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# Matthias Flacius Illyricus





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# Matthias Flacius Illyricus

Biographische Kontexte, theologische Wirkungen,  
historische Rezeption

Biografski konteksti, teološki utjecaji i  
povijesna percepcija

Biographical Contexts, Theological Impact,  
Historical Reception

Herausgegeben von  
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## Vorwort

Matthias Flacius Illyricus zählt zu jenen Gestalten der Frühen Neuzeit, denen man bis heute einerseits großen Respekt entgegenbringt, andererseits aber auch mit großer Reserviertheit begegnet. Dies liegt darin begründet, dass man sich dem vielseitigen Gelehrten meist entweder über seine historiographischen und hermeneutischen Werke oder aber über seine theologischen Streitschriften nähert. Ihre Inhalte bzw. diskursiven und argumentativen Techniken werden auch weiterhin Ziel des wissenschaftlichen Interesses bleiben, sollen aber in diesem Sammelband – zusammen mit anderen Schriften und Korrespondenzen – unter der Perspektive beleuchtet werden, in welcher Weise sich in ihnen die Auswirkungen der verschiedenen, die Biographie des Flacius prägenden Lebensstationen widerspiegeln. Die hier versammelten Beiträge gehen daher der Frage nach, inwiefern das regelrecht existenzielle Ringen um theologische Wahrheit den Lutheraner und Melanchthon-schüler Flacius in seinen jeweiligen Lebenskontexten über die bloße Lust an der Kontroverse hinausführte, welche Netzwerke er aufbaute und wie er in ihnen agierte. Auch die Frage, in welcher Weise die Zeitgenossen die Lehre des Flacius rezipierten und gruppenbildend einsetzten, soll angerissen werden. All diese Fragestellungen lagen einer Tagung zugrunde, die im Jahr 2015 im kroatischen Labin (ital. Albona), dem Geburtsort des Illyrers, stattfand und internationale Flacius-Forscher und Flacius-Interessierte zusammenführte.

Die Beiträge des ersten Abschnitts betrachten Flacius als Wanderer zwischen den Welten. Diesem Zugang liegt als Forschungshypothese der Gedanke zugrunde, dass Flacius' Existenz als permanenter Migrant, der sich in verschiedenen städtischen und territorialen, politischen und konfessionellen Zusammenhängen zu behaupten hatte, auch sein Denken und Arbeiten prägte. Fünf Beiträge versuchen, die herausragenden Stationen seiner Wanderschaft unter der Fragestellung, welche Einflüsse kulturelle und soziale Kontexte auf die geistige und theologische Entwicklung des Flacius ausübten, zu beleuchten. Es scheint auf der Hand zu liegen, dass sich Erfahrungen von Heimat und Heimatlosigkeit sowie des erlittenen und selbstgewählten Exils auch in Theologie- und Bekenntnisbildung niederschlugen, auch wenn dies nicht immer einfach nachzuweisen ist. An diesem Ansatzpunkt aber orientieren sich die Beiträge, die die Migration des Flacius aus seiner kroatischen Heimat in das Heilige Römische Reich deutscher Nation und in das Magdeburger Exil in den Blick nehmen, sowie die Jahre in Jena und Regensburg, außerdem die Phase, in der Flacius für die konfessionelle Konsolidierung der lutherischen Gemeinde in Antwerpen sorgte, und schließlich das Straßburger Exil und die letzten Jahre in Frankfurt am Main behandeln.

Der zweite Abschnitt widmet sich Flacius als Kämpfer für die theologische Wahrheit. Die hier gruppierten sieben Beiträge versuchen, das Ringen um die Wahrheit als Strukturelement des theologischen Denkens des Flacius in der Zuspitzung auf klare bekennnismäßige Aussagen, aber auch in konfessionell übergreifender Relevanz herausarbeiten, wie sie z.B. in den historischen und hermeneutischen Werken gegeben ist. Dabei wird deutlich, dass die Person des Flacius nicht ohne weiteres auf den Streittheologen und stets polarisierenden Gelehrten reduziert werden kann. Dennoch können jene Kontroversen nicht ausgespart bleiben, die das spezifisch theologische Profil des Flacius schärften. Von besonderer Bedeutung dafür waren seine Positionierung zu Interim und Adiaphora, mit der auch die Frage nach dem Verhältnis zwischen Politik und Religion verwoben ist, sowie der Erbsündenstreit, der dann seine spezifische Plausibilität erhält, wenn man ihn unter dem Aspekt seiner Genese aus der synergistischen Kontroverse heraus betrachtet. Flacius' strikter Rekurs auf die Heilige Schrift als oberster Autorität förderte zudem die Polarisierung gegenüber der mit dem Tridentinum beginnenden konfessionellen Konsolidierung des Römischen Katholizismus und dessen Loyalität gegenüber päpstlichen Strukturen. Auch die strikte Abgrenzung von Andreas Osiander war von dieser, die Autoritätenfrage betreffenden Grundsatzentscheidung inspiriert. Dass das Eintreten für die »Wahrheit« ein leitendes Element nicht nur für die theologischen Stellungnahmen des Flacius war, sondern auch für sein Geschichtsverständnis und die Art seiner Geschichtsschreibung, für das Konzept der Zeugenschaft und für die Hermeneutik als exegetischem Schlüssel zur Heiligen Schrift ausschlaggebend wurde, erweisen die Perspektiven auf die *Magdeburger Zenturien*, den *Catalogus testium veritatis* und die *Clavis Scripturae Sacrae*.

Flacius als Gelehrten in seinen Netzwerken zu beschreiben – so der Schwerpunkt des dritten Abschnitts – stellt eine besondere Herausforderung dar, da dafür die bisher kaum beachteten und weitgehend unedierte Korrespondenzen mit anderen Gelehrten zu sichten sind, deren Aufkommen und Fundorte aber immerhin durch Dr. Luka Ilić im Leibniz-Institut für Europäische Geschichte Mainz (IEG) zu großen Teilen in einer Datenbank verzeichnet werden konnten. Zweifellos interessant, aber auch schwierig zu verfolgen ist der Aspekt, ob sich möglicherweise Aussagen über die Konjunkturen treffen lassen, denen gewonnene und verlorene Freundschaften bzw. Gegnerschaften folgten. Auf dieser Ebene bleibt viel zu tun. Die in diesem Band abgedruckten drei Beiträge können hier nur eine kleine Schneise schlagen und zu weiteren Forschungen anregen. Zur Sprache kommen Flacius' Kontakte in die Schweiz und nach Italien, die Gelehrtenkorrespondenz mit Adressaten in Polen und Ostpreußen sowie die Beziehungen, die Flacius zu dem von der Lutherschen Theologie inspirierten Italiener Pietro Paolo Vergerio unterhielt.

Dass der vierte Abschnitt zur Rezeption und gruppenbildenden Wirkung des Flacius und seiner Theologie leider nur einen Beitrag bieten kann, hängt aufs Neue mit der schwierigen Quellenlage zusammen. Denn um die europäische Dimension der Wirkungsgeschichte zu erhellen, wären nicht nur Österreich als bekannter Schutzraum, in den sich die Flacianer, d.h. die Anhänger und aktiven Vertreter der Erbsündenlehre des Flacius, nach zahlreichen Ausweisungen aus dem Reich zurückzogen, in den Blick zu nehmen, sondern auch das Erbe der Flacianer in Süd- und Osteuropa insgesamt, vor allem mit Schwerpunkt auf Slowenien und Kroatien. Auch hier besteht ein Forschungsdesiderat. Und so schließt dieser Band mit der übergreifenden Frage danach, ob es zu der Ausprägung eines »Flacianismus« im Sinne einer Konfession mit Bekenntnischarakter und konfessionsspezifischen Elementen kam, deren sodann grenzübergreifende Wirkung zu verfolgen wäre. In einem Appendix werden zudem aussagekräftige Quellenstücke und bibliographische Hinweise geboten, die nicht nur die Argumentation der Beiträge stützen und illustrieren, sondern auch zur Weiterarbeit anregen sollen. Letzterem dient auch das Verzeichnis der in den einzelnen Beiträgen herangezogenen Drucke des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts, das zusammen mit dem Verzeichnis der relevanten Sekundärliteratur und neuerer Quelleneditionen die Quellen- und derzeitige Forschungslage abzubilden versucht. Die Beiträge des Bandes sind fast zu gleichen Teilen in deutscher und englischer Sprache abgefasst. Kurze vorangestellte Abstracts auf Kroatisch sollen auch jenen den Zugang zu den Inhalten ermöglichen, die die Herkunftssprache des Flacius vorziehen. Zusätzliche deutsche Zusammenfassungen zu den englischen und englische zu den deutschen Beiträgen ermöglichen eine rasche Orientierung. Wenn es diesem Band gelingt, einen Perspektivenwechsel in der Flacius-Forschung anzuregen und dafür zu sensibilisieren, dass selbst die gegenwärtige Beschäftigung mit dem Illyrer immer noch allzu häufig von eingefahrenen Meinungen und alten Klischees geprägt ist, hat er sein Ziel erreicht.

Vielen Beteiligten, die zum Gelingen der damaligen Konferenz in Labin / Kroatien, aber auch zum Abschluss dieses Bandes beigetragen haben, ist an dieser Stelle Dank zu sagen. Die Tagung, die sich als vierte in eine Reihe internationaler Konferenzen zu Matthias Flacius Illyricus einreihet, wurde maßgeblich von der Stadt Labin und ihrem Bürgermeister Tulio Demetlika gefördert, der – in Kooperation mit dem Leibniz-Institut für Europäische Geschichte Mainz – exzellente Tagungsbedingungen bereitstellte und die Konferenzteilnehmer in großer Gastfreundschaft willkommen hieß. Eine Finanzierung durch die Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, für die sich Johannes Hund maßgeblich eingesetzt hatte, ermöglichte es, dieses Treffen der internationalen Flacius-Forschung zu organisieren. Vor Ort sorgten Loredana Ružić Modrušan (Grad Labin) und Andrea Maier (IEG Mainz) für einen reibungslosen Ablauf. Die Fertigstellung dieses Bandes als Dokumentation

der Ergebnisse lastete nicht nur auf den Schultern der Herausgeber, sondern ist in besonderer Weise dem Einsatz von Marion Bechtold-Mayer (IEG) zu danken. Sie, Prof. Dr. Robert Kolb (St. Louis, MO) und Marina Schumann (Zagreb) haben für die Übersetzungen der Abstracts ins Deutsche, Englische und Kroatische gesorgt. Dr. Christiane Bacher und Vanessa Weber, die die *Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte* im IEG redaktionell betreuen, haben den schwierigen Herstellungsprozess in großer Geduld und mit hoher Kompetenz begleitet. Allen Genannten sei an dieser Stelle ein sehr herzlicher Dank gesagt.

Mainz, 16.8.2018

Irene Dingel

# I. WANDERER ZWISCHEN DEN WELTEN



Luka Ilić

## *Peregrinatio academica* and Life Pilgrimage of Matthias Flacius Illyricus

From Labin to Wittenberg

Različita mjesta na kojima je Matija Vlačić Ilirik živio i radio u odrasloj dobi dobro su poznata, kao i činjenica da je često selio tijekom svoje akademske i crkvene karijere. No manje su poznata prva desetljeća njegova života, koja obuhvaćaju jednako velik geografski prostor. Ovaj članak bavi se godinama Vlačićeva sazrijevanja u rodnom Labinu i njegovim akademskim putovanjem, koje ga je odvelo u Veneciju, Augsburg, Basel, Tübingen i naposljetku Wittenberg. Smještajući Vlačićevu *peregrinatio academica* u povijesni i društveni kontekst, autor nastoji prikazati neke od važnijih osoba i iskustava s kojima se Vlačić susreo na tom 2200 kilometara dugom putovanju. Članku su pridodani transkript i faksimil do danas gotovo nepoznatog latinskog atesta o Vlačićevoj obitelji i podrijetlu iz 1569. godine, koji je potpisao mletački gradonačelnik (*Podestà*) grada Labina.

Die zahlreichen Orte, an denen Matthias Flacius Illyricus als Erwachsener lebte und arbeitete, sind hinreichend bekannt, ebenso wie die Tatsache, dass er sich während seiner akademischen und kirchlichen Karriere an vielen verschiedenen Orten aufhielt. Weniger bekannt sind die ersten Jahrzehnte seines Lebens, die sich in einem ähnlich großen geographischen Raum abspielten. Dieser Beitrag konzentriert sich auf die ersten, Flacius prägenden Jahre in seiner Heimatstadt Labin und auf seine akademische Wanderschaft, die ihn nach Venedig, Augsburg, Basel, Tübingen und schließlich nach Wittenberg führte. Er bettet diese *peregrinatio academica* in den historischen und sozialen Kontext ein, betrachtet dabei die für die Entwicklung des Flacius wichtigen Personen und skizziert die Erfahrungen, die er auf dieser 2.200 km langen Reise machte. Darüber hinaus wird ein bisher beinahe unbekanntes lateinisches Dokument von 1569, das über Flacius' Familie und seine Ursprünge Auskunft gibt, unterzeichnet von Labins höchstem Beamten (*Podestà*), in Transkription diesem Aufsatz als Appendix beigefügt.





Matthias Flacius Illyricus' journey, his *peregrinatio academica*, took him from his birthplace Labin along more than 2,200 km across the Alps with stops in Venice, Augsburg, Basel, Tübingen, Regensburg and finally to Wittenberg, all within a period of five years. Such an undertaking is impressive and enviable even in today's terms and within the frame of reference with modern means of transportation. Before he began pursuing his education, Flacius spent the first sixteen years of his life in the small Istrian town of Labin (Albona) – the longest he ever lived in one place. And yet this is the part of Flacius' life that the least amount of information is available on.

In his biography on Flacius, Mijo Mirković observed »that neither Flacius' work, nor his letters contain details about his father, mother, relatives or childhood«<sup>1</sup>. He goes on to offer his own interpretation of the reason behind this, explaining that »Flacius writes in a way that suggests his life began at the moment when he first encountered Protestantism through [his relative] Friar Baldo Lupetino and when he decided to become a Protestant himself«<sup>2</sup>.

Even though not much is known about Flacius' early years or about his family, a few sources do reveal information about the context within which he grew up. The Italian historian Marino Sanudo, a contemporary of Flacius', visited Labin with his father and in his diary he states that in 1483 the town had 300 households and 350 adult inhabitants<sup>3</sup>. In spite of its small size, Labin was a significant settlement for the Eastern Istrian region. Following its incorporation into the Republic of Venice in 1420, many new buildings were erected, which contributed to shaping the architectural image of the old town as it is preserved even today. Sanudo also testifies to the fact that Croatian was spoken by the inhabitants beside Italian.

In 2008 the Istrian State Archives in Pazin published a critical edition with the transcription of the official records kept by the Labin priest and at the same time apostolic and public notary Bartolomeo Gervasio for the years 1525 to 1550<sup>4</sup>. At the third Flacius Symposium, which was held in 2010, Tullio Vorano presented some of the information about the Flacius family that could be reconstructed from these documents<sup>5</sup>. Therein Flacius' father, Andrea Franković alias Vlačić and the house he owned in the old town are referred to: in 1535 it is reported that he was already dead. The testament that Flacius' sister, Celia left behind in February 1546 mentions three brothers, Francisco,

1 MIRKOVIĆ, Matija Vlačić, p. 14, translation mine.

2 Ibid.

3 SANUDO, Itinerario di Marin Sanuto, p. 456.

4 LADIĆ/ORBANIĆ (eds.), Bartolomeja Gervazija: »Testamentum Celie file, quondam ser Andree Francouich«, pp. 157–158.

5 See VORANO, Labin Vlačićeva.

Jacobo and Matthias, and two sisters, Dominica and Martina. Those five siblings of Flacius' were alive in 1546 but it is not known how many more he had, including those that may have died prematurely. It is also not clear whether all siblings mentioned were from the same mother. Celia's will suggest that Matthias owned a piece of land that she, Celia, was farming. It was most likely this farmland that Flacius sold on his trip to Labin in 1563. It is documented that he visited Labin, Ljubljana and Venice in 1563, since he wrote about that trip in a letter to Hartmann Beyer in Frankfurt that year. Therein he observed that the true religion is being preached (*vera religio propagatur*) in Carnia (today the northeastern Italian area of Friuli), Croatia, Carinthia (Kärnten) and Styria (Steiermark)<sup>6</sup>. Also Primus Truber reported about Flacius' eight-day stay in Ljubljana on his way from Labin back to Regensburg:

Der Illyricus ist alhie bey mir 8 tag gewest. Meine genedige herrn auf mein anpringen haben jme 32 thaller verehrt. Seinem discipulum Sebastianum Khrellium<sup>7</sup> werden meine genedige herrn im yeczundt nechstkühnfftigen lanndtag mir zu einem gefüllffen annemmen. Illyricus ist auf Kharenndten zuegeritten, suecht in den clössteren alte geschribne buecher. Wirdt sich wiederumben gen Regenspurg zu seinem weyb vnnd 7. khindern erheben<sup>8</sup>.

Another contemporary report proving that he was in Slovenia comes from Matthias Klombner, who wrote to Hans Ungnad from Ljubljana on July 23, 1563<sup>9</sup>.

Young Flacius left Labin at the age of sixteen and went to pursue studies in Venice. There is very little documentary evidence that has been found so far about this period, making it the second least documented part of Flacius' life. Most of the sources that refer to Flacius' experience in *La Serenissima Repubblica* stem from his own written output: letters, dedications and forewords to

6 »Fui hac aestate Venetijs et in patria, ac reperi homines mediocriter veritatis cupidos. In Carnia, Croatia, Carinthia et in finibus Styriae sic satis vera religio propagatur. Hisce diebus hic ordinabuntur 3 ministri illuc ad functiones vocati. Orabis igitur Dominum, ut et illis im umbra mortis fedentibus celestis lux exoriatur«: Letter from Flacius to Hartmann Beyer in Frankfurt, Regensburg, August 30, 1563, in: Frankfurt/Main, Universitätsbibliothek J.C. Senckenberg, Sign. MS. Ff. H. Beyer A 194, pp. 229r–229v (MIROVIĆ, Matija Vlačić, p. 217 wrongly states that this correspondence was destroyed in a fire during the Second World War).

7 Sebastian Krell (Krelj).

8 Primus Truber to Hans Ungnad, Laibach, July 8, 1563, in: Stuttgart, Hauptstaatsarchiv, A 63, Büschel 13, cited from RAJHMAN, Pisma Primoža Trubarja, pp. 152–155, here p. 153.

9 The letter is kept at the University Library in Tübingen. A summary of the letter and selected excerpts from it can be found in KOSTRENČIĆ, Urkundliche Beiträge, pp. 184–185.

his works, in which he shares memories and remembrances of what he experienced there. What can be reconstructed is as follows:

The Venice that Flacius encountered in 1536, the year Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam died, was a city already deeply impacted by humanism. It had even developed its own particular branch, the so-called Venetian humanism and was practiced at the Aldine Academy, a circle that comprised clerics and scholars who gathered around the influential publisher Aldus Manutius. Giovanni Battista Cipelli, also known as Egnazio, was among the founding members of the academy. He was a prominent Renaissance humanist and a friend of Erasmus, with whom he kept occasional correspondence until 1534. Egnazio became Flacius' teacher at the School of San Marco, when young Matthias began his three-year-long study in Venice. From Egnazio, Flacius received an introduction to humanistic ideas and to Erasmus' works, including his translation of the New Testament from Greek into Latin<sup>10</sup>. Flacius thus became familiar with the humanist emphasis to return to the study of original sources (*ad fontes*), as exemplified both by Manutius, who focused on collecting the Classics and publishing them, and by his own teacher Egnazio. Studying Ancient languages and collecting and publishing classical sources eventually became Flacius' lifelong pursuit.

It was during his time in Venice that Flacius expressed interest in studying theology. His relative, Baldo Lupetino, who held the position of provincial at the monastery of San Francesco della Vigna in the city at the time secretly gave Flacius Luther's writings and advised him »to go to Germany, not to a monastery, if [he] wanted to study theology«<sup>11</sup>. Shortly afterwards the young Illyrian was on his way northward across the Alps after three years spent in Venice.

Beginning his *peregrinatio academica* in Venice was a natural, even logical step for Flacius, as it was for others from the territories around the northern Adriatic under Venetian control at the time. In Venice two important foundations were laid for Flacius' future. For his later academic journey his in-depth encounter with Renaissance humanism was of utmost importance. Since Flacius received his initial humanist education in Venice, it can be argued that his prominent interest in history and his mastery of ancient languages arose not so much from his later exposure to Luther and Melancthon but from his early training at the school of San Marco and in the shadow of the Aldine Press.

10 See Ilić, What has Flacius to do with Erasmus?

11 TWESTEN, Matthias Flacius Illyricus, pp. 35–63, here p. 38: »[...] erzählte er mir, wie Luther das Evangelium wieder zu Ehren gebracht habe, wies mir einige Schriften und rieth mir, nach Deutschland, nicht ins Kloster zu gehen, wenn ich Theologie studiren wolle. Auf der Stelle war ich mit Freuden dazu bereit und reiste wenige Wochen darauf nach Deutschland«. See also KAUFMANN, »Erfahrungsmuster«, p. 289.

Flacius' stay in Venice also signified a major turning point on a personal level. His decision to study protestant theology and the advice not to pursue this further education at a university in Venetian territory such as Padua [under Venetian control between 1405 and 1797], but rather in Germany, meant that he set out on a journey from which there would be no return. Although up until this point Flacius' educational journey had not been uncommon, what followed cannot be described as a typical *peregrinatio academica* – as it became a quest suddenly driven by a growing religious motivation.

Flacius' first stop north of the Alps was in Basel, where he matriculated at the university in 1539<sup>12</sup>. He lived in the home of Professor Simon Grynaeus, who taught Greek and was widely recognized by his contemporaries as a prominent philosopher, philologist and theologian. Grynaeus was Erasmus' friend and succeeded him at the university in Basel. Among his other professors was Johannes Oporinus, who taught him Greek, and the two of them developed a relationship that resulted in ongoing cooperation and a life-long friendship, with Oporinus later printing many of Flacius' works. In a hitherto unpublished letter, Oporinus wrote to professor Joachim Camerarius in Tübingen on November 30, 1539, asking him to greet Flacius<sup>13</sup>. This suggests that Flacius spent only one semester at Basel before moving on to Tübingen. As a young student in Basel, Flacius was almost bound to come in contact with the intellectual legacy of the great humanist Erasmus, who had lived and worked in the city during three different periods [1514-1516, 1521-1529, and in the last years of his life, i.e. 1535-1536]. The emphasis on learning Biblical languages, especially Greek in this phase of his education, later proved crucial for Flacius in his work on Biblical exegesis and hermeneutics.

From Basel Flacius left for Tübingen, where he studied under Matthias Garbitius Illyricus (Matija Grbac, Grbić), who was the first known Protestant from present-day Croatia and stemmed from the Istrian Peninsula<sup>14</sup>. Garbitius was – just as Grynaeus in Basel – a professor of Greek and had previously taught Greek literature at the University of Wittenberg. In Tübingen Garbitius taught not only Greek language but also Latin literature and poetry and from July 1544 onward ethics as well. Apart from lecturing on the Greek classics, Garbitius himself composed and published poetry in Greek and Latin. Young Flacius stayed in Garbitius' home during his time in Tübingen. Flacius was also taught by the humanist and polymath Joachim Camerarius and thus

12 The full entry reads: »Matheus de Francistis de Albona Polensi Dioec. [esi] in Illicico, sub Venetorum ditione, pauper«, in: WACKERNAGEL (ed.), *Matrikel der Universität Basel* 2, p. 22, Nr. 4.

13 STEINMANN, Oporinus, p. 69.

14 For more about Garbitius, see ILIĆ, *Praeceptor Humanissimus et duo Illyri*.

continued to be impacted by humanism through his studies. It was Camerarius and Garbitius who advised Flacius to go to Wittenberg in order to continue studying for a Master of Arts degree.

Flacius arrived in Wittenberg as a student in 1541 and matriculated at the university in the summer semester (1 May) as a pauper (*gratis inscriptus*)<sup>15</sup>. Academically, Wittenberg was the apex of his studies, the culmination of his *peregrinatio*. Here he was, right in the central location of the Lutheran Reformation and in its intellectual middle. The university at that time had already become an important theological center in Europe and attracted scores of students from various countries who wanted to familiarize themselves with Luther's teaching. As a student, Flacius' life was limited to his room, the university and the church. He was taught by both Luther and Melancthon at the university; he dedicated himself to learning and tutored other students in Greek and Hebrew in order to earn some money. In a letter from November 1544 Luther referred to Flacius' academic devotion by calling him »studiosissimus«<sup>16</sup>.

Yet, his first few months in Wittenberg also marked a deep spiritual and personal crisis for Flacius. After three years of studying in German-speaking territories, far away from home, learning German and struggling to adjust to differences in culture, climate and diet, he had many doubts about his newly acquired Lutheran faith. In the midst of his personal crisis he had a face-to-face meeting with Luther, who comforted him, shared his own example of having gone through a similar struggle (*Anfechtung*), and encouraged him from the Word of God. This experience strengthened his admiration of Luther.

In this way, Wittenberg was indeed a second turning point for Flacius' Evangelical faith: it was here that his Lutheran beliefs became consolidated. However, it was only the culmination of a long journey, a peregrination, in which his previous academic and personal experiences in Venice, Basel and Tübingen also played an important role. Wittenberg signified academically broadening horizons for Flacius, too: after receiving foundations in Renaissance humanism, he encountered how humanism was being utilized to serve the methods and goals of the Reformation. Wittenberg was to be the last station in Flacius' *peregrinatio*. In 1544 he received a teaching appointment for Hebrew language at the Faculty of Arts and a year later he married the daughter of a pastor from the vicinity of Wittenberg. On February 25, 1546 Flacius received a master's degree, graduating as the best in his class of thirty-nine students.

15 FÖRSTEMANN (ed.), *Album Academiae Vitebergensis* 1, p. 191. In the enrolment records of the Wittenberg University, Flacius is listed as »Mattheus Wutzer ex Dalmatia«.

16 WA.Br 10, pp. 679–682, here p. 681, Nr. 4041: »Cum vero Matthias Illyricus vestri studiosissimus...«.

Ending up in Wittenberg did not only mean that Flacius was geographically distant from his home but that he was also religiously and intellectually in a completely different world than Labin. Flacius left his home behind not only physically: he also entered a new world of thought and belief. On both academic and personal levels he was being gradually removed from his homeland and from his people. It is reasonable to suppose that he still had contact with Croatian-speakers while in Venice, since it is well-known that a large number of people from the Istrian Peninsula and from the islands as well as from the Dalmatian coastline lived in the city. This population, made up primarily of seamen and merchants, had even developed their own social and cultural institutions by the time Flacius came there. During the later stages of his transalpine journey, however, he was mainly without personal contacts to people from his native land. The only notable exception to this was in Tübingen, where he lived in the Garbitius household. Unlike representatives of other nationalities such as Hungarians, whose numbers were significant at the University of Wittenberg in the mid-sixteenth century<sup>17</sup>, extremely few from Flacius' homeland studied north of the Alps. He therefore lacked the comradery and support system that such national groups could offer. However, he did remain in contact with individuals he had studied together with or taught, which is evidenced for example in a letter he received from his former student Emericus Zigerius from Osijek in present-day eastern Croatia and which he published while in Magdeburg with his own seven-page-long preface. In the letter Zigerius described the latest conquests of the Ottoman Turks in central and southern Europe and wrote about the situation of the Protestants living in the territories under Ottoman dominion<sup>18</sup>.

Flacius' decision to leave the safe confines of Italian Catholicism and Venetian civic life must have been a momentous one, inspired by Baldo Lupetino but also by the message emanating from Wittenberg and other centers of the Reformation.

Flacius was not a child of wealthy parents – unlike many others from Central and Southeastern Europe, who came from privileged backgrounds and decided to study abroad while enjoying their families' support, such as Flacius' contemporary, Andreas Dudith. Instead, Flacius' matriculation documents, where he consistently identified himself as a pauper, reveal his social standing. In such a situation it was even more important that he make use of one of the typical advantages a *peregrinatio academica* had to offer: to establish social contacts, to build up networks that were in part based on clientelistic

17 TAMÁSKA, Die ungarische Peregrination.

18 ZIGERIUS, EPISTOLA ex Turcia, ad M. Illy. Missa.

relationships<sup>19</sup>. There are several examples of people Flacius met along his journey from Venice to Wittenberg, which were crucial for building up his later network of those supporting him financially, publishing his works, or politically influential individuals lobbying for him or for causes he represented.

In contrast to many other Central European young men in the sixteenth century, among whom were also those who had studied Protestant theology, who returned to their homes after their *peregrinatio academica* to put into practice what they had learned within their home contexts, Flacius never had the opportunity to return to live in his beloved Labin. The only time he came back incognito was in 1563, when he sold his land. He could not return, since his works had been banned by the first Roman Index of January 1559 (*Index librorum prohibitorum*), which made it impossible for him to come back since he could risk imprisonment and possible death by the Inquisition<sup>20</sup>. Flacius' writings were also placed in the subsequent editions of the Index from 1564 and 1582. On a personal level he lamented this, as his writings increasingly testify to his longing for his birthplace. Even though physically absent, he followed the developments in the region and he was striving to spread the Protestant Reformation in the Venetian and Croatian lands through various means.

One hitherto little known document from 1569 corroborates some of the information concerning the earliest stages of Flacius' *peregrinatio academica*. Baldiserra (Baldassare) Trevisan, mayor of Labin and of Plomin (Flanona/Fianona) from 1568 to 1570, signed with his own hand in Labin on June 19, 1569 an attestation, establishing Flacius' credentials (see the transcription of this document in appendix 1 at the end of this book).

The reason Flacius acquired the testimony from Labin is because as he himself states some people questioned his Christian baptism and legitimate birth, including his family name. Already in 1568, soon after his arrival in Strasbourg, a number of local theologians demanded from him an overview and an explanation of all the theological disputations he had been involved in up to that point, wishing to determine where his controversial reputation originated. Flacius responded by writing *Narratio actionum et certaminum M. Matth. Fl. Illyrici. Bona fide conscripta*<sup>21</sup>, in which he recounted his origins, his biography, and the most important disputations he had taken part

19 IRRGANG, *Peregrinatio Academica*. Her book shows that study-related migrations (at least in the fifteenth century) were much rarer than they have been mythologized. They never became mass movements, and the number of those studying in various places was extremely small.

20 *Index Avctorvm Et Librorum* (1559), p. F4r.

21 This work was only published posthumously while the manuscript obviously circulated widely. The original Latin text was issued by Conrad Schlüsselburg, in his *Catalogi*

in. The attestation he received from Labin served further to officially confirm his real identity and the truth of his claims concerning his origins and his life journey<sup>22</sup>.

The attestation was requested by Matthias' maternal uncle, Luciano Luciani, and several witnesses, all influential men in good standing in the community. They are listed by name as confirming Flacius' identity and membership in the Vlačić-Franković family: the most reverend Gaspare Luciano, parish priest of Labin, 80 years old; Antonio de Sydro, canon, 50 years old; Sebastiano Lupatino, nobleman from Labin, 72 years old; Ubaldo Schampichio, a nobleman from the region and a relative of Luciano's, 50 years old; Zacharia Agatich, citizen of Labin, 80 years old. Flacius' mother bore the name Jacobea Luciani, and she was also related to the Lupetino family. Thus, it is clear that more than one of the witnesses was a relative of Flacius'.

The attestation also records some of Flacius' experiences in Basel in 1536, where he lived in the house of Simon Grynaeus, and from Tübingen, where he stayed in the house of Matthias Garbitius Illyricus<sup>23</sup>. He refers to the latter as his compatriot (*popularique meo*). Flacius published this document in Basel in 1570<sup>24</sup>, tucked away on pages 323 to 326, located between his long and controversial theological work on original sin and a work written by Paul Reinecker<sup>25</sup>, which made it extremely difficult to find.

However, the 1569 attestation from Labin raises more questions than it can answer. Flacius' uncle, Luciano Luciani was a judge in Labin at the time. What reason or interest could he have had to request the issue of such a document? Surely he would have been implored by Matthias himself to acquire this type of evidence. Flacius was often accused by numerous opponents and enemies of cheating, lies, stealing of documents<sup>26</sup>, and some claimed that not even his surname was real (as he used the Latinized version *Flacius* instead of the original *Vlačić*, added the epithet *Illyricus* to it, and almost never employed the preferred surname used by his father, *Franković*) and therefore he was held to be not a credible person. The attestation confirmed that he had not used a false surname, and it could serve as a weapon to silence his opponents. The document apparently benefited Flacius, who was exasperatingly trying to get permission to remain in Strasbourg, together with his large family, since

Haereticorum Liber XIII, pp. 802–857. Caspar Heldelin, Jr. translated it into German as: *Erzählunge der Handlungen* and published it together with Flacius' funeral oration, *Eine Christliche predigt*, p. Sijj r–Eej v (VD16 F 1380/1381).

22 This document in itself is most unusual and perhaps the original can still be found in the Strasbourg archives.

23 FLACIUS, *Demonstrationes De Essentia imaginis dei*, pp. 323–326 (X2r–X3v).

24 The preface to Count Volrad of Mansfeld was dated in Strasbourg on January 1, 1570.

25 REINECKER, *Methodica Probatio Propositionis*. For Reinecker's short biography see, ILIĆ, *Theologian of Sin and Grace*, p. 204, n. 192.

26 OLSON, *Bücherdieb Flacius*.



his stay in the city was eventually prolonged until May 1573. Flacius' life pilgrimage ended in Frankfurt am Main, where on the Feast Day of St. Matthias, February 24, 1575 he received the prolongation of his stay with his family in the city, and received the following answer:

Als Matthias Flacius Illiricus suppliciert vnnd gebetten mit Ime geduldt zu tragen vnnd noch lenger allhie bleiben und wonnen zu lassen. Soll mann Ime noch bis vff Prima Maij alhie zu bleiben zu vergönnern. Doch das er sich als dann von hinnen mache vnnd seinen pfennig anderswo zere<sup>27</sup>.

Unfortunately, Flacius died before the deadline given to him by the city officials, on March 11, 1575.

This brief overview of Flacius' *peregrinatio academica* and of his life journey reveals two desiderata for future study: one is to find out more about his early life and the influences upon him in Labin. This also includes the unanswered questions and ambiguities raised by the 1569 attestation. The other area where research is still lacking concerns Flacius' time in Venice. Contributions to these two stages of Flacius' life would help us be able to reconstruct his early biography more precisely while hopefully also gaining greater insight into his overall experience.

27 Frankfurt/Main, Institut für Stadtgeschichte im Karmeliterkloster, Ratsprotokoll und Bürgermeisterbuch, Donnerstag 24. Februar 1575.

## Wade Johnston

# Adiaphora and Confession

### Flacius' Magdeburg Writings Produced in Exile

Matija Vlačić Ilirik napustio je Magdeburg kao drugi čovjek. Ondje je postao kršćanskim prognanikom i započeo živjeti lutalačkim životom. Adijaforistički spor bio je presudan trenutak u njegovu životu. Dospio je u konflikt sa svojim učiteljem i mentorom, Philippom Melancthonom, kao i s nekadašnjim kolegama na Sveučilištu u Wittenbergu. Njegova koncepcija Crkve kao vjerne manjine pod križem iskristalizirala se upravo u Magdeburgu, gdje se oblikovao i njegov pogled na crkvenu povijest. Poistovjetio se s Lutherom snažnije nego ikada prije. U Magdeburgu je stekao prijatelje i neprijatelje koji će odigrati presudnu ulogu u njegovu budućem radu i borbama. Dobio je ideje za neka od svojih čuvenih djela, koje će uroditi plodom godinama nakon okončanja Adijaforističkog spora. Iako je Vlačić vjerojatno više od bilo koga drugoga zaslužan za uspjeh Magdeburga u borbi protiv Interima, Magdeburg je također presudno utjecao na Vlačića. Bilo je to njegovo prvo izgnanstvo za ljubav istine, onakve kakvu je priznavao i ispovijedao. Iz ovog razdoblja njegova života proizašao je niz njegovih najvećih uspjeha i najgorčenijih sukoba. Naprosto nije moguće razumjeti Ilirikov život i djelo ne uzmu li se u obzir njegova iskustva u »Božjoj pisarnici«.

Matthias Flacius Illyricus verließ Magdeburg als veränderter Mensch. Hier wurde er zum »Exul Christi« und begann sein Leben als Wanderer. Der Adiaphoristische Streit war ein bestimmender Faktor in seinem Leben. Er befand sich plötzlich ebenso in Gegnerschaft zu seinem Lehrer und Mentor, Philipp Melancthon, wie auch zu seinen ehemaligen Kollegen der Wittenberger theologischen Fakultät. Seine Konzeption der Kirche als gläubiger Rest unter dem Kreuz entstand in Magdeburg. Seine Sicht auf die Kirchengeschichte nahm Gestalt an. Er identifizierte sich mehr mit Luther als jemals zuvor. In Magdeburg gewann er Freunde und machte sich Feinde, die für seine zukünftigen Arbeiten und Auseinandersetzungen wesentlich werden sollten. Hier konzipierte er einige seiner berühmten Werke, die nach dem Ende des Adiaphoristischen Streits Wirkung entfalteten. Während Flacius, wahrscheinlich mehr als jeder andere, Magdeburg im Kampf gegen das Augsburger und