

“A good word is a dew from heaven to earth...: It is a precious balme, that has sweetnesse in the boxe, whence it comes, sweetnesse and vertue in the bodie, whereto it comes [John Florio’s “To the Reader” of his dictionary of 1598]

“...mercy...droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest; It blesseth him that gives and him that takes” [Shakespeare, “The Merchant of Venice”- Act IV, Scene i, 180 ss.]

Michelangelo Florio and forgiveness; Shakespeare, “the real dramatist of forgiveness” (Von Balthasar).

Abstract:

1. M. O. Nobili examines two important letters, in Latin, sent by M. Florio to Cecil: i) in 1551, he denounced 14 of his parishioners for violation of religion (and recalled the *strict Old Testament law*); ii) in 1552, for his “act of fornication”, he asked for mercy (and recalled *Jesus’ New Law of forgiveness* in the *New Testament*).
2. The play *Measure for Measure* by the Dramatist (as already perceived by R. Romani and I. Bellini-2012), seems a sort of autobiographical work, on the basis of the story that is documented by the said letters.
3. Some passages from Michelangelo’s letter of 1552 (on the themes of *justice and mercy*, already expressed by Aretino in his *Seven Psalms* of 1534 and in his letter to Henry VIII of 1542) are *-in an impressive way- found, translated into English, in Portia’s speech in praise of mercy* (in *The Merchant of Venice*)!
4. Shakespeare is “the real dramatist of forgiveness”, according to Hans Urs von Balthasar, in his “*Excursus: Shakespeare and Forgiveness*”; the “transition from equalizing justice [i.e., from the Old Testament law of retaliation, “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth”] to mercy is one of the innermost motive forces of his art”.

Summary:

I. Michelangelo Florio and forgiveness

I.1 The fundamental “*skillfully argued*” letter, in Latin (here translated into English- see Appendix II, at the bottom of this study) of 23 January 1552, by Michelangelo Florio to Sir William Cecil, *a veritable masterpiece of literature and theology*; Michelangelo (guilty of a *mutually agreed “act of fornication”*), “*cites examples, from the Old [and New] Testamen*” and “*begs forgiveness*” by Cecil. *Concepts and words, written in Latin by Michelangelo, are literally reproduced in English by the Dramatist in the famous speech of Portia in praise of mercy (“The Merchant of Venice”).* It was a *private letter (not accessible to anyone)* and kept by Cecil’s secretary, Sir Michael Hicks; John Strype obtained access to Cecil’s secret documents and published it for the first time in 1694. *At the time of Shakespeare, only John Florio could have a copy of this paternal letter and substantially translate its passages into English.* This Latin letter by Michelangelo appears as the *source of the famous speech, in English, of Portia in praise of mercy!*

I.1.1 John Florio made a reworked English translation of the paternal text and added the fundamental “*incipit*” to it, taking up *the same words and concepts* that he himself had previously written in the “*To the Reader*” of his dictionary, published in 1598, but licensed to the publisher on March 2, 1596. The “*good word*” by John Florio (which is “*a dew from heaven to earth... a precious balme*”, which is *twice*

beneficial, both for those who say the good word, and for those who receive it); and “mercy” by the Dramatist (a “merciful word”, equivalent, in a figurative sense, to John’s “good word”), which “droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest; It blesseth him that gives and him that takes”.

This is the method the Dramatist (John Florio!) used to compose his works, reworking paternal texts and adding some of his own!

In the following §§ I.3 and III.4, we will also deepen the fundamental Aretino’s influence on Michelangelo’s letter to Cecil on 23 January 1552 (Aretino who, therefore, indirectly, also influences Portia’s speech!) and we will consider (see the following §§ III.4 and III.5) how Michelangelo (like other important writers) frequently used the “*imitatio*” of previous works by other (Italian and Latin) authors!

I.2 The previous Michelangelo’s Latin letter to Cecil, dated 1551. Michelangelo, *without any mercy*, had requested exemplary punishment (which *could also be exile from the Kingdom*) for 14 of his parishioners who did not fulfill their duties, recalling *the severe Old Testament Law*; while, in his subsequent letter of 23 January 1552, Michelangelo himself had invoked the new Commandment of mercy preached by Jesus in the New Testament. The theme of “*judging and being judged*”.

I.3 Michelangelo had invoked, for his parishioners, the severe Law of the Old Testament and for himself the new Commandment of love and forgiveness preached by Christ in the New Testament. He applied double standards of measurement. Michelangelo, a preacher, had forgotten the evangelical teaching: “*the measure with which you measure will be measured out to you*”. The 14 of his parishioners, denounced by him to Cecil, risked exile from the Kingdom. But, after his “*fornication*”, Michelangelo himself risked receiving a severe punishment (exile from the Kingdom) from Cecil, as he had requested, *without any mercy*, for his 14 parishioners. *Both the 14 parishioners and Michelangelo were awaiting for Cecil’s judgment!* All (the 14 parishioners and Michelangelo himself) really risked being severely punished with exile from the Kingdom! Michelangelo’s letter of January 23, 1552 (a veritable *masterpiece of theology and literature!*), which exalted Cecil’s natural inclination to clemency seems to have been the decisive instrument for facilitating a merciful solution to this whole complex affair; indeed, Cecil, Baron Burghley, proved to be truly a person prone to forgiveness. Michelangelo exalts, addressing Cecil: “*miram illam tuam charitatem*”, “*your marvellous charity*”; he also emphasizes “*ea opinio, quam de tua pietate, prudentia, doctrina et mansuetudine concepi hactenus*”, “*that opinion I have perceived till now about your pity, prudence, doctrine and mansuetude*” (Aretino had turned to Henry VIII in his letter of August 1, 1542, with similar words, pointing out: “*the pity, the mansuetude ... with which ... you forgive*”, “*we see you to proceed with a sort of justice, and with a sort of mercy, more similar to divine mercy and justice, than to human [mercy and justice]*”). *We have no knowledge of Cecil’s judgement*, but the facts speak clearly: 1) *we have no news of any expulsion of the 14 parishioners from the Kingdom* (punishment that, by its gravity, vice versa would certainly left some written trace); 2) *Michelangelo himself was substantially forgiven, he married his beloved woman*, even though he was subjected to a public punishment and was deposed as a Preacher.

I.4 Pietro Aretino (Michelangelo Florio’s friend): the centrality of the theme of forgiveness and of the need to reconcile mercy and justice (Prof. Élise Boillet), in “*David’s Seven Penitential Psalms*” (Venice 1534), one of the books of Florio’s library (which was indicated by John among the books he read for his dictionaries of 1598 and 1611 - see Appendix III at the bottom of this study, bibliographical reference n.34, and Appendix IV, bibliographical reference n.133). In his letter to Cecil of 23 January 1552, Michelangelo strongly got ideas from such text, with the technique of *imitatio*. This Aretino’s text (translated into English in 1549) strongly also influences (like Aretino’s Italian letter to Henry VIII of 1 August 1542) Portia’s the speech of in praise of mercy, in *The Merchant of Venice*. Aretino’s ingenious “*anachronism*”: biblical King

David implores *God's forgiveness*, invoking, not the law of the Old Testament, but *the new law of mercy and love preached by Jesus Christ!* The reference to the “benefit” of God (clear allusion to the “*Trattato del beneficio di Giesù Christo crocifisso*”, the most important work of the Italian Reformation, published in Venice in 1543 - the volume was in Florio’s library and among the works read by John Florio for his dictionary of 1611; see item n. 234 in Appendix IV of this study). Mercy as a “rain”, which washes the sins, in Aretino (“*Seven Psalms*”) and in Portia’s speech on mercy in the *The Merchant of Venice*. Did Michelangelo remember “by heart” *many literary reminiscences*, present in his Latin epistle of 1552, without his library in London?

I.5 Michelangelo Florio *theologian (his great capacity as a “preacher”, to render difficult theological concepts intelligible to all)* and his theological work of an Evangelical Christian, the *Apologia* (1557), in which five fundamental issues are addressed:

- i) “*The true and [the] false Church*”;
- ii) the “*Essence and [the] quality of the Mass*”. Michelangelo’s statements are supported by Saint Paul’s *Epistle to the Hebrews of*, Evangelicals’ preferred Saint!
- iii) “*The true presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Supper*”;
- iv) “*The Papacy, and primacy of Saint Peter*”. According to Michelangelo, *St. Paul was the first Bishop of Rome. By the will of God, the life of those who sailed with Saint Paul to Rome was under the Saint’s protection.* St. Paul’s epistle to the Romans shows that St. Paul took special care of Rome.
- v) the “*Councils and their authority*”.

I.6 The *Consummatum est* (the real focal point of Michelangelo Florio’s *theology of Christian forgiveness, Apologia*, p. 37 v) and the *Consummation* in *Hamlet*. By mere “coincidence”, Michelangelo Florio *had theorized* (in his manuscript “*Regole de la lingua Thoscana*” of 1553) *the possibility of introducing, in a literary text, the terms and words proper of Christ’s passion.*

I.7 The *centrality of the evangelical and theological Saint Paul’s message* in the *Apologia* by Michelangelo Florio. Brief notes on the fundamental Lutheran theme of “*justification by faith alone*”, based on *Saint Paul’s Epistle to the Romans, mentioned by Michelangelo.* Michelangelo’s reference to the troubled Saint Paul’s sea voyage from Caesarea to Rome; *by the will of God, the life of those who sailed with Saint Paul to Rome was under the Saint’s protection.* We will further illustrate (also in the following §§ II.1.7.1 e II.1.2.1) how *various plays of the Dramatist draw their sure source of inspiration from the biblical stories of Saint Paul’s life (Saint Paul’s shipwreck in Malta - “The Tempest”) and from Saint Paul’s “Letters” (the “novus homo”, the “man new made”, in “Measure for Measure”).*

II. Shakespeare, “*the real dramatist of forgiveness*” (Von Balthasar)

II.1 The fundamental study of the Swiss theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar (one of the major Catholic theologians of the 20th century): “*Excursus: Shakespeare and Forgiveness*”. “*The real dramatist of forgiveness is and remains Shakespeare*”. *The great Christian theologian of the 20th century analyzes and comments the texts of the Dramatist, with a profound theological rigor, making reference to the work of the Dramatist as to that of a true great Christian theologian!* Portia’s speech in praise of mercy and many other examples of the works of the Dramatist show, according to von Balthasar, “*in a ‘postfiguration’ of the gospel [i.e., in a subsequent representation of the Gospel, through theatrical works], the possibility of allowing mercy to take place of justice*”. Finally, “*The transition from equalizing justice [i.e., from the Old Testament law of retaliation, “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth”] to mercy is one of the innermost motive forces of his [dramatist’s] art*”.

II.1.1. *The Merchant of Venice*

II.1.1 Reference is to be made to the previous § I.1, regarding the really impressive comparison between the piece (*almost ignored so far by the scholars*) by Michelangelo Florio (in the letter of 23 January 1552) on forgiveness and Portia's speech in praise of mercy.

II.1.1.2 Von Balthasar emphasizes "*the amusing judgment scene*", in which Portia vigorously sponsors Antonio's defense. Michelangelo Florio (another mere "coincidence"?) had already theorized, in 1553, the *kind of language that must be used by a lawyer who defends, before a court*, which must be characterized by "*audacity, solicitude, promptness ... In this way any thesis that he supports, better penetrates the mind of the judge. And this is the strength of languages*".

II.1.2 *Measure for Measure*

II.1.2.1 According to von Balthasar, the play "*marks the high point of the problem of justice versus mercy. This is a Christian mystery play ...*". Isabella's reference to "*mercy*" is made in terms similar to those in Portia's speech (Act II, Scene ii, 59-63). Isabella's reference to "*the redemption of all by Christ*" and to St. Paul's concept (much appreciated by the Evangelicals!) of "*novus homo*", of "*made new man*" (Act II, Scene ii, 73-79), of the "*renewed*" man from the salvific mission of Christ (the Dramatist shows himself as a *great theologian!*).

II.1.2.2 Von Balthasar points out that "*everyone is brought to judgment, and no one knows how it will end*". "*Everyone ... must go through judgement*". *All the characters risk being condemned*. Other scholars point out that, at least up to Act V, the spectator remains in suspense: everything seems to lead to *the rigorous application of the law*, with the infliction of "*four death sentences*".

II.1.2.3 *Measure for Measure and too many coincidences (already perceived by Roberta Romani and Irene Bellini in 2012) with the human story of Michelangelo Florio between the end of 1551 and the beginning of 1552 (as now also documented in detail by the analysis of the two written letters from Michelangelo to Cecil)*.

II.1.2.3.1 *Measure for Measure*: the story of a man, who, like Michelangelo, *has committed an act of consensual fornication, which becomes evident through the woman's pregnant state*.

II.1.2.3.2 *Measure for Measure*: the story of a man, Angelo, who plays a role of authority, like Michelangelo (whose name Angelo also bears!). Angelo condemned Claudio, on the basis of a *strict law*, which he applies to the letter; even Michelangelo had requested to Cecil exemplary punishment for his 14 parishioners, on the basis of the *strict Old Testament Law*. The question of *the relationship between the new Commandment of love, preached by Christ, and the Old Testament Law of revenge* was one of the *most relevant profiles in the religious discussion at the time!* *The new law of the benefit of Christ (mercy) was opposed to the harshness of the old law [the Old Testament], as the central theme of the most famous book of the Italian Spirituals, Il Trattato Utilissimo del Beneficio di Cristo (Venice 1547, a book that is in Florios' library, read by John for his dictionary of 1611- see it in Appendix IV at item n. 234)*.

II.1.2.3.3 *Measure for Measure*: the story of Angelo, an authority, who also infringes *the strict law on the basis of which he condemned Claudio*. Even Michelangelo, an authority, after having requested a punishment for his 14 parishioners, is also stained *with a serious sin*.

II.1.2.3.4 *Measure for Measure*: the story of Angelo and Claudio who both end up before a court, *to be judged by the Duke of Vienna*; just like Michelangelo Florio and his 14 parishioners, whose destiny was remitted *to Cecil's sentence, Baron Burghley. In both cases (of the play and of Michelangelo's real story), it seems, at a certain point, that everyone can be condemned*.

II.1.2.3.5 *Measure for Measure*: a story with a happy ending (*from the tragedy we pass to the comedy*), with the forgiveness for Claudius and Angelo, by the clement Duke. For von Balthasar, the Duke (who judges) is “*a transparent allegory of God*” and “*the majority are pardoned*”. Even the story of Michelangelo and his 14 parishioners ends with a happy ending, thanks to the clemency of Cecil, Baron Burghley, “*mollified*” by that masterpiece which is *the extraordinary letter of 23 January 1552 by Michelangelo on forgiveness*. It is the triumph of the “*new commandment*” of love and forgiveness, preached by Jesus.

II.1.3 *Romeo and Juliet*.

II.1.3 Von Balthasar points out that the drama “*ends with the reconciliation of the hostile families over the dead bodies of their children and the announcement of imminent judgment by the prince: ‘Some shall be pardon’d, and some punished’*” (a real “*Last Judgment*”!). *Romeo and Juliet*, “*Poor sacrifices of our enmity!*” (Act V, Scene iii, 305).

II.1.4 *Hamlet*

II.1.4 Before dying, following the duel, *Laertes and Hamlet exchange each other forgiveness* (“*Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet*”).

II.1.5 *Timon of Athens*

II.1.5 With an evident anachronism, Flavius, Timon’s “*former steward, is acquainted with the Christian commandment (and that at the time of Alcibiades!)*”; it is the *fundamental Christian commandment of love, and therefore of forgiveness, even towards enemies*. This is the *newest commandment, which characterizes the perfection of Christian love and which replaces the Old Testament Law of Retaliation!*

II.1.6 *Winter’s Tale*

II.1.6 Leontes, king of Sicily, had ruthlessly behaved against his wife Hermione, of whom he was unjustly jealous; after a “*‘saintlike’ life of penance, he is urged to ‘Do as the heavens have done, forget your evil; With them, forgive yourself’*” (Act V, Scene i). *These words reveal the innermost motive power of the later plays*”.

II.1.7 *The Tempest*

II.1.7 According to von Balthasar, in *The Tempest*, the theme of forgiveness “*goes further still.... in hardly any other play of Shakespeare is there so much to be forgiven and so much pardon actually given*”. In the final Epilogue, when “*The enchantment has disappeared ‘prayer’ and ‘indulgence’ are necessary*”; Piero Boitani, similarly, notes that “*Prospero at the end of The Tempest takes leave of his spectators with the words that close the prayer of our Father*”.

II.1.7.1 In *The Tempest*, Prospero reassures Miranda that, in the shipwreck caused by him, “*There is ... not so much perdition as an hair*” (Act I, Scene ii, 29); in the *Acts of the Apostles* (27, 34), St. Paul, who is about to ship to Malta, reassures the sailors, telling them that: “*Not a hair of the head of anyone of you will be lost*”. St. Paul’s shipwreck in Malta, one of the most compelling stories of the New Testament, is a sure source of inspiration for *The Tempest* (see also previous § I.7). Also Michelangelo Florio had spoken in his *Apologia* (p.61 r) of Saint Paul’s perilous sea voyage, and had specified that, *by the will of God, the life of those who sailed with Saint Paul to Rome was under the Saint’s protection*.

