THE TROY LEGEND IN BOHORIČ'S 'PRAEFATIUNCULA' TO *ARCTICAE HORULAE* (1584) AND COMPARABLE WRITINGS OF THE MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE PERIODS

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The issue of Slovene culture in the European context occupies an important place in Rado Lencek's rich and versatile scholarly *opus*. This contribution to his Festschrift is written with the intention of supporting the crucial connection of Slovene culture with its Western European models. The Troy legend is an example which indicates clearly the link between Slovene Protestant writings and Northern European historiography.

The Troy legend preserved in the historiography of the Renaissance and the Reformation period has a long history. Homer's heroes of the Trojan war continued to live through the centuries in later Roman versions of Homer's work as well as in medieval Franco-Roman legends and chronicles. The present paper will not attempt an exhaustive survey of the existing Italian and Northern European medieval and Renaissance versions of the Troy legend. Our task here is to put in proper cultural context the appearance of this legend in Bohorič's Preface to his grammar *Arcticae Horulae* (1584). However, before we analyze Bohorič's Slavic version of the Troy legend, we should survey its development on Western European soil.

The Troy legend played an immense role in the Middle Ages and was popular both in Italy and Franco-Gallia. Although the Troy legend was of Roman imperial origin, the Church kept propagating it persistently with peaceful purposes, tracing the descent of the Franks and Romans from the city of Troy. Thus these two peoples were said to have the same ancestors, and so to be 'German' brothers. The term *German* derives from this name, which the Romans gave to the Franks. The Romans and the Franks as cousins were consanguineous and the ancient German chronicles represent the Franks as the brothers or the cousins of the Romans: *Romanum fore Troianum natura fatetur / Germanus patriota suus fraterque videtur*, and as having the same mother: *Troia suis populis mater utrique fuit.*[1]

It is important to underscore the fact that from the earliest times the Troy legend was widely propagated for political and juridical reasons. The Frankish emperor was the successor of the Roman emperor. The acceptance of the Troy legend in Franco-Gallia embodied the medieval ideal of a universal Roman society and the Holy Roman Empire. Therefore the Roman law received and applied by the Franks and Gauls was considered by the Romans as the imperial law applicable to all Roman territories. The *translatio imperii* had as its goal to preserve that ideal and universal state which was the Roman Empire, with its providential mission towards the human race; a mission analogous in the natural order to that of the Church in the Order of Grace. The Troy legend, with its Roman ideal of the universal Empire, found its best expression in Dante's works. For example, in the Fourth Treatise of the *Convivio* Dante sets forth the high mission of the Roman people:

"E però che più dolce natura [in] segnoreggiando, e più forte in sostenendo, e più sottile in acquistando né fu né fia, che quella de la gente latina—sì come per esperienza si può vedere—e massimamente [di] quello popolo santo, nel quale

l'alto sangue troiano era mischiato, cioè Roma, Dio quello elesse a quello
officio."[2]

Thus, according to Dante, it was God's will and choice to make the Romans the
noblest race and therefore the conquering and ruling race. Dante deeply believed that the
entire *gente latina* had an imperial vocation according to divine revelation. Thus, the Troy
legend found its most forceful expression in Dante's idealization of the Roman people and
his intense Latin patriotism which made his conception of history profoundly Virgilian. He
necessarily accepted the Italian origin of Troy, which had played an important role in the
literary recreation of the Roman universal empire since Virgil's times. Dante could claim
that the Holy Roman Empire was destined to rule the world since Virgil had written:
"Nascetur pulcra Troyanus origine Cesar, imperium Oceano, famam qui terminet astris."[3]
The Troy legend, which was concentrated on the Trojan-Roman universal mission, helped
Dante to fix his political hopes on a universal Empire.

