunabula Short Title Catalogue* (hosted by the British Library) and the *Universal Short Title Catalogue* (ustc.ac.uk). The vernacular translations of Vegio's *Palinurus* by Mikuláš Konáč (1507) and Johannes Gallinarius (1512) also ascribe the work to Lucian, see K. Sidwell, *op. cit.* (6) forthcoming.

[96] The Tuscan soul was identified as Leonardo Bruni by Marsh in L. B. Alberti, *op. cit.* (93) 1987, 224 n.4, corrected to Niccolò Niccoli in D. Marsh, *op. cit.* (6), 61. Since Niccoli died in 1437 and Bruni only in 1444, the latter is indeed the more likely option.

[97] L. B. Alberti, *op. cit.* (93) 2022, 428–45 (§173–269); L. B. Alberti, *op. cit.* (93) 1987, 114–5; cf. Leon Battista Alberti, *De commodis litterarum atque incommodis*, ed. Mariangela Regoliosi, Polistampa, Florence, 2021.

Alberti concludes his *Defunctus* with a brief denunciation of the crimes committed by those who hold power.[98] Bleak in outlook, Neophronus' account is nevertheless frequently humorous and self-deprecating; Polytropos chides Neophronus' former naiveté yet also offers sympathetic support. In short, *Cynicus* and especially *Defunctus* parallel elements of *Dialogus Sylla*, but there is no sign that they, rather than Lucian himself, are the origin of Andronicus' ideas.

Vegio may have known Lucian through the imitations of Alberti, who was his colleague in the papal curia.[99] Vegio's dialogue is another example of the ingenu-veteran interaction familiar from *Tyrannus*, *Defunctus*, and later *Sylla*. In *Palinurus*, the eponymous drowned helmsman of Aeneas seeks, during his transit to Hades, to bond with Charon over the hardships of a boatsman's life. Charon, however, explains that all human existence is full of (largely self-inflicted) misery: humankind is slave to passions and ambitions, although only virtue brings true happiness. Rulers are particularly affected, in as much as they have greater scope to indulge their desires, but equally are weighed down by greater pressures.[100] Here Vegio parts ways with Lucian and Alberti, who denounced the crimes of tyrants without regard for the burdens that leadership entails. In this respect he prefigures Andronicus' angle, but a classical source for both (either directly or indirectly) is Xenophon's *Hiero*. Charon explains that the wicked get their just deserts in the Underworld, where the judges cannot be bought; Andronicus likewise contrasts those incorruptible judges with their colleagues active on earth.[101] Amidst these platitudes, there is one evocative vignette in *Palinurus* which recurs in *Dialogus Sylla* in two ways. Towards the end of the dialogue, Charon contrasts the simple care he takes of his old boat, mending its gaping leaks, with the oppressive concerns of Pluto, who has to contend with landslides, earthquakes, and the resultant rays of sunlight penetrating into his dark realm.[102] The *Sylla* opens with Caesar describing the old and decrepit condition of Charon's boat.[103] And towards the end, Sulla's discussion of humankind's mining for gold ties in with an exposition of the other challenges faced by Pluto in maintaining the integrity of his subterranean domain,

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[98] L. B. Alberti, *op. cit.* (93) 2022, 468–71 (§ 412–419); L. B. Alberti, *op. cit.* (93) 1987, 125.

[99] D. Marsh, *op. cit.* (6), 67–9.

[100] Ps.-Lucian, *Luciani Palinurus, Heroica, Scipio Romanus, Asinus aureus, Bruti romani epistole, Diogenis Cynici epistole*, Gaspard Philippe, Paris, 1505, 9v–13v.

[101] Ps.-Lucian, *op. cit.*, 13v; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 48r; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 55. Compare Lucian, *op. cit.* (82), 100, whose reference to Rhadamanthus as 'just' is no more than an *epitheton ornans*.

[102] Ps.-Lucian, *op. cit.* (100), 11r; Charon's boat is again described as old and worn on 12v.

[103] T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 2r–3r; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 9–10.

which otherwise runs the risk of sunlight entering.[104] Vegio's text is unremittingly serious: there is no characterisation of the interlocutors, no quick back and forth, and hardly any humour. Charon's relentless expositions completely persuade his eager student Palinurus, who disembarks suitably chastened. To conclude, specific identical details, the broad subject of rulers' unhappiness as well as wickedness, the lengthy monologues and the didactic tone – all these features shared between Vegio's work and *Dialogus Sylla* strongly suggest that Andronicus knew *Palinurus*. He probably chose to imitate this text on the assumption that it was a genuine work by Lucian, a misidentification enabled by (and in turn encouraging) the Renaissance tendency to read this author as a purveyor of straightforward moral lessons.[105] Therefore *Dialogus Sylla*'s humorous moments are owed to the real Lucian, while its heavy-handed moralising, in all likelihood, represents less a failure by Andronicus to sustain the comedic mode than his imitation of a decidedly unfunny text which he believed to be Lucian's.

If we leave aside the Underworld-aspect of *Dialogus Sylla*, and consider it instead as a paragon of famous men framing a number of political and ethical discussions, another Quattrocento model comes to mind. This is Poggio Bracciolini, who authored dialogues *Against Avarice* (1428), on the *Unhappiness of Leaders* (1440) and on the *Vagaries of Fortune* (1448), as well as a debate about Caesar and Scipio (1435). Poggio's *De infelicitate principum* is heavily influenced by Xenophon's *Hiero*, which he read in the translation of his friend Leonardo Bruni.[106] As the date shows, *De infelicitate* may in turn have been a source of inspiration for Vegio's *Palinurus*, instead of, or in addition to, Xenophon's original. Indeed, if Vegio's knowledge of Lucian derived from Alberti, it is perhaps all the more likely that his knowledge of Xenophon came via Poggio, who was also among his curial colleagues. Another precedent for such borrowing occurs in Alberti's *Cynicus*, which adopts Poggio's chastisement of greedy clergy from his dialogue *Contra avaritiam* to substitute for *Menippus'* attacks on the rich – in this case, the appropriation is confirmed by the fact that Alberti dedicated his *Cynicus* precisely to Poggio.[107] Andronicus may similarly have borrowed tropes on the burdens of leaders' lives from either Xenophon's *Hiero*, or Vegio's *Palinurus*, or Poggio's

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[104] T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 45v–46r; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 52–3.

[105] D. Marsh, *op. cit.* (6), 67; 71; also C. Robinson, *op. cit.* (6), 82–5.

[106] I have argued at the *RSA* meeting of 2017 (Chicago) that certain turns of phrase in Poggio's *De infelicitate principum* resemble Bruni's *Hiero* translation more than the original Greek. Bruni's translation is edited by Jeroen De Keyser, »Leonardo Bruni's Latin Translations of Xenophon's *Hiero* and Basil's *Ad adolescentes*,« *Schede umanistiche* 27:2 (2023), 5–67.

[107] D. Marsh, *op. cit.* (6), 63.

De infelicitate principum, or from all three.[108] The latter's *Contra avaritiam*, furthermore, could have inspired *Sylla*'s denunciation of greed, especially where this dialogue calls out greed as the worst vice in leaders.[109] Finally, Poggio's *De varietate fortunae* includes a famous reflection on the ruins of Rome and the passing of time, which is potentially relevant to Caesar's observations *à propos* the city in the *Sylla*.[110]

Because these moral-philosophical *topoi* were recycled so often, it is hard to go beyond noting the possibility of influence. The evidence is more compelling with regard to *Dialogus Sylla* as a paragon of famous men. While the come-uppance of a tyrant is a familiar feature of the Underworld dialogue, Andronicus' choice for Caesar in this role is an innovation that recalls the antihero of Poggio's *Caesar-Scipio Controversy*. It is true that Caesar had already been called a 'tyrant' by Cicero, but sustained unfavourable treatments of his person and career were rare both in the classical world and in the Renaissance – with the exception of Lucan's epic, to which Andronicus indeed alludes.[111] Caesar's ancient biographers, Suetonius and Plutarch, presented an ambivalent mixture of great qualities and shortcomings. In Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*, furthermore, Caesar's foil was the equally brilliant but flawed Macedonian Alexander, and this pairing recurs in the paragon added by Pier Candido Decembrio to his translation of Curtius Rufus' *Historiae Alexandri Magni*.[112] Only Poggio compared Caesar consistently negatively to another Roman general and statesman (Scipio Africanus), as Andronicus was to do in *Sylla*.

Moreover, the backstory of *Dialogus Sylla* as described in the dedication letter calls to mind the origins of the *Caesar-Scipio Controversy*. Just as Andronicus refers to a previous debate with Michael Nardinus in favour or against Diocletian's abdication, so Poggio opens the *Controversy* by recalling how his friend (Scipione Mainenti, to whom he addresses the opening text, *De praestantia Scipionis et Caesaris*) had requested he write down his verdict on the respective

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[108] Poggio's *De infelicitate principum* is edited and translated in Poggio Bracciolini, *On Leaders and Tyrants*, ed. and tr. Hester Schadee and Keith Sidwell, with David Rundle, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 2024, 282–389.

[109] Poggio Bracciolini, *Dialogus contra avaritiam*, ed. and tr. Giuseppe Germano, Belforte, Livorno, 1994, XIX.3–5; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 46r–46v; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 53.

[110] Poggio Bracciolini, *De varietate fortunae*, ed. Outi Merisalo, Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, Helsinki, 1993, 91–100; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 28v–30r; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 36–7.

[111] Cic. *Off.* 1.112; 2.23; 3.19; for Lucan, see T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 10, n. 8.

[112] For Decembrio's paragon see M. Pade, *op. cit.* (5), 251–4.

merits of Caesar and Scipio.[113] *De praestantia* then provoked a rebuttal from Guarino Veronese, who brought his former student prince Leonello d'Este into the debate to judge his case against Poggio's. The latter responded with a *Defensio* and reissued the complete set of texts accompanied by a covering letter addressed to Francesco Barbaro, asking the Venetian humanist to act as arbiter. This is the format in which the *Controversy* came to circulate. Barbaro's role, therefore, prefigures that of Lascaris as adjudicator and supporter of the *Sylla*'s dissemination, in the same way that Mainenti as instigator anticipated Nardinus.

Furthermore, similarities in content and style between the *Sylla* and the *Controversy* abound. This is perhaps most striking in Sulla's final summary of his own and Caesar's achievements, delivered in front of Minos, which mirrors the direct comparison in which *De praestantia* culminates down to its sentence structure.[114] There are many more shared *topoi* and turns of phrase, but, ultimately deriving from classical sources, these cannot prove that Andronicus consulted Poggio's text, even if their occurrence together may be deemed significant.[115] However, there are also notable differences. Unlike Poggio, Andronicus bypasses the private lives of his protagonists, cutting off this turn in the conversation with the arrival of Minos; nor is he interested in the effect of single rule on literary culture, a topic that exercised Poggio's Florentine circle.[116] Of course, the republican slant that permeates Poggio's contributions to the *Controversy* was utterly irrelevant to Andronicus, and the (to him) more pertinent distinction between good and bad rule is only one of a range of themes in the ultimately anti-political *Sylla*. For those additional topics,

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[113] Poggio's *De praestantia Scipionis et Caesaris*, Guarino's *De praestantia Caesaris et Scipionis*, and Poggio's *Defensio*, along with the relevant letters to Leonello and Barbaro, are edited and translated in Poggio Bracciolini, *op. cit.* (108), 2–219. For the origins of the debate, see ibid., viii–xii.

[114] T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 49v–50r; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 57; Bracciolini, *op. cit.* (108), Poggio's *Praestantia*, § 24.

[115] For example, on seizing goods and/or spilling blood: T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 11v; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 19, cf. P. Bracciolini, *op. cit.* (108), Poggio's *Praestantia*, § 11, cf. Cic. *S. Rosc.* 50.146. On Scipio's ungrateful fatherland: T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 23r–v; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 31, cf. P. Bracciolini, *op. cit.* (108), Poggio's *Praestantia*, § 20, cf. Val. Max. 5.3.2. On weighing arguments in a balance: T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 32r; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 39, cf. P. Bracciolini, *op. cit.* (108), Guarino's *Praestantia*, § 19, cf. Hor. *Ep.* 2.1.30. On the eyesight of Lynceus: T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 32r; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 40, cf. P. Bracciolini, *op. cit.* (108), Poggio's *Defensio*, § 82, cf. Pliny, *HN* 2.78; Lucian, *op. cit.* (86), 16, Erasmus, *Adagia* 1054 = 2.1.54. On Herostratus' arson as a misdeed not a great deed: T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 40r; T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 46–7, cf. P. Bracciolini, *op. cit.* (108), Poggio's *Defensio*, § 91, cf. Val. Max. 8.14 ext. 5.

[116] P. Bracciolini, *op. cit.* (108), xvi–xviii.

the *Caesar-Scipio Controversy* was simply not an appropriate source. This is where Poggio's dialogues had the potential to complement the paragon. If Andronicus had access to a collection of *Poggiana*, appropriated the paragon from the *Controversy* and expanded its arguments with moral-political observations on greed, the woes of power, and Fortune's fickleness sampled from Poggio's dialogues, to then recast these materials in the form of a Lucianic dialogue, the result would look a lot like *Dialogus Sylla*. In fact, all these texts of Poggio had appeared in print by 1527, and one extant manuscript preserves them all together.[117]

Since Poggio, unlike Vegio, could not be mistaken for a classical authority, it is worth considering why Andronicus might have found him a desirable model. One answer may be that he pairs well with Lucian. Poggio had translated Lucian's *Ass*, and he refers to Lucian in several of his own works, including *De praestantia*, *On Avarice*, and *The Unhappiness of Leaders*.[118] In addition, Poggio's most frequently printed work, his *Facetiae*, bestowed on him the reputation of a ludic author, as Andronicus in the *Sylla* aspired to be.[119] In addition, there may be a non-literary reason for why Andronicus might model himself after Poggio, which is discussed below and brings us back full circle to the Dalmatian's literary and political environment.

7. Centring the Periphery

As Lucian and his imitators knew, the Underworld setting enabled authors to adopt an outsiders' perspective on the foibles of society. Arguably, by adopting the authorial persona of Poggio, Andronicus aimed at the reverse: to present himself

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[117] Poggio Bracciolini, *Historiae conviviales disceptivae*, Johann Knobloch, Strasbourg, 1510 (reissued multiple times) contains *De avaritia* and the section on Rome of *De varietate fortunae*; *De infelicitate principum* was printed in Paris in 1473 and 1511 and in Leuven in 1480; and the *Caesar-Scipio Controversy* in Vienna in 1512; however, the Basel edition of Poggio's *Opera Omnia* which contains *De avaritia*, the *Controversy*, and *De infelicitate principum* appeared only in 1528, a year after the publication of the *Sylla*. Data from *ISTC*, *op. cit.* (95) and *USTC*, *op. cit.* (95). The manuscript is Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Urb. lat. 224.

[118] P. Bracciolini, *op. cit.* (108), Poggio's *Praestantia*, § 1; P. Bracciolini, *op. cit.* (109), X.7; P. Bracciolini, *op. cit.* (108), Poggio's *De infelicitate principum*, § 7; 35; 45.3. See also Keith Sidwell, 'Sodalitas and Inimicitia in the Lucianism of Poggio Bracciolini', in *Sodalitas Litteratorum. Études à la mémoire de / Studies in memory of Philip Ford*, ed. Ingrid De Smet and Paul White, Droz, Geneva, 2019, 137–161.

[119] I owe this suggestion to David Rundle. For Poggio's sixteenth-century fame, see his »Poggio Bracciolini's International Reputation and the Significance of Bryn Mawr, MS 48,« in *Poggio Bracciolini and the Re(dis)covery of Antiquity: Textual and Material Traditions*, ed. Roberta Ricci, University of Florence Press, Florence, 41–70.

as an insider to a specific reader, Janus Lascaris. Poggio had been an extremely well-connected figure in his lifetime: he served as secretary to seven popes, he was the correspondent of many princes and prelates, as well as a personal friend of Cosimo de' Medici and his brother Lorenzo the Elder; finally, he concluded his long career by holding the chancellorship of Florence.[120] The genesis of the *Caesar-Scipio Controversy* as a debate involving humanists and princes across Italy, to which Andronicus' appears to allude, underlines Poggio's central position in political and humanistic networks.

The dedicatee of the *Sylla*, Lascaris, had spent many years in Florence: at the latest from 1489, but he may have arrived as early as the 1470s. The intellectual circle around Lorenzo the Magnificent, in which the Byzantine moved, included many men who had personally known Poggio, and it is highly likely that Lascaris would have been familiar with Poggio's work. If Andronicus, on these grounds, expected his dedicatee to pick up on his allusions, the benefits would have been twofold. By modelling himself after Poggio, Andronicus could augment his authorial credentials and claim a central position in a network; at the same time, he also created a distinguished precedent for Lascaris as the arbiter and patron of *Dialogus Sylla*.

Contrasting this authorial positioning in the preface with the oblique viewpoint of the text and the message of withdrawal it espouses, what emerges is a shift from the periphery to the centre. This oscillation recurs, within the preface, with regard to Andronicus' positioning of his dedicatee, and of his homeland, Dalmatia. (Ex-)centricity is, almost by definition, a matter of perspective, but Andronicus hints at a second operative factor: the workings of time, past and future.

The intellectual and political networks linking Andronicus and Lascaris have been amply discussed. In addition, the author uses the dedicatory letter to construct a conceptual identity connecting Lascaris, Sulla, Diocletian – and perhaps himself. For Nardinus and Andronicus, Diocletian was an emperor from their nation in as much as all three hailed from Dalmatia. Arguably Lascaris could also stake a claim to Diocletian, who had instituted the Tetrarchy, which prefigured the Roman Empire's division into East and West, and within the Tetrarchy had governed most of future Byzantium's territory. Moreover, Lascaris was himself of imperial descent: the Lascaris dynasty was the penultimate to rule Byzantium, prior to the Palaeologans. Indeed, some association may be implied by the very last line of dedication, where Andronicus' calls on the Byzantine émigré to ensure that 'our

[120] Poggio's biography was written by Ernst Walser, *Poggius Florentinus: Leben und Werke*, B. G. Teubner, Leipzig, 1914. See also Armando Petrucci and Emilio Bigi, »Bracciolini, Poggio,« *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (Internet, November 1, 2024).

Diocletian' will be redeemed from slander: previously, 'our' referred to the author and Nardinus, but here the pronoun appears to include Lascaris.[121]

Diocletian, as Andronicus recalls, had chosen to remove himself from the peak of human affairs to return to private life. The dialogue's Sulla, who had followed the same course of action, defends precisely this choice. According to Andronicus in the preface, Lascaris is in a similar situation, but by force. His ancestors had ruled Constantinople, but on account of its fall to the Ottomans, he is now merely a private man: 'And this alteration you bear with such strength that you seem to have chosen this type of existence.'[122] As such, *Dialogus Sylla* acts as a kind of *consolatio* for Lascaris (even if Andronicus politely denies that his addressee is in need of such moral support).[123] It is possible, moreover – since Sulla acts as the author's mouthpiece – that Andronicus proleptically identifies with Lascaris in this regard. It is not hard to imagine, although impossible to prove, that the tribulations of his homeland, precariously squeezed between Venice, the Habsburgs, and the advancing Ottomans, provoked in Andronicus similar resignation or, indeed, despondency. Anticipating the likelihood that the Ottomans may soon take Dalmatia's coastal cities, just as they previously seized Byzantium, *Dialogus Sylla* then doubles as a philosophical consolation by Andronicus to himself.[124]

This vindication of the periphery, however, occurs side by side with a reverse manoeuvre. When Andronicus creates connections between himself, Nardinus,

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[121] 'Itaque mitto tibi hunc dialogum, ut […] si probaveris, te authore exeat in manus hominum, et noster Diocletianus vindicetur a calumnia. Vale', T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 1v, T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 9, 'And so I send you this dialogue, in order that […] if you approve, it may go forth into people's hands with you as supporter, and our Diocletian be redeemed from a false charge'.

[122] 'Quam tu commutationem sic fortiter toleras, ut istud vivendi genus elegisse videare', T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 1v, T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 9.

[123] 'Existimavi hanc meam foeturam non nihil ad tuam fortunam pertinere, non autem solandi tui atque confirmandi gratia – in quo virtus et litterae summum adire periculum videantur – sed quoniam augustali sanguine ortus, utpote cuius maiores longa serie Constantinopoli imperarunt, vicissitudine rerum ad hanc tenuitatem redactus sis', T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 1527, 1v, T. Andronicus, *op. cit.* (2) 2017, 9, 'I reckoned that this fruit of mine had a certain relevance to your fortune, not however for the sake of consoling or strengthening – in which your virtue and letters would seem to meet the greatest challenge – but because, born from imperial blood in as much as your ancestors in a long line ruled Constantinople, you have been reduced to this smallness by the vicissitude of events'.

[124] Keith Sidwell has argued that a similar proleptic consolation was undertaken by Poggio in *De infelicitate principum*, in which one of the speakers, Cosimo de' Medici, is advised that a life of letters is preferable even over a leading role in a Republic, when at the time of writing Medici control over Florence seemed to hang in the balance, P. Bracciolini, *op. cit.* (108), xxxvi–xli.

and Lascaris centred around Diocletian, he simultaneously transforms Dalmatia into an imperial location and a humanistic hub. It may be true that humanism in Hungary-Croatia was 'always *off-centre*', but it is no less true that it was one of these realms' two great cultural connections to the West – the other being Catholicism.[125] The common designation of Croatia as Christianity's '*antemurale*' against the Ottoman threat relies on it being both peripheral vis-à-vis the Catholic centre and an integral part of Christendom.[126] Similarly, diverse humanistic discourses served to inscribe both Croatia and Dalmatia on a classical map shared with western Europe. For instance, leading families had long inserted themselves into Roman history through fictive genealogies, individual cities flaunted real or imagined Graeco-Roman foundations, while the whole region could be classicised as modern-day Illyricum.[127] Just as the scholar St Jerome, another scion of Dalmatia, demonstrated the province's Christian and humanist credentials, so Andronicus uses Diocletian to elevate Dalmatia to the rank of both Byzantium and Rome.[128] In doing so, he creates a western-identified Dalmatia in opposition to the

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[125] Off-centre humanism: Marianna Birnbaum, *Humanists in a Shattered World: Croatian and Hungarian Latinity in the Sixteenth Century*, Slavica Publishers, Inc., Columbus, Ohio, 1985, 48; Humanism as the second great link after Catholicism: Mihovil Kombol cited in Michael Petrovich, »Croatian Humanists and the Writing of History in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries,« *Slavic Review* 37:4 (1978), 624–39, at 638.

[126] Norman Housley, »Christendom's Bulwark: Croatian Identity and the Response to the Ottoman Advance, Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries,« *Transactions of the Royal Society*, sixth series, 24 (2014), 149–64.

[127] Luka Špoljarić, »Illyrian Trojans in a Turkish Storm: Croatian Renaissance Lords and the Politics of Dynastic Origin Myths,« in *Portraying the Prince in the Renaissance: The Humanist Depiction of Rulers in Historiographical and Biographical Texts*, ed. Patrick Baker *et al*., De Gruyter, Berlin and Boston, 2016, 121–56; Zrinka Blažević, »How to revive Illyricum? Political Institution of the 'Illyrian Emperors' in Early Modern Illyrism,« in *Welche Antike? Konkurrierende Rezeptionen des Altertums im Barock*, ed. Ulrich Heinen, 2 vols, Harassowitz, Wiesbaden, 2011, 431–44.

[128] Luka Špoljarić, »In the Footsteps of St Jerome: Dalmatian Humanists on their Renaissance of Letters,« in *Panthéons de la Renaissance: Représentation des grands hommes et mythologie du temps présent (Italie/Europe, 1300–1700)*, ed. Élisabeth Crouzet-Pavan, Jean-Baptiste Delzant, and Clémence Revest, École française de Rome, Rome, 2021, 73-93; Ines Ivić, »The 'Making' of a National Saint: Reflections on the Formation of the Cult of Saint Jerome in the Eastern Adriatic,« in *Il Capitale Culturale, Supplementi* 7, *Visualizing Past in a Foreign Country: Schiavoni/Illyrian Confraternities and Colleges in Early Modern Italy in comparative perspective* (2018), ed. Giuseppe Capriotti, Francesca Coltrinari, and Jasenka Gudelj, 247–87; Julia Verkholantsev, *The Slavic Letters of St. Jerome. History of the Legend and Its Legacy, or, How the Translator of the Vulgate Became the Apostle of the Slavs*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2014. Already the first generation of Dalmatian humanists, such as Petar Cipiko, hailed both Jerome and Diocletian as fellow countrymen, Luka Špoljarić, »The 1435 Scipio-Caesar Debate in Venetian Zadar

Ottoman invaders, while also making a claim for cultural equality to the Italian humanists, who treated superior Latinity as their undisputed birthright. Nevertheless, if identities from the past are expected to be operative still in the present, it is not a given (as the fate of Lascaris shows) that they will extend into the future. This, then, is the paradox of Andronicus' *Dialogus Sylla*: while the text sings the praises of the periphery, the paratext re-centres – but only precariously – both its author and his fatherland.

Andronicus' effort to represent himself and Dalmatia to the world in the face of the Ottoman advances met with some recognition abroad. Twenty years after the publication of *Dialogus Sylla*, a correspondent of Andronicus, Tamás Nádasdy, writing from Venice, informed the Dalmatian that 'Paolo Giovio has recently published a book on portraits of famous men, among whom he has also briefly mentioned your name, which I will report to you unaltered as it is written, since I do not intend to bring the book itself.'[129] The book in question is Paolo Giovio's *Elogia virorum literis illustrium* or *Elogia doctorum virorum* (1546), which concludes with a section devoted to non-Italian authors.[130] Nádasdy would know, because he is mentioned by Giovio just a few lines before Andronicus. Giovio, as noted, had been one of the Corycian poets, and may thus have been familiar with Michael Nardinus; however, there is no particular reason to suppose that the

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and the Political Horizons of the First Dalmatian Humanists,« in *Renaissance Humanism and the Venetian Empire*, Special Issue of *Renaissance Studies*, ed. Clémence Revest and Luka Špoljarić (forthcoming).

[129] 'Paulus Jovius recens edidit librum de imaginibus clarorum virorum inter quos et nomen tuum perbreviter perstrinxit, quod ut perscriptum est, ad te merum efferam, si librum ipsum ferre non puto', Venice, 26 March 1547, Tamás Nádasdy to Andronicus, cited in G. Barta, *op. cit.* (12), 90.

[130] The relevant passage reads: 'Haec eadem [sc. Fortuna] pari incursu Dalmatas afflixit, apud quos valida ad capessendam ex literarum studiis laudem hac aetate ingenia floruerunt: sed ab assiduis Barbarorum incursionibus exturbati vetere agro, ac in extremas patrii littoris margines compulsi, tanquam de retinenda libertate desperantes, armis literas commutasse videri possunt, sic ut nemo dignus elogio compareat, nisi in lucem studiose producat cives suos Tranquillus Andronicus praeclarus Ciceronis aemulator, dum gravissimarum actionum ac Othomanicae legationis, obscurorumque nobis itinerum commentaria perscribit', Paolo Giovio, *Elogia veris clarorum virorum imaginibus apposita*, Tramezzini, Venice, 1546, 78v; 'And she too, with a like assault, has laid low the Dalmatians, among whom men of genius able to win fame from the pursuit of letters have flourished in this generation; but driven from their ancient territory by continuous invasions of the barbarians and forced to the farthest bounds of their seacoast, as if despairing of keeping their liberty, they seem to have exchanged letters for arms, so that no one worthy of an *elogium* is to be found there, unless the zealous efforts of that illustrious imitator of Cicero, Tranquillus Andronicus, should bring to notice his fellow citizens, through his accounts of great events and of his Ottoman embassy and of regions unknown to us', Paolo Giovio, *An Italian Portrait Gallery*, tr. Florence Alden Gragg, Chapman & Grimes, Boston, 1935, 171.

humanist from Šibenik was the source of Giovio's knowledge of Andronicus. If Nádasdy delivered on his promise to transcribe for Andronicus the passage that pertained to him, that may explain the presence of a handwritten note on the frontispiece of a copy of *Dialogus Sylla* now held in the Bibliothèque nationale de France. This note records the same passage of Giovio alluded to by Nádasdy, with very slight variations:

> Paulus Iovius in fine voluminis virorum doctrina illustrissimorum. Nemo nobis comparet inter Dalmatas ob barbarorum incursiones nisi in lucem cives suos producat Tranquillus Andronicus, praeclarus Ciceronis aemulator, qui gravissimarum actionum ac Othomanicae legationis obscurorumque nobis itinerum commentaria perscribit.
>
> Paolo Giovio, at the end of his volume on men famous for learning. No one is visible to us among the Dalmatians on account of the barbarian invasions, unless Tranquillus Andronicus would lead his compatriots out into the light. He is a distinguished emulator of Cicero, who writes detailed commentaries on very important negotiations and his Ottoman mission and routes that are obscure to us.[131]

Be that as it may, it is clear that Paolo Giovio, at least, believed that Tranquillus Andronicus was the single person capable at the time of *keeping* Dalmatia on the humanistic map.

[131] Frontispiece of *op. cit.* (2) BM: 8° 24102-5.

Hester Schadee

DIALOGUS SYLLA TRANKVILA ANDRONIKA I DVIJE PJESME MIHOVILA NARDINA

Razmatramo strukturu i sadržaj Andronikova *Dijaloga Sula*, pokazujući na koji način djelo povezuje raspravu o rimskoj politici prvog stoljeća pr. Kr. – posebice opreku optimata i populara – s općenitijim moralno-filozofskim govorom o teretu moći, o ljudskoj pohlepi i taštini te o prevrtljivosti Fortune. Pokazali smo da su ove teme povezane s protuhabsburškim savezom francuskog kralja Franje I. i ugarskog vojvode Ivana Zapolje u širem kontekstu osmanskih napredovanja. Jedan od aktera *Sule*, Julije Cezar, pokazuje više od naznaka cara Karla V, dok njegov oponent Sula zastupa stajališta koja podsjećaju na Zapoljina. Osim toga, na Sulina usta progovara sam Trankvil preporučujući povlačenje iz političkog djelovanja.

Književna je osnova *Dijaloga Sula* lukijanska; ustanovili smo da književni motivi djela potječu iz četiri Lukijanova dijaloga. Usto, razmotrili smo četiri dijaloga iz podzemnog svijeta nastala u XV. st, pokazujući da se Trankvil oslanjao i na *Palinura* Maffea Vegia (za dijalog je Trankvil vjerojatno mislio da se radi o autentičnom Lukijanovu djelu). Osim toga, predložili smo i mogućnost intertekstualne veze s djelima Bracciolinija, osobito s polemikom o Scipionu i Cezaru.

Istraživanje mreže profesionalnih i intelektualnih veza na koje se Trankvil oslanjao razjasnilo je njegov interes da pridobije naklonost Jana Laskarisa, kojemu je *Dijalog Sula* posvećen. Trankvilova se briga očituje u njegovim književnim izborima (Laskaris je bio jedan od priređivača *editio princeps* grčkog Lukijanova izvornika) i u poziciji koju u posvetnom pismu namjenjuje kako sebi, tako i adresatu. U pismu Trankvil spominje kakva je bila sudbina Laskarisa, prognanika nakon pada Carigrada; čitalac može naslutiti da ta sudbina nagoviješta budućnost samog autora djela i njegove domovine Dalmacije. No, posvetno pismo počinje spomenom Trankvilova prijatelja Mihovila Nardina, koga smo identificirali kao šibenskog humanista poznatog Laskarisu zbog zajedničkog sudjelovanja na Koricijama, gozbama koje je papinski protonotar Johann Goritz priređivao u Rimu. Zbog toga rad donosi izvornik i prijevod dviju pjesama koje je Nardin sastavio za *Coryciana*.

Ključne riječi: Cezar, Habsburzi, Osmanlije, Dalmacija, dijalozi u podzemnom svijetu, Lukijan iz Samosate