III. First conclusions and further ideas for a research

III.1 The work of the Dramatist, like Michelangelo Florio's theological works, appears to be characterized by what von Balthasar calls a true "*postfiguration of the gospel*", a true theatrical representation of the gospel teachings.

III.2 The preferred theological reference, both of Michelangelo Florio and of the Dramatist (whose work is considered by the Swiss theologian von Balthasar as a true work of theology!), appears to be St. Paul, the theologian of the Evangelicals and Lutherans (and Michelangelo Florio was properly an Evangelical!).

III.3 The theme of forgiveness is a fundamental theme in the letter by Michelangelo Florio to Cecil of 23 January 1552. The words and concepts expressed there in Latin seem to be translated and reworked in English by the Dramatist (by John Florio, according to the "Floriana thesis" by Santi Paladino-1955), in *The Merchant of Venice*.

III.4 In reality, the letter by Michelangelo Florio of 23 January 1552 is profoundly influenced, in turn, by Aretino's *Seven Psalms* (1534) and by Aretino's letter of August 1st, 1542 to Henry VII, King of England, where "*justice is exalted ... when is more similar to the divine mercy and justice, [rather] than to the human [justice]*"; Aretino praises Henry VIII, for his "*piety*", "*mansuetude*", terms literally attributed, in turn, from Michelangelo to Cecil, translated into Latin: "*tua pietate ... et mansuetudine*". An analysis of the texts leads to the conclusion that: 1-2) the *Seven Psalms* (1534) by Aretino and the letter, in *Italian vernacular*, by Aretino (1542) are "*indirect*", "*second degree*" sources of Portia's discourse on mercy in "*The Merchant of Venice*"; 3) the most elaborate (strictly confidential and secret) letter, in *Latin*, by Michelangelo Florio to Cecil, is a "*direct*" source of Portia's speech; 4) Portia's speech, in *English*, in "*The Merchant of Venice*", is the further reworking and translation into *English*, from the Latin, by John Florio, the only one able to own a copy of the paternal letter, sent by Michelangelo to Cecil; the only one able to rework what John himself wrote in the address "*To the Reader*" of his dictionary of 1598, with regard to the "*good word*". 4 different texts, 3 minds of different writers, 3 different languages (*Italian vernacular*, *Latin* and *English*): the celebration of the "*trans-cultural*" nature of the work of the Dramatist and of the "*imitatio*", *that is creative and innovative imitation of pre-existing literary texts by other authors!*

III.5 The theme of the *fear of exile* from the Kingdom of England, *a fear that*, in the letter by Michelangelo Florio to Cecil, coincided with the possibility of being killed by the Inquisitors, where he had been banned. Michelangelo stated (§ 24 of the letter, below, in Appendix II) that: "*the teeth and mouths of the enemies of the Gospel... [should have become full] of my flesh and blood*"; unless "*I myself must deny the truth of that [i.e. of the Gospel]*". Also in this case, Michelangelo makes use of the "*imitatio*". Michelangelo does nothing but change, in a different situation, the same words and concepts expressed by Bernardino Ochino (the most famous Italian Reformer!) in his letter of 22 August 1542 to Vittoria Colonna (*a letter well known among the Italian Evangelicals, just like Michelangelo*); Ochino, who had been invited to go to Rome to be interrogated by the Inquisition, had decided not to go to Rome, for fear of being incarcerated and "*because [in Rome] I could not but deny Christ or be crucified*"¹. The equation between exile and death (here expressed by Michelangelo) also characterizes a famous piece in *Romeo and Juliet*, where Romeo strongly proclaims (with a sort of emotion, which seems to belong to Michelangelo's autobiography), addressing Friar Laurence: "*'banished' is death [Act III, scene I, v. 20-21]*". And, to friar Lorenzo, who does not understand, Romeo states: "*Thou canst not speak of that thou dost not feel [v. 65]*". It seems as if the Dramatist (just like Michelangelo) had personally felt, on his skin, the terror of exile, perceived as death! In Romeo's words Ochino's words "*indirectly*" resound too!

¹ The entire text of this letter is reported by Ugo Rozzo, *I dialoghi sette e altri scritti del tempo della fuga, di Bernardino Ochino*, Turin, Claudiana, 1985, pp. 123-124.

III.6 In the letter of 22 January 1552, Michelangelo appears as an extremely doubtful man, as appears from the most painful words of the end of § 1 of this letter (in Appendix II): “*But my mind was doubtful, and it was dragged towards different solutions*”, “*Sed pendebat animus, et in diverse trahebatur.*” Michelangelo does not know whether or not to write to Cecil, from which he fears to receive severe punishment! A charge of doubt that, of course, can recall that of *Hamlet*!

III.7 In his letter of 22 January 1552, Michelangelo describes his own “*act of fornication*”, as a “*fall*”; he notices (see Appendix II § 1) the “*magnitudine Labis, qua nunc me commaculati contingit*”, “*the gravity of my Fall, for which now it happens to me to be stained*”. Michelangelo admits (§ 3) that “*exsurgentibus quibusdam nebulis de limosa concupiscentia carnis meae, et obnubilantibus cor meum, per abrupta cupiditatum cecidi, ac praecipuus cecidi in caenum, voraginem et gurgitem libidinis et immunditiae carnis, relicto Deo, cujus ira invaluit super me*”, “*because, owing to certain darkening that originated from the murky lust of my flesh and which obscured my mind, through the depths of the cupid senses I fell, and I fell headlong into the mud, into the chasm and the vortex of lust and the impurity of the flesh, departing from the precepts of God, whose anger took hold of me above me*”. Also to describe his fall, Michelangelo uses the “*imitatio*”, this time from the *Phaeton’s “fall*”, as narrated by Ovid in the *Metamorphoses*, Book II. The painting *Phaeton’s Fall*” (Mantua), by Julio Romano (1527-1528) - *Michelangelo had completely identified himself with Phaeton and his ruinous fall* - The sonnet “*Phaeton to his friend Florio*” (1592) - The reference to Phaeton’s myth in *Richard II* (Act iii, Sc. III, 180-181) - The reference, in *Measure for Measure*, to the “*imagery*” of the race of a horse and of loosened reins, to express the explosion of sensuality: “*And now I give my sensual race the rein*” (Act II, Sc. iv, 159).

III.7.1 A possible comparison:

i) Michelangelo’s “*fall*”.

In the letter, in Latin, by Michelangelo to Cecil (dated 23 January 1552), Michelangelo speaks (Appendix II, § 1) of his own “*Labes*”, “*Fall*” and also states (§ 3): “*cecidi in ... gurgitem libidinis*”, “*I fell ... into... the vortex of lust*”.

ii) Gertrude’s “*fall*” in *Hamlet*.

The Ghost of Hamlet’s father tells his son that Claudio, after his murder, “*won to his shameful lust The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen. O Hamlet, what a falling off was there!*” - Act I, Scene v, 45-47). Also this passage seems to draw on words and concepts from the aforementioned letter by Michelangelo. Similarly, also for Gertrude there is “*a falling off*”, and a “*shameful lust*”.

III.7.2 A further possible comparison:

i) Michelangelo Florio’s name, which had become (§ 2 of the letter of January 23, 1552, in Appendix II) a “*nomen pæminosum*” (a “*scratched name*”, a “*wounded name*”), due to his “*fall*” (described in the same letter, at § 1, “*Labes*”, “*Fall*”; at § 3: “*cecidi in ... gurgitem libidinis*”, “*I fell ... in the vortex of lust*”).

ii) Hamlet’s “*wounded name*” (Act V, Scene ii, 349) similarly appears to be due to Gertrude’s “*falling off*”, and to her “*shameful lust*”.

APPENDIX I

The letter, in Latin, presumably from the end of 1551, sent by Michelangelo Florio to William Cecil. *Translation into Italian and notes by Massimo Oro Nobili.*

APPENDIX II

The letter, in Latin, dated 23 January 1552, sent by Michelangelo Florio to William Cecil. *Translation into Italian and notes by Massimo Oro Nobili.*

APPENDIX III

“*The names of the Bookes and Auctors, that have bin read of purpose for the accomplishing of this Dictionarie, and out of which it is collected*” (reference is made to John Florio’s dictionary “*A Worlde of*

Wordes”-1598 [*The numbers, before any bibliographical reference of the list, have been added, for editorial purposes*]).

APPENDIX IV

“The names of the Authors and Books that have been read of purpose for the collecting of this Dictionarie” (reference is made to John Florio’s dictionary *“Queen Anna’s New World of Wordes”*- 1611 [*The numbers, before any bibliographical reference of the list, have been added, for editorial purposes*]).

I.

Michelangelo Florio and forgiveness

I.1 The fundamental “skillfully argued” Latin letter (here translated also into Italian) of 23 January 1552, by Michelangelo Florio to Sir William Cecil, a really true masterpiece of literature and theology; Michelangelo (guilty of a mutually agreed “act of fornication”), “cites examples, from the Old [and New] Testament” and “asks Cecil’s forgiveness”. Concepts and words, written in Latin by Michelangelo, are literally reproduced in English by the Dramatist in the famous Portia’s speech on praise of mercy (“The Merchant of Venice”). It was a confidential letter (not accessible to anyone) and kept by Cecil’s Secretary, Sir Michael Hicks; John Strype obtained access to Cecil’s secret documents and published it, for the first time, in 1694. At the time of Shakespeare, only John Florio was in the position to have a copy of this paternal letter and to substantially translate the relevant passages into English. This Latin letter by Michelangelo appears as the source of the famous speech, in English, of Portia in praise of mercy!

Michelangelo Florio’s two Latin letters to Lord William Cecil, Baron Burghley, were published by John Strype, a historian who lived between 1643 and 1737, who, as the *Encyclopædia Britannica* specifies, had access to the letters received from Cecil, through the documentation kept by Cecil’s secretary, Sir Michael Hicks; more precisely, John Strype had access to this documentation, through his friendship with William Hicks, Michael Hicks’s son².

As John Strype reports, “in the year 1550, or 1551, there was ... a church of Italians constituted in London, by the influence and care of our Archbishop [Thomas Cranmer] and Sir William Cecil, under [the Polish] John à Lasco’s superintendency. This church consisted of divers Italian nations, as Florentines, Genoeses, Milanois, Venetians, and others ... One Michael Angelo Florio, a Florentine by birth³, was appointed their preacher”⁴.

² See the entry *Strype, John*, in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 1911, vol. 25, readable in https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/1911_Encyclop%C3%A6dia_Britannica/Strype,_John

³ Strype believes that Michelangelo was a Florentine by birth. In our view, he was born in Figline Valdarno, near Florence, see Massimo Oro Nobili, *A 500 anni dalla nascita di Michelangelo Florio: Aretino, i Florio, Amleto* 23 settembre 2018, in <http://www.shakespeareandflorio.net/>, pp. 28-37.

⁴ John Strype, *Memorials of the Most Reverend Father in God Thomas Cranmer, sometime Lord Archbishop of Canterbury wherein the history of the Church and the Rformation of it, during the Primacy of the said Archbishop, are greatly illustrated; Ans many singular Matters relating thereunto, now first published (1694) In Three Books collected chiefly from records, registres, authentic letters, and other original manuscripts, by John Strype, M.A., A New Edition, with Additions, Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1812, Vol I, p. 343. The volume can be read in the following link, at p. 343, <https://books.google.it/books?id=U1s4QAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=it#v=onepage&q&f=false>*

Strype refers (in another of his works) that “*It was commendable practice of this church of strangers, that good discipline was preserved in it, to bring scandalous sinners to open shame, whatever their outward qualities or respects were. To this church, at this time, belonged a scholar and preacher, named Michael Angelo Florio, an Italian; who preached to a congregation of Italians, and had the countenance of the Archbishop [Thomas Cranmer] and the Secretary [of the King Edward VI, Sir Cecil]*”⁵.

In 1552 Michelangelo Florio - as John Strype refers- was “*guilty of an act of uncleanness: for which Sir William Cecil, Secretary of State, who had been his good friend, was exceedingly displeased with him ... and intending to inflict some severe punishment upon him; which seemed to be banishment out of the [English] nation ... [Michael] Angelo wrote him a very pertinent letter, minding him of the frailty of human nature, and of the mercy of God to Moses, Aaron, David, Jonas, Peter, after their falls: and that if he were forced to depart the kingdom, he must either be compelled to renounce the truth of the Gospel, or have his blood shed by the enemies thereof... In fine, he [Michelangelo] got over this brunt, and recovered mild Cecil’s favour: for I find, a year after, our Archbishop wrote to him [to Cecil] to further a certain business of Michael Angelo at court, as much as he could*”⁶. Furthermore, Strype says that Michelangelo Florio “*having been found guilty of an act of fornication, he underwent the censures of the Church, and was deposed from his ministry. Afterwards enjoined penance, which he performed. But some time after seemed to have been restored again*”⁷.

The above mentioned Michelangelo’s “*very pertinent letter*” (written in Latin, which was, at that time, the language that allowed communication between two educated men, like Michelangelo - who did not evidently have a full command of English - and Cecil) is correctly dated by Luigi Firpo⁸, according to whom, Michelangelo in the letter “*to Cecil of 23 January 1552 ... strikes every right chord of supplicating contrition: guilt is not disputed, but human frailty is invoked to make it excusable: the guilty invokes pity and above all fears a threatened decree of expulsion from the kingdom: returning to the continent would mean certain death for him, a penalty too disproportionate to the committed fault*”.

⁵ John Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials Relating Chiefly to Religion and the Reformation of It, and the Emergencies of the Church of England Under King Henry VIII., King Edward VI., and Queen Mary I., with Large Appendices Containing Original Papers, Records &c., Vol. II, Part I, Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1822*, p. 377. The volume can be read in the following link, at p. 377,

<https://books.google.it/books?id=S88QAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=it#v=onepage&q&f=false>

⁶ John Strype, *Memorials of the Most Reverend Father in God Thomas Cranmer, sometime Lord Archbishop of Canterbury wherein the history of the Church and the Rformation of it, during the Primacy of the said Archbishop, are greatly illustrated: Ans many singular Matters relating thereunto, now first published (1694) In Three Books collected chiefly from records, registres, authentic letters, and other original manuscripts, by John Strype, M.A., A New Edition, with Additions, Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1812, Vol I, p. 345. This letter is also readable in the following link, at p. 345,*

<https://books.google.it/books?id=U1s4AQAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=it#v=onepage&q&f=false>

⁷ John Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials Relating Chiefly to Religion and the Reformation of It, and the Emergencies of the Church of England Under King Henry VIII., King Edward VI., and Queen Mary I., with Large Appendices Containing Original Papers, Records &c., Vol. II, Part I, Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1822*, p. 378. The volume can be read in the following link, at p. 378,

<https://books.google.it/books?id=S88QAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=it#v=onepage&q&f=false>

⁸ Luigi Firpo, *Opera di Giorgio Agricola de l’Arte de’ metalli partita in XII libri ... tradotti in lingua toscana da M. Michelangelo Florio fiorentino* (Basilea, 1563); reprint in facsimile (Turin 1969), p. XIII.

Frances Yates, as well, said that “*This letter was written early in 1552*”⁹.

In this letter, unlike a previous letter to Cecil (in 1551¹⁰), Michelangelo can no longer bear the title of “*Italorum Concionator*” “*Preacher of Italians*”, having been deposed by that office; nor does he longer show, in this letter, his epithet of Fiorentino (in lieu of the epithet of those who boast of the virtues of the great characters of Florence, the shame of the epithet of fornicator took over!).

It is highly likely that Michelangelo had entertained, without the prior sacred bond of marriage, a mutually agreed sexual relationship with a woman, who became pregnant (the son of sin would have been John Florio). The expression “*act of fornication*” (used by Strype in this regard) clearly indicates a “*consensual sexual intercourse between two persons not married to each other*”.¹¹

Realistically, *the act of fornication* (of the preacher Michelangelo) *must have been made evident by the advanced state of pregnancy of the fornicatress!*

Yates, as well, seems to strongly support this hypothesis, since she explains that, with regard to Michelangelo’s “*moral ‘lapse’, it seems highly probable that one of the conditions upon which forgiveness was granted would be the regularization by marriage of his connection with the woman*”¹².

Furthermore, at the end of the § 1 of his letter on 23 January 1552 (the division of the letter into paragraphs has been done by us, to facilitate the references in the text of the passages of the letter itself; the letter is reported - translated into English - in Appendix II, at the bottom of this study), Michelangelo mentions that some malicious voices had incorrectly reported the fact and, obviously, exaggerating Michelangelo’s fault. Indeed, Michelangelo himself affirms that the “*affair, as it really is*”, is “*not like the unclean mouths of any impudent dared to throw up*”.

To confirm our view, we find a letter, in Latin, dated October 12, 1568, addressed by Edmund Grindal, bishop of London, to Jean Cousin, minister of the French Church¹³, in which Grindal (evidently

⁹ Frances A. Yates, *John Florio, The Life of an Italian in Shakespeare’s England*, Cambridge University Press, 1934, p. 6. You can read this sentence, in the preview of such volume, available in the link <https://books.google.it/books?id=Qi8wAbnw4aIC&printsec=frontcover&hl=it#v=onepage&q&f=false>

¹⁰ About the date of this [undated] letter, see Luigi Firpo, *Opera di Giorgio Agricola de l’Arte de’ metalli partita in XII libri ... tradotti in lingua toscana da M. Michelangelo Florio fiorentino* (Basilea, 1563); reprint in facsimile (Turin 1969), footnote 19 at p. XIII.

¹¹ This is the usual definition of “fornication”, which is provided in dictionaries; you can read it, for example, in the Dictionary by Merriam-Webster, in <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fornication>

¹² Frances A. Yates, *John Florio, The Life of an Italian in Shakespeare’s England*, Cambridge University Press, 1934, p. 6. You can read this sentence, in the preview of such volume, available in the link <https://books.google.it/books?id=Qi8wAbnw4aIC&printsec=frontcover&hl=it#v=onepage&q&f=false>

¹³ Such information is reported by Luigi Firpo, *Opera di Giorgio Agricola de l’Arte de’ metalli partita in XII libri ... tradotti in lingua toscana da M. Michelangelo Florio fiorentino* (Basilea, 1563); reprint in facsimile (Turin 1969), footnote 21 at p. XIII.

influenced by the malicious voices that had spread), refers to Michelangelo's rape of a maiden (*"constupratam ancillam"*). Grindal was not, at all, aware of how the facts actually took place and he had only heard rumors about the affair; he was completely uninformed about that affair, so he was neither a direct witness nor a reliable source; in fact, precisely because he simply knew the story, by hearsay, he wanted to receive accurate information corresponding to the truth on the subject. In particular, he was interested in knowing some details on the *"publica poenitentia"* (public penance), which Michelangelo had possibly suffered and on the number of witnesses that were present to it.

Yates further supports the thesis of a mere *"act of fornication"*¹⁴, pointing out that, already in the summer of 1552, Michelangelo Florio lived in the house of the Duke of Suffolk and dedicated his manuscript *Institutioni della Lingua Thoscana* to his pupil Jane Gray (Duke's daughter)¹⁵. Yates adds that Michelangelo's *"recent disgrace was no bar to service in that strict household"*¹⁶. Should Michelangelo have been a rapist of a maiden, he would certainly not have been allowed to live in an aristocratic house and to give lessons to a young aristocratic maiden, like Lady Jane Gray (who will become Queen of England, for nine days, in July 1553). *Michelangelo had had the mere fault of having entertained a mutually agreed sexual relationship without the prior blessing of the sacred marriage bond.*

Coming now to talk about the contents of the letter, it is really impressive to compare some passages taken from Michelangelo's letter to Cecil and the famous and *fundamental piece* of *"The Merchant of Venice"*, concerning *Portia's praise of mercy*: it is not excessive to say that *Michelangelo had already substantially written in Latin* (in his famous letter on 23 January 1552) the same *identical concepts and words, that the Dramatist would have then introduced in his English text* of *"The Merchant of Venice"*!

In order to demonstrate the above, we report herein below two excerpts, which are taken (i) from some sentences, contained in the mentioned Michelangelo's letter on 23 January 1552 and (ii) from *Portia's speech on praise of mercy*, taken from the *"The Merchant of Venice"* (Act IV, Scene i, 180 ss.):

- (i) [§§ 12-14] *"Perhaps considering the king's power, the sword's strength of the law-defender, the force of the executioner's torture instrument, the weapons of the soldier, the rules of the one who governs and the severity of the good father: were all these things established in vain? No doubt, but all of the above has its measures, causes, reasons and usefulness. In fact, forgiveness does not contrast with these institutions of the human governments, nor is indulgence opposed to them. If this were to happen [that indulgence were to be opposed to the institutions of the human governments], Christ would not have offered us the sweetness of his grace, nor would he have witnessed such mansuetude by virtuous decisions, but he would have merely confirmed the most severe principle of revenge of the Old Testament."*

¹⁴ Frances A. Yates, op. cit., p.6. Yates (p.8 and footnotes 1 and 2) points out that Michelangelo was living (in Summer 1552) in the Duke of Suffolk's house, since Michelangelo says, in the dedication of his manuscript, *"that he holds in reverence 'the lowest servants of his [the duke's] well-nourished and well addressed family'"*.

¹⁵ Frances A. Yates, op. cit., pp. 7-8, and footnote 2 at p. 8.

¹⁶ Frances A. Yates, op. cit., p.8.

[and a few lines before, §§ 8-9] *Who intends to hate all those who make mistakes, certainly does not love himself. And if he claims that all those who err, are to be condemned to death, he will not tolerate anyone living. [...] And, just as God's mercy is necessary for each one because of his own faults, so it is appropriate for everyone to be merciful towards all those who err.*"

(ii) *"The quality of mercy is not strain'd, It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest; It blesseth him that gives and him that takes: 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes The throned monarch better than his crown; His sceptre shows the force of temporal power, The attribute to awe and majesty, Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings; But mercy is above this sceptred sway; It is enthroned in the hearts of kings, It is an attribute to God himself; And earthly power doth then show likest God's When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew, Though justice be thy plea, consider this, That, in the course of justice, none of us Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy; And that same prayer doth teach us all to render The deeds of mercy."*

Michelangelo emphasized *"the king's power, the sword's strength of the law-defender"*.

Likewise, Portia emphasized *"the force of temporal power"*.

According to Michelangelo, *"forgiveness does not contrast with these institutions of the human governments"*.

Likewise, according to Portia, *"earthly power doth then show likest God's When mercy seasons justice"*.

According to Michelangelo, he, who *"claims that all those who err, are to be condemned to death, he will not tolerate anyone living"*.

Likewise, according to Portia, *"in the course of justice, none of us Should see salvation"*.

Michelangelo says: *"And, just as God's mercy is necessary for each one because of his own faults, so it is appropriate for everyone to be merciful towards all those who err."*

Portia, likewise, concludes her speech: *"we do pray for mercy; And that same prayer [the Our Father prayer] doth teach us all to render The deeds of mercy."*

We strongly believe that Portia's praise on mercy derives from Michelangelo Florio's praise on mercy (in his *Latin letter to Cecil* on 23 January 1552), which was (similarly to Portia's one) all *deeply permeated with Christian accents*.

It was a confidential letter (not accessible to anyone) and kept by Cecil's Secretary, Sir Michael Hicks; John Strype obtained access to Cecil's secret documents and published it, for the first time, in 1694. *At the time of Shakespeare, only John Florio was in the position to have a copy of this paternal letter and to substantially translate the relevant passages into English.*

The above mentioned Michelangelo's Latin letter, *focused on forgiveness*, is a true masterpiece, a "skillfully argued letter", as Frances Amelia Yates defined it¹⁷!

This letter, in Latin, by Michelangelo appears as a *real source of the famous Portia's speech, in English, in praise of mercy!*

Shakespeare, as well (as we will illustrate in the following § II.1), is rightly considered, as the "*real dramatist of forgiveness*"¹⁸ and this appears as a *fundamental aspect of his entire work!*

I.1.1 John Florio made a reworked English translation of the paternal text and added the fundamental "incipit" to it, taking up the same words and concepts that he himself had previously written in the "To the Reader" of his dictionary, published in 1598, but licensed to the publisher on March 2, 1596. The "good word" by John Florio (which is "a deaw from heaven to earth... a precious balme", which is twice beneficial, both for those who say the good word, and for those who receive it); and "mercy" by the Dramatist (a "merciful word", equivalent, in a figurative sense, to John's "good word"), which "droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest; It blesseth him that gives and him that takes".

This is the method the Dramatist (John Florio!) used to compose his works, reworking paternal texts and adding some of his own!

In the following §§ I.3 and III.4, we will also deepen the fundamental Aretino's influence on Michelangelo's letter to Cecil on 23 January 1552 (Aretino who, therefore, indirectly, also influences Portia's speech!) and we will consider (see the following §§ III.4 and III.5) how Michelangelo (like other important writers) frequently used the "imitatio"¹⁹ of previous works by other (Italian and Latin) authors!

¹⁷ Frances A. Yates, *John Florio, The Life of an Italian in Shakespeare's England*, Cambridge University Press, 1934, p. 6. You can read this sentence, reading the preview of such volume, available in the link <https://books.google.it/books?id=Qi8wAbnw4aIC&printsec=frontcover&hl=it#v=onepage&q&f=false>

¹⁸ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama, Theological Dramatic Theory*, vol. I, *Prolegomena*, translated by Graham Harrison, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 1988, p. 466. The Author dedicates 14 pages to a paragraph entitled "Excursus: Shakespeare and Forgiveness" (pp. 465-478). Title of the German original, by Hans Urs von Balthasar, is *Theodramatik: Erster Band: Prolegomena*, 1973 Johannes Verlag, Einsiedeln (Switzerland).

¹⁹ See Prof. Nicola Gardini (University of Oxford), "Viva il latino", special edition, GEDI, Roma 2018 (first edition 2016, Garzanti, Milano), pp. 92-93, who points out that: "For the Romans, poetry ... was a regulated and codified practice and, as such, developed through the perpetuation of manners ... even quoting directly texts from the past or alluding to them in a more or less uncovered way. Therefore, the essence of literature was the tradition. Literature meant transmission, reserve of memory, genealogical system; in a word *imitatio*, a pivotal concept of ancient aesthetics (which will regain fortune in the Renaissance). Neither imitation forbids or excludes innovation. The so-called originality of the creator poet is romantic myth, and perhaps it is only a myth of a myth, since even the most innovative of the avant-garde artists never shows to completely overlook the comparison with the past. Leopardi, one of the greatest European romantics, is nourished by classical culture. The poet who takes the words of another ... implements an essential change in the signification ... [of the] ancient [text], which is automatically invested with the *non-originary* function of a model. The use of the words of others shows ... the relationship between the antique and the modern in an aura of continuity. In fact, this is an intentional continuity: to consider books, even the most diverse, as fundamental parts of a unique culture and to invest the literary structure of the task of propagating knowledge and identity. So much responsibility stems from a sense of the language and of the word, which is permeated by the

I.2 The previous Michelangelo's Latin letter to Cecil, dated 1551. Michelangelo, *without any mercy*, had requested exemplary punishment (which *could also be exile from the Kingdom*) for 14 of his parishioners who did not fulfill their duties, recalling *the severe Old Testament Law*; while, in his subsequent letter of 23 January 1552, Michelangelo himself had invoked the new *Commandment of mercy preached by Jesus in the New Testament*. The theme of "*judging and being judged*".

The theme of "*judging and being judged*" is one of the fundamental themes of Michelangelo Florio's life.

In a previous Michelangelo's Latin letter to Lord Cecil, in 1551 (see this letter, translated by us in English, in Appendix I, at the bottom of this study), Michelangelo proves to be very impulsive and drastic towards some of his parishioners who do not respect the obligation to pay him "*omnia necessaria*" ("*what is necessary*") and dare "*to speak badly of him and of Gospel*", having also begun again to attend Catholic mass.

Michelangelo reminds Lord Cecil of their meeting, held in the previous days on the matter, and does not hesitate to report to Cecil (with a list of names and surnames) as many as 14 of his parishioners!

In essence, Michelangelo asks Lord Cecil for an exemplary punishment, also because this "*was a behavior punishable by severe punishment if it would have been held by English citizens: but this people [the Italian parishioners] had been allowed to enjoy the liberties of the Country, asking for new immunities and more extensive privileges every day; with naturalization they had subjected themselves to the British laws: so why would they get away with it? The conclusion of the merciless Christian minister is that they must be ... subjected to severe punishment*"²⁰.

sacred". "Per i Romani la poesia ... è pratica regolata e codificata e, in quanto tale, si sviluppa attraverso la perpetuazione di maniere ... perfino citando direttamente testi del passato o alludendo a questi in modo più o meno scoperto. Essenza della letteratura, dunque, è la tradizione. Letteratura significa trasmissione, riserva di memoria, sistema genealogico; in una parola *imitatio*, concetto cardine dell'estetica antica (che riavrà fortuna nel rinascimento). Né l'imitare vieta o esclude l'innovare. La cosiddetta originalità del poeta creatore è mito romantico, e forse è soltanto un mito di un mito, perché neppure il più innovativo degli avanguardisti dimostra mai di tralasciare del tutto il confronto con il passato. Leopardi, uno dei maggiori romantici europei, è nutrito di cultura classica ... Il poeta che riprende le parole di un altro ... attua una modifica essenziale nella significazione ... [del testo] antico, che automaticamente si ritrova investito della funzione *non originaria* di modello. Il ricorso alle altrui parole evidenzia ... il rapporto tra antico e moderno in un'aura di continuità. Di intenzionale continuità, infatti, si tratta: di considerare i libri, anche i più diversi, parti fondamentali di un'unica cultura e di investire la struttura letteraria del compito di propagare saperi e identità. Tanta responsabilità nasce da un senso del linguaggio e della parola che ha del sacro."

²⁰ Luigi Firpo (preface, "*Giorgio Agricola e Michelangelo Florio*" to *L'Arte de' metalli tradotto in lingua toscana da Michelangelo Florio Fiorentino*, edited by Bottega d'Erasmus, Turin, 1969, p. XII) thus briefly summarizes the position exposed by Michelangelo in his above-mentioned letter of denouncement.

John Strype rightly points out that: “*But it might make one apt not to think over-favourably of this man. A pastor, thus to turn accuser of his flock; a professor of the reformed religion to require the utmost rigor of punishment for differing in religion*”²¹.

Michelangelo, in support of his firm request, quotes a passage from the Old Testament, stating that: “*In the divine Scriptures, it is ordered that those who rebel against God, laws and holy decisions are to be killed without mercy: as Deuteronomy demonstrates, in paragraphs 13 and 17*” (see Appendix I, at § 8, at the bottom of this study).

This request meant *the actual possibility* for the 14 reported Italian people *to be expelled, banished from the Kingdom of England!*

It is evident that these reported persons, who should have been summoned by Lord Cecil, could not but wait for the opportune moment to make it pay, in turn, to this minister (Michelangelo), who proved to be very little charitable and merciful.

In fact, as noted, “*Brusque and imprudent in his reprimands, absolutely merciless Florio found himself a few months later having to invoke for himself that mercy of which he had shown himself to be very stingy towards his neighbor*”²².

And his parishioners, who had been reported by him, risked severe punishment, among which the exile from the Kingdom, could only be, in turn, *very severe towards the guilt of this preacher who, without being married, had had sexual intercourse with a woman, making her pregnant.*

I.3 Michelangelo had invoked, for his parishioners, the severe Law of the Old Testament and for himself the new Commandment of love and forgiveness preached by Christ in the New Testament. He applied double standards of measurement. Michelangelo, a preacher, had forgotten the evangelical teaching: “the measure with which you measure will be measured out to you”. The 14 of his parishioners, denounced by him to Cecil, risked exile from the Kingdom. But, after his “fornication”, Michelangelo himself risked receiving a severe punishment (exile from the Kingdom) from Cecil, as he had requested, without any mercy, for his 14 parishioners. Both the 14 parishioners and Michelangelo were awaiting for Cecil’s judgment! All (the 14 parishioners and Michelangelo himself) really risked being severely punished with exile from the Kingdom! Michelangelo’s letter of January 23, 1552 (a veritable masterpiece of theology and literature!), which exalted Cecil’s natural inclination to clemency seems to have been the decisive instrument for facilitating a merciful solution to this whole complex affair; indeed, Cecil, Baron Burghley, proved to be truly a person prone to forgiveness. Michelangelo exalts, addressing Cecil: “*miram illam tuam charitatem*”, “your marvellous charity”; he also emphasizes “*ea opinio, quam de tua pietate, prudentia, doctrina et mansuetudine concepi hactenus*”, “that opinion I have perceived till now about your pity, prudence, doctrine and mansuetude” (Aretino had addressed Henry VIII in his letter of August 1, 1542, with similar words, pointing out: “the pity, the mansuetude ... with which ... you forgive”, “we see you to proceed with a sort of justice, and with a sort of mercy, more similar

²¹ John Strype, *Memorials of the Most Reverend Father in God Thomas Cranmer, ... cit.*, p. 345.

²² Luigi Firpo, *op. cit.*, p. XII.

to divine mercy and justice, than to human [mercy and justice]”). We have no knowledge of Cecil’s judgement, but the facts speak clearly: 1) we have no news of any expulsion of the 14 parishioners from the Kingdom (punishment that, by its gravity, vice versa would certainly left some written trace); 2) Michelangelo himself was substantially forgiven, he married his beloved woman, even though he was subjected to a public punishment and was deposed as a Preacher.

In this paragraph, we briefly consider the complex story of Michelangelo Florio, in the light of the letters that Michelangelo himself sent to Cecil (the letter of denunciation of the parishioners, in 1551, and the letter of request forgiveness, dated 23 January, 1552).

The 14 parishioners, denounced by Michelangelo to Cecil, risked to be banished from the Kingdom.

As for Michelangelo, *Cecil would have to be more severe against him*, their preacher, their pastor, who, *as an authority, should have been a good example for the parishioners, and not just in preaching.*

Michelangelo was “*a preacher who did not practice what he preached!*” A preacher who preached premarital chastity and then had contradicted, with his behavior, what he himself had preached.

If the 14 parishioners, denounced by Michelangelo to Cecil, risked to be exiled by Cecil, *Michelangelo, even more, would have deserved exile!*

At least, Michelangelo deserved to be judged *with the same degree of severity* with which he had, in a completely lack of mercy, denounced his 14 parishioners to Cecil, asking for an exemplary punishment for them!

In this climate, which was not characterized by mutual sympathy and forgiveness, but by the most bitter hatred, Michelangelo’s words of are well justified; indeed, in Michelangelo’s letter of 23 January 1552, he mentions, in the opening (see Appendix II, § 1), the fact that “*the whole affair, as it really is*”, is not “*like the unclean mouths of any impudent dared to throw up*”.

As already noted, a mere consensual sexual relationship (although not preceded by the sacred marriage bond), had become (as already mentioned), *in the voices of the angry parishioners, a real rape.*

It is particularly surprising that Michelangelo, *in his first letter to Cecil (1551)*, invokes the rigor of the Old Testament Law, for his parishioners who had behaved in an outrageous manner towards God and his priests, exposing them as at least to the exile from Kingdom: “*In the divine Scriptures, it is ordered that those who rebel against God, laws and holy decisions are to be killed without mercy: as Deuteronomy demonstrates, in paragraphs 13 and 17*” (see Appendix I, § 8).

In his second letter (23 January 1552), after a few weeks, Michelangelo asks for forgiveness, invoking *the mercy preached by Jesus in the Gospels, which went beyond the strict Old Testament Law.*

In his own defense, Michelangelo states, in fact, that: “*§ 13 forgiveness does not contrast with these institutions of the human governments, nor is indulgence opposed to them. § 14 If this were to happen*

[that indulgence is opposed to the institutions of the human governments], Christ would not have offered us the sweetness of his grace, nor would he have witnessed such clemency by virtuous decisions, but he would have merely confirmed the most severe principle of revenge of the Old Testament” (Appendix I, §§ 13 and 14).

In short, for his parishioners, Michelangelo had invoked the strict law of the Old Testament and for himself the new commandment of love and forgiveness preached by Christ.

Michelangelo “*had used double standards*” of measurement, in violation of the basic principle of the “*same standard*”, according to which “*The law is the same for everyone and should be applied in the same manner to all*” (either the strict law of Old Testament applies to everyone, or the new merciful Commandment preached by Christ must be applied to all).

For a Christian like Michelangelo, this way of behaving contrasted with Jesus Christ’s *fundamental teaching*, according to which, *with the same measure with which we will judge others we will be judged* (“*the measure with which you measure will be measured out to you*” - Gospel of Matthew, 7,2²³); and *we can obtain divine forgiveness only if we have, in turn, forgiven our neighbor* (according to the words of “The Our Father” prayer, “*forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*”).

In Michelangelo’s second letter of 23 January 1552 (shortly after the previous letter), the position is completely reversed. Michelangelo, in the previous letter, “*scourger of the corrupt practices of the ‘papists’, was now guilty of an ‘act of fornication’ for which he had to implore the forgiveness of his patron, Sir W. Cecil*”²⁴.

Michelangelo should have thought that, to all, in equal way (both to his parishioners and to himself, in the recalled affair), only one law would have had to be requested and applied: “*The new law of the Benefit of Christ [that] was opposed to the hardness of the Old Law*”²⁵.

In Michelangelo’s personal story, *there is a dramatic moment in which it seems that the severe and hard Law of the Old Testament may prevail: the rigorous law that Michelangelo has impetrated for his 14 parishioners (which may cause their exile!), seems to rebound upon Michelangelo himself, who risks, too, to be banned from the Kingdom.*

In this story, it is surprising that, simultaneously, in front of William Cecil, Baron Burghley, *two denouncements were pending*, for his final verdict:

- 1) *Michelangelo’s denouncement, who asked for exemplary punishment (recalling the rigor of the Old Testament Law) against his 14 parishioners, who do not pay him the agreed remuneration, do not observe the Evangelical religion and have begun again to attend Catholic mass;*

²³ Gospel of Matthew, 7, 2, readable in http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/_PVG.HTM

²⁴ Praz, *Machiavelli in Inghilterra e altri saggi sui rapporti anglo-italiani*, Sansoni ed., Firenze, 1962, p.189.

²⁵ Eleonora Belligni, *Renata di Francia (1510-1575) - Un’eresia di corte*, Utet, Turin, 2011, p. 154 and footnote 24.

- 2) *the denouncement against Michelangelo, certainly supported by the 14 denounced parishioners*, who, similarly (having been *so mercilessly denounced by Michelangelo*), demand *exemplary punishment*; if they risk being exiled from the Kingdom, all the more, Michelangelo must be exiled! As Michelangelo says, in his letter of January 23, 1552, the story of his “fornication” had been magnified and represented in ways far more serious than the story itself deserved (evidently by those parishioners that Michelangelo had so mercilessly reported to Cecil); in short, as Michelangelo points out, the story of his sin [was] “*Not like the unclean mouths of any impudent* [evidently of the 14 reported and their relatives and friends] *dared to throw up*”.

For everyone, both for Michelangelo and for the 14 Italians who took refuge in England, *religionis causa, the ban from the Kingdom could also mean death* (by the Roman Inquisition, being they all heretics).

Both Michelangelo and the reported 14 parishioners, are now submitted to the same unique judge, William Cecil, Baron Burghley!

It seems that forgiveness should not be applied to anyone and that the story is drawing to a dramatic ending for everyone!

Then, *Michelangelo wrote his masterpiece: the letter of 23 January 1552.*

Michelangelo Florio exalted, addressing Cecil (§1: “*miram illam tuam charitatem*”, “*your marvellous charity*”; as well as, he pointed out (§ 2) “*ea opinio, quam de tua pietate, prudentia, doctrina et mansuetudine concepi hactenus*”, “*that opinion I perceived till now about your pity, prudence, doctrine and mansuetude*”.

Aretino had addressed Henry VIII in his letter of August 1st, 1542²⁶, with similar words, pointing out: “*the pity, the mansuetude ... with which ... you forgive*”, “*we see you to proceed with a sort of justice, and with a sort of mercy, more similar to divine mercy and justice, than to human [mercy and justice]*”.

Michelangelo, in his letter to Cecil, translates the same terms used by Aretino in his letter to Henry VIII, dated 1 August 1542, where Aretino exalts Henry VIII’s “*pity ...and mansuetude*” (Michelangelo exalts, in Latin, Cecil’s “*pietate ... et mansuetudine*”), and dedicates to Henry VIII (just by this letter) the Second Book of his Letters (published in Venice in 1542). Aretino’s *Lettere* are listed among the books read by John Florio for preparing his dictionaries (see Appendix III, reference no.65 and Appendix IV, reference no.217).

The scholars have pointed out that “*Aretino’s dedicatory epistle to Henry VIII reflects in its complex syntax the fantastic claims he makes about (and for the delectation of) its subject [Henry VIII]...*”

²⁶ You may read such letter in Paolo Procaccioli, *Pietro Aretino, Lettere*, Tomo II Libro II, Salerno Editrice Roma, 1998, n. 1, pp.15-16.

Henry ...appreciated this token of approbation from Italy's most celebrated living literary figure – 'il Flagello dei Principi' in Ariosto's celebrated formulation, or 'the whip of Princes' as John Florio has it in *Second Frutes* – and made another gift of 300 scudi"²⁷. Aretino attributes to Henry VIII an ability to apply "a sort of justice, and ...a sort of mercy, more similar to divine mercy and justice, than to human [mercy and justice]"; here Aretino clearly reworks, for the benefit and celebration of his recipient, very profound concepts that he had expressed in his "David's Seven Penitential Psalms" (Venice 1534- you can widely see, on the matter, the following § I.4).

Returning to Michelangelo's letter of 23 January 1552, Michelangelo appeals to human frailty and no longer refers to the severity of the Old Testament Law (which had invoked in his letter in 1551, against its 14 parishioners); in his letter of 23 January 1552, Michelangelo, on the other hand, clearly refers to Christ's new Commandment, the Commandment of love; Michelangelo (addressing the Secretary of State of King Edward VI), points out (§ 13 of the letter, in Appendix II) that "*forgiveness does not contrast with... [the] institutions of the human governments, nor is indulgence opposed to them*". Indeed he adds that (§ 14 of the letter) "*If this were to happen [that indulgence is opposed to the institutions of the human governments], Christ would not have offered us the sweetness of his grace, nor would he have witnessed such clemency by virtuous decisions, but he would have merely confirmed the most severe principle of revenge of the Old Testament*".

Now, Cecil, Baron Burghley, should have to issue his decisive sentence; *he who had deeply believed in the Gospel of Christ, who had always helped the new London Churches of foreigners.*

We have no clear information or evidence of such sentence, but the events that intervened after this letter by Michelangelo are really clear.

In a very acute way, Yates states that "[Michelangelo] Florio's skilfully argued letter evidently had a mollifying effect" on Cecil, Baron Burghley, who *had to show clemency to everyone*: both towards the 14 parishioners denounced by Michelangelo, and towards Michelangelo himself. He behaved towards everyone, without unequal treatment, *applying to all the new commandment of forgiveness, preached by Christ.*

- 1) As for the 14 Italians denounced to Cecil by Michelangelo, *there is no more news of them*; if they were severely punished with exile, we would certainly have some written information about this serious punishment. Probably, however, *the accusation of the accuser Michelangelo, a man now discredited* (after his act of fornication and his deposition as a Preacher), *had to be set aside by Cecil.*
- 2) As for Michelangelo, as already noted, John Strype states that "[Michelangelo] got over this brunt, and recovered mild Cecil's favour"²⁸. Furthermore, Strype states that Michelangelo

²⁷ Michael Wyatt, *The Italian encounter with Tudor England. A cultural politics of translation*, Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 70. Wyatt translates into English some passages of Aretino's letter at pp. 68-69.

²⁸ John Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials Relating Chiefly to Religion and the Reformation of It, and the Emergencies of the Church of England Under King Henry VIII., King Edward VI., and Queen Mary I., with Large Appendices Containing*

Florio “*having been found guilty of an act of fornication, he underwent the censures of the Church, and was deposed from his ministry. Afterwards enjoined penance, which he performed. But some time after seemed to have been restored again*”²⁹; which frankly does not seem to correspond to the truth, so much so that, already in the summer of 1552, we find Michelangelo teaching Italian to Lady Jane Gray, in the house of the Duke of Suffolk and he dedicates to her, his manuscript *Institutioni della Lingua Thoscana*.

Cecil (*the judge of these two affairs, connected to each other!*) would really and deeply recognized himself as a lenient man just as Michelangelo had written in his letter of 23 January 1552 and, therefore, for everyone, a happy ending would have been the happy conclusion of an affair that seemed, at a certain moment, to be bad for everyone.

Michelangelo will likewise get married in “reparative” wedding with his beloved and the 14 parishioners will not receive any punishment.

The general forgiveness had saved everyone!

I.4 Pietro Aretino (Michelangelo Florio’s friend): the centrality of the theme of forgiveness and of the need to reconcile mercy and justice (Prof. Élise Boillet)³⁰, in “David’s Seven Penitential Psalms” (Venice 1534), one of the books of Florio’s library (which was indicated by John among the books he read for his dictionaries of 1598 and 1611 - see Appendix III at the bottom of this study, bibliographical reference n.34, and Appendix IV, bibliographical reference n.133). In his letter to Cecil of 23 January 1552, Michelangelo strongly got ideas from such text, with the technique of *imitatio*. This Aretino’s text (translated into English in 1549) strongly also influences (like Aretino’ Italian letter to Henry VIII of 1 August 1542) Portia’s the speech of in praise of mercy, in *The Merchant of Venice*. Aretino’s ingenious “anachronism”: biblical King David implores God’s forgiveness, invoking, not the law of the Old Testament, but the new law of mercy and love preached by Jesus Christ! The reference to the “benefit” of God (clear allusion to “*Il Trattato Utilissimo del Beneficio di Cristo*”, the most important work of the Italian Reformation, published in Venice in 1543 - the volume was in Florio’s library and among the works read by John Florio for his dictionary of 1611; see item n. 234 in Appendix IV of this study). Mercy as a “rain”, which washes the sins, in Aretino (“*Seven Psalms*”) and in Portia’s speech on mercy in the *The Merchant of Venice*. Did

Original Papers, Records &c., Vol. II, Part 1, Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1822, p. 378. The volume is readable in <https://books.google.it/books?id=S88QAAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=it#v=onepage&q&f=false>

²⁹ John Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, cit., p. 378.

³⁰ See Pietro Aretino, Edizione Nazionale delle Opere, *Opere religiose*, Tomo I, “*Genesi, Sette salmi, Passione di Gesù*”, cured by Élise Boillet, Premessa by Giulio Ferroni, Salerno editor, Roma, 2017; see also Élise Boillet, *L’Arétin et la Bible* Genève, Librairie Droz, 2007, p. 316: “*La conciliation entre le notion de justice et de miséricorde débouche sur un troisième notion, celle d’équité, présente dans le texte biblique et que l’Arétin charge donc d’un sens particulier*”.

Michelangelo remember “by heart” many literary reminiscences, present in his Latin epistle of 1552, without his library in London?

I.5 Michelangelo Florio theologian (his great capacity as a “preacher”, to render difficult theological concepts intelligible to all) and his theological work of an Evangelical Christian, the *Apologia* (1557), in which five fundamental issues are addressed: i) “*The true and [the] false Church*”; ii) the “*Being and [the] quality of the Mass*”; iii) “*The true presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Supper*”; iv) the “*Papacy, and primacy of Saint Peter*”; v) the “*Councils and their authority*”.

Michelangelo defined himself in the *Apologia* (p.84 v) as an Evangelical Christian, who gets angry with the Catholic Friar Bernardino and with all those who say: “*Let us destroy these Evangelicals, who having translated the Bible into the vernacular, had rendered evident Christ’s doctrine, which we kept hidden, by reading it only in Latin*”.

In this paragraph, Michelangelo’s words have been slightly “modernized” and translated into English, in order to make the text more readily intelligible.

Michelangelo, in his work, addresses the following five issues (that we simply reproduce without comments):

i) “*The true and [the] false Church*”

According to Michelangelo (*Apologia*, p. 22 r-v), “*only one is the Church of the Lord, which is spread all over the world; the Church is loved, sanctified, purified, governed, defended, maintained and enlightened by Christ, who is its only supreme Pontiff, shepherd, Bishop, head, and light... neither the Papacy was ordained by Christ, nor their doctrine is Christ’s doctrine... we only believe in Christ’s doctrine, in Christ’s laws, and we recognize only Christ as our supreme Pontiff*”.

ii) the “*Essence and [the] quality of the Mass*”. Michelangelo’s statements are supported by Saint Paul’s Epistle to the Hebrews of, Evangelicals’ preferred Saint!

According to Michelangelo (*Apologia* pp. 37v and 39 r), “*we have been sanctified by the will of God, through the offering of Christ’s body, which was made only once ... Christ concluded his life by saying that where the forgiveness of sins is, there is no more room for sin, which Christ declared to us on the cross when he said, Consummatum est [everything has been finished, accomplished, all my mission has been accomplished]... Should be true what you [i.e. the catholic Friar Bernardino] say - that, in each Mass, Christ is sacrificed to the Father - it would be necessary to admit that Christ is cruelly sacrificed in every hour and in many places, where the Mass is celebrated*”.

Michelangelo affirms that Christ offered the sacrifice of himself only once and that this sacrifice cannot be repeated in every Mass.

He explicitly makes reference to the words of *St. Paul (the saint preferred by the Evangelicals!)* in his *Letter to the Hebrews* (referred to in the margin of *Apologia* page 37v: “Heb. [Epistula ad Hebreos] 9. 10.14”), where the following passages of this Letter are indicated:

- 1) Chapter 9 of this Letter where, in paragraphs 24-28, we read that: [24]...*Christ* did not enter into a sanctuary made by hands, a copy of the true one, but heaven itself, that he might now appear before God on our behalf. [25] *Not that he might offer himself repeatedly*, as the high priest enters each year into the sanctuary with blood that is not his own; [26] if that were so, he would have had to suffer repeatedly from the foundation of the world. But *now once* for all *he has appeared* at the end of the ages *to take away sin by his sacrifice*. [27] Just as it is appointed that human beings die once, and after this the judgment, [28] so also *Christ, offered once to take away the sins of many*, will appear a second time, not to take away sin but to bring salvation to those who eagerly await him”³¹;
- 2) Chapter 19, paragraph 14, of the same Letter, where we read: “[14] For *by one offering* he [Christ] *has made perfect forever those who are being consecrated*”³².

Michelangelo concludes the issue (*Apologia* p.37 v), noting that *Saint Paul’s words support the Lutheran theses affirmed by Michelangelo, with regard to the Mass.*

iii) “The true presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Supper”.

According to Michelangelo (*Apologia* pp. 48 and 49 r), when “*Jesus took a piece of bread, gave a prayer of thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, take and eat it, this is my body ... meant ... take this bread as a sign representative of my body ... so you believe with the spirit that my body is given to you ... and your trust in God is strengthen... This is the true meaning of those words ... it is true that we affirm to spiritually receive [the body of Christ], because these things may only be received with the spirit and with faith. We deny ... your ... transubstantiation*”.

iv) the “Papacy, and primacy of Saint Peter”. According to Michelangelo, *St. Paul was the first Bishop of Rome. By the will of God, the life of those who sailed with St. Paul to Rome was under the Saint’s protection. St. Paul’s epistle to the Romans shows that St. Paul took special care of Rome.*

³¹ This passage from the letter of St. Paul to the Hebrews can be read in http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/_P110.HTM

³² This passage from the letter of St. Paul to the Hebrews can be read in http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/_P11P.HTM

According to Michelangelo (*Apologia* p.61 r-v), “Christ ... constituted Paul as minister of his word in Rome, where no one else had been constituted before ... It was ... Paul the first Bishop of Rome, who was ordained by our Lord Jesus Christ, and [as Paul told to his fellow travelers] ‘this night the angel of God (of whom I am ... servant) appeared to me, and he told me: Do not be afraid, Paul, you need to present yourself to Caesar: and ... by the will of God you will protect all those who sail with you³³ ... And Paul entered in Rome, and really began to do his office of Bishop from morning until night, witnessing the kingdom of God ... And the Epistle that was very well written by Paul to the Romans, clearly shows that he took particular care of this city, people and church”.

v) the “Councils and their authority”

Michelangelo (*Apologia*, p. 52 v) affirms that he does not believe in the catholic “Councils ... which have thrown the doctrine of Christ behind their backs and have established many dogmas and articles of faith ... God with perpetual law has forbidden to add or remove a single iota to his word”.

I.6 The *Consummatum est* (the real focal point of Michelangelo Florio’s theology of Christian forgiveness, *Apologia*, p. 37 v) and the *Consummation* in *Hamlet*. By mere “coincidence”, Michelangelo Florio had theorized (in his manuscript “*Regole de la lingua Thoscana*” of 1553) the possibility of introducing, in a literary text, the terms and words proper of Christ’s passion.

Michelangelo Florio, in his *Apologia* (p.37 v) establishes an *indissoluble link* between the *new commandment of forgiveness* and the accomplishment of the salvific mission of Jesus (the “*Consummatum est*”).

In fact, Michelangelo states, as already noted, that: Christ “*concluded his life by saying that where the forgiveness of sins is, there is no more room for sin, which Christ declared to us on the cross when he said, Consummatum est [everything has been finished, accomplished, all my mission has been accomplished]*”.

The sacrifice, the salvific mission of Christ, his last words on the cross, before his death (“*Consummatum est*”, “*It is finished*”, “*Everything is accomplished*”), are *indissolubly linked to the forgiveness of sins, of all sins (including the Original sin of Adam), and for this forgiveness He has sacrificed himself*.

³³ In the *Tempest* (Act I, Scene ii, 28-29), Prospero reassures Miranda that, in the shipwreck caused by him, “*There is ... not so much perdition as an hair*”. This expression is taken from the *Acts of the Apostles* XXVII, 33-34, where Saint Paul, who was about to sink to Malta, reassured the sailors that “*none of you will perish even a single hair of the head*”. This is the most fabulous account of the New Testament: the shipwreck of Saint Paul [Evangelicals’ preferred Saint!] in Malta during the sea voyage, which he had to face in his deportation from Caesarea to Rome, in order to submit himself to the judgment of Caesar. Scholars have correctly pointed out the similarity between the expressions that are used by Prospero and by Saint Paul (see *La Tempesta di William Shakespeare*, cured by Rocco Coronato, translation by Gabriele Baldini, Bur 2010, p.78, footnote 8).

The *Consummatum est* is the real focal point of Michelangelo Florio's *theology of Christian forgiveness!*

We note that the "*Consummatum est*" also resounds in the most important monologue of *Hamlet*.

Indeed, it is to be pointed out that Hamlet's approach to death is described as *a true passion of Christ*.

Hamlet speaks of his "*heart-ache*", in the famous "monologue" (Act III, I, 62) and how such evil would have ceased with the "*consummation*" (III, I, 63), i.e. with death.

Max Leo Ammon Deutschbein (1876-1949), by "*Translating 'consummation' as 'Vollendung' ['Consummation', 'Accomplishment']*", affirms that this expression evokes the '*Consummatum est*', the '*Everything is accomplished*', of Christ at the moment of death".³⁴

Also Piero Boitani³⁵ notes that Hamlet precisely repeats "*the words of Christ on the cross in the Gospel of John (19:30): 'consummatum est'. 'Jesus said: 'It is finished' ['Everything is accomplished]!' And bowing his head, he handed over the spirit*" (Gospel of John, 19:30)³⁶.

The Latin text of the Second Letter of St. Paul to Timothy (4,7) also contains the Latin verb "*consummare*"; also Saint Paul, before his martyrdom (similarly to Jesus, before his death) affirms: "*cursum consummavi*"³⁷, "*I have finished [I have completed] the race [of preacher of the Gospel of Christ]*"³⁸.

By mere "coincidence", Michelangelo Florio *had theorized* (in his manuscript "*Regole de la lingua Thoscana*" of 1553) *the possibility of introducing, in a literary text, the terms and words typical of Christ's passion*; as in the case of the suffering of a soul near death (just as the Dramatist does in *Hamlet*); with the following single exception to such implicit general rule: "*the words and expressions of the Passion of Christ cannot be used in a literary text where the author wants to tell the story of a bloody and cruel battle*" ("*Chi vuole isprimere un fatto d'arme sanguinoso e crudele; le parole, gl'accenti, e i mouimenti che s'usano nel ragionar' della passion' di Christo usar' non*

³⁴ See the authoritative opinion by Max Deutschbein, *Der Hamletmonolog "To be or not to be"*, in *Shakespeare-Jahrbuch*, LXXX-LXXXI (1944-45), pp.31-69. This opinion is referred by Hunter Kellenberger, "*Consummation*" or "*Consumation*" in *Shakespeare?*, in *Modern Philology*, published by The University of Chicago Press, Vol. 65, No. 3 (Feb., 1968), footnote 8 at p.230; this study is readable in http://www.jstor.org/stable/436471?seq=3#page_scan_tab_contents The curriculum of Max Deutschbein, teacher and, from 1943, Vice president of the *German Shakespearean Society*, *Deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft*, may be read in http://research.uni-leipzig.de/catalogus-professorum-lipsiensium/leipzig/Deutschbein_788/

³⁵ Boitani, *Il Vangelo secondo Shakespeare*, 2009, p. 30.

³⁶ See the Gospel passage: in Latin in http://www.vatican.va/archive/bible/nova_vulgata/documents/nova-vulgata_nt_evangelium_ioannem_lt.html#19

in English in http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/_PXR.HTM

³⁷ See the above mentioned passage of the *Second Letter of Saint Paul to Timothy*, in Latin, in http://www.vatican.va/archive/bible/nova_vulgata/documents/nova-vulgata_nt_epist-ii-timotheum_lt.html#4

³⁸ See the above mentioned passage of the *Second Letter of Saint Paul to Timothy*, in English, in http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/_P119.HTM

*debbe*³⁹). That is, the terms and words proper to the Passion of Christ can certainly not be used to describe a bloody battle, but *certainly, to describe the inner suffering of a soul, when death approaches*.

I.7 The centrality of the evangelical and theological Saint Paul's message in the *Apologia* by Michelangelo Florio. Brief notes on the fundamental Lutheran theme of “*justification by faith alone*”, based on *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, mentioned by Michelangelo. Michelangelo's reference to the troubled Saint Paul's sea voyage from Caesarea to Rome; by the will of God, the life of those who sailed with Saint Paul to Rome was under the Saint's protection. We will further illustrate (also in the following §§ II.1.7.1 e II.1.2.1) how various plays of the Dramatist draw their sure source of inspiration from the biblical stories of Saint Paul's life (Saint Paul's shipwreck in Malta - “*The Tempest*”) and from Saint Paul's “*Letters*” (the “*novus homo*”, the “*man new made*”, in “*Measure for Measure*”).

Like all the Evangelicals, Michelangelo also considered St. Paul to be his most theologian referent. As it is well known, *one of the central themes of the Lutheran Reformation* is that of “*justification by faith alone*”, that is (with a wide approximation, without entering into theological issues, on which I am incompetent at all) the fact that a person, *thanks to faith*, can obtain the forgiveness of his sins, and be *considered right* by the merciful God, when subjected to divine judgment (“*Justification*” is a properly juridical term, connected to a judgment).

All the disquisition originated from the famous *Letter to the Romans of St. Paul*, which, in chapter 3,28, states: “*For we consider that a person is justified by faith apart from works of the law.*”⁴⁰

Michelangelo Florio, as pointed out in the previous § I.2, in point v), believed (*Apologia* p. 61 r) that “*Paul was the first Bishop of Rome ordained by our Lord Jesus Christ*”.

Michelangelo himself (*Apologia* p.61) makes specific reference to the *Letter of St. Paul to the Romans*, in order to clarify that “*the very well-written Letter to the Romans clearly shows that he [Saint Paul] took particular care of this city, people and church*”.

Returning to the theme of the “*justification by faith alone*” (which was supported by Luther on the basis of the *Letter of St. Paul to the Romans*, 3,28), I consider it useful to quote a very brief passage regarding what the great theologian Pope, Benedict XVI, said about it, in the General Audience of 19 November 2008, on the theme *Saint Paul: The Doctrine of Justification: from Works to Faith*⁴¹.

³⁹ See Giuliano Pellegrini, *Michelangelo Florio e le sue Regole de la lingua Thoscana*, in *Studi di filologia italiana*, vol. XII, 1954, p. 108.

⁴⁰ See the quoted passage of the above mentioned letter in http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/_PYR.HTM

⁴¹ See the relevant official document in https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/audiences/2008/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20081119.html

“let us now reflect on a topic at the centre of the controversies of the century of the Reformation: the question of justification... [Saint Paul] to the Christians of Rome he reasserts that ‘all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus’ [Letter to the Romans 3, 23-24⁴²]. . And he adds ‘we hold that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the law’ (ibid., v. 28). At this point Luther translated: ‘justified by faith alone’... Being just simply means being with Christ and in Christ. And this suffices. Further observances are no longer necessary. For this reason Luther’s phrase: ‘faith alone’ is true, if it is not opposed to faith in charity, in love. Faith is looking at Christ, entrusting oneself to Christ, being united to Christ, conformed to Christ, to his life. And the form, the life of Christ, is love; hence to believe is to conform to Christ and to enter into his love. So it is that in the Letter to the Galatians in which he primarily developed his teaching on justification St Paul speaks of faith that works through love (cf. Gal 5: 14⁴³). Paul knows that in the twofold love of God and neighbour the whole of the Law is present and carried out. Thus in communion with Christ, in a faith that creates charity, the entire Law is fulfilled. We become just by entering into communion with Christ who is Love. We shall see the same thing in the Gospel next Sunday, the Solemnity of Christ the King. It is the Gospel of the judge whose sole criterion is love. What he asks is only this: Did you visit me when I was sick? When I was in prison? Did you give me food to eat when I was hungry, did you clothe me when I was naked? And thus justice is decided in charity. Thus, at the end of this Gospel we can almost say: love alone, charity alone. But there is no contradiction between this Gospel and St Paul. It is the same vision, according to which communion with Christ, faith in Christ, creates charity. And charity is the fulfilment of communion with Christ. Thus, we are just by being united with him and in no other way.”

We do not wish, we repeat it, to enter into the merit of theological questions, for which we are absolutely unprepared.

The above passage is a simple demonstration of how the *Letter of St. Paul to the Romans* (also mentioned by Michelangelo) was one of the central points of discussion at the time of the Lutheran Reformation.

Michelangelo, in his *Apologia* (p.61 r), as already noted (see the previous § I.2, in point v), also mentions the *sea voyage*, that St. Paul made in his deportation from Caesarea to Rome, in order to submit himself to the judgment of Caesar and how, by the will of God, St. Paul took the life of those

⁴² See the passages of the Letter in http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/_PYR.HTM

⁴³ See the Letter of Saint Paul to Galatians in http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/_P105.HTM ; at chapter 5:14 of such Letter, it is said that “For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

who sailed with him under the Saint's protection; "God had granted safety to all who were sailing with⁴⁴" him.

In the *Acts of the Apostles* (in Chapter 27⁴⁵) this perilous journey is narrated, and, in particular, the violent "storm", *tempest* (near the island of Gozzo [also named Cauda or Gaudos], close to Crete - *Acts of the Apostles*, Chapter 27: 14-19⁴⁶) and *the shipwreck of St. Paul in Malta* (*Acts of the Apostles*, Chapter 27: 31-34; Chapter 28: 1-10⁴⁷), which is *one of the most compelling accounts of the New Testament!*

St. Paul encouraged his fellow travelers, telling them (based on the promise of the angel of God) that: "not one of you will be lost, only the ship", "Not a hair of the head of anyone of you will be lost" (*Acts of the Apostles*, Chapter 27: 22 and 34⁴⁸).

As we will best explain in the following § I.7.2.1, *the great biblical account of this shipwreck was a sure source of inspiration for "The Tempest" of the Dramatist!*

Prospero (in *The Tempest*, Act I, Scene ii, 29-32), after having provoked a storm and a shipwreck (as pointed out by scholars⁴⁹) *will reassure Miranda with words similar to those of St. Paul in the Acts of the Apostles: "there is no soul - No, not so much perdition as an hair betid[ed] to any creature in the vessel Which thou heard'st cry, which thou sawst sink"; "not a single person was hurt—no, not so much as a hair on anyone's head was destroyed in the ship that you saw sink [modern text]"*.

In the following § II.1.2.1, we will also illustrate how a typical expression, contained in the *Letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians* and fundamental in the context of the faith of the Evangelicals - such as

⁴⁴ See this sentence in Chapter 27:24 of the *Acts of the Apostles* in http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/_PYL.HTM

⁴⁵ See the above mentioned Chapter 27 of the *Acts of the Apostles* in http://www.vatican.va/archive/ITA0001/_PWW.HTM

⁴⁶ See the above mentioned Chapter 27 of the *Acts of the Apostles* in http://www.vatican.va/archive/ITA0001/_PWW.HTM

⁴⁷ See the above mentioned Chapter 27 of the *Acts of the Apostles* in http://www.vatican.va/archive/ITA0001/_PWW.HTM ; see the above mentioned Chapter 28 of the *Acts of the Apostles* in http://www.vatican.va/archive/ITA0001/_PWX.HTM

⁴⁸ See the above mentioned Chapter 27 of the *Acts of the Apostles* in http://www.vatican.va/archive/ITA0001/_PWW.HTM

⁴⁹ See *La Tempesta di William Shakespeare*, introduction and notes by Rocco Coronato, translation by Gabriele Baldini, Bur, Rizzoli, Milano, 2010, p.78, footnote 8. Coronato states that "In the *Acts of the Apostles* 27, 34, during the shipwreck on the journey that will take him to Rome, with a similar image [to that used by the Dramatist] Saint Paul guarantees the salvation to the whole crew" "Negli Atti degli Apostoli 27, 34, durante il naufragio lungo il viaggio che lo porterà a Roma, con un'immagine analoga [a quella usata dal Drammaturgo] San Paolo garantisce la salvezza a tutto l'equipaggio".

the “*novus homo*”⁵⁰ (the man new made, the reborn man, delivered from sin by Christ’s salvific sacrifice) – will be literally reported in “*Measure for Measure*” (“*man new made*”, Act II, Scene ii, 78).

⁵⁰See the above mentioned expression of Saint Paul, in the Latin text of his *Epistula ad Ephesios* (Chapter 4: 24), in http://www.vatican.va/archive/bible/nova_vulgata/documents/nova-vulgata_nt_epist-ephesios_lt.html#4 ; see also the English text of the *Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians* (Chapter 4:24), in <http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/P10B.HTM>

II.

I. Shakespeare, “the real dramatist of forgiveness” (Von Balthasar)

II.1 The fundamental study of the Swiss theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar (one of the major Catholic theologians of the 20th century): “*Excursus: Shakespeare and Forgiveness*”. “*The real dramatist of forgiveness is and remains Shakespeare*”. The great Christian theologian of the 20th century analyzes and comments the texts of the Dramatist, with a profound theological rigor, making reference to the work of the Dramatist as to that of a true great Christian theologian! Portia’s speech in praise of mercy and many other examples of the works of the Dramatist show, according to von Balthasar, “in a ‘postfiguration’ of the gospel [i.e., in a subsequent representation of the Gospel, through theatrical works], the possibility of allowing mercy to take place of justice”. Finally, “The transition from equalizing justice [i.e., from the Old Testament law of retaliation, “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth”] to mercy is one of the innermost motive forces of his [dramatist’s] art”.

First of all, it is necessary to briefly point out that the Swiss theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar (Lucerne 1905 - Basel 1988) was one of the major Catholic theologians of the 20th century.

“In 1984 he received the Paul VI International Prize for theology. Designated cardinal by John Paul II, he died two days before his creation in the consistory of 28 June 1988”.⁵¹

In 1973, he published a volume in German, “*Theodramatik; Erster Banf: Prolegomena*”. This is the first volume of a five-volume work.

In the Preface of this Volume, von Balthasar maintains that it is “in the theatre [that] man attempts a kind of transcendence, endeavoring both to observe and to judge his own truth, in virtue of a transformation - through the dialectic of the concealing-revealing mask - by which he tries to gain clarity about himself”⁵².

⁵¹ See the entry *Balthasar, Hans Urs von*, in *Dizionario di filosofia* (2009) Treccani, in http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/hans-urs-von-balthasar_%28Dizionario-di-filosofia%29/

It should be noted that even Peter Milward, a Jesuit father and Professor of English Literature, addressed the subject of this study in an interesting article, *La qualità della misericordia in Shakespeare*, published in *La Civiltà Cattolica* 2016 III 125-131 | 3986 (23 luglio 2016).

You may read it in http://notedipastoralegiovanile.it/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=11352%3AAla-qualita-della-misericordia-in-shakespeare-&catid=173%3Aquestioni-letterarie&Itemid=1 ; see also Silvia Guidi, *Quante omelie in Shakespeare. Il Bardo e la misericordia*, in *Osservatore Romano*, 9 luglio 2016, in <http://www.osservatoreromano.va/it/news/quante-omelie-shakespeare>

⁵² Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama, Theological Dramatic Theory*, vol. I, *Prolegomena*, translated by Graham Harrison, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 1988, p. 12. Title of the German original, by Hans Urs von Balthasar, is *Theodramatik: Erster Band: Prolegomena*, 1973 Johannes Verlag, Einsiedeln (Switzerland).

Von Balthasar precises that “*What interests us is the whole phenomenon of the theatre: the sheer fact that there is such a thing as a structured performance and ultimately the actual substance of the play itself. Our aim will be to show how theology underlies it all and how all the elements of the drama can be rendered fruitful for theology*”.⁵³

There is, in van Balthasar, the conviction that the great theater is a representation of the world and that, in the great theatrical work, man is in search of transcendence: theatrical drama and theological research can therefore go hand in hand, while the study of the theater, as a representation of the world, can bear fruit also to the theologian and theology.

Von Balthasar also introduces a further concept: “*Insofar as, in Christianity, the norm of Christian conduct is itself dramatic [just like Christ during his passion, also all believers must bear their own cross], we can glimpse from this vantage point a genuine, Christian dramatic genre which ... can stand beside the classical tragedy of Aeschylus and Sophocles. As we shall show, certain Shakespeare’s plays attain this theological level... Let no one say that after Christ-drama everything has basically been said and shown, that drama is exhausted*”⁵⁴.

The great Swiss theologian analyzes and comments the texts of *Shakespeare, with a profound theological rigor, making reference to the work of the Dramatist as to that of a true great Christian theologian!*

Von Balthasar, in fact, proceeds to a very interesting “*Excursus: Shakespeare and Forgiveness*” for 14 pages!

This “*Excursus*” is carried out in the context of a paragraph dedicated to “*Right and Judgment*”, where von Balthasar affirms, referring to the thought of Emil Staiger, that, in the theater, the poet, the dramatist “*(who after all is ‘God the Father to his characters’) is like ‘the judge to whom a case is submitted for judgment’ and who selects the material so that it ‘helps him to come to a just verdict’. ‘Thus drama tends, of itself, toward the external form of the court process’ (E. Staiger). Most of the greatest dramatists have used this form at least once... [including] Shakespeare... each play encourages the spectator to make a decision as to whether, in this particular course of events, the right thing has been done; or whether (which comes to the same thing, since attention is focused on it) it has not been done*”.⁵⁵

Von Balthasar notes that “*serious drama ... can dare to show real court scenes on stage, pre- or postfiguration.... of ...[the] ‘Last Judgement’*”⁵⁶.

⁵³ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., p. 9.

⁵⁴ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., p. 118.

⁵⁵ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., p. 438. Von Balthasar quotes here some passages taken from Emil Staiger, *Grundebegriffe der poetik*, Atlantis, Zurich, 3rd edition 1956, pp. 175-177.

⁵⁶ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., pp. 456-457.

Von Balthasar - as a typical example of the statement by Staiger that “*drama tends, of itself, toward the external form of the court process*” - points out that “*the duke in Shakespeare’s Measure for Measure ... is a transparent allegory of God, initially observing the world incognito and then emerging visibly to judge it ... in this case the majority are pardoned*”⁵⁷.

We add that “*Romeo and Juliet*”(Act V, Scene iii, 308) ends with the generic words of a true “*Last Judgment*”: “*Some shall be pardoned, and some punished*”.

As a premise to his important “*Excursus: Shakespeare and Forgiveness*”, Van Balthasar states that:

“The ‘right’ is the goal of human action. This ‘right’ can be the justice that tries to balance accounts, but it can also go beyond this. In the world A.D., in what we have called the ‘postfiguration’ [i.e., a theatrical representation] of the gospel, the possibility of allowing mercy to take the place of justice (a universally human possibility, already found in the ancient world in the concept of ‘sanctuary’) can become a major dramatic theme that also brings ancient motifs into the brighter light of Christianity ... even in Spanish drama with its preoccupation with justice that often verges on fanaticism; we find it [the theme of mercy] in Moreto’s El valiente justiciero, to quote only one example, where Donna Leonor pleads with the king (III, i) in a speech that extols mercy as the brightest jewel of justice ... But the real dramatist of forgiveness is and remains Shakespeare. The transition from equalizing justice [i.e., from the Old Testament law of retaliation, “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth”⁵⁸] to mercy is one of the innermost motive forces of his art”⁵⁹.

These are statements (*the latter two, in particular*) very important, which *provide a fundamental and illuminating interpretative key, both to better understand the whole work of the great Dramatist, and to clearly identify the cultural and theological profile of the Dramatist himself, that is the real author of Shakespeare’s works!*

Von Balthasar also states that:

“If we wanted to divide *Shakespeare’s* work into periods with regard to the theme of forgiveness (pardon, mercy, indulgence, grace), the following scheme would emerge. In the first period the emphasis is on the mercy and grace that comes from human beings; thus in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, the royal plays and up to “*All’s Well That Ends Well* and *Measure for Measure*. In the second period of the great tragedies the theme recedes, even though it is still there in *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Timon of Athens* and particularly in *Coriolanus*; in fact, *none of*

⁵⁷ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., pp. 458-459.

⁵⁸ According to the Old Testament Law of retaliation, a person who had injured another person was to be penalized to a similar degree. In the *Leviticus*, 24:19-20, you can read: “[19] *Anyone who inflicts an injury on his neighbor shall receive the same in return.*[20] *Limb for limb, eye for eye, tooth for tooth! The same injury that a man gives another shall be inflicted on him in return*”. See this passage in http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/_P3A.HTM

⁵⁹ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., pp. 465-466.

the tragedies are without some conciliatory prospect. In the final period, that of the so-called ‘romances’, it completely dominates; here human forgiveness becomes so transparent, revealing the underlying quality of grace in of Being as such, that occasionally (in *Pericles*) thanksgiving takes over: there is nothing more to forgive. At the same time *the poet is aware of the cost of forgiveness, which is a kind of miracle in our life*; indeed, it *must* be a rarity if it is to have its full effect. This is expressed in *Measure for Measure*, which has the Old Testament concept of justice in its title: death for death, love for love, hatred for hatred, like for like, measure for measure; *but its whole thrust lies in the fact that it goes beyond this level. Everything depends on this costliness; it is that imparts weight to the theme*”⁶⁰[few characters in italics are mine].

Likewise, Piero Boitani points out that “*the romances of Shakespeare ... form his good news, his Gospel ... Shakespeare constantly has the Christian Gospel in his mind*”⁶¹.

Von Balthasar takes into consideration, to underline the theme of forgiveness, as many as 22 works by Shakespeare: *Richard II, Richard III, Henry IV, Henry VI, The two gentlemen of Verona, As You Like It, All’s Well That Ends Well, Measure for Measure, The Merchant of Venice, Cymbeline, Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, King Lear, Julius Caesar, Othello, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, Timon of Athens, Coriolanus, The Winter’s Tale, The Tempest, Pericles, Prince of Tyre.*

Here, we briefly refer to the observations of von Balthasar (following the same order of the theologian), concerning the following 7 Shakespearean plays: 1) *The Merchant of Venice*; 2) *Measure for Measure*; 3) *Romeo and Juliet*; 4) *Hamlet*; 5) *Timon of Athens*; 6) *The Winter’s Tale* and 7) *The Tempest*.

II.1.1 *The Merchant of Venice*

II.1.1 Reference is to be made to the previous § I.1, regarding the really impressive comparison between the piece (*almost ignored so far by the scholars*) by Michelangelo Florio (in the letter of 23 January 1552) on forgiveness and Portia’s speech in praise of mercy.

II.1.1.2 Von Balthasar emphasizes “*the amusing judgment scene*”⁶², in which Portia vigorously sponsors Antonio’s defense. Michelangelo Florio (another mere “*coincidence*”?) had already theorized, in 1553, the *kind of language that must be used by a lawyer who defends, before a court, which must be characterized by “audacity, solicitude, promptness ... In this way any thesis that he supports, better penetrates the mind of the judge. And this is the strength of languages*”⁶³.

⁶⁰ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., p. 466.

⁶¹ Piero Boitani, *Il Vangelo secondo Shakespeare*, il Mulino, Bologna 2009, p. 11.

⁶² Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., p. 462.

⁶³ See the said interesting passage in Giuliano Pellegrini, *Michelangelo Florio e le sue regole de la lingua thoscana*, in *Studi di filologia italiana*, vol. XII, 1954, p. 108: “*E chi la causa d’un’ che sia condannato à torto ha da difendere in giudizio, se l’animo del giudice muovere, ed al condannato giovar’ disia, come chi dimanda la limosina non parli, ma con audacia, sollecitudine, prontezza, gratuità, e constanzia. La qual’ cosa qualunque ragione detta da lui meglio*

II.1.2 Measure for Measure

II.1.2.1 According to von Balthasar, the play “marks the high point of the problem of justice versus mercy. This is a Christian mystery play ...”⁶⁴. Isabella’s reference to “mercy” is made in terms similar to those in Portia’s speech (Act. II, Scene ii, 59-63⁶⁵). Isabella’s reference to “the redemption of all by Christ”⁶⁶ and to St. Paul’s concept (much appreciated by the Evangelicals!) of “novus homo”⁶⁷, of “made new man” (Act II, Scene ii, 73-79⁶⁸), of the “renewed” man from the salvific mission of Christ (the Dramatist shows himself as a *great theologian!*).

II.1.2.2 Von Balthasar points out that “everyone is brought to judgment, and no one knows how it will end”⁶⁹. “Everyone ...must go through judgement”.⁷⁰ All the characters risk being condemned. Other scholars point out that, at least up to Act V, the spectator remains in suspense: everything seems to lead to the rigorous application of the law, with the infliction of “four death sentences”⁷¹.

II.1.2.3 Measure for Measure and too many coincidences (already perceived by Roberta Romani and Irene Bellini in 2012⁷²) with the human story of Michelangelo Florio between the end of 1551 and the beginning of 1552 (as now also documented in detail by the analysis of the two written letters from Michelangelo to Cecil).

negl'altrui cuori fa penetrare. E questo è il peso de linguaggi”. “The lawyer who must defend the cause of one who is unjustly accused in court - in order to convince the mind of the judge for the accused’s benefit - must not speak like a man asking for alms, but with audacity, solicitude, promptness, gratuity and constancy. In this way any thesis that he supports, better penetrates the mind of the judge. And this is the strength of languages”.

⁶⁴ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., p. 470.

⁶⁵ “Well, believe this: No ceremony that to great ones [be]longs, Not the king’s crown, nor the deputed sword, The marshall’s truncheon, nor the judge’s robe, Become themwith one half so good a grace As mercy does”.

⁶⁶ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., p. 470.

⁶⁷ See latin *Epistula Sancti Pauli Apostoli ad Ephesios 4* (in http://www.vatican.va/archive/bible/nova_vulgata/documents/nova-vulgata_nt_epist-ephesios_lt.html#4), where reference is made to “*vetus homo*” and to “*novus homo*”: “21 si tamen illum audistis et in ipso edocti estis, sicut est veritas in Iesu: 22 deponere vos secundum pristinam conversationem *veterem hominem*, qui corrumpitur secundum desideria erroris, 23 renovari autem spiritu mentis vestrae 24 et induere *novum hominem*, qui secundum Deum creatus est in iustitia et sanctitate veritatis”. “21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, *the old man* which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on *the new man* which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness” (see the English version of such passage of St. Paul’s *Epistle to the Ephesians*, in *New King James Version*, in <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+4%3A17-32&version=NKJV>).

⁶⁸ “Why, all the souls that were forfeit once; And He that might the vantage best have took Found out the remedy. How would you be, If He, which is the top of judgment, should But judge you as you are? O, think on that; And mercy then will breathe within your lips, Like man new made”.

⁶⁹ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., p. 470.

⁷⁰ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., p. 473.

⁷¹ Sergio Perosa (Preface), *Shakespeare, Misura per misura*, introduction by Nemi D’Agostino and Preface, translation and notes by Sergio Perosa, Ed. Garzanti, Milano, 1999, p. LIX.

⁷² Roberta Romani and Irene Bellini, *Il segreto di Shakespeare. Chi ha scritto i suoi capolavori?*, Milano, Mondadori, 2012, pp. 109-110.

II.1.2.3.1 *Measure for Measure*: the story of a man, who, like Michelangelo, *has committed an act of consensual fornication, which becomes evident through the woman's pregnant state.*

II.1.2.3.2 *Measure for Measure*: the story of a man, Angelo, who plays a role of authority, like Michelangelo (whose name Angelo also bears!). Angelo condemned Claudio, on the basis of a *strict law*, which he applies to the letter; even Michelangelo had requested to Cecil exemplary punishment for his 14 parishioners, on the basis of the *strict Old Testament Law*. The question of *the relationship between the new Commandment of love, preached by Christ, and the Old Testament Law of revenge* was one of the *most relevant profiles in the religious discussion at the time! The new law of the benefit of Christ (mercy) was opposed to the harshness of the old law [the Old Testament], as the central theme of the most famous book of the Italian Spirituals, Il Trattato Utilissimo del Beneficio di Cristo (Venice 1547, a book that is in Florios' library, read by John for his dictionary of 1611- see it in Appendix IV at item n. 234).*

II.1.2.3.3 *Measure for Measure*: the story of Angelo, an authority, who also infringes *the strict law on the basis of which he condemned Claudio*. Even Michelangelo, an authority, after having requested a punishment for his 14 parishioners, is also stained *with a serious sin*.

II.1.2.3.4 *Measure for Measure*: the story of Angelo and Claudio who both end up before a court, *to be judged by the Duke of Vienna; just like Michelangelo Florio and his 14 parishioners, whose destiny was remitted to Cecil's sentence, Baron Burghley. In both cases (of the play and of Michelangelo's real story), it seems, at a certain point, that everyone can be condemned.*

II.1.2.3.5 *Measure for Measure*: a story with a happy ending (*from the tragedy we pass to the comedy*), with the forgiveness for Claudius and Angelo, by the clement Duke. For von Balthasar, the Duke (who judges) is *“a transparent allegory of God”*⁷³ and *“the majority are pardoned”*⁷⁴. Even the story of Michelangelo and his 14 parishioners ends with a happy ending, thanks to the clemency of Cecil, Baron Burghley, *“mollified” by that masterpiece which is the extraordinary letter of 23 January 1552 by Michelangelo on forgiveness. It is the triumph of the “new commandment” of love and forgiveness, preached by Jesus.*

II.1.3 *Romeo and Juliet*

II.1.3 Von Balthasar points out that the drama *“ends with the reconciliation of the hostile families over the dead bodies of their children and the announcement of imminent judgment by the prince: ‘Some shall be pardon'd, and some punished’”*⁷⁵ (a real *“Last Judgment”*!). *Romeo and Juliet, “Poor sacrifices of our enmity!” (Act V, Scene iii, 305).*

II.1.4 *Hamlet*

⁷³ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., p. 458.

⁷⁴ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., p. 459.

⁷⁵ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., p. 472.

II.1.4 Before dying, following the duel, *Laertes and Hamlet exchange each other forgiveness* (“*Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet*”⁷⁶).

II.1.5 *Timon of Athens*

II.1.5 With an evident anachronism, Flavius, Timon’s “former steward, is acquainted with the Christian commandment (and that at the time of Alcibiades!)”⁷⁷; it is the fundamental Christian commandment of love, and therefore of forgiveness, even towards enemies. This is the newest commandment, which characterizes the perfection of Christian love and which replaces the Old Testament Law of Retaliation!

II.1.6 *Winter’s Tale*

II.1.6 Leontes, king of Sicily, had ruthlessly behaved against his wife Hermione, of whom he was unjustly jealous; after a “ ‘saintlike’ life of penance, he is urged to ‘Do as the heavens have done, forget your evil; With them, forgive yourself’ (Act V, Scene i). These words reveal the innermost motive power of the later plays”⁷⁸.

II.1.7 *The Tempest*

II.1.7 According to von Balthasar, in *The Tempest*, the theme of forgiveness “goes further still.... in hardly any other play of Shakespeare is there so much to be forgiven and so much pardon actually given”⁷⁹. In the final Epilogue, when “*The enchantment has disappeared ... ‘prayer’ and ‘indulgence’ are necessary*”⁸⁰; Piero Boitani, similarly, notes that “*Prospero at the end of The Tempest takes leave of his spectators with the words that close the prayer of our Father*”⁸¹.

II.1.7.1 In *The Tempest*, Prospero reassures Miranda that, in the shipwreck caused by him, “*There is ... not so much perdition as an hair*” (Act I, Scene ii, 29); in the *Acts of the Apostles* (27, 34), St. Paul, who is about to ship to Malta, reassures the sailors, telling them that: “*Not a hair of the head of anyone of you will be lost*”⁸². St. Paul’s shipwreck in Malta, one of the most compelling stories of the New Testament, is a sure source of inspiration for *The Tempest* (see also previous § I.7). Also Michelangelo Florio had spoken in his *Apologia* (p.61 r) of Saint Paul’s perilous sea voyage, and had specified that, *by the will of God, the life of those who sailed with Saint Paul to Rome was under the Saint’s protection.*

⁷⁶ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., p. 473.

⁷⁷ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., p. 474.

⁷⁸ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., p. 476.

⁷⁹ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., p. 476.

⁸⁰ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., p. 477.

⁸¹ Piero Boitani, *Il Vangelo secondo Shakespeare*, il Mulino, Bologna 2009, p. 11.

⁸² See the above mentioned Chapter 27 of the *Acts of the Apostles* in

<http://www.vatican.va/archive/ITA0001/PWW.HTM>

III. First conclusions and further ideas for a research

III.1 The work of the Dramatist, like Michelangelo Florio's theological works, appears to be characterized by what von Balthasar calls a true "*postfiguration of the gospel*"⁸³, a true theatrical representation of the gospel teachings.

III.2 The preferred theological reference, both of Michelangelo Florio and of the Dramatist (whose work is considered by the Swiss theologian von Balthasar as a true work of theology!), appears to be St. Paul, the theologian of the Evangelicals and Lutherans (and Michelangelo Florio was properly an Evangelical!).

III.3 The theme of forgiveness is a fundamental theme in the letter by Michelangelo Florio to Cecil of 23 January 1552. The words and concepts expressed there in Latin seem to be translated and reworked in English by the Dramatist (by John Florio, according to the "*Floriana thesis*" by Santi Paladino-1955), in *The Merchant of Venice*.

III.4 In reality, the letter by Michelangelo Florio of 23 January 1552 is profoundly influenced, in turn, by Aretino's *Seven Psalms* (1534) and by Aretino's letter of August 1st, 1542 to Henry VII, King of England, where "*justice is exalted ... when is more similar to the divine mercy and justice, [rather] than to the human [justice]*"; Aretino praises Henry VIII, for his "*piety*", "*mansuetude*", terms literally attributed, in turn, from Michelangelo to Cecil, translated into Latin: "*tua pietate ... et mansuetudine*". An analysis of the texts leads to the conclusion that: 1- 2) the *Seven Psalms* (1534) by Aretino and the letter, in *Italian vernacular*, by Aretino (1542) are "*indirect*", "*second degree*" sources of Portia's discourse on mercy in "*The Merchant of Venice*"; 3) the most elaborate (strictly confidential and secret) letter, in *Latin*, by Michelangelo Florio to Cecil, is a "*direct*" source of Portia's speech; 4) Portia's speech, in *English*, in "*The Merchant of Venice*", is the further reworking and translation into *English*, from the Latin, by John Florio, the only one able to own a copy of the paternal letter, sent by Michelangelo to Cecil; the only one able to rework what John himself wrote in the address "*To the Reader*" of his dictionary of 1598, with regard to the "*good word*". 4 different texts, 3 minds of different writers, 3 different languages (*Italian vernacular, Latin and English*): the celebration of the "*trans-cultural*" nature of the work of the Dramatist and of the "*imitatio*", *that is creative and innovative imitation of pre-existing literary texts by other authors!*

III.5 The theme of the *fear of exile* from the Kingdom of England, *a fear that*, in the letter by Michelangelo Florio to Cecil, *coincided with the possibility of being killed by the Inquisitors, where he had been banned*. Michelangelo stated (§ 24 of the letter, below, in Appendix II) that: "*the teeth and mouths of the enemies of the Gospel... [should have become full] of my flesh and blood*"; unless "*I myself must deny the truth of that [i.e. of the Gospel]*". Also in this case,

⁸³ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*,..., cit., pp. 465-466.

Michelangelo makes use of the “*imitatio*”. Michelangelo does nothing but change, in a different situation, the same words and concepts expressed by Bernardino Ochino (the most famous Italian Reformer!) in his letter of 22 August 1542 to Vittoria Colonna (a letter well known among the Italian Evangelicals, just like Michelangelo); Ochino, who had been invited to go to Rome to be interrogated by the Inquisition, had decided not to go to Rome, for fear of being incarcerated and “because [in Rome] I could not but deny Christ or be crucified”⁸⁴. The equation between exile and death (here expressed by Michelangelo) also characterizes a famous piece in *Romeo and Juliet*, where Romeo strongly proclaims (with a sort of emotion, which seems to belong to Michelangelo’s autobiography), addressing Friar Laurence: “‘banished’ is death [Act III, scene I, v. 20-21]”. And, to friar Lorenzo, who does not understand, Romeo states: “Thou canst not speak of that thou dost not feel [v. 65]”. It seems as if the Dramatist (just like Michelangelo) had personally felt, on his skin, the terror of exile, perceived as death! In Romeo’s words Ochino’s words “indirectly” resound too!

III.6 In the letter of 22 January 1552, Michelangelo appears as an extremely doubtful man, as appears from the most painful words of the end of § 1 of this letter (in Appendix II): “But my mind was doubtful, and it was dragged towards different solutions”, “*Sed pendebat animus, et in diverse trahebatur.*” Michelangelo does not know whether or not to write to Cecil, from which he fears to receive severe punishment! A charge of doubt that, of course, can recall that of *Hamlet*!

III.7 In his letter of 22 January 1552, Michelangelo describes his own “act of fornication”, as a “fall”; he notices (see Appendix II § 1) the “*magnitudine Labis, qua nunc me commaculati contingit*”, “the gravity of my Fall, for which now it happens to me to be stained”. Michelangelo admits (§ 3) that “*exsurgentibus quibusdam nebulis de limosa concupiscentia carnis meae, et obnubilantibus cor meum, per abrupta cupiditatum cecidi, ac praecipiti cecidi in caenum, voraginem et gurgitem libidinis et immunditiae carnis, relicto Deo, cujus ira invaluit super me*”, “because, owing to certain darkening that originated from the murky lust of my flesh and which obscured my mind, through the depths of the cupid senses I fell, and I fell headlong into the mud, into the chasm and the vortex of lust and the impurity of the flesh, departing from the precepts of God, whose anger took hold of me above me”. Also to describe his fall, Michelangelo uses the “*imitatio*”, this time from the *Phaeton’s fall*, as narrated by Ovid in the *Metamorphoses*, Book II. The painting *Phaeton’s Fall* (Mantua), by Julio Romano (1527-1528) - Michelangelo had completely identified himself with Phaeton and his ruinous fall - The sonnet “*Phaeton to his friend Florio*” (1592) - The reference to Phaeton’s myth in *Richard II* (Act iii, Sc. III, 180-181) - The reference, in *Measure for Measure*, to the “imagery” of the race of a horse and of loosened reins, to express the explosion of sensuality: “And now I give my sensual race the rein” (Act II, Sc. iv, 159).

III.7.1 A possible comparison:

i) Michelangelo’s “fall”.

In the letter, in Latin, by Michelangelo to Cecil (dated 23 January 1552), Michelangelo speaks (Appendix II, § 1) of his own “*Labes*”, “*Fall*” and also states (§ 3): “*cecidit in ... gurgitem libidinis*”, “I fell ... into... the vortex of lust”.

⁸⁴ The entire text of this letter is reported by Ugo Rozzo, *I dialoghi sette e altri scritti del tempo della fuga, di Bernardino Ochino*, Turin, Claudiana, 1985, pp. 123-124.

ii) Gertrude's "fall" in *Hamlet*.

The Ghost of Hamlet's father tells his son that Claudio, after his murder, "won to his shameful lust The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen. O Hamlet, what a falling off was there!"- Act I, Scene v, 45-47). Also this passage seems to draw on words and concepts from the aforementioned letter by Michelangelo. Similarly, also for Gertrude there is "a falling off", and a "shameful lust".

III.7.2 A further possible comparison:

i) Michelangelo Florio's name, which had become (§ 2 of the letter of January 23, 1552, in Appendix II) a "nomen pæminosum" (a "scratched name", a "wounded name"), due to his "fall" (described in the same letter, at § 1, "Labes", "Fall"; at § 3: "cecidi in ... gurgitem libidinis", "I fell ... in the vortex of lust").

ii) Hamlet's "wounded name" (Act V, Scene ii, 349) similarly appears to be due to Gertrude's "falling off", and to her "shameful lust".

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Independent scholar and sincere Florios' "fan"

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"Michelangelo Florio e il perdono: Shakespeare, 'il vero drammaturgo del perdono' (von Balthasar)"

in

www.shakespeareandflorio.net

APPENDIX I

The letter, in Latin, presumably from the end of 1551, sent by Michelangelo Florio to William Cecil^{85 86}. Translation into Italian and notes by Massimo Oro Nobili.

<p>NUM.[BER] LII. <i>Michael Angelo, preacher to the Italian Congregation, his complaint against some of his flock, with a list of their Names.</i></p> <p>Clarissimo Domino Sycilio, Serenissimi Regis Angliæ, &c. a Secretis; Michael Angelus Florius Florentinus, Italorum Concionator [Contionator]. S. D. [Salutem Dicit]</p> <p>§ 1 CUM diebus elapsis meam tibi enarrarem inopiam et necessitatem, ac meorum Italorum impietatem, mihi imposuisti, ut eorum Italorum nomina, quos opus erat ut convenires, tibi significarem, et idcirco in calce harum mearum reperies, et cum absque interturbatione seriorum negotiorum tuorum hos omnes, unà vel separatim, convenire poteris, mihi non exiguum præstabis favorem, ut te facturum spero.</p> <p>§ 2 Hi omnes polliciti sunt Reverendissimo Cantuariensi, mihi omnia necessaria providere, et ab eis de mense Januarij accepi tantum, quinque libras.</p> <p>§ 3 At postquam viderunt et audierunt me tam aperto</p>	<p>NUM.[BER] LII. <i>Michael Angelo, preacher to the Italian Congregation, his complaint against some of his flock, with a list of their Names.</i></p> <p>To the illustrious Sir Cecil, personal secretary of the Most Serene King of England etc .; Michael Angelo Florio Fiorentino, Preacher of the Italians. Sends greetings</p> <p>§ 1 CONSIDERING THAT - since a few days ago I explained you my lack of means and economic constraints, as well as the failure of my Italian [parishioners] in absolving their duties towards me- you forced me to indicate you the names of those Italians to be convoked by you; to this end you will find [such names] at the bottom of these lines, and when you will be able to summon all of them, jointly or separately, without hindrance to your most important commitments, you will do me - as I hope you will do - a really not small favor.</p> <p>§ 2 All of them committed themselves to the Most Reverend Archbishop of Canterbury ⁸⁷ [Thomas Cranmer] to provide everything necessary for me, and from the month of January I received only five pounds.</p> <p>§ 3 Furthermore, after they saw me and listened to me</p>
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⁸⁵ The letter, in Latin, is reported in John Strype, *Memorials of the Most Reverend Father in God Thomas Cranmer, some time Lord Archbishop of Canterbury wherein the history of the Church and the Rformation of it, during the Primacy of the said Archbishop, are greatly illustrated; Ans many singular Matters relating thereunto, now first published (1694) In Three Books collected chiefly from records, registres, authentic letters, and other original manuscripts, by John Strype, M.A., A New Edition, with Additions, Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1812, Vol II, Num. LII, pp. 881-882 (first edition 1694). The letter is readable at pp.881-882 in <https://books.google.it/books?id=ikQJAAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=it#v=onepage&q&f=false>*

⁸⁶ About the date of this undated letter, in any case prior to January 1552, see Luigi Firpo, *Opera di Giorgio Agricola de l'Arte de' metalli partita in XII libri ... tradotti in lingua toscana da M. Michelangelo Florio fiorentino* (Basilea, 1563); reprinted in facsimile (Turin 1969), note 19 at p. XII. The same Firpo, op.cit., p. XII, states that the next letter of January 23, 1552 is "a few months later".

⁸⁷ "Cantuaria" was the ancient Latin name of Canterbury: see <http://www.catholicity.com/encyclopedia/c/canterbury.html>

<p>Marte adversus Papæ dogmata, hypocrisim et tyrannidem concionantem, ac eorum incredulitatem et duritiam cordis arguentem, me omnino deseruerunt.</p> <p>§ 4 Sed hoc fere nihil est.</p> <p>§ 5 Non enim ipsi impudentes erubescunt ore vipereo mihi et Evangelio Christi, (quod sincere annuntio), detrahare; Et, quo ausu nescio, (cum omnes habeant privilegia Libertatis, quemadmodum veri et naturales Angli, et juraverint eamet servare mandata, quæ servare tenentur Angli omnes), quotidie audiunt Missas; quas si audirent Angli, pænas luerent.</p> <p>§ 6 Et cur isti, ut merentur, non corriguntur ?</p> <p>§ 7 Et si ipsi quotidie nova privilegia, et novas immunitates a Serenissimo Rege petere non verentur, et nonnunquam obtinent, cur illis non præcipitur, ut faveant Evangelio, et abrenuntient Papæ, et dogmatibus ejus?</p> <p>§ 8 In Scriptura divina jubentur rebelles Deo, legibus, et iudiciis sanctis, interfici sine misericordia: ut patet Deut. 13. & 17.</p> <p>§ 9 Eliseus ille tam Deo gratus Propheta, jubente ipso Deo, inunxit Jehu in regem ad hoc, ut et domum Achabi prorsus extirparet, ac sacerdotes omnes Baal interficeret.</p> <p>§ 10 Jure igitur optimo possunt et debent hii omnes, cum adversentur et Evangelio, et hujus tam Sancti Regis sanctionibus, nempe pijs.</p>	<p>preaching against the dogmas, the hypocrisy and the tyranny of the Pope with such obvious hostile vehemence, and ranting against the unbelief and insensibility of their soul, they completely abandoned me.</p> <p>§ 4 But this is almost nothing.</p> <p>§ 5 In fact, these same impudent people do not blush to discredit, with poisonous words, me and the Gospel of Christ (which I sincerely announce); And, I do not know with which impudence (since they have all the privileges of Liberty, more or less like the mere English people, and have sworn to observe those same laws, which all English people are required to observe), every day they listen the Masses; should English people listen to the Masses, they would suffer severe punishment.</p> <p>§ 6 And why are not these [Italians] reprimanded, as they deserve?</p> <p>§ 7 And if these [Italians] do not hesitate every day to ask for new privileges and new immunities to the Most Serene King and sometimes they get them, why are they not prescribed to observe the Gospel and to oppose the Pope and his dogmas?</p> <p>§ 8 In the divine Scriptures, it is ordered that those who rebel against God, laws and holy decisions are to be killed without mercy: as Deuteronomy demonstrates, in paragraphs 13 and 17.</p> <p>§ 9 That Prophet Elisha, so pleasing to God, on the orders of the same God, anointed Jehu to be the new king [of Israel], precisely because he was to completely extirpate the dynasty of Ahab, and to kill all the priests of the [god] Baal.</p> <p>§ 10 Therefore, all those people can and must [be punished] with the most adequate justice, where they behave in such a way that it contrasts both with the Gospel and with the certainly fair articles of law of this very Holy King [Edward VI].</p>
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§ 11

Tuæ prudentiæ et pietati hoc meum negotium committendum jure existimavi, cum sis verè unus ex his, quibus ait Dominus et Servator noster Christus, *Elegi vos de mundo, ut eatis, et fructum afferatis, et fructus vester maneat.*

§ 12

Certus igitur sum, quod nihil eorum omittes, quæ ad Dei gloriam, Evangelij laudem, et meam Salutem pertinere agnosces. Vale

Italorum Nomina,

D[ominus]. Carolus Rinuccinus.
D. Guido Cavalcanti.
D. Batista Cavalcanti.
D. Bartholomeus Fortini. *Florentini omnes.*

D. Azalinus Selvagus.
D. Benedictus Spinola.
D. Antonius Bruschetto. *Januens.*

D. Christoforus [da Monte] *Mediolanensis.*
D. Batista Burrone, *Mediolanensis.*

D. Marcus Antonius Erizo.
D. Evangelista Fonte. *Veneti.*

D. Petrus Ciampante. *Lucensis.*

D. Nicolaus de Nale.
D. Andreas de Resti. *Ragusienses.*

§ 11

I felt it right to have to submit this delicate question to your wisdom and righteousness, since you really are one of those to whom the Lord our Savior Christ said: *I have chosen you from the world, so that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain* [Gospel of St. John 15:16].

§ 12

I am therefore certain that you will not omit [to do] anything that you believe will be adequate to the glory of God, to the praise of the Gospel and to my Salvation. Take care of yourself.

The Names of the [reported] Italians,

Mr. Carlo Rinuccini.
Mr. Guido Cavalcanti.
Mr. Battista Cavalcanti.
Mr. Bartolomeo Fortini. *All Florentines.*

Mr. Azalino Salvago.
Mr. Benedetto Spinola.
Mr. Antonio Bruschetto. *From Genoa.*

Mr. Cristoforo [da Monte] *From Milan.*
Mr. Battista Burrone, *From Milan.*

Mr. Marcantonio Erizzo.
Mr. Evangelista Fonte. *From Veneto.*

Mr. Pietro Ciampante. *From Lucca.*

Mr. Niccolò de Nale.
Mr. Andrea de Resti. *From Ragusa [Sicily].*⁸⁸

⁸⁸ The list of the Italian names of the accused persons is reported by Luigi Firpo, *Giorgio Agricola e Michelangelo Florio, cit. , p. XII, nota 20.*

APPENDIX II

The letter, in Latin, dated 23 January 1552, sent by Michelangelo Florio to William Cecil⁸⁹.
Translation into Italian and notes by Massimo Oro Nobili.

<p>NUM.[BER] LIII. <i>Michael Angelo endeavours to appease the Secretary, greatly offended with him for a gross miscarriage.</i></p> <p>Clarissimo Viro, ordinis equestris, Domino Gulielmo Sycilio, Serenissimi Regis Angliæ, &c. a Secretis, Michael Angelus Florius, S. P. D. [Salutem Plurimam Dicit]</p> <p>§ 1 SUBODORATUS hisce diebus elapsis miram illam tuam charitatem, qua me piè complecti solebas, magnitudine Labis, qua nunc me commaculati contingit, victam fuisse; téque adversus me ita excanduisse, ut me scelerosis omnibus indignitate excellere judicares. Quæ cum animo mecum volutare cepissem, arbitrabar consultum fore, si ad te scriberem, rémque omnem, ut se habet, non ut quorunque impudentium lutulenta ora evomere ausa sunt, panderem. Sed pendebat animus, et in diversa trahebatur.</p> <p>§ 2 Nam verebar nè vehementius in me sevires, audito meo nomine, quod tam pæminosum apud te factum est. Verum cum rem altius mecum perpenderim, prorsus mutavi Sententiam, tum quia misantropos non es, tum etiam quia ea opinio, quam de tua pietate, prudentia, doctrina et mansuetudine concepi hactenus, falsa non me Lactavit spe.</p>	<p>NUMERO LIII. <i>Michael Angelo endeavours to appease the Secretary, greatly offended with him for a gross miscarriage.</i></p> <p>To the Most Illustrious Man, of the Equestrian Order, Lord William Cecil, Personal Secretary of the Most Serene King of England, etc., Michael Angelo Florio, sending many greetings.</p> <p>§ 1 HAVING HAD SENSED that in these past days your marvellous charity had been annihilated, with which you used to dress me with filial piety, because of the gravity of my Fall, for which now it happens to me to be stained; and that you were so angry at that point, to judge me that I had overcome all criminals by unworthiness. Since I had begun to consider such things between myself, I thought that a decision was required, whether to write to you and explain the whole affair, as it really is, and not like the unclean mouths of any impudent dared to throw up. But my mind was doubtful, and it was dragged towards different solutions.⁹¹</p> <p>§ 2 In fact, I feared that you, with greater vehemence against me, would have thrown you, if you had only heard of my name, which for you has become a name so chapped by cracks [editor's note: a name that is, muddled, discredited, wounded]. Indeed, as I carefully considered the matter more deeply, I changed the Decision altogether, both because you are not a grumpy person, and because that opinion (I have perceived till now about your pity, prudence, doctrine and mansuetude) did not Feed me with a false hope.</p>
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⁸⁹ The letter, in Latin, is reproduced in the work by John Strype, *Memorials of the Most Reverend Father in God Thomas Cranmer, some time Lord Archbishop of Canterbury wherein the history of the Church and the Rformation of it, during the Primacy of the said Archbishop, are greatly illustrated; Ans many singular Matters relating thereunto, now first published (1694) In Three Books collected chiefly from records, registres, authentic letters, and other original manuscripts, by John Strype, M.A., A New Edition, with Additions, Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1812, Vol II, Num. LIII, pp. 883-885. This letter is also readable in the following link at pp. 883-885 <https://books.google.it/books?id=ikQJAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=it#v=onepage&q&f=false>*

⁹¹ Michelangelo Florio appears as a deeply doubtful person, not very different from Shakespearean Hamlet.

§ 3

Iccirco his meis ad te litteris provolare audeo, faterique te non injuria me scelerosum vocitasse, quia exsurgentibus quibusdam nebulis de limosa concupiscentia carnis meæ, et obnubilantibus cor meum, per abrupta cupiditatum cecidi, ac præceps cecidi in cænum, voraginem et gurgitem libidinis et immunditiæ carnis, relicto Deo, cujus ira invaluit super me.

§ 4

Sed ut memineris, obsecro, Amplissime Domine, me ex eodem Adamo genitum, ex quo David, ac plerique electi Dei, qui ejusdem criminibus obnoxij fuere.

§ 5

Ex humo, non ex suamet substantia, ut quidam falso opinati sunt, Deus hominem condidit, non ex durissimo Lapide aut chalybe. Quod quidem si perspectabis illum proclivorem aptioremque ad malum reddidit.

§ 6

Si enim naturam nostram humanam sic Deus condidisset (quod impossibile est) ut nunquam peccasset, melior ipso Deo fuisset, (quod absit:), quia natura quæ potest peccare, sicut et non peccare, si semper vinceret, illi naturæ præponenda esset, quæ ideo non peccat, quia impassibilis est.

§ 7

Age dic, ex terræ limo conditus quis non peccat? Et si bonos omnes suos esse velit Deus, non tamen illis potestatem peccandi adimit. Et quisquis naturam nostram quam diligentissime inspexerit, cum Christo filio Dei fatebitur, *Neminem præter unum Deum bonum.*

§ 8

In me igitur in hujus criminis fæcem prolapsio naturam, Amplissime Domine, attende, in te vero, et in alijs ab hac peccati sorde mundis, gratiam Dei, non naturæ virtutem, Laudato. Qui peccantes omnes

§ 3

For this reason, I dare to address you with this letter of mine, and to recognize that you have rightly attributed me the epithet of sacrilege, because, owing to certain darkening that originated from the murky lust of my flesh and which obscured my mind, through the depths of the cupid senses I fell, and I fell headlong into the mud, into the chasm and the vortex of lust and the impurity of the flesh, departing from the precepts of God, whose anger took hold of me above me.

§ 4

But, as you have thought, O most illustrious Lord, I beg you for me, who was begotten by the same Adam, from whom David [was born] and many people chosen by God, who were guilty of the sins of that same [Adam].

§ 5

From the earth, not from his very substance, as some falsely believe, God created man, not by a very hard Marble or steel. For without doubt, if you will carefully evaluate, God made that [man] more inclined and ready to evil.

§ 6

If, in fact, God had created our human nature in such a way that no one ever fell into sin (what is impossible), this would have been better for God himself (that which is far from the truth); because it would be preferable a nature that can sin, as well as not to sin (even if it could always win [over evil]), compared to that nature which indeed never sins, because it is insensitive to passions.

§ 7

Now then, tell me: who, created with the mud of the earth, does not sin? And if God wants all men to be good, it does not preclude them from sinning. And whoever would consider our nature as carefully as possible, will recognize with Christ, the son of God, that *No one is good except one, God.*⁹²

§ 8

O Most illustrious Lord, pay attention to me, that let me go in the mud of this sacrilege; therefore Praise the nature in me [editor's note: that makes men susceptible to sin], while in you and in other people without the

⁹² The sentence is taken from the Gospels of Mark (10:18) and Luke (18:19).

odisse quaerit, neque profecto seipsum diligit. Et si quoscunque reos mortis damnari contendit, neminem vivere patietur.

§ 9

Quis unquam electorum dei tam mundus ab omni Labecula criminis fuit, cui non opus fuerit quotidie rogare patrem, ut illi sua remittat debita? Nonne omnes habent, quod plangent, et reprehensione conscientiae, et mobilitate peccatricis naturae? Et sicut unicuique propter sua peccata Dei misericordia est necessaria, ita uniuscujusque proprium est errantium omnium misereri.

§ 10

Haec perspicua comperies in unigeniti filij dei illo recto sanctoque judicio, ab eo a Phariseis petito adversus mulierem in adulterio deprehensam ; qui et legem adulteram damnantem comprobavit, et iudices caeterosque omnes terrendo ad misericordiam revocavit.

§ 11

Quærit Deus Opt. Max., ut regna subvertantur erroris, non errantes ipsi, et eos ubique jubet spiritu mansuetudinis instaurendos esse, non odio et persecutione perdendos.

§ 12

Qui igitur vehementi errantes prosequitur odio, eos perdere, non sanare conatur. Sed video hic te

turpitude of sin, [Praise] the grace of God, not the virtue of [editor's note: human] nature. Who intends to hate all those who make mistakes, certainly does not love himself. And if he claims that all those who err, are to be condemned to death, he will not tolerate anyone living.

§ 9

Who ever, among those people who are chosen by God, was so free from any small Stain of guilt, for which it was not necessary to invoke the father every day, so that he could forgive his debts? Is it not true that everyone has [some spots], because they are beating their chests both for the reproach of their own conscience and for the fickleness of their sinful nature? And, just as God's mercy is necessary for each one because of his own faults, so it is appropriate for everyone to be merciful towards all those who err.

§ 10

You will discover how this reasoning is evident in that righteous and holy judgment of the only son of God, who was requested of this by the Pharisees against a woman recognized in adultery; and he confirmed the law that condemns the adulteress, and, however, at the same time, he persuaded them to mercy, by terrifying the judges and all other [people present].⁹³

§ 11

Maximus Great God wants that the kingdoms are to be destroyed because of their mistakes, but not that such destiny may involve people who makes mistakes, and commands that they should be everywhere encouraged to new life with a spirit of mansuetude and not to damnation with hatred and persecution.

§ 12

Whoever punishes those who err with vehement hatred, ends up striving so that they may be among the damned

⁹³ See the Gospel of John, 8: 1-11. "Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst. They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more".

<p>corrugare frontem, audióque dicere, Num frustra instituta sunt potestas regis, vis gladij cognitoris, ungulæ carnificis, arma militis, disciplina dominantis, et severitas boni patris ?</p>	<p>people and not among the saved people. But on this occasion I see you wrinkling your forehead and I hear you say: “Perhaps considering the king’s power, the sword’s strength of the law-defender, the force of the executioner’s torture instrument, the weapons of the soldier, the rules of the one who governs and the severity of the good father: were all these things established in vain?”</p>
<p>§ 13 Non utique, sed habent ista omnia modos suos causas, rationes, et utilitates. Non enim ordinationibus hisce humanarum rerum adversatur remissio, nec contrariatur indulgentia.</p>	<p>§ 13 No doubt, but all of the above has its measures, causes, reasons and usefulness. In fact, forgiveness does not contrast with these institutions of the human governments, nor is indulgence opposed to them.</p>
<p>§ 14 Quod si fieri contingeret, nobis non attulisset Christus suæ dulcedinem gratiæ, nec tam pijs elogijs mansuetudinem commendasset, sed veteris Testamenti severiorem legis vindictam comprobasset.</p>	<p>§ 14 If this were to happen [that indulgence is opposed to the institutions of the human governments], Christ would not have offered us the sweetness of his grace, nor would he have witnessed such mansuetude by virtuous decisions, but he would have merely confirmed the most severe principle of revenge of the Old Testament.</p>
<p>§ 15 Sed quid audeo docere Minervam, et noctuas ferre Athenas?</p>	<p>§ 15 But why dare I give teachings to Minerva [goddess of wisdom] and bring owls to Athens?⁹⁴</p>
<p>§ 16 Nonne hæc omnia in sacris didicisti literis? Nonne fides, nonne pietas, non hæc tandem ipse te deus edocuit, cum te viti, quæ est vita nostra, Christo Jesu Servatori nostro inseruit?</p>	<p>§ 16 Is not it true that you have already learned from the holy scriptures all these my biblical quotes? Is not it true that faith, piety, all these feelings finally God himself taught you, when he grafted you [like a branch] into the vine, which is our life, our Jesus Christ the Savior?⁹⁵</p>
<p>§ 17 Moses, cui legitur facie ad faciem Dominus esse locutus, missus ad gentes, et ad fratres suos, ire nolebat, et ad aquas contradictionis quam graviter Deum offenderit, Dei ipsius testimonio, novimus</p>	<p>§ 17 Moses, to whom, as we read [in the scriptures], the Lord ordered, face to face, that he was the guide of his people and his brothers, but he was hesitant to accept the task and to go, and we all knew how seriously has offended</p>

⁹⁴ The sentence “to bring owls to Athens” means “*To do or undertake something redundant, pointless, or futile. It refers to the city of Athens in the time of Ancient Greece, where silver coins were minted with the image of an owl (which were abundant in the city). Thus, to bring either owls or silver to Athens would be a useless venture* (see in <https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/bring+owls+to+Athens>). Cecil (who is compared to the goddess Minerva) well knows biblical texts and it is useless for Michelangelo to explain these texts to him!

⁹⁵ Michelangelo recalls one of the most beautiful parallels in the Gospels, when Jesus says (Gospel of John, 15:5): “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing”. “The vine ... is ... Jesus. The disciples, to the extent, and only to the extent that they are united to Him, are the branches ... the absolute necessity of ‘remaining united’ is affirmed ...” (Bruno Maggioni, *Il racconto di Giovanni*, Cittadella Editrice, Assisi, 2006, pp. 288-289). Both the branches (branches) that depart from the stem of the vine and the stem of the vine itself are intimately connected and in them the same sap flows.

<p>omnes.</p> <p>§ 18 Aaron, Dei Altissimi Sacerdos idololatriæ Israelitarum consentiens, ex auro et monilibus fæminarum eorum vitulum fabricavit; illi aram extruxit, ac holocausta immolavit: cui sane facinori simile nec oculus mortalium vidit, nec auris audivit.</p> <p>§ 19 Jonas propheta præceptum sibi, ut Ninivitis prædicaret, irrupit, ut ad alium locum pergeret, quo missus non fuerat.</p> <p>§ 20 David rex et propheta, vir utique secundum cor Dei, plus æquo Veneri indulgens, uxorem rapuit alienam, et virum illius interfici curavit.</p> <p>§ 21 Simon Petrus, cui Dominus pollicitus erat claves regni cœlorum, cum juramento ipsum Dominum suum negavit. Nec tamen ille pijssimus Deus terræ chasmata aperiri jussit, ut vivi absorberentur hi qui legem suam violaverunt: ut suo exemplo doceret omnes, rigorem judicij pietate et clementia frangere.</p> <p>§ 22 Defervescat igitur minax tua illa indignatio et formidabilis ira ad versus me, demitte furorem. Vir integerrime, misericorditer me prolapsus corripe, et cum dilectione saluti meæ consule, et prospice.</p>	<p>God, as evidenced by the testimony of God himself, near [the place which was, thereafter, known as] the “waters of contradiction”.⁹⁶</p> <p>§ 18 Aaron, High Priest of God, consenting to the idolatry of the Israelites, built a calf made of gold and the jewelry of their women; he raised up an altar to this [calf] and offered sacrifices: