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## EPISTOLARY TOPICS IN THE LETTERS OF THE HUMANIST ANTUN VRANČIĆ

*Abstract:* In this work, the epistolary topics in the correspondence of Antun Vrančić (Antonius Verancius, 1504–1573) will be discussed by means of analysing what is both conventional and constant in this correspondence. This will affirm the conventionality of letter-writing as a literary genre. The aim of this is to affirm the continuity of the epistolary tradition from antiquity to the period of humanism, as well as to demonstrate Vrančić's use of literary *topoi* in his correspondence. On the one hand, mention will be made of the topics of thought which are made manifest in the frequent use of statements of thought, and on the other hand, topics of language will be taken into consideration: these include the frequent use of phrases, citations and proverbs which can also be found in these letters. This phenomenon has been noted in the Latin epistolary tradition, particularly in the letters of Cicero, Pliny, Seneca and Frontinus, which affirms that Vrančić used these as examples when composing his own letters. This work will begin with an overview of all the categories of topics and the appearance of each topic, as can be found in the correspondence of Antun Vrančić, will be duly noted. All categories will be presented in tables as well, so that one can gain an understanding of their context as the addressee and the year of composition of each letter will also be noted. This will allow an easier overview of the profile of the addressees of Vrančić's letters as well as demonstrating the frequency of these topics within the period of the correspondence itself. Thus, on the one hand, our purpose will be to show Vrančić's relationship to his precursors in antiquity, and on the other hand, to show that which makes the application of a certain topic dependent on a given situation (address – context – period); particularly Vrančić's creativity in the use of commonplaces. There are four tables in the Addenda in which two groups of linguistic topics are collated and cited – the use of citations and proverbs in the afore mentioned correspondence. These examples are presented separately due to their frequency, and are presented in a table for the sake of convenience.

### 1. Introduction

The majority of letters which comprise the epistolographic corpus of the Croatian humanist and Primate of Hungary, Antun Vrančić (1504–1573), are to be found in the Szalay-Wenzel editi-

on in the *Monumenta Hungariae historica* series.<sup>1</sup> Vrančić's correspondence spans a period of 35 years: from 1538 to 1573. His letters display a diversity of theme and the social status of his addressees widely differs; they include heads of both church and state as well as friends and family. From this it is evident that Vrančić's letters are of special interest, containing a wealth of information which can be approached from different points of vantage and can be analysed in different ways. In this work these letters will be analysed in the context of epistolary topics, and by presenting the categories that can be found within this epistolarium, their frequency and the addressees to whom they are directed will be shown. We will attempt to affirm the correlation between the *topoi* and the category of the addressee, Vrančić's progress and the age etc., with the presentation of the variations of the use of 'topoi' in different contexts as our central aim. We will attempt to affirm the continuity of the epistolary tradition from antiquity to the period of humanism and take special note of the portions of Vrančić's text which display a divergence from the traditions of antiquity. There are numerous studies on epistolary topics, in general or on particular categories, of classical epistolographers especially of Cicero, Pliny, Seneca and Frontinus.<sup>2</sup> Dubravka Brezak-Stamać has written on the use of topics in the versified epistles composed during the renaissance period in Croatia in her doctorate thesis<sup>3</sup> as well as in other research papers. Her focus has primarily been on the traditions of antiquity in the verse epistles composed by Croatian writers during the renaissance period.<sup>4</sup> A

<sup>1</sup> Verancsics Antal, *Összes munkái*, sv. 1-12, Budapest, 1857-1875, in the series *Monumenta Hungariae historica* (= *MHH*, series II. t. II, III-VI, IX, X, XIX, XX, XXV, XXVI, XXVII). According to the latest facts regarding the correspondence of Antun Vrančić, there are 791 letters written by Antun, he was the addressee of 139 letters, while he co-wrote 199. An additional 18 letters should be added to this corpus and these can be found in the National and University library in Zagreb and are curated in the Collection of Manuscripts and Old Books under the signature R-5717 (to be referred to in this paper as NSK).

<sup>2</sup> We shall cite some of the titles here: K. Thraede, *Grundzuege griechisch-roemischer Brief-topik*, Zetemata, H, 48, Munchen, 1970.; H. Cancik, *Untersuchungen zu Senecas Epistulae morales*, Hildesheim 1967.; L. Loefstedt, *Les expressions du commandement et de la defense eu latin*, Helsinki, 1966.; J. B. Hofmann, *Lateinische Umgangssprache*, Heidelberg, 1951.; E. Malcovati, *Cicerone e la poesia*, Ann. Fac. Lettere-Filos, cagliari, XIII 1943.; P. J. Armleder, *Quotation in Cicero's Letters*, Diss. Univ. Cincinnati 1957.; G. Mazzoli, *Seneca e la poesia*, Milano, 1970.; F. Mewis, *De Senecae philosophi studiis litterarum*, Diss. Regimonti, 1908. etc.

<sup>3</sup> Dubravka Brezak Stamać, *Poetika poslanice u stihu u hrvatskoj književnosti 15. i 16. stoljeća*, 2011, diss., Zagreb.

<sup>4</sup> Dubravka Brezak Stamać: "Epistolografška topika u hrvatskim renesansnim poslanicama u stihu", *Forum*, 10-12, 2011. str. 1336-1382.; "Galatni

significant contribution to the research of classical epistography can also be found in the work of Paolo Cugusi which contains a chapter dedicated to epistolary topics.<sup>5</sup> Having consulted the available works of reference<sup>6</sup> we noted that Cugusi's overview analyses topics by taking into account the works of the most important Latin epistolographers and, furthermore, he systematically elaborates the categories that can be found therein, whereas other authors have either concentrated only on a particular epistolographer<sup>7</sup> or mentioned only several of the categories of topics. It is because of this that the work of Cugusi will be our point of departure in this paper. He begins by differentiating between topics of thought and topics of language, and thus divides these two topics into several subcategories. Concerning topics of thought, he makes mention of other *topoi* due to the fact that they were frequently used by Latin writers. These include phrases, for example, which emphasise that the letter is a substitute for a conversation, mention of the brevity of the letter, letter-writing without a defined argument, the lack of new information, a sense of concern for the health of the addressee etc. Cugusi divides topics of language into three groups. The first group includes colloquial expressions used in these letters such as *scito, scias, mihi crede* etc. as well as petitions to various divinities. The second group includes the incorporation of words in Greek, citations (from Greek and Latin authors) and proverbs, while the third group includes the common phrases typical of official correspondence. The first and second groups are predominantly found in private letters. This formed our basis to identify many of the categories of topics of which Vrančić had made use. Although we had attempted to find as many as possible we did not cite all of them, but those that were most representative. Due to their frequency, the examples that are related to the use of citations and proverbs will be presented by table in the **Addenda** of this paper. Likewise, all the categories of epistolary topics will be presented in a table so that the use of a particular category can be placed within the context of the addressee and the year in which the letter was sent. The aim of this is to show the status of each addressee according to the frequency of any particular aspect of epistolary topics (four groups of letters were collated for this purpose as regarding the recipient of the letter – family, friends, official political and official ecclesiastical

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rječnik renesansnih poslanica u stihu, topoi najopćenitije primjene", *Forum*, 4-6, 2013. str. 558-602.

<sup>5</sup> Cugusi, Paolo, *Evoluzione e forme dell'epistolografia latina. Nella tarda repubblica e nei primi due secoli dell'impero. Con cenni sull'epistolografia preciceroniana*. Roma – Herder – 1983., str. 73 -104.

<sup>6</sup> Viz. the works cited at the end of our paper.

<sup>7</sup> Viz. note 2.

correspondence) and, furthermore, to affirm if there is a difference in the frequency of the use a particular category according to the period of time in which the letter was sent.

## 2. Topics of Thought

When mention is made of the topics of thought in epistolography, the statements of thought that are found in classical epistolographers are what first come to mind. These were, amongst other matter from antiquity, assimilated by the epistolographers of the period of humanism. The existence of a correlation between topics and content has been proven by several works of scholarship in which, among other things, mention is made of its various aspects.<sup>8</sup> By using examples that have been founded upon research, an analysis of Vrančić's epistolarium will show that the existence of a correlation between topics and content can be found in his letters.

### 2. 1. A Conversation between «Absent Interlocutors»

Mention is often made, when defining the nature of written correspondence itself, of the topos which describes letter-writing as a conversation among «absent friends». The author finds pleasure in emphasising the riches gained by letter-writing when the opportunities are lacking for a conversation «face to face». Many such examples can be found in classical, as well as in later, epistolography which affirm this topos as an epistolographical commonplace.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> In close connection to the first topic of thought see: C. Castillo, "La epístola como género literario: de la antigüedad a la edad media latina", *Estudios Clásicos* 18, pg. 439: Estos tópicos se repiten, se adornan, se amplían, haciéndose su expresión cada vez más rebuscada. Veamos unos cuantos ejemplos de ellos: 1. Carta como conversación entre personas alejadas (*sermo absentium, inter absentes*): además de en Cicerón, en Séneca: *conuersari cum amicis absentibus* (Ep. 75. 1-2). La epístola es una reflexión personal de la que se hace partícipe al amigo...2. La presencia espiritual del amigo, *quasi coram*, es consideración frecuente también en Séneca: *mecum semper es* (Ep. 64.1.); *tecum esse mihi uideor* (Ep. 67. 2); la carta es como huella del amigo ausente: *uera amici absentis uestigia* (Ep. 40. 1.)"etc; On the topic of the brevity of the letters see: Sara Lilja, "On the Nature of Pliny's Letters, pg. 75: "Quite often Pliny speaks on the length of the letter. He himself wants to receive letters as long as possible: *plurimas et longissimas* (II 2, 2), *aeque longam* (II 2, 25), *non minus longa* (IV, 2, 16)...Two passages, however, seem to support the view that there was a definite rule against excessive letter-writing."

<sup>9</sup> Cugusi, 1983: 74: Cic. *Att.* 8, 14, 1 *ut nihil ad te dem litterarum facere non possum et simul (...) requiesco in his miseris cum quasi tecum loquor, cum vero tuas epistolas lego, multo etiam magis*; 9, 10, 1 *tecum ut quasi loquerer (...)*; 12, 53 *ego (...) ad te (...) scribo (...) quia tecum loqui uideor* etc. From the

The following examples are to be found in Vrančić's epistolarium: in the letter to his close friend Franjo Trankvil Andreis, 1538.: (...) *ut saltem mutuis litteris colloqueremur et una essemus* (MHH VI, 17); in the letter to Vrančić's friend, the reformist theologian Johannes Honter, 1538.: (...) *non infimam partem statui litteris saltem et cogitatione tecum consumere, si coram esse, colloqui* (MHH VI, 74); to the Italian doctor of medicine Giorgio Blandrata 1546.: (...) *nunc tamen haec epistola, utcunque poterit, perferet functionis huius officium, quo citius cum tuis colloquar(!)* (MHH VI, 213); to his close friend Mihály Csáky, 1549.: *ut tecum colloquar, qui mihi es et fuisti omnium amicorum optimus* (MHH VII, 19); to the priest Bernard, 1568.: (...) *existimans, me coram tecum colloqui* (MHH IX, 241); and in the letter to his brother Mihovil, 1557.: *Tecum vel saltem litteris, gratia colloquendi* (NSK 2/3).

An example that can be found in the NSK in Zagreb is referring to his brother Mihovil in particular, to whom he was writing more often than to other members of his family, while the other addressees in which these examples are found were Vrančić's friends of various social status. Among them were his close friends Franjo Trankvil Andreis and Mihály Csáky, followed by the theologian and humanist Johannes Honter, the doctor of medicine Giorgio Blandrata, as well as two members of the clergy - pater Bernhard and the bishop Andreus Sebridovski. Despite being of different social status, they were all in close ties to Vrančić himself and this can easily be seen in letters themselves. All of the letters in which we encountered this topos can be grouped among the *genus familiare*, and in some of these letters we can find phrases that belong to either topics of thought or topics of language, especially topoi concerning health and amity overall. It can easily be noted that Vrančić often places the topos of a «conversation among interlocutors» in the context of «phrases of amity»<sup>10</sup> whenever he wishes to emphasise letter-writing as a cultivation of friendship. Among the 6 „interlocutors“ who were recipients of

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epistolarium of Seneca: Sen. *epist.* 26, 7 *haec tecum loquor, sed tecum quoque me locutum esse puta* itd. From the epistolarium of Pliny: Plin. *epist.* 5, 1, 12 *haec tibi scripsi quia de omnibus quae me delectant vel angunt non aliter tecum quam tecum loqui soleo* etc. From the letters of st. Jerome: *epist.* 29, 1 *epistolare officium est quodammodo absentes inter se praesentes fieri*, or from st. Augustine: *epist.* 80, 2 *colloqui...vobiscum talia cupio... litteris, qualia colloqui possemus si coram vestris sensibus adessemus*.

<sup>10</sup> For eg. in the letter to Johannes Honter after the topoi we find: *...colloqui, congregari atque gradi non licet, cupiens tandem adesse tempus illud, quo amicitiam ac benevolentiam nostram veterem iam mutuis aspectibus iungamus et confirmemus* (MHH VI, 74). Or to Mihály Csáky: *...colloquar, qui mihi es et fuisti omnium amicorum optimus* (MHH VII, 19).

Vrančić's letters, two of them were his closest friend to whom he wrote more often than to others (10 letters were written to Mihály Csáky, 7 to Franjo T. Andreis), whereas there are only 1 or 2 letters to the remaining recipients, and 37 letters to his brother Mihovil. From the table that can be found in the Addenda one can ascertain that the letters in which we find this topic are from an earlier period, from 1538 to 1550 respectively, and are more scarce in the later correspondence, from 1557 to 1573.

## 2. 2. The Brevity of these Letters

Many classical authors took special note of brevity as a formal characteristic of epistles. Erasmus states for example: «*Amica est huic generi brevitatis, maxime si vel de multis, vel de minutulis negotiis agatur (...)*».<sup>11</sup> Although brevity was never an imperative that was to be blindly adhered to, they were aware that brevity could act as an impetus for the letter writer to end the letter.<sup>12</sup> Despite this, the postulate of this topos was never entirely applied, which is confirmed by the many letters that cannot be characterised as brief. Saara Ljilja, in her paper on the characteristics of Pliny's letters, states that Pliny, going against this rule, preferred longer letters.<sup>13</sup> We do not find examples of this topos in Vrančić's letters and also, by taking into account that his letters are of an intermediary length, one can conclude that this is something that he took into consideration. Occasionally, as in Pliny's case, he would either ask the addressee for a longer letter or write one himself. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of August 1547 he wrote to his brother Mihovil: *De aliis rebus scripsi ad te antea longiore epistola.* (MHH VI, 282), and in a later part of the same letter: *Scribis ad me nimis breves epistolas et ieiunas. Equidem vellem, ut longiores dares* (MHH VI, 283). In a longer letter to his uncle Ivan Statilić from the year 1540, clearly aware that he had transgressed the standard epistolary practice, he notes: *Huic certe reginae, ne alias multas et eximias ejus animi dotes commemorem, quum epistola poscit jam catastrophem* (MHH VI, 129).

<sup>11</sup> Erasmus, Desiderius, *De conscribendis epistolis*, Darmstadt, 1980., pg. 46.

<sup>12</sup> Cugusi, 1983: 74.: Sen. *epist.* 45, 13 *ne epistulae modum excedam (...)* and in a further ten letters; Plin. *epist.* 2, 5, 13 *iam finem faciam ne modum (...)* in *epistula excedam (...)* and further in the text; Fronto p. 60, 9-10 *ne modum epistulae egrediar, finem facio* etc.

<sup>13</sup> Saara Lilja, "On the Nature of Pliny's Letters, pg. 74: Quite often Pliny speaks of the length of the letter. He himself wants to receive letters as long as possible: *plurimas et longissimas* (II, 2, 2), *aeque longam* (II, 25), *quales istinc redire uberrimae possunt* (II, 12, 7)...and further in the text.

### 2. 3. Writing Despite the Lack of an Argument

The following topos is tied to two phenomena: the instance in which the author senses that there is no clearly defined argument for the letter, yet in spite of this wishes to write a letter, and the instance in which the addressee lacks an arguments the «interlocuter» suggests that he write whatever comes to mind. This topos can be found in Cicero's epistolarium especially,<sup>14</sup> whereas this was something of which Seneca disapproved.<sup>15</sup> Saara Lilja claims that this was an approach that Pliny despised: „Cicero could send a letter without any particular reason...whereas Pliny refrained from writing if there was no *materia* worth being told in letter.“<sup>16</sup> In Vrančić's epistolarium we find the letter to his friend and the bishop Stanislaus Tarlo from the year 1538, in which he wished to remind the bishop that correspondence is not important for its primary aim exclusively—the exchange of information, but also so that contact is maintained among friends. Vrančić begins this letter with the following: *Quamquam nullum mihi argumentum scribendi occurrebat, quod aut tua aut mea interesset, recordari tamen illorum, quos dudum amandos, colendos, observandosque nobis proposuimus, non tam debiti nostri muneris esse censeo, quam suave iucundumque futurum, si saepius id fecerimus* (MHH VI, 8). We find a further affirmation of this stance in Vrančić's letter from 1550 to a personage only referred to as Daniel (and as *pictor* in an apposition) to whom he provides a similar piece of advice: (...) *et si prorsus tibi nullum scribendi argumentum occurrerit (...) hoc saltem expleas epistolam* (MHH VII, 30).

### 2. 4. Complaints Due to Unreplied Letters

A topos closely connected to the prior is the sender's respective complaint to the interlocutor for allowing too great an interim for a reply. Besides the complaint, there is also a statement incorporated into the letter pertaining to the sender expecting a reply from the interlocutor. Among the epistolographers of antiquity most examples of this topos can be found in the letters of Cicero

<sup>14</sup>Cugusi, 1983: 75.: Cic. *Att.* 1, 12, 4 *quid praeterea ad te scribam non habeo.* (...) *tu velim saepe ad nos scribas. Si rem nullam habetis, quod in buccam venerit scribito;* 5, 5, 1–7, 5, 4; 5, 6, 2; 6, 5, 4; 7, 6, 1; 7, 19, 1; 8, 13, 1; 8, 14, 1; 9, 10, 1; 9, 16, 1; 10, 3, 1; 10, 3a, 1; 12, 12, 2; 12, 41, 1; 12, 44, 4; 12, 53; *Q. fr.* 2, 10, 1; 2, 11, 1; 2, 12, 3; *fam.* 4, 10, 1; 6, 4, 1; 9, 3, 1; 9, 10, 1; 11, 25, 1; 12, 9, 1; 14, 2, 1 i 16, 6, 1.

<sup>15</sup>Cugusi, 1983: 75.: Sen. *Ep.* 118, 1–2: *Nec faciam quod Cicero, vir disertissimus, facere Atticum iubet, ut etiam si rem nullam habebit, quod in buccam venerit scribat.*

<sup>16</sup>For a more detailed discussion viz. Saara Lilja, pg. 70.

and Pliny.<sup>17</sup> We often find this topos in Vrančić's letters<sup>18</sup>: in his letter to Jeremija Jakobin from 1538: *Si tamen ad me litteras, quas summe cupio, dare voluerit* (MHH VI, 26); to Giovanni Marsupino, 1538.: *Tu ad me scribis nihil* (MHH VI, 39); to his friend and prebendary of Korčula Franjo Nigretić 1538.: *Ni dabas nuper ad me litteras tuas... in oblivionem me abiisse credebam* (MHH VI, 40); to his friend Giovanni Maria Tiraboschi, 1540: *Quod nullae ad me litterae tuae iam quadrienium venerunt,(...) Cur non scribas? Cur tacendo longius a me recedis?* (MHH VI, 67); to Marino Cabala (*Marinus Caballus*), 1544: *Nullas me hactenus ad te dedisse litteras* (MHH, VI, 175); to the prince of Timișoara (of Croatian origin) Petar Petrović, 1546.: *A te nec nuncium, nec litteras, nec vel unicam salutis aut consolationis significationem accipio* (MHH VI, 216); to his friend Mihály Csáky, 1546.: *Litteras tuas, praeterquam unas, iam ab Idibus Augusti non accepi* (MHH VI, 238) etc.<sup>19</sup>

As can be seen in the examples, there are phrases of complaint in Vrančić's letters, most of them due to the tardiness of his friends in writing a reply, but only once to his brother Mihovil. That Vrančić desired longer letters from his brother, with more content and on a more regular basis something we have already mentioned in the context of topics concerning the brevity of the epistolary form. Mihovil's letters to Antun were of special importance, primarily because they were the only source of information on family matters: these include the family's financial state and overall well-being. It is no wonder, then, how he "honoured," his brother, who at this time was living in Šibenik, with the following

<sup>17</sup>Cugusi, 1983: 76: *Cic.fam. 15, 16, 1 puto te iam suppedere, quem haec tertia iam epistula ante oppresserit quam tu scidam aut litteram; Q. fr. 2, 3, 7 a te post illam Vlbiensem epistulam nullas litteras accepi*, etc. *Plin. epist. 1, 11, 1 olim mihi nullas epistulas mittis*, etc.

<sup>18</sup>If there are many examples of particular topics found in Vrančić's epistolary, some of them will be mentioned in the text, while others will be given in the notes.

<sup>19</sup>Other examples: to Mihály Csáky *Aegre fero tuam taciturnitatem. Nam diu est, quod ad me nihil scripseris* (MHH VI, 242); to the painter Daniel, 1550: *Quod tamdiu nihil litterarum tuarum acceperim magnopere miror... Multa mihi sane de ista tua taciturnitate in mentem veniunt* (MHH VII, 29); to Franjo Trankvil Andreis, 1550.: *rogo te, da operam, ut saepius litteras tuas legamus* (MHH VII, 22); to Mihály Csáky again, 1550.: (...) *tuas des saltem ad me litteras crebriores* (MHH VII, 32); to Lukas Slavik, 1550: *Ego ad te semper do aliquid rerum novarum, tu ad me aut nihil unquam, aut saltem nonnihil aliquando* (MHH, VII, 91); to Gaspar Peccius, 1559.: *Nullae unquam litterae tuae ad me quovis tempore, (...) quae mihi gratissimae et suavissimae non veniant* (MHH VIII, 64); and to his brother Mihovil, 1557.: (...) *quod tam raro per litteras proloquare?* (NSK, 2/4)



words in a letter from 1547 which Vrančić sent from the very distant region of Erdély: *Scribis ad me nimis breves epistolas... Scio enim te non totis diebus atque noctibus atteri uxorio latere, ut plenae nauis libera danda est navigatio. Porro de patre parum, de fratribus nihil, de noverca rebusque aliis longe minus...* (MHH VI, 283). As far as other examples are concerned, in almost all instances we find this topos at the beginning of the letter (9 times), twice towards the end and twice in the middle of the letter. We can assume from this that this was Vrančić's means of informing his correspondent of how greatly this correspondence meant to him and how greatly he wanted to maintain contact: so it is obvious why he placed this theme at the beginning of the letter. It is noticeable that this topos is found mostly in the earlier period of Vrančić's correspondence, from the period of 1538 to 1550 respectively. During the years 1538 to 1540 Vrančić was living mostly in the territories which are now part of today's Romania: in the cities of Turda, Cluj-Napoca and Alba Iulia, and in 1550 he spent some time on the property of his friend Tamás Nádasdy, in the Hungarian town of Szarvas. Vrančić certainly felt isolated in places like these, so his desire to receive letters from his friends can be easily understood. Keeping this in mind, we can conclude that the use of this commonplace was not used simply to conform to the canons of letter-writing, but are evidence of the real needs of the letter-writer himself.

## 2. 5. The Author's Promise to Write about Future Events or that the Addressee Write about Such Events

One often finds in these letters a promise to the addressee that procrastination will be avoided so that information on future events will be shared as soon as they occur. In antiquity this topos was often used by Cicero and his addressees, and by Frontinus as well.<sup>20</sup> Pliny though, according to Saara Lilja, claimed that the theme of a letter should not be left to chance, expressively stating that *aliquid novi* does not satisfy the criteria, and that it is necessary to write about interesting, and if possible, about unique things, also showing a particular indifference to the description of events that belong to the mundane. It should be understood by one of Pliny's commonly used phrases *rem epistula dignam* that what should be described in a letter should not just be *novitas*, but *no-*

<sup>20</sup> Cugusi, 1983: 76: Cic. *fam.* 5, 21, 5 *ego (...) si quid acciderit ut mutandum consilium sit, te certiores faciam statim*; *Att.* 7, 13a, 3 *quid actum sit scribam ad te, cum certum sciam.* etc.; Caes. Cic. *Att.* 9, 13A, 1 *cum in spem venero de compositione aliquid me conficere, statim vos certiores faciam* (= *Ep. Lat. Min.* II, n. XXVIII frg. 53) etc.; Fronto p. 83, 17 – 18 *si certius quid statuero, faciam tibi notum.*

*vitas notabilis*.<sup>21</sup> Due to the frequency of this topos in the letters of Vrančić, we can safely say that he did not agree with Pliny's statement. One can observe, from the many examples in his epistolarium, passages in which he promises to write about future events or passages in which he exhorts his addressee to write about future events, particularly to inform about what is new, although it need not be sensational. We will, firstly, cite examples in which Vrančić promises to inform: the letter to Pietro Francesco Parisio, 1553: *ut te de statu meo faciam certiozem* (MHH III, 47); to his uncle Ivan Statilić, 1540: *Quare maturavi quamprimum... te facere certiozem* (MHH VI, 76); to his friend Giorgio Volano, 1546.: (...) *voluique interim facere te de his certiozem* (MHH VI, 206); to André Gorki, 1546.: *Ex Transsylvania, donec hic ero, quicquid aut mearum aut publicarum rerum accepero, diligenter tecum communicabo* (MHH VI, 228) etc.<sup>22</sup>

It is more often the case that Vrančić wishes to be informed about current events. We will cite examples in which he prays, seeks and occasionally begs to be informed about what is new: to his brother Mihovil, 1567.: *detis operam, ut vestris litteris certior fiam* (MHH V, 139); to his friend Ferenz from Mošna, 1538.: *Rogo itaque, fac me quamprimum certiozem (...) tu vero idem ad me vicissim facito, ut sciam* (MHH VI, 36-37); to Johannes Honter, 1540.: *Nova si quae habes (...) perscribes ad me, velim. Rem, hercule, pergratam mihi feceris, si quod scias, mecum communicabis* (MHH VI, 74); to Andrea Suriano, 1544.: *Si quid aliud erit, quod ex hac ruditate Scythica optare poteris, fac ut sciam* (MHH VI, 174); to Peter Petrović, 1546.: *Nescio, Petre, cur fit, sed mei videris nimium esse oblitus. A te nec nuncium, nec litteras, nec vel unquam salutis aut consolationis significationem accipio* (MHH VI, 216); to Jan Tarlo, 1547.: (...) *ex his litteris, fac sciam, velim* (MHH VI, 251) etc.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> For a more detailed discussion viz. Saara Lilja, pgs. 67-68.

<sup>22</sup> Other examples: to Stanislav Vapovi, 1547.: *Ego (...) teque de omni statu meo ac valetudine facere certiozem* (MHH VI, 271); to Paulo Sabesi, (...) *facio te de reditu meo certiozem* (MHH VI, 313); to his friend pater Bernard, 1568.: *et vel saltem illud crebrius ad te scribam* (MHH IX, 239). In all these examples we can see the use of the syntagma *facere certiozem*, and some slight variations of this when he uses *diligenter tecum communicabo* and *crebrius ad te scribam*.

<sup>23</sup> Other examples: to an unidentified addressee: (...) *rogo, cures, ut sciam ex tuis litteris* (MHH VI, 253); to Johannes Kindler, 1547.: *curaris me tam studiose de his facere certiozem* (MHH VI, 268); to Stanislav Vapovi, 1547.: (...) *si quid occurrerit scitu dignum... scribas ad me velim.* (MHH VI, 275); to Ernest Elver, 1548.: (...) *magno opere petimus, ut nos quam primum non solum facias certiozem* (MHH VI, 290); to Christian Pomarius/Baumbart, 1549.: (...) *feceris me certiozem* (MHH VI, 315); to Mihály Csáky, 1550: *Si commode poteris, fac me de omnibus certiozem, quae istic agantur* (MHH VII, 32); to the same,

From the examples we have just cited, we will notice that Vrančić's turns of phrase display a greater variation than in the examples we saw prior. The most prevalent are those that use the syntagma *facere certiore*, and occasionally he uses the more laborious expression *fac (facito), ut sciam* or the conditional sentence *si quid scias, mecum communicabis* and others like this. At a great distance from friends with whom he was acquainted either while studying or as an ambassador, as well as from his family, Vrančić often sought that the correspondant inform him on what was new in the next letter. This has provided us with the impetus to pose the question whether there is a definite reason for this other than mere epistolary conventions. Having gone through the said letters, we have noticed that among all fifteen of them, eight in all were written from Alba Iulia in Transylvania and we have concluded that Vrančić's distance from the more important European centers of that time is perhaps the reason why he made use of this topos. Vrančić had thus, after completing his studies in Padua, Vienna, and Krakow, spent several years in the region of Transylvania, now known as Erdély, where he mostly felt at a loss due to the sheer distance of this place, so his desire to receive any news from his friends was great. Besides the use of this topos in letters that were addresses to his friends, we also find it used four times in the family correspondence. In two letters to his brother Mihovil (MHH VI, 206 and NSK 2/7) we will notice a greater exertion in the use of these commonplace phrases by which he informs his brother to write on current events with greater celerity (*omni festinatione festinantius, quam citissime poteritis*). This definitely tells us that family matters were of special importance to Vrančić. Viewing this diachronically, the use of this topos informs us that Vrančić was more likely to include the phrases of epistolary topics, especially topics of thought, in his earlier correspondence and he used it more often from the years 1538 to 1550. We can see, firstly, that the reasons for this were that he wrote to his friends more often at this time, and the elements of epistolary topics, as we had noted earlier, are more frequent in his family, rather than his official correspondence (there is more official correspondence after 1550). Secondly, it is a fact that at this time he was spending an extended period in the region of Erdély where he found it difficult to get hold of any new information be it either political or private, whereas after 1550, having moved over to Ferdinand's side, he was to live in the more important European

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1550.: *Oro itaque te (...) facias me (...) certiore* (MHH VII, 85); to his brother Mihovil, 1558.: (...) *facias me certiore omni festinatione festinantius* (MHH VII, 206); again to his brother, 1567.: *Facite postremo me, quam citissime poteritis, certiore* (NSK, 2/7).

centers (particularly in Vienna) where he found new information more available.

## 2. 6. Concern for the Health of the Addressee

Among the stereotypical epistolary phrases that can be extracted from these letters, we also find the topos by which concern is shown for the health of the addressee or a sense of joy is expressed for the addressee's state of well-being. We find this in Vrančić's letters on several instances: in his letter to his friend, the canon Piotr Porembski, 1538: (...) *maximo gaudio affici, intelligens, te et vivere et bene valere* (MHH VI, 14); to Franjo Trankvil Andreis, 1538: (...) *vehementer ipsi mihi et gavisus et gratulatus sum, quod superesses et certe valeres* (MHH VI, 17); to Franjo Nigretić, 1538: (...) *teque de recta valetudine mea gaudere declararis* (MHH VI, 40); to Johannes Honter, 1540: *Illud profecto a te, mi Honthere, desidero, velis quamprimum de statu ac salute tua certiozem me facere* (MHH VI, 74) etc.<sup>24</sup>

The topos by which concern or joy for the health of the addressee is expressed is an almost inevitable epistolographic commonplace so that it is no wonder that it can be found in Vrančić's epistolarium. We may also note that it is not that prevalent, bearing in mind that Vrančić wrote approximately 800 letters. We must also mention that we have found several lighter expressions of this topos but have selected those that display a more representative usage. Even in this instance, with the exception of those which include his brother Mihovil, this topos is found primarily in the correspondence addressed to his friends. In his letters to F. Trankvil Andreis, Johannes Honter and Franjo Nigretić, other aspects can be observed, most of which we have mentioned earlier. We can safely assume that Vrančić was close friends with these men, which is why we find expressions of true friendship in these letters, complaints about unrequited mail, the desire to be infor-

<sup>24</sup> Other examples: to his friend Mateo Mariliani, 1540: *Valetudinem tuam cura et serva te meliori tempore*. (MHH, VI, 136); to Tamás Kassai, 1547: (...) *et mihi tum verbis tum litteris (...) attulit consolationem (...) quibus narravit vos recte valere* (MHH VI, 286); to his brother Mihovil, 1550: *Omnes vos domi ex sententia valere* (MHH VII, 46); to Franjo Trankvil Andreis, 1550: *Salvum te et incolumem esse, quod ex litteris tuis intellexi, (...) magnopere gavisus sum* (MHH VII, 49); to Andrija Dudić, 1566.: *Unde etiam ex animo tibi compatiar, metuens, ne quid adversae valetudinis contrahas ex tam itineribus gravibus* (MHH IX, 133); to the bishop Janos Liszthi, 1571: (...) *gratulor Eidem, quod et convaluerit a tam incomoda gravique aegritudine* (MHH X, 84); to Juraj Drašković, 1571: *Quod vero Reverendissima dominatio Vestra fruitur bona valetudine, gratulamur ei plurimum* (MHH X, 202); to his brother Mihovil Mihovil, 1557: *Annus est quod de te nihil audiverim (...) quaque uteris valetudine*. (NSK, 2/3).

med of current events as well as concern for their health. As shown by these examples, there are some slight variations in the language that Vrančić uses: those in which Vrančić expresses joy and congratulates the addressee on his health and those in which he shows some concern, asking of the addressee that he inform him about the state of his own health in the next letter.

## 2. 7. Hope for a Meeting Face to Face

Among the epistolographers of antiquity the hope of a meeting face to face in the near future is often expressed.<sup>25</sup> Vrančić's use of this topos is rare: we find it in the letter to his friend Stanislaw Wapowski, 1546: *Ad me autem quandocunque venire volueris, venies semper gratissimus* (MHH VI, 210); in his letter to Andrija Dudić, 1566: *Ego, (...) libenter te viderem et amplecterer* (MHH IX, 133); and to the priest Paolo Salini, 1567.: *Quod reliquum est, videre etiam vos admodum cupimus. Idque si fieri possit Constantinopoli* (MHH XII, 341).

It seems that Vrančić was aware that travel was something of a luxury that could not be afforded by all and also entailed much risk, so that he preferred not to express the desire for a meeting despite the fact that this was an epistolary commonplace.

## 2. 8. Expressions of Amity

Vrančić expressed close ties and dedication to certain addressees, especially to his friends, and affirmed this by using expressions of amity. In the epistolarium of Cicero the expression *carum (caros) habere* is quite frequent and Vrančić uses it in a similar way as *carum esse* to be exact. Other than this expression, we also find phrases which are based on the verb *amare* and on the adverb *semper*, but we also find others: in his letter to Franjo Trankvil Andreis, 1538: (...) *quum te sincero corde semper amaverim*, (MHH VI, 17); to his friend Paolo Giovio, 1539.: (...) *et affectum erga te singularem agnoscas, quem equidem quum amem et colam* (MHH VI, 30); to Franjo Nigretić, 1538: (...) *me ut semper ames, te ut a me amari non dubites*, (MHH VI, 41); to Johann A. Valentin, 1539: *te ex animo et amo et veneror* (MHH VI, 50); to Andrea Suriano, 1544.: *Nec putes, (...) quum te et ipsum Marium memoria teneo amoque, ut charissimos, iocundissimos, suavissimos, ac imo etiam (ardentius non possum) ut solem unicos*

<sup>25</sup>Cugusi, 1983: 77: Q. Cic. Cic. fam. 16, 8, 2 *effice ... ut ad nos firmus et valens quam primum venias*; Fronto p. 176, 9-10 *fac ... ut fortis ad nos venias*; Claudio Tiberiano, P. Mich. VIII 472, 9-11 *occasione inventa spero me celerius apud te venturum etc.*

(MHH VI, 173) to his friend the bishop of Šibenik Ivan Lučić Stafilić, 1544: *Quoniam ego te semper a teneris et amavi et colui* (MHH VI, 176) etc.<sup>26</sup>

Here we have primarily concentrated on the examples which are representative and convincingly display the use of this topos. While other topoi were also used for members of Vrančić's family, this particular topos was only used when Vrančić wrote to his friends. Viewing these letters diachronically, we must note that they are all from an earlier period of Vrančić's correspondance. After a closer reading of the passages cited, in which the author wishes to express his loyalty and friendship, we will notice a slight gradation in register which is dependant on the addressee of the letter. Of the fifteen examples which we have selected, 4 are connected to Vrančić's close friends, whereas the remaining letters are connected to his acquaintances. The language Vrančić uses in these letters is of a more openly emotional nature: *sincero corde semper amaverim; qui mihi es et fuisti omnium optimum; vehementer amem; prae multis amicis tuis esse charissimum*. For those to whom Vrančić wrote one or two letters (the number of these letters may possibly mean that they were only acquaintances of Vrančić) Vrančić's language is more controlled. An example of this is when he says to Jakopo Strada *sis mihi charus*, yet to Giorgio Volano *quam mihi charus esse* etc. Finally, we have observed that when Vrančić was writing to friends who were of some standing in the Church, phrases of friendship are complemented with expressions of respect: to the bishop Paolo Giovio he writes *amem et colam*, to the canon Johann A. Valentin he writes *et amo et veneror*, and to the bishop Ivan L. Statilić *et amavi et colui*. All the expressions show that Vrančić was tied by friendship with these personages, yet there is also evidence of the epistolary topic which had as its aim *amicitiam confirmare*.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Other examples: to Giorgio Volano, 1546: *Nec tamen dubitare poteris, quam mihi charus esses* (MHH VI, 202); to Stanislaw Wapowski, 1547: *Magni sunt amoris haec, (...) Vapovi, qua mihi nihil sane dulcius neque amabilius esse potest, ut nunc prorsus te, ac revera et amem et diligam* (MHH VI, 273); to Christian Pomarius /Baumbart, 1549: *Amo enim te, amore, mihi crede, singulari* (MHH VI, 329); to Mihály Csáky, 1549: *ut tecum colloquar, qui mihi es et fuisti omnium amicorum optimus*. (MHH VII, 19); to the same, 1550: *Haec ego tibi consulo... quam te vehementer amem...* (MHH VII, 54); to Jakopo Strada, 1558: *Tua tamen amicitia victus, (...) ut cognosceres, quanti te faciam, quam sis mihi charus* (MHH VII, 287); to Giovanni Fasolo, 1568: (...) *te mihi esse charissimum* (MHH IX, 252); to Anselmo Stoekelio, 1569: *me tibi prae multis amicis tuis esse charissimum* (MHH IX, 268); to Nicasio Ellebodio, 1569: *Semper ante te, Nicasi, et amavi et in albo habui, in quo et doctos et mei amatissimos consuivi*. (MHH X, 30).

<sup>27</sup> On the use of this topos in the Croatian poets of the Renaissance see: Du-bravka Brezak-Stamać, 2011: 1354-1364. for a more detailed discussion.

From the preceding paragraphs it is evident that all the categories of the topics of thought, as adumbrated by Cugusi in his work, are represented to a greater or lesser extent in Vrančić's letters. The table below represents topics of thought. In it are those that Vrančić used in his private correspondence exclusively, either with friends or with members of his family. We do not find these topics in his official correspondence. The reason for this might possibly be the epistolary tradition itself in which phrases of familiarity were acceptable in private correspondence but were not "tolerated," in official correspondence due to the fact that here clarity was expected; conciseness was expected of the writing itself without a superfluity of rhetorical ornament. Viewing these letters diachronically, it can be observed that these topics are more prevalent in those letters from an earlier date, yet are rarer in the later letters.

**Table 1. Topics of Thought**

Epistolary categories	Letters to family	Other private letters <sup>28</sup>	Official political letters	Official letters to the clergy	Year
Conversations with absent friends	1	5	-	-	1538,1540,1546, 1549,1557,1568.
Brevity of letters	-	1	-	-	1540.
Writing without argument	-	2	-	-	1538, 1550.
Complaints due to letters without a reply	-	14	-	-	1538 – 3×, 1540, 1544,1546-4×, 1550-3×,1557, 1559.
Promise / plea for a new letter	4	17	-	-	1538,1540,2×,154, 1546-2×,1547-5×, 1548,1549-2×, 1550-2×,1553, 1558,1567-2×, 1568.
Concern for the addressee's health	2	10	-	-	1538-3×, 1540-2×, 1547,1550-2×, 1557, 1566, 1571-2×.

<sup>28</sup>The topos, for the most part, concerns the letters among friends, more precisely the letters which Vrančić wrote either to his good friends or to trusted acquaintances.

Hope for a meeting	-	3	-	-	1546, 1567.	1566,
Expressions of amity	-	15	-	-	1538-3×, 1539, 1544-2×, 1546, 1547, 1549-2×, 1550, 1558, 1568, 1569-2×.	

### 3. Topics of Language

Cugusi divides topics of language into three groups: the first group includes the use of colloquial expressions which is typical of the *sermo cotidianus*, the second includes the use of expressions from the Greek, the placement of citations and proverbs in the letter itself, while the third group includes the use of stereotypical expressions. *Heus tu* and *quid ais?* occur frequently in the letters of Cicero, yet there are more expressions on which Cugusi places an emphasis; *scito*, *scias*, *ex aliquo scire*, *mihi crede*, *fac+subjunctive* etc.<sup>29</sup> Various appeals are included in this group, among them are petitions to God. Such phrases in classical epistolography are those like *me hercules*, *medius fidius*, *di me perdat* etc., while in Vrančić we find, although there are some exceptions, the frequent use of a petition to the Christian God; *Faxit dominus Deus*, *Deus bone*, *Faxit Altissimus* etc. are a few examples of this. Concerning the categories that belong to the second group, Vrančić indeed makes frequent use of both citations and proverbs. We did not find any expressions from the Greek in Vrančić's letters so that this group does not play a part in our investigation. The stereotypical phrases (and their variants) *humillime supplico*, *dignetur*; *rogo*, *velit*; *operam dabo*, *ut*; are a characteristic of official correspondence and thus we also find them in Vrančić's official correspondence.

#### 3. 1. Colloquial Expressions

##### *(verum) scito /scias / scis /scire te (vos) volo*

An investigation into colloquial expressions will inform the following part of this paper as they are an important component of these letters. They were used in order to achieve the closeness of a „conversation“. This also includes the use of apostrophe for certain addressees as well as phrases of speech in the imperative and the vocative; in written communication this was a type of substitute for the direct communication between two people. In Cicero's epistolarium we will find the expression *scito* more fre-

<sup>29</sup> Cugusi 1983: 78-83.



quently, whereas in Pliny *scias* is more frequent. These expressions play the part of introductory phrases in sentence so that they are found at the beginning of a new thought. *Scito* was a phrase with greater currency during the republican period and the use of it remained for some time afterwards. At a later date it was replaced some what by *scias* and *scire te volo*. Vrančić was wont to use the expression *scito* most often with either *verum* or *ceterum* following, so the examples that we have found of this are many.<sup>30</sup> Other expressions are more uncommon; *scias* in three places,<sup>31</sup> *scire te volo* only once<sup>32</sup>, yet *scis* is more frequent.<sup>33</sup> All these expressions, by which a colloquial tone is achieved, are found in Vrančić's private correspondence; and we must add that they are more common in his correspondence to friends than to family, the reason for this being that he wrote more letters to the former than the later. The expression *scito* is most prevalent in the letters that he wrote to friends (31), but we also have examples in the letters he wrote to family (9). The statistics for *scis* paint a somewhat different picture. Of the 9 examples mentioned, 7 are to be found in the correspondence to family, and 2 in the correspondence to friends which ultimately shows that Vrančić preferred the lighter expression *scis* for family correspondence rather than the more imperative *scito* so we can conclude that Vrančić's criteria for choosing the appropriate expression was the addressee.

### *ex litteris scire/ cognoscere /intelligere*

Cugusi cites the category *Ex aliquo scire* and others like it that can be frequently found in Cicero's epistolarium, although these instances are more scarce in works of a later date.<sup>34</sup> Vrančić often made recourse to the expression *ex litteris scire* as well as to verbs that were semantically close.<sup>35</sup> As is the case with other colloquial expressions, this instance, as expected, is found primarily in the private correspondence, either to family or friends.

<sup>30</sup> *MHH*: IV, 54.; VI, 11.; VI, 15.; VI, 16.; VI, 25.; VI, 40.; VI, 47.; VI, 58.; VI, 68.; VI, 90.; VI, 109.; VI, 179.; VI, 186.; VI, 206.; VI, 247.; VI, 262.; VI, 265.; VI, 273.; VI, 293.; VI, 313.; VI, 347.; VII, 8.; VII, 9.; VII, 11.; VII, 21.; VII, 24.; VII, 48.; VII, 106.; VII, 153.; VII, 181.; VII, 205.; VII, 352.; VIII, 67.; VIII, 207.; IX, 281.; X, 239.; X, 313.; X, 351.; XI, 170.; XII, 301.; NSK, 2/4, 2/5.

<sup>31</sup> *MHH*: VI, 76.; VI, 245.; 10, 352.

<sup>32</sup> *MHH*: VI, 107.

<sup>33</sup> *MHH*: VI, 60.; VI, 70.; VI, 84.; VI, 86.; VI, 88.; VI, 101.; VI, 159.; VI, 352.; 7, 64.

<sup>34</sup> Cugusi, 1983: 80.

<sup>35</sup> *MHH*: VI, 14.; VI, 49.; VI, 56.; VI, 62.; VI, 73.; VI, 74.; VI, 250.; VI, 320.; VII, 46.; VII, 49.; VII, 63.; VIII, 72.; VII, 147.; VII, 235.; VIII, 161.; IX, 121.; IX, 132.

***mihi crede (credas) / crede mihi (nobis)***

This expression of persuasion is incorporated into a sentence, yet is rarely placed at the beginning of the sentence as is the case with *scito*. By using it, one desired to affirm a particular statement as well as to convince the addressee of its veracity. Cicero would often resort to the expression *mihi crede*, while those with whom he corresponded preferred *crede mihi*.<sup>36</sup> In Vrančić's epistolarium we have the following instance: the expression *mihi crede* is used 16 times,<sup>37</sup> we find *mihi credas* three times,<sup>38</sup> and *crede (credite) mihi (nobis)* are used twice.<sup>39</sup> What immediately surfaces is that topoi such as these are used only if the addressee is either a friend or a member of Vrančić's family. Viewing this diachronically, these topoi are almost exclusive to the period from 1538 to 1550, and are sparse in those letters from a later period. Vrančić placed this expression at the beginning of a sentence only once (in the letter to his uncle Ivan Statilić) while all other examples are found within the sentence. It can also be noticed that such examples are more prevalent in sentences which include a negation, yet are rarer in affirmative sentences. In the first instance we have a particular statement which Vrančić wished to emphasise.<sup>40</sup>

***fac ut + subj. / cura (curetis) ut + subj.***

Cugusi cites the fact that the formulation *fac ut + subjunctive* was present in the letters from all periods of classical epistolography, and was most frequent in Cicero's time, whereas *cura ut + subjunctive* was more noticeable among the *subscriptions*.<sup>41</sup> We do not find such formulations in Vrančić that often, yet they are still there; *fac ut + subjunctive* is used 5 times,<sup>42</sup> and *cura (curetis) ut + subjunctive* is used 9 times.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Cugusi, 1983: 80.

<sup>37</sup> *MHH*: VI, 127.; VI, 181.; VI, 225.; VI, 239.; VI, 250.; VI, 259.; VI, 269.; VI, 316.; VI, 329.; VI, 339.; VII, 23.; VII, 50.; VII, 73.; VI, 87.; VII, 178.; VIII, 152.;

<sup>38</sup> *MHH*: VI, 204.; VI, 214.; IX, 275.

<sup>39</sup> *MHH*: VIII, 94.; X, 17.

<sup>40</sup> To cite some examples: *non hercle, epistola, non internuncio, sed libro, aut mea praesentia, mihi crede, opusest.* (*MHH*, 6, 181); *Nec praetermittam, mihi crede, ullas rationes atque conatus...* (*MHH*, 6, 225); *De obitu patris tui Caroli...non aliter, mihi crede, affectus sum...* (*MHH*, 6, 259); *Veniet autem hoc ad me..., non aliter, mihi crede, quam res...* (*MHH*, 6, 316); *Amo enim te, amore, mihi crede, singulari* (*MHH*, 6, 329) etc.

<sup>41</sup> Cugusi, 1983: 83.

<sup>42</sup> *MHH*: VI, 331.; VII, 9.; VII, 34.; XI, 32.; *NSK*, 2/2.

<sup>43</sup> *MHH*: VI, 103.; VI, 128.; VI, 257.; VI, 287.; VII, 23.; VII, 131.; X, 344.; XI, 7.; XI, 29.; *NSK*, 2/2.

### Various Petitions / Pleas to God

One of the most frequent oaths in classical epistolography is (*me*)*herc(u)le(s)* and it is especially found in Cicero's epistolarium; in the letters that he wrote and in those of his addressees, but it can also be found in the letters of Seneca, Pliny and Frontinus as well as in those of later epistolographers.<sup>44</sup> Vrančić also makes use of this device to achieve a colloquial tone, yet adds new, christian supplications to the stock of those from antiquity: *Proh Jupiter*<sup>45</sup>; (*Me*) *Herc(u)le*<sup>46</sup>; *Dii boni*<sup>47</sup>; *Deus bone*<sup>48</sup>; *Jesu bone*<sup>49</sup>; *Per Deum*<sup>50</sup>; *Faxit Deus*<sup>51</sup>; *Faxit dominus Deus*<sup>52</sup>; *Faxit Deus Optimus Maximus*<sup>53</sup>; *Faxit Altissimus*<sup>54</sup>; *Faxit Christus*.<sup>55</sup> He uses classical petitions exclusively in the letters to his friends, and uses *Proh Juppiter!* only once for a member of his family, brother Mihovil; in this letter from 1540 he warns Mihovil of the dangers of a Turkish advance and, in a state of great concern, advises him to return home as soon as possible. The expression *Deus bone!* is the one most commonly used in Vrančić's epistolarium so that we find it in letters to addressees of various social status. The remaining petitions all intertwine slightly, yet one will surely note the expressive use of *Faxit Deus!* and its variants in the official correspondence. Like these supplications, we must single out a group of phrases / syntagma which also glorify and ask the aid of God, yet are morphologically different as they are in the ablative absolute: *Deo (bene) favente*<sup>56</sup>; *Deo dante*<sup>57</sup>; *Deo(bene) (ad)iuvente*<sup>58</sup>; *Deo volente*<sup>59</sup>; *Deo certe*<sup>60</sup>; *(Domino) Deo comite*<sup>61</sup>; *Deo duce*<sup>62</sup>;

<sup>44</sup> Although some of the expressions that we will be cited qualify as exclamations, here they will be referred to as petitions.

<sup>45</sup> MHH: VI, 84.

<sup>46</sup> MHH: IV, 52.; IV, 89; VI, 74.; VI, 181.; VI, 199.; VI, 204; VI, 222; VI, 240.; VI, 278.; VI, 289; VI, 314.; VI, 331.

<sup>47</sup> MHH: VII, 104

<sup>48</sup> MHH: VI, 13.; VI, 205.; VI, 289.; VI, 307.; VI, 353.; VII, 82.; VII, 137.; VII, 234.; VII, 274.; VII, 282.; VII, 301.; VIII, 50.; VIII, 54.; VIII, 59.; VIII, 66.; IX, 74.; IX, 103, 240.; IX, 123, 284.; NSK, 2/5.

<sup>49</sup> MHH: VII, 165.

<sup>50</sup> MHH: VI, 37.; VI, 39.; VI, 87.; VII, 46.

<sup>51</sup> MHH: VI, 81.; VI, 109.; VI, 320.; VII, 32.; VII, 105.; VII, 108.; VII, 110.; VIII, 154.; VIII, 184.; XI, 193. NSK, 2/6., NSK, 2/6.

<sup>52</sup> MHH: IX, 103.

<sup>53</sup> MHH: VIII, 138.

<sup>54</sup> MHH: III, 229.; VII, 162.; VIII, 46.; VIII, 50.; VIII, 121.; IX, 190.; IX, 237.; X, 84.; XI, 6.

<sup>55</sup> MHH: VII, 18.

<sup>56</sup> MHH: VI, 23.; VI, 74.; XI, 230. i 231

<sup>57</sup> MHH: VI, 78.; XI, 24.

<sup>58</sup> MHH: VII, 23.; VII, 174.; X, 134.; 11, 253.; NSK, 2/1.

<sup>59</sup> MHH: VIII, 196.; IX, 97.; X, 80.; X, 340.; X, 334.; X, 346.; X, 347.; XI, 31.; XI, 84.; XII, 258.; XII, 300.; NSK, 2/2; NSK, 2/9.

*Deo autore*<sup>63</sup>; *Auspice Deo*<sup>64</sup>; *Deo Optimo Maximo comite*<sup>65</sup>; *Favente Domino*<sup>66</sup>; *Domino comite*<sup>67</sup>; *Domino bene iuvante*<sup>68</sup>; *Christo duce*<sup>69</sup>; *Favente omnium liberatore Christo*<sup>70</sup>; *Auspice Christo*.<sup>71</sup>

### 3. 2. The Use of Citations and Proverbs

#### Citations

In the Latin epistolary tradition the use of citation was a common practice. Among Greek authors the most often cited were Homer and Euripides, especially in the correspondence of Cicero, Seneca and Pliny, whereas in the correspondence of Frontinus most of the citations are from Plato, Callimachus and Apollonius of Rhodes. Concerning Latin authors, both Cicero and Varro would most often cite from the works of Ennius, Terence and Pacuvius, while Seneca and Pliny would cite Vergil, Ovid, Lucretius and Catullus. Vrančić, in accordance with the epistolary tradition, also had a predilection to use a citation, either from a poet or from a writer of prose. We do not find citations in Greek language, but we do find citations from Greek authors which Vrančić had read in Latin translation so that he cites them in Latin. Besides classical quotations, he had a tendency to place citations from the Bible in his letters which should come as no surprise should we bear in mind that he was of the clergy. Without exhausting every excerpt and paraphrase from this huge epistolographic opus, yet still citing some of the most illuminating examples, one will notice that citations from classical authors have a greater precedent over those from the Bible. Vrančić cites, usually stating the original source, three Greek authors (Socrates, Plato and Hesiod), and ten Roman authors. Most of the citations are from Horace (6), followed by Cicero (3), Terence (3) and Ovid (3), whereas Martial, Terence, Caesar, Livy, Vergil, Seneca and Quintilian are cited only once or twice. Of all the 27 citations, 20 are from within the period of 1538 to 1550, as well as the other elements of epistolary topics. As far as the addressees of these letters are concerned, the statistics remain the same; 12 citations are from the family corre-

<sup>60</sup> *MHH*: VII, 164.; XI, 6.

<sup>61</sup> *MHH*: IV, 89.; XI, 185.; *NSK*, 2/5; *NSK*, 1/6.

<sup>62</sup> *MHH*: IV, 87.; XI, 230.

<sup>63</sup> *MHH*: IV, 229

<sup>64</sup> *MHH*: VI, 213.; VI, 286.; VI, 311.; VI, 336.; *NSK*, 2/4.

<sup>65</sup> *MHH*: IV, 13.

<sup>66</sup> *MHH*: VII, 48.

<sup>67</sup> *MHH*: III, 246.

<sup>68</sup> *MHH*: X, 29.

<sup>69</sup> *MHH*: VII, 17

<sup>70</sup> *MHH*: VII, 23.

<sup>71</sup> *MHH*: VI, 336.; VII, 47.

spondence and 15 of them are from the correspondence to his friends. Because of this we can make the conclusion that Vrančić, following the traditions of epistolography, used quotations in his letters that were of a familial nature so that we do not find them in the official correspondence. Vrančić would use citations by openly stating the original source. Only once does he state both the author and the work („...ait... *Marcus Tullius in II. de Oratore*), and on several occasions would state the author („...iuxta *carmen Martialis...*“, „...ut *Virgilius ait...*“, „...ut est in *Horatio...*“), and sometimes would incorporate a citation or paraphrase without warning (*Restat...si solandus es, quum et humani a te nihil alienum putem.*).<sup>72</sup>

Concerning quotations from the Bible, it must be remarked that a large percentage of them are from the Epistles of St. Paul (8) when compared to the others which appear only once or twice – the Psalms of David, Isaiah, the Gospel according to Luke, the Second Epistle of John, Acts of the Apostles, the Epistle of Peter, Deutoronomy, Malachi, Jeremiah and Proverbs. In the majority of instances Vrančić would either introduce or affirm a citation or paraphrase from the Bible by using various expression of which he would state the source („...ut *cum Propheta dicam...*“, „...ut *cum Paulo loquar...*“, „*Ait enim Paulus...*“, „...ut *scribit Jeremias...*“ etc.). Occasionally God himself is stated as the source, the word of God to be more exact, whether he was named *explicite* or whether this was to be understood from context („*Dicit enim Deus...*“, „...*qui dixit...*“, „...*a Divino, qui dixit...*“). The context of all these citations is clerical, indeed religious, ranging from the relationship between the Islamic and Christian powers, problems with Lutherans, the collection of tithes to reflexions on human weakness generally, especially among the priesthood. The statistics are significantly different when compared to the incorporation of citations from classical authors. Viewing this diachronically, one will notice that the majority of citations from the Bible are to be found in the period from 1560 to 1573; of all 20 instances 15 are from this period, yet only five citations are from the preceding period from 1538 to 1560. The probable reason for this might be Vrančić's progress within the ranks of the clergy, and also a possible change in his reading habits: from the secular literature of human to that of a spiritual provenance. The majority of citations from the Bible are to be found in those letters which Vrančić exchanged with those who were connected to the clergy in some way (12), yet there are also occasions in which we find them in the correspondence to his friends

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<sup>72</sup> MHH VI, 17.

(6). An overview of citations of both classical and biblical citations will be found in the **Addenda** at the end of our paper in tables 1 and 2.

### Proverbs

The incorporation of proverbs into these is an aspect of topics that is closely tied to what we have just discussed prior. In Cicero's letters *ad Att.* this is a frequent occurrence, and can also be found in the letters of Cicero's correspondents. The so-called «literary» letters of Pliny, Seneca and Frontinus are in no way an exception. After reading through Vrančić's letters it will become evident that he was well acquainted with the best known collection of proverbs from the period of humanism: the *Adagia* of Erasmus. Not only did he cite and elaborate from this book, he also assimilated a great deal of its contents.<sup>73</sup> There are also other proverbs in his letters the origin of which is still unknown to us. Vrančić incorporated proverbs into his letters much in the same way he incorporated citations: Vrančić uses certain phrases as a kind of marker that he will be using a „foreign text“. Occasionally these are expressions by which Vrančić clearly states that a proverb will follow („...*iuxta tritum illud proverbium*“, „...*meminertque illius proverbii*“, „...*iuxta vetus proverbium*“, „...*ut Hungaris est in proverbio*“), sometimes he would introduce them with a neutral phrase („...*ut aiunt*“), and sometimes he would use the proverb only („*Gallum vicissim afferunt, velle movere omnem lapidem...*“, „*Crassiore, ni fallor, Minerva eras*“, „*videmur nobis semper in tranquillo esse*“ etc.). Even when using proverbs Vrančić does not transgress the epistolary norm: the addressees are either friends or family and proverbs barely make an appearance in the official correspondence. The letters belong to his earlier period (1538-1550), and if we find them in the second (od 1551-1573), they are mostly from the family correspondence. The examples which have been traced to an original source, as well as those the source of which is still unknown will also be found in the **Addenda** in tables 3. i 4.

### 3. 3. The Use of Stereotypical Phrases

Besides the stereotypical phrases by which the letter is placed within context and the phrases of greeting at the beginning and the end of the letter, there are phrases to be found within the letter which can (due to their frequent appearance) be considered as the *loci communes* of epistolographic expression. What we are

<sup>73</sup>All the proverbs of Erasmus are cited according to: <http://www.oopen.org/search?keyword=adagiorum+chilias>. Semptember 6th 2013.

<sup>73</sup> 6: 2755.

dealing with here is the phraseology of official correspondence which is why they are more easily to be found in Pliny's letters to Trajan or perhaps in more specific epistolographic types as in letters of recommendation or condolence etc. for example. In Vrančić's letters we find a certain number of phrases which, to a certain extent, reappear. What now follows is the location of every such phrase in Vrančić's letters:

(*humillime*) *supplico, dignetur*,<sup>74</sup> *humillime supplicans, dignetur*,<sup>75</sup> *demisse supplico, dignetur*.<sup>76</sup>

*rogo, velit(velint)*,<sup>77</sup> *rogamus (rogavimus), velit (velint)*<sup>78</sup>

*operam dabo, ut*,<sup>79</sup> *dabo / do(omnem) operam, ut*,<sup>80</sup> *dabimus (omnem) operam, ut*,<sup>81</sup> *dans omnem operam*,<sup>82</sup> *daturus operam, ut*.<sup>83</sup>

We have taken every phrase of this kind into consideration and have noted the following particulars. Vrančić used *Humillime supplico, dignetur* only in the correspondence in which the addressees were his superiors, meaning personages of status in either church or state. In all of the 50 letters which have been found, the statistics show that this phrase was found 33 times in his letters to the emperor Maximilian, 10 times to emperor Ferdinand, 2 times in letters addressed to the popes Paul the IVth and Pius the Vth, 2 times to Charles the Vth, 1 to king Rudolph, 1 Nikola Olah, the Primate of Hungary and 1 to the Hungarian Chamber. This expression was used, therefore, only in the official corres-

<sup>74</sup> *MHH*: II, 247.; VII, 235.; VII, 273.; VII, 303.; VII, 342.; VII, 345.; VIII, 48.; VIII, 88.; VIII, 93.; VIII, 117.; VIII, 172.; VIII, 175.; VIII, 179.; VIII, 187, 188 i 189.; VIII, 195.; VIII, 248.; VIII, 256.; VIII, 264.; VIII, 295.; VIII, 349.; VIII, 356.; IX, 37, 38 i 39.; IX, 61.; IX, 129.; IX, 292.; IX, 293.; X, 26.; X, 123.; X, 128.; X, 135.; X, 160.; X, 165.; X, 179.; X, 269.; X, 276.; X, 284.; X, 290.; XI, 13.; XI, 45.; XI, 59 i 60.; XI, 74.; XI, 133.; XI, 148.; XI, 159.; XI, 175.; XI, 198.; XI, 199.; XI, 279.; XI, 303, 304 i 305.; XII, 317.

<sup>75</sup> *MHH*: VII, 331.; IX, 193.; XI, 282.

<sup>76</sup> *MHH*: IX, 50.; IX, 232.; X, 25.; XI, 75.; XI, 302 i 305.

<sup>77</sup> *MHH*: II, 65.; VI, 15.; VI, 288.; VIII, 63.; VIII, 83.; VIII, 91.; VIII, 156.; VIII, 242.; VIII, 290.; VIII, 380.; IX, 71.; IX, 75.; IX, 117.; X, 11.; X, 300.; X, 360.; XI, 27.; XII, 268.

<sup>78</sup> *MHH*: VIII, 72.; VIII, 81.; VIII, 107.; VIII, 363.; VIII, 369.; IX, 26.; IX, 73.; IX, 132.; IX, 153.; IX, 161.; X, 132.; X, 139.; X, 255.; X, 261.; X, 328.; XI, 34.; XI, 140.; XI, 152.; XI, 217.; XII, 227.; XII, 257.

<sup>79</sup> *MHH*: VI, 9.; VI, 102.

<sup>80</sup> *MHH*: VI, 13.; VI, 18.; VI, 41.; VI, 93.; VI, 168.; VI, 354.; VII, 18.; VII, 28.; VII, 305.; VIII, 59.; VIII, 114.; IX, 71.; IX, 164.; X, 243.; X, 286.; XI, 234.; XII, 304.

<sup>81</sup> *MHH*: VI, 76.; VI, 315.; IX, 304.; X, 192.; X, 339.

<sup>82</sup> *MHH*: VII, 8.; VIII, 260.

<sup>83</sup> *MHH*: VIII, 261.; IX, 239.

pondence, as an elegant tone was what was required. The context of these phrases depends on the content of the letter itself, but for the most part they introduce or proclaim an appeal, which can be easily understood should we bear in mind the meaning of these phrases. The most numerous were the appeals adressed to the emperors we noted above and in most of them we find Vrančić seeking forgiveness for not completing what was ordered of him or seeking some particular aid with money, ammunition etc. As can be seen in the following table, the phrase *rogo, velit* and its variants are not found exclusively in the official correspondence, but also in the correspondence to friends, yet this is nothing out of the ordinary; this is because of the lower level of elegance and conventionality than in that of the previous type. Of all 39 examples, 20 are to be found in the official correspondence to dignitaries of state, 10 are found to dignitaries to of the church and 9 in letters to friends. The group of addressees which includes dignitaries of state, except in a few instances, were not of the same profile as those in the letters to whom we find phrases such as *humillime supplico, dignetur*: here we have statesmen of lesser rank, such as captains, dukes, or, as in several cases, state institutions. The context of the content differs somewhat and is linked to the theme of the letter at hand, and concerns, as expected, and appeal to the addressee of the letter. The statistics show that the greatest degree of variance can be seen in the last group of letters which is of a different content and a lower level of elegance. The phrases that we mentioned prior were those of appeal to the addressee, whereas, by using the phrase *dabo / do (omnem) operam, ut* and its variants, he sender promises the addressee that he will make the required effort to complete a certain task. This can be found a total of 25 times in Vrančić's letters, 16 times in the letters to friends and 9 times in the official correspondence which proves that this phrase is befitting in both types of correspondence, but in Vrančić's case it is to be found mostly in the family correspondence. The following table will display the frequency of the category of topics of language in Vrančić's letters. The purpose of this table is to show the percentage of the representation of the individual elements of such topics in certain types of correspondence.

**Table 2. Topics of Language**

Epistolary expressions	Letters to family	Letters to friends	Official political letters	Official letters to the clergy	Year
<i>(verum) scito</i>	9	31	2	-	1538-5×, 1539, 1540-4×, 1541-2×,



					1546-2×, 1547-4×, 1548, 1549-5×, 1550-4×, 1555, 1557, 1558- 3×, 1559-2×, 1560, 1569, 1571-3×, 1572.
<i>scias</i>	1	2	-	-	1540, 1547, 1571.
<i>scis</i>	7	2	-	-	1540-7×, 1549, 1550.
<i>scire te volo</i>	1	-			1540.
<i>ex litteris scire etc.</i>	6	10	1	1	1539-2×, 1540-3×, 1547, 1549, 1550- 5×, 1555, 1558, 1560, 1566-2×, 1569.
<i>mihi crede (credas)</i>	2	17	-	-	1540, 1544, 1546- 4×, 1547-3×, 1549- 3×, 1550-4×, 1552, 1560, 1569.
<i>crede mihi (nobis)</i>	1	1	-		1559, 1569.
<i>fac ut+ subj.</i>	2	3	-	-	1549-2×, 1550, 1555, 1572.
<i>cura (curetis) ut+ subj.</i>	2	4	3	-	1540-2×, 1547-2×, 1550-2×, 1571, 1572-2×.
exclamations to God: <sup>84</sup> <i>Proh Juppiter !</i>	1	-	-	-	1540.
<i>(Me) herc(u)le!</i>	-	12	-	-	1540, 1544, 1546- 4×, 1547, 1548, 1549-2×, 1555-2×.

<sup>84</sup>The use of the exclamation will be presented separately, the constructions using the ablative absolute in particular .

<i>Dii boni!</i>	-	1	-	-	1550.
<i>Deus bone!</i>	2	11	4	2	1540, 1546, 1548-2×, 1549, 1550-2×, 1555, 1560-4×, 1571, 1572-4×, 1573-2×.
<i>Jesu bone!</i>	-	1	-	-	1550.
<i>Per Deum!</i>	2	2	-	-	1538-2×, 1540, 1550.
<i>Faxit Deus!</i>	2	6	4	-	1540-2×, 1549, 1550-4×, 1558-2×, 1560-2×, 1572.
<i>Faxit Dominus Deus!</i>	-	-	-	1	1564.
<i>Faxit Deus Optimus Maximus!</i>	-	-	-	1	1560.
<i>Faxit Altissimus!</i>	1	-	6	2	1550, 1554, 1559-3×, 1566, 1568, 1571, 1572.
<i>Faxit Christus!</i>	-	1	-	-	1549.
Ablative absolute: <i>Deo (bene) favente</i>	-	1	3	-	1538, 1540, 1573-2×.
<i>Deo dante</i>	-	2	-	-	1540, 1572.
<i>Deo (bene) (ad)iuvente</i>	2	-	3	-	1546, 1550, 1551, 1571, 1573.
<i>Deo volente</i>	2	1	9	1	1532, 1555, 1560, 1564, 1567, 1568, 1571-5×, 1572-2×.
<i>Deo certe</i>	-	1	1	-	1550, 1572.
<i>Deo comite</i>	2	-	1	1	1553, 1558, 1572-2×.
<i>Deo duce</i>	-	-	2	-	1553, 1573.

<i>Deo autore</i>	-	-	1	-	1554.
<i>Auspice deo</i>	1	4	-	-	1546, 1547, 1548, 1549, 1557.
<i>Deo Optimo Maximo comite</i>	-	-	1	-	1553.
<i>Favente domino</i>	1	-	-	-	1550.
<i>Domino (Deo) comite</i>	1	-	1	-	1553., 1568.
<i>Domino bene iuvante</i>	-	1	-	-	1569.
<i>Christo duce</i>	-	1	-	-	1549.
<i>Favente omnium liberatore Christo</i>	1	-	-	-	1550.
<i>Auspice Christo</i>	1	1	-	-	1549, 1550.
Citations from classical writers	12	15	-	-	1538-4×, 1540-3×, 1546-3×, 1547, 1549-4×, 1550-5×, 1557, 1558, 1559, 1566, 1569, 1571.1573.
Citations from the Bible	2	6	-	12	1538, 1540, 1549, 1550-3×, 1560-4×, 1566, 1571, 1572-6×, 1573-2×.
Proverbs	22	23	3	1	1538-4×, 1540-9×, 1541, 1546-5×, 1547-3×, 1549-2×, 1550-7×, 1552, 1555, 1560, 1561, 1566, 1569-6×, 1571-3×, 1572-2×, 1573-2×.
<i>(humillime) supplico, dignetur</i>	-	-	43	7	1558-3×, 1559-8×, 1560-5×, 1561-6×, 1562-2×, 1563, 1564, 1566, 1569-

					3×, 1571- 9×, 1572-9, 1573- 2×
<i>humillime supplicans, dignetur</i>	-	-	2	1	1559, 1566, 1573.
<i>demisse supplico, dignetur</i>	-	-	4	2	1563, 1568, 1572, 1573.
<i>rogo, velit (velint)</i>	-	5	6	7	1538, 1547, 1559- 3×, 1560, 1561-2×, 1562, 1564-2×, 1566, 1567, 1569- 2×, 1571-2×, 1572.
<i>rogamus (rogavimus), velit (velint)</i>	-	4	14	3	1559-3×, 1560, 1562-2×, 1563, 1564, 1566-2×, 1567, 1571-5×, 1572-4×, 1573.
<i>operam dabo, ut</i>	1	-	1	-	1538, 1540.
<i>do / dabo (omnem) operam, ut</i>	-	11	4	2	1538- 2×, 1540-2×, 1541, 1549-2×, 1550, 1559-3×, 1564, 1566, 1571- 2×, 1572, 1573.
<i>dabimus (omnem) operam, ut</i>	1	3	1	-	1540, 1549, 1550, 1569, 1571.
<i>dans omnem operam</i>	-	1	1	-	1549, 1561.
<i>daturus operam, ut</i>	-	1	-	1	1561, 1568.

## 5. Conclusion

In Vrančić's epistolarium topics of thought are represented in the private correspondence exclusively, especially in the letters to friends. This affirms that Vrančić used the typical means of epistolary communication in his private correspondence, using Cicero's and Pliny's letters as an example. The topic most represented is that by which a complaint is expressed due to an unreplied letter and an appeal to the addressee that the correspondence con-

tinue. We can conclude from this that Vrančić wanted to maintain communication with distant friends, at least by letter. We have also noticed that these were letters that Vrančić wrote at an earlier phase of his life, i.e. that the influence of classical epistolography was much greater on the earlier period of his correspondence, their epistolographic conventions respectively, and that he was to later distance himself from this kind of writing. It is possible that his education had left a mark upon him, certainly his studies of the epistolographic theories of *ars dictaminis* and *ars epistolandi*, and the principles of rhetoric. Yet the fact that Vrančić decided at one point to compose a volume of letters in the humanistic tradition suggests that it was certain that he had prior study of the theory and practice of epistolography. Concerning topics of language, phrases such as *verum scito* and others like it, *mihi crede* and its variants also, are to be found exclusively in the private correspondence. This can only be expected should one take into consideration that these are specifically familiar and colloquial expressions which are used in the communication of the everyday. On the other hand, Vrančić used the expression *supplicio, dignetur* in official correspondence exclusively. Citations and proverbs are also most frequent in the corpus of Vrančić's private correspondence, whereas they are hardly to be found at all in the official correspondence.

It is obvious that Antun Vrančić did not begin the composition of his epistolographic opus unconsciously and without the requisite knowledge of how to write a letter. He not only found models among the epistolographers of antiquity but also among his contemporaries, which proves that these epistolary topics, with expressions which were virtually petrified, had found their way in the letters of numerous epistolographers, with Vrančić among them. This influence is most evident in the earlier phase of his correspondence when he communicated mostly with friends so that the influence of the letters of Cicero and Pliny is without question. In this private correspondence Vrančić developed a particular style of writing in which the tone is somewhat leisurely and colloquial. In the later phase the official correspondence predominates mostly concerning matters of either church or state. There are expressions which are stereotypical for this type of communication but the percentage of expressions which can be defined within the bound of epistolographical topics is less, and this influenced the stylistic differences that one would otherwise expect. In this work we have attempted to confirm the representation of classical epistolographic topics in Vrančić's epistolarium, in particular to present and analyse the percentage of the use of *topoi* in his correspondence. Our opinion is that Vrančić used a particular *topos* according to the context and addressee respective-

ly and that he did not overuse them, but with a sense of balance. Because of this his letters are neither forced nor overwrought but natural and this demonstrates Vrančić's erudition and practicality in the use of epistolary topics.

## TOPICA EPISTOLARE NELLE LETTERE DI UMANISTA ANTUN VRANČIĆ

### Riassunto

In questo lavoro si tratta della topica epistolare nelle lettere di umanista croato Antun Vrančić (*Antonius Verancius*, 1504-1573). Da una parte si parla della topica di idee che si manifesta per mezzo di frequente uso dell'espressioni di idee, dall'altra parte si parla della topica di lingua che si riferisce all'uso di particolari frasi, citazioni e proverbi. Questo fenomeno s'incontra nella tradizione epistolare latina, specialmente in Cicerone, Plinio, Seneca e Frontone, che conferma quali modelli aveva Vrančić scrivendo le sue lettere. Il lavoro prima di tutto fornisce una panoramica di tutte le categorie della topica e poi all'interno di ciascuna si danno gli esempi trovati in grande epistolario di Vrančić. Altretanto in tabelle sono presentate le categorie in modo che l'uso di ciascuna e' messo in contesto del mittente e dell'anno in cui la lettera e' stata inviata. Con questo si voleva presentare a quale profilo di mittenti Vrančić scriveva le lettere in cui si trovano gli elementi di topica e in quale periodo queste lettere sono scritte. Quindi, in lavoro si vuole da una parte presentare il rapporto di Vrančić verso i modelli antichi, d'altra la dipendenza d'uso della topica nelle diverse circostanze (destinatario – contesto – tempo), cioè la creatività di Vrančić nell'uso di topica. Nell'**appendice** alla fine del lavoro si mettono quattro tabelle in cui sono raggruppati esempi di due categorie di topica di lingua – uso di citazioni e proverbi in lettere. Questi esempi sono elencati separatamente solo a causa della numerosità e sono presentati in tabelle per una migliore visibilità.

PAROLE CHIAVI: *epistolografi antichi, epistolario di Antun Vrančić, topica epistolare, proverbi*

## ADDENDA

Table 1. The Use of Citations – Classical Authors<sup>85</sup>

<b>MHH 6, 14:</b> licet me Ister licet te Nilus habeat, (...).	<b>Hor. Carm. 4, 14, 46:</b> Nilusque et Hister, te rapidus Tigris (. <b>Ov. Ep. Ex Pont. 3, 2, 44:</b> (...) quos procul a uobis Pontus et Hister habet
<b>MHH 6, 194:</b> (...) apponeretur cum titulo: Etiam si totus illabatur orbis.	<b>Hor. Car. 3, 3, 7-8:</b> etiam si totus illabatur orbis, impavidum feriunt ruinae.
<b>MHH 7, 279:</b> et, ut Flaccus ait, lalagen canendo.	<b>Hor. Carm. 1, 22, 10:</b> dum meam canto Lalagen (...).
<b>MHH 8, 110:</b> et mediocritatem, quam et Horatius auream appellavit, et nos ex hac celsitudine, (...).	<b>Hor. Carm. 2, 10, 5:</b> Auream quisquis mediocritatem / diligit, tutus caret obsoleti (...).
<b>MHH 9, 165:</b> de quo proditus est Horatianus ille versiculus: "Multa tulit fecitque puer, sudavit et alsit,".	<b>Hor. Ars poet. 413:</b> multa tulit fecitque puer, sudavit et alsit.
<b>MHH 11, 310:</b> Mixta enim senum et iuvenum densantur funera « etc. ut est in Horatio.	<b>Hor. Carm. 1, 28, 9:</b> mixta senum ac iuvenum densantur funera.
<b>MHH 6, 5:</b> et quae (ut dicitur) quadrigis vehantur (...). <b>MHH 11, 43:</b> Vehitur tamen et ipse opinionis suae quadrigis.	<b>Cic. Brut. 331, 2:</b> cuius in adulescentiam per medias laudes, quasi quadrigis vehementem (...).
<b>MHH 6, 343:</b> Caeterum, et honestiore, puto, serviemus conditione hic, quum dignitate domini, quod ait Cicero, minus est turpis fortuna servi.	<b>Cic. Ad Oct. 8, 5:</b> non quo ulla sit optanda servitus, sed quia dignitate domini minus turpis est fortuna servi.
<b>MHH 7, 37:</b> Ait nempe vel Marcus Tullius in II. de Oratore: Si barbarorum est in diem vivere, nostra consilia sempiternum tempus spectare debent.	<b>Cic. De orat. 2, 169, 2:</b> At ex dissimilitudine: si barbarorum est in diem vivere, nostra consilia sempiternum tempus spectare debent.

<sup>85</sup>In the first column the citations from Vrančić's are taken from the Hungarian edition Szalay-Wenzel (MHH) or from the letters in the National and University Library in Zagreb (NSK), the sources of these are in the second column.

<b>MHH 6, 17:</b> quum et homo sis et humani a te nihil alienum putem.	<b>Ter. Heaut. 1, 1, 77:</b> Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto.
<b>MHH 6, 226:</b> Sapienti pauca.	<b>Ter. Phorm. 3, 38:</b> Ah, dictum sapienti sat est.
<b>MHH 6, 342:</b> agnosce hic diligenter Comici sententiam: «Obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit.»	<b>Ter. Andr. 1, 1, 68:</b> Obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit.
<b>MHH 7, 57:</b> Sic enim et Naso ait: Rara quidem est virtus, quam non fortuna gubernat, quaeque manet stabili, quum fugit illa, pede.	<b>Ovid. Trist. 5, 14, 7:</b> Rara quidem virtus, quam non Fortuna gubernet, / quae maneat stabili, cum fugit illa, pede.
<b>MHH 7, 62:</b> Non ita se nobis praebet fortuna secunda, ut mihi sit ratio laudis habenda meae.	<b>Ovid. Trist. 1, 1, 51-52:</b> non ita se praebet nobis Fortuna secundam, ut tibi sit ratio laudis habenda tuae.
<b>MHH 6, 4:</b> juxta carmen Martialis: Triginta toto mala sunt epigrammata libro, si totidem bona sunt, Lause, liber bonus est.	<b>Mart., VII, 81, 1-2:</b> Triginta toto mala sunt epigrammata libro, / si totidem bona sunt, Lause, bonus liber est.
<b>MHH 7, 60:</b> Martialis oraturus Jovem pro suo caesare Domitiano, inquit in eius epigrammatis fine: Te pro caesare debeo rogare, Pro me caesarem debeo rogare.	<b>Mart. VII, 60, 7-8:</b> Te pro caesare debeo rogare, / Pro me debeo Caesarem rogare.
<b>MHH 6, 86:</b> Quintilianus vero nullum dolorem mortales habere voluit nisi ab impatientia.	<b>Quint. Decl. mai. und. 1, 8:</b> non habemus ullum, nisi ab impatientia dolorem, et ut aliquid crudele, saevum sit, metus facit.
<b>MHH 6, 346:</b> Quoniam autem vana est sine viribus ira (...).	<b>Liv. Ab urbe condita 1, 10, 4:</b> docet uanam sine uiribus iram esse.
<b>MHH 6, 255:</b> Hincque illud vetus nunc demum verum esse cognovi: Amicitias experiri pecunia.	<b>Caes. Bell. Civ. 3, 60, 3:</b> et novam temptare fortunam novasque amicitias experiri constituerunt.
<b>MHH 6, 314:</b> sic enim et tu – ut Virgilius ait – ad astra scandes. <b>MHH 7, 63:</b> Macte igitur, vera virtute, sic itur ad astra.	<b>Verg. Aen. 9, 641:</b> macte nova virtute, puer, sic itur ad astra.
<b>MHH 7, 113:</b> juxta illud Tragici: o funestus multis populi dirisque favor, qui cum flatu vela secundo rates implevit, vexitque procul, languidus idem deserit alto saevoque mari.	<b>Sen. Octav. 887-892:</b> O funestus multis populi / dirisque fauor, / qui cum flatu uela secundo / ratis implevit uexitque procul, / languidus idem deserit alto / saeuoque mari.



<p><b>MHH 6, 86:</b> Sed audi Socratem. Is miseros dicebat, qui miserias non cognovissent, et felicissimos, qui innocentes multa paterentur.</p>	<p><b>Possible from Plat. Gorg. 472e-473a (and further passim):</b> κατὰ δὲ γετήνῃ μὴν δόξαν, ὦ Πῶλε, ὁ ἀδικῶν τεκαὶ ὁ ἄδικος πάντως μὲν ἄθλιος, ἀθλιώτερος μὲν τοι ἔάν μὴ διδῶ δίκην μὴ δὲ τυγγάνῃ τιμωρίας ἀδικῶν, ἦτρον δὲ ἄθλιος ἔάν διδῶ δίκην καὶ τυγγάνῃ δίκης ὑπὸ θεῶν τεκαὶ ἀνθρώπων.</p>
<p><b>MHH 6, 86:</b> Plato solam patientiam robur totius philosophiae appellabat.</p>	<p><b>Possible from Pseudo-Caecilius Balbus: 10.</b> <i>Quid Plato? totius philosophiae robur patientia est.</i> <a href="http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/caeciliusbalbus.html">http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/caeciliusbalbus.html</a> 27. 10. 2012.</p>
<p><b>NSK 1/2:</b> Nam etsi virtutem Dii posuerint sudore parandam (ut Haesiodus cecinit, si bene memini).</p>	<p><b>Hes. Op. 289:</b> τῆς δ' ἀρετῆς ἰδρῶντα θεοὶ προπάροιθεν ἔθηκαν / ἀθάνατοι (...).</p>

## Table 2. The Use of Citations – the Bible

<p><b>MHH 8, 141:</b> Quia periculum est etiam in falsis fratribus, ut cum Paulo loquar.</p>	<p><b>2 Cor 11, 26:</b> in civitate periculis in solitudine periculis in mari periculis in falsis fratribus.</p>
<p><b>MHH 8, 209:</b> Ait enim Paulus: Corpus Christi esse Ecclesiam.</p>	<p><b>Cor 12, 27:</b> vos autem estis corpus Christi et membra de membro (...).</p>
<p><b>MHH 11, 109:</b> Ait enim Propheta, quod vox eius non auditur foris. Dicit et Paulus, sibi non incumbere eos iudicare, qui sunt foris, quos Dominus iudicabit.</p>	<p><b>1 Cor 5, 12-13:</b> quid enim mihi de his qui foris sunt iudicare nonne de his qui intus sunt vos iudicatis nam eos qui foris sunt Deus iudicabit auferte malum ex vobis istis. <b>Isa 42, 2:</b> nec audietur foris vox eius (...).</p>
<p><b>MHH 7, 47-48:</b> in quo omnia, per quem omnia et a quo omnia.</p>	<p><b>Eph 4, 6:</b> unus Deus et Pater omnium qui super omnes et per omnia et in omnibus nobis (...).</p>
<p><b>MHH 4, 19:</b> ut in bono (quod dicit Paulus) vincam malum.</p>	<p><b>Rom 12, 21:</b> noli vinci a malo sed vince in bono malum.</p>
<p><b>MHH 11, 121:</b> Id ipsum sapite, idemque sentite, sed in Domino.</p>	<p><b>Phil 2, 5:</b> hoc enim sentite in vobis quod et in Christo Iesu (...)</p>
<p><b>MHH 11, 220:</b> et priorem fidem (ut dicit Paulus) fecere irritam...»</p>	<p><b>1 Tim 5, 13 :</b> habentes damnationem quia primam fidem irritam fecerunt (...).</p>
<p><b>MHH 6, 26:</b> ut cum Propheta dicam, domi nostrae nostram aquam nostra pecunia bibimus.</p>	<p><b>Lam 5, 4:</b> Aquam nostram pecunia bibimus.</p>

<b>MHH 7, 165:</b> cum divino Psalte decantando: Beatus, quem tu elegisti, et assumpsisti, domine, hic enim in artis tuis habitabit (...).	<b>Ps 65:</b> beatus quem elegisti et adsumpsisti, inhabitant in atriis tuis (...).
<b>MHH 9, 55:</b> il Propheta: Exarsit ignis in sinagoga haereticorum, flamma combussit peccatore.	<b>Ps 105, 18:</b> Et exarsit ignis in synagoga eorum, flamma combussit peccatores.
<b>MHH 6, 72:</b> num pro pane lapidem, aut pro pisce serpentem porrexit.	<b>Lk 11, 11:</b> Quis autem ex vobis patrem petet numquid lapidem dabit illi aut pisces numquid pro pisce serpentem dabit illi.
<b>MHH 6, 325:</b> quae Joannis quoque sententia, ut in prima Canonica II. capite concupiscentiam dicit esse carnis, oculorum et vitae superbiam.	<b>1 Jn 2, 16:</b> quoniam omne quod est in mundo concupiscentia carnis et concupiscentia oculorum est et superbia vitae (...).
<b>MHH 8, 202:</b> Unde et Paulus Actorum 20. maioribus Ecclesiae dicebat: «Attendite vobis et universo gregi, in quo vos Spiritus Sanctus posuit Episcopos regere ecclesiam Dei. Et paulo infra: «Ex vobis, inquit, ipsis exurgent viri loquentes perversa, ut abducant discipulos post se.	<b>Acts 20, 28-30:</b> attendite vobis et universo gregi in quo vos Spiritus Sanctus posuit episcopos regere ecclesiam Dei...et ex vobis ipsis exurgent viri loquentes perversa ut abducant discipulos post se (...).
<b>MHH 8, 202:</b> Petrus quoque secunda sua canonica 2. capite: «Novit, ait, Deus, pios de temptatione eripere, iniquos vero in diem iudicii reservare cruciandos... et paulo post «pellicientes animas instabiles.»	<b>2 Pt 2, 9:</b> (...) novit Dominus pios de temptatione eripere iniquos vero in diem iudicii cruciandos reservare (...).
<b>MHH 10, 102:</b> e diremo: «Manus nostra excelsa, et non Dominus fecit haec omnia.»	<b>Dt, 32, 27:</b> et dicerent manus nostra excelsa et non Dominus fecit haec omnia.
<b>MHH 11, 16:</b> qui dixit: «Inferte decimam horrea mea, et in domo mea sit cibus.»	<b>Mal 3, 10:</b> inferte omnem decimam in horreum et sit cibus in domo mea (...).
<b>MHH 7, 165:</b> nec expavescam illud Prophetarum: Non mittebam eos, et ipsi currebant, non loquebar ad eos, et ipsi prophetabant?	<b>Jr 23, 21:</b> Non mittebam prophetas, et ipsi currebant, non loquebar ad eos, et ipsi prophetabant.
<b>MHH 11, 108:</b> Dicit enim Deus, quod „currebant, sed non erant missi, prophetabat, sed non per	<b>Jr 23, 21:</b> Non mittebam prophetas, et ipsi currebant, non loquebar ad eos, et ipsi prophetabant.

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me.“

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**MHH 11, 201:** a Divino, qui dixit: «Id ipsum sapite, simul venite et gaudete et laudate simul; « non divisim, non seorsim, non per sectas.

**Is 52, 9:** gaudete et laudate simul deserta Hierusalem (...).

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**MHH 11, 218:** Ait enim et spiritus Domini: «Fili, da mihi cor tuum, et sufficit mihi.»

**Prv 23, 26:** praebe fili mi cor tuum mihi (...).

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### Table 3. The Use of Proverbs - Vrančić and Erasmus

<b>MHH 4, 17:</b> Nec enim invitis canibus venari oportet.	<b>Erasmus 2, 665:</b> Invitis canibus venari.
<b>MHH 6, 4:</b> Nam si infinitorum authorum scripta percurras, iudicio doctorum alii erunt breves, obscuri (...) exoleti et Delii, ut aiunt, natatoris indigi.	<b>Erasmus 2, 529:</b> Delius natator.
<b>MHH 7, 39:</b> et, ut aiunt, Delio quopiam natatore,(...).	
<b>MHH 6, 5:</b> Meae suis terminis, et sua pellicula contentae sunt (...).	<b>Erasmus 2, 592:</b> Intra tuam pelliculam te contine.
<b>MHH 6, 12:</b> Adagium est, multas amicitias silentium dirimere (...).	<b>Erasmus 3, 1026:</b> Multas amicitias silentium diremit.
<b>MHH 6, 28:</b> nec dubito voti mei compotem (...)	<b>Erasmus 6, 2755:</b> In voti compotem.
<b>NSK 1/2:</b> nosque nostri voti compotes facias.	
<b>MHH 10, 164:</b> ut huiusce modi voti compos fieret.	
<b>MHH 6, 63:</b> videmur nobis semper in tranquillo esse (...).	<b>Erasmus 3, 1106:</b> In tranquillo est.
<b>MHH 6, 70:</b> ex pulice (...) elephantos gignit.	<b>Erasmus 2, 869:</b> Elephantum ex musca facis.
<b>MHH 6, 86:</b> vatiniano odio insequabatur (...).	<b>Erasmus 3, 1194:</b> Odium Vatinianum.
<b>MHH 6, 91:</b> iniuria in crumenam tuam recordas, non inscius proverbii illius: saepe multa inter os et offam. <b>MHH 6, 56:</b> Nam vetus est: Nimia verba minimum rei consequi.	<b>Erasmus 1, 402:</b> Inter os et offam.

<b>MHH 6, 187:</b> velle movere omnem lapidem.	<b>Erasmus 1, 330:</b> Omnem movere lapidem.
<b>MHH 10, 164:</b> et movit omnem lapidem (...).	
<b>MHH 11, 237:</b> omnem (ut dici solet) lapidem movi.	
<b>MHH 6, 202:</b> Crassiore, ni fallor, Minerva eras.	<b>Erasmus 1, 37:</b> Crassa Minerva
<b>MHH 6, 241:</b> Daedalus agere.	<b>Erasmus 3, 1262:</b> Daedali opera.
<b>MHH 6, 244:</b> (...) iuxta tritum illud proverbium: ut ferrum ferro, sic ingenium ingenio acuitur.	<b>Erasmus 2, 700:</b> Ferrum ferro acuitur.
<b>MHH 6, 329:</b> non libenter scribo quasi in cursu, quicquid in buccam venerit (...).	<b>Erasmus 1, 472:</b> Quicquid in buccam venerit.
<b>MHH 6, 346:</b> abrupti funem ab eius littore.	<b>Erasmus 1, 467:</b> Funem abruptum tenendo.
<b>MHH 7, 28:</b> Quod de paroemia: » Bovem ad ceroma» scire voluisti, (...); Opera et impensa periiit. Oleum et operam perdidit... Apud fimum vapores odororum spargis.	<b>Erasmus:</b> Bos ad ceroma (1, p. 454. l. 102); Oleum et operam perdidit (1, 362); Apud finum odororum vaporem spargis (1, 361).
<b>MHH 9, 282:</b> si oleum et operam, quod est in proverbio, perdideris.	
<b>MHH 7, 54.:</b> iuxta vetus proverbium (...) lampada in cursu tradens	<b>Erasmus 1, 138:</b> Cursu lampada trado.
<b>MHH 7, 177:</b> ut cum iis, de quibus est paroemia: qui eget, in turba versetur.	<b>Erasmus 6, 2945:</b> Qui eget in turba versetur.
<b>MHH 8, 141:</b> possem... ex meis fratribus digito demonstrare.	<b>Erasmus 2, 943:</b> Digito monstrari.
<b>NSK 1/2:</b> digito etiam (ut dici solet) multitudinis ostenderis (...).	
<b>MHH 8, 255:</b> aqua mari adere.	<b>Erasmus 2, 182:</b> Mari aquam addere.
<b>MHH 9, 300.:</b> qui optime nostis vestro uos metiri pede.	<b>Erasmus 2, 589:</b> Pede tuo te metiri.
<b>MHH 11, 21:</b> Sed quoniam tu non es in hoc albo (...).	<b>Erasmus 2, 634:</b> Non eras in hoc albo.
<b>MHH 11, 193:</b> Dies enim ipsa fit magister aliquando, fit noverca etiam.	<b>Erasmus 2, 764:</b> Ipsa dies quandoque parens, quandoque noverca.

<b>MHH 11, 278:</b> Dominus dominus est, servus vero servus.	<b>Erasmus 3, p. 278, l. 400:</b> Dominus domino, seruus seruo praestat.
<b>MHH 12, 302:</b> ne vetus illud in nos cedat: «Non sunt amici amici, qui degunt procul.»	<b>Erasmus 3, p. 302. l. 891:</b> Amici procul agentes non sunt amici.
<b>MHH 12, 307:</b> ad olus scilicet corchorus;	<b>Erasmus 2, 621:</b> Etiam corchorus inter olera.

Table 4. Remaining proverbs

<b>MHH 6, 62:</b> Saepe audivi a maioribus, (...) ut nunquam miseros unico teli genere affligat, sed pluribus et variis, (...). <b>MHH 6, 262:</b> Accidit hoc iuxta tritum infelicitum proverbium: Nullum malum solum.	Nulla calamitas sola.
<b>MHH 6, 70:</b> mel pro veneno, album pro nigro. <b>MHH 6, 85:</b> quum mel pro veneno, album pro nigro tibi subditum scribas (...).	Mella sub ore tenent, corde venena fovent. <sup>86</sup> Impia sub dulci melle venena iacent. <sup>87</sup>
<b>MHH 6, 119:</b> quum amor et imperium non ferat socium (...).	Amor et dominum non patiuntur socium. <sup>88</sup>
<b>MHH 6, 243:</b> Vis vero vi repelli solet, et amorem amor parit.	Vis vim vi repellit Amor gignit amorem.
<b>MHH 6, 272:</b> mea quidem sententia (...) procul ab oculis, procul a corde.	... quantum oculis, animo tam procul ibat amor. <sup>89</sup>
<b>MHH 7, 25:</b> meminertque illius proverbii: lupinum lupos non esse.	Caninam non est <sup>90</sup> ili ferae inter se placidae sunt; lupo non mordet lupum; cornix cornici nunquam oculos effodit.
<b>MHH 7, 64:</b> quamque multos coeco verberare, ut Hungaris est in proverbio, pulsare solet.	In Bartas's dictionary: coecum verber = ultio cum decore. <sup>91</sup>

<sup>86</sup>Marevich, *Lexicon latino-croaticum encyclopaedicum*, Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 2000., pg. 3425.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid.

<sup>88</sup>E. Lautenbach, *Latein-Deutsch: Zitaten-Lexikon: Quellennaschweise*, LIT Verlag Münster, 2002. pg. 49.

<sup>89</sup>Prop. *Eleg.* 3, 21, 10.

<sup>90</sup>Lautenbach 2002: 172.

<sup>91</sup>A. Bartal, *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis regni Hungariae*, Lipsiae, MCMI.

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<b>MHH 9, 123:</b> Nonne dixeram tibi, vt eiusmodi Camerinam ante tempus non moueres (...).	In Bartal's dictionary: Camarinam mouere: proverb. a lacu Camarino in Sicilia ex magnis foetoribus noto: simultates mouere.
<b>MHH 9, 283:</b> tibi illud obiiciatur domi a conterraneis: "Scytha Patavium, Scytha Patavio." <sup>92</sup>	Croatian proverb that has the same meaning: Martin (Mate) u Zagreb, Martin (Mate) iz Zagreba.
<b>MHH 10, 343:</b> qui denuo ex Hungaro Hungarus es factus.	Has the same meaning like the previous proverb.

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<sup>92</sup>It is most likely that the ethnonyme *Scytha* refers to the Seklere of Hungary, and not to the Scythians (Tartars).