Numerous copies and various versions of the Troy legend circulated throughout Franco-
Gallia during the medieval period. Probably the most famous version of it was that which
was created by Frankish chroniclers. They invented the Trojan head with the name *Francus*
who later, together with many others, lost his way during the Trojan war and migrated
across the Caucasus, the swamps of the Don, the Danube and the Rhein in order to arrive
in Gallia, where Pirade, the comrade of Francus, founded the city of Paris. Furthermore,
the popularity of this legend extended beyond the frontiers of the Holy Roman Empire; it
was widely diffused thoughout all other parts of Europe, including Spain and England.
However, the Italians exceeded all other nations in multiplying different versions of the
legend. Numerous Italian communes and *signorie*, especially from 1200 until 1500,
created their similar prestigious origins on the basis of this Roman medieval legend, in
addition to other similar legends and myths. During the Pre-Renaissance and Renaissance
periods not only Italian local chroniclers but also poets contributed enormously to the
further invention and diffusion of this legend.[4]

Thus the Troy legend was used and elaborated in the works of both Italian and Northern
European historiographers. However, a difference appeared between nationalism and
universalism. The Italian historiographers fully conformed to the Roman universalist
ideology. On the contrary, northern humanist historians showed a lack of enthusiasm for
world histories. Some of them, especially German historiographers, attempted to separate
German history from universal history. This patriotic use of world history remained the
dominant trend among northern humanists and shaped their conception of the past, as they
altered the Italian version of the Troy legend to give it a more national character and
'Germanic' tone. In contrast, Roman universalism prevented Dante and other Italians from
literary self-determination. The northerners, like the Italians, began their works where
ancient history ended and carried the national story unbroken through the middle ages to
their own time. However, unlike the Italians the humanists in the North were preoccupied
with the search for fanciful genealogies as evidences of their national past, tracing their
origins to the Trojans and the descendents of Noah.

For example, one can find such a genealogy of German *Stämme* back to Troy and Noah
in Annius of Viterbo (Giovanni Nanni)'s *Antiquitatum variarum volumina XVII cum
commentariis* (Rome, 1498). Hartman Schedel, a physician of N5rnberg, published in
1493 his *Liber Chronicarum*, which ranged from Adam and Maximilian I and even to the
Last Judgement. Significantly, though Schedel was familiar with many Italian writers, he
used Vincent of Beauvais as a source for his account of the Trojan War.[5] Later, in another
search for the noble ancestors of the Bavarians, Johannes Thurmaier (called *Aventinus*)

reaffirmed their Trojan origin in his *Bavarian Chronicle* (1508). Also, the legends in the French *Grandes Chroniques* supported a Trojan origin of the French, which found one of its best expressions in Ronsard's national poem, the "Franciade," written ca. 1570 in honor of the Valois house, which glorified the French ancestors of Trojan origins. At the same time in accordance with general humanist revisionism outside Italy, there also appeared in the North some historical writings which called into doubt the Trojan origin of the northerners.[6] However, it should be stressed that in most cases the Troy legend, along with other myths, contributed substantially to the formation of a national history with Trojan origins, heroic national kings, and a national view of events among northern humanists.

The Renaissance historiographical writings were not interrupted in the Reformation period. The linking of their historical past with Troy by German, French and other northern historians found its immediate reflection in Bohorič's "Praefatiuncula" to his *Arcticae Horulae*, the first Slovene grammar, which was created in the best tradition of Protestant and German humanist philology. Thus, in the preface to his grammar Bohorič claims:

> "Iam si primam originem et vetustatem Slavorum quis investiget, is inveniet, eam gentem esse antiquissimam. Nam in expeditione illa Graecorum adversus Trojam vocati Heneti, in auxilium graecis vicinis, venerunt."

Thus Bohorič drew upon the same general Frankish-German sources which declared the Trojan ancestry of the Franks and Germans. Understandably, he could not claim the same Trojan origin of the Germans for the Slavs. Therefore he seems to have invented a similar story which connected in a direct way the Slavs with the Trojans. Specifically, Bohorič seems to have originated the idea that the *Heneti* (*Veneti*, *Vindi* or *Vendi*, all names given to the Slavs by the Germans) came to help their Greek neighbors in a war against the Trojans:

> "Et si temporum ratio recte subducitur, planum sit omnino, Bellum Trojanum gestum fuisse, plus minus mille annis a Diluvio. Efficitur itaque; nostram gentem inter antiquissimas esse."

This first Slovene grammarian deliberately relates the origin of the Slavs to the Trojans' time in order to create their ancient, glorious past. In the spirit of Renaissance-Reformation historiography, Bohorič tried to rearrange the past of the Slavic peoples and bring it into the light of present preoccupations. Similarly, Bohorič's contemporaries, the German, French and other transalpine humanists had aimed at making their own nations as ancient as the Italians, by furnishing them with an ancient history comparable in antiquity to that of the Romans. Emulating his German humanist teachers, Bohorič explained the proto-origin and age of the Slavs in the framework of the Graeco-oriental world.

Bohorič further supports his claim about the ancient age of the Slavs by adding that all the Slavs use one and the same language which they have in common with the most ancient inhabitants of Mysia in Asia Minor:

> "Huc etiam accedit, unus et idem et quidem communis nostris hominibus, cum antiquissimis **homoglōttois** Mysis, quos nunc Bosnenses appellant, linguae usus."[7]

In Bohorič's opinion, the Bosnians still spoke in this ancient language, mutual to the Mysians and Slavs:

> "Retinent enim adhuc Mysi literaturam antiquam et peculiarem et nostrae linguae per accommodam, cum Graecis, utpote vicinis, per omnia fere congruentem et

cum Moshovitiis et Rutenis communem. A quibus Croatae sua scriptione et notis
literarum quidem discedunt: at appellationibus et potestate, quemadmodum et
sermone (ut paulo posci ex certis tabellis apparebit) non diffentiunt." (9)

After such a myth-explanation of the origin of a single common Slavic language, it
is clear why Bohorič begins his grammar with a chart of the Cyrillic alphabet, "which is
used at the court of the Turkish ruler, in particular by the 'praetoriani milites,' the so-called
'janičari,' by the Bosnians, Ruthenians and Muscovites." The order of the Cyrillic alphabet
reveals that Bohorič arranged it according to the Greek alphabet. He gives all three types
of letters: small, capital and cursive. He provides them all with their number values,
alphabetical names, and sound values. Evidently Bohorič consulted the existing Slavic
alphabets, especially Ruthenian, Muscovite and Croatian Glagolitic ones, charts of which
he also provides in his preface.[8] On the whole, Bohorič's grammar follows the general
model of the German; that is, the Lutheran brand of Protestant grammars, based on the
mixed Graeco-Byzantine and Latin traditions.[9]

This linguistically-oriented Slavism, especially Bohorič's ideas about the interrelated-
ness of the Slavs and their common Slavic ethnicity, derives, as noted by us elsewhere,[10]
from the strong South Slavic Illyrism of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This Illyrism
was wide-spread in the period of the Italian Renaissance and in the subsequent centuries
among the inhabitants of Dalmatia, the Croatian Littoral, Istria, and the Republic of
Dubrovnik. During the period of the Slovenes' collaboration with the Illyrian (Croatian)
humanists in publishing Protestant books for the South Slavs, some ideas of this potent
Illyrian Slavophilism were also adopted by the most prominent sixteenth century Slovene
Protestant writers and inserted to some extent in the prefaces to their editions. In spite of
all these Slavic feelings and the awareness of Slavic kinship, expressed in his preface,
Bohorič never intended to write a common Slavic grammar as, for instance, did J.
Križanić, who published his in the seventeenth century. Bohorič's work is significant
because he did not simply adopt these Illyrian ideas from Croatian Renaissance historiog-
raphy, but rather adapted them according to the Northern European historiographical
reorientation towards Graeco-oriental sources. Thus he recognized the Heneti, i.e., the
Slavs, as being the neighbors of the Greeks in the time of the Trojan War, and he identified
the Slavic language with that of the Mysians. In so doing, Bohorič closely follows that
group of writers who were searching for their ancestors not among the Trojan combatants,
but among the Greeks and their neighboring collaborators. Therefore Bohorič's humanistic
tendency to establish the ancient genealogy of the Slavs does not deviate fundamentally
from the deeply-rooted traditional representations by medieval and Renaissance chroni-
clers and historiographers, who used the Troy legend in order to prove an ancient and noble
origin of their respective peoples.

As our analysis has shown, the presence of the Troy legend and its further adaptation
in the preface to Bohorič's grammar reveals its direct connection with Northern Europe,
and particularly German humanist historiography which represent the continuation of
Franco-Roman medieval versions of this legend. As such the Troy legend serves as a
remarkable illustration of the fact that both Renaissance and Reformation historiographies
are more connected than it was previously thought. Perhaps, even more important is that
this Roman legend of Troy, widely popular in Italy and Franco-Gallia in the Middle Ages
and preserved in the writings of the Renaissance and Reformation periods, reveals a
common thread of Roman-Christian civilization that links the Middle Ages with the
Renaissance and Reformation.

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2. Dante Alighieri, *Il Convivio*, ed. Maria Simonelli (Bologna: Casa editrice Prof. Riccardo Pàtron, 1966) 138.

3. Dante Alighieri, *Epistole*, in *Opere minori*, II, ed. Arsenio Frugoni and Giorgio Brugnoli (Milan-Naples: Riccardo Riccardi, 1979) 566.

4. Herbert Frenzel, "Il mito troiano nel pensiero europeo," in *La storiografia nel mondo italiano ed in quello tedesco. Stato e problemi attuali nel quadro dell'unità culturale europea* (Merano, 1963) 567-73. See a list of the pertinent literature in H. Frenzel, "Der Stammbaum der Este — Ein Beitrag zur genealogischen Trojalegende," in *Word und Text — Festschrift f5r Fritz Schalk*. (Frankfurt/a.M: V. Klostermann, 1963) 187-199.

5. Thus, Robert Gauguin published in 1495 a *Compedium de origine et gestis Francorum* where he criticized a possible Trojan origin of the French. A humanist from Verona, Paolo Emilio, found many suspicious stories in the *Grandes Chroniques* of France. He expressed his doubts about a Trojan origin of the French in his work *On the Deeds of the French*. Also, an Italian humanist, Polydore Vergil, omitted the Troy stories and other fantastic tales about the early Britons from his *English History* which he wrote during his nearly 50-year stay in England. Cf. Ernest Breisach, *Historiography — Ancient, Medieval and Modern* (Chicago-London: U Chicago P, 1983) 163-5.

6. Eduard Fueter, *Geschichte der neueren Historiographie* (Munich-Berlin: Oldenbourg, 1911) 184-5.

7. The word *homoglōttois* is printed in Greek in the original.

8. Josip Bratulić, "Die glagolitische und die kyrillische Schrift in der Bohorič'schen Grammatik," in Adam Bohorič, *Arcticae horulae, II Teil: Untersuchungen* (Munich: 1971) 109-21.

9. Olga Nedeljković, "Two Humanistic traditions in the grammatical system of the Croatians and Slovenians," forthcoming.

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POVZETEK

LEGENDA O TROJI V BOHORIČEVI 'PRAEFATIUNCULA' V *ARCTICAE HORULAE* (1584) IN PRIMERLJIVA DELA SREDNJEVEŠKEGA IN RENESANČNEGA OBDOBIJ

Namen avtorice je pokazati, kako Bohorič v 'Praefatiuncula' v Arcticae horulae *povezuje izvor Slovanov s trojanskim časom v duhu renesančno-reformacijskega zgodovinopisja. Tekmujoč z sever-no-evropskimi zgodovinarji, posebno nemškimi humanisti, je Bohorič Slovane istovetil s Heneti, ki so prišli na pomoč grškim sosedom v vojni proti Trojancem. Bohoričevo humanistično tendenco, da bi izpostavil staro rodoslovje Slovanov, je razen tega podpirala ideja, da so Slovani uporabljali enega iz jezikov, ki so bili skupni večini starih prebivalcev v Mali Aziji in Miziji. Bohoričeva razlaga prvotnega izvora in starosti Slovanov v okviru grško-orientalskega sveta jasno odkriva njegove protestantsko-humanistične vire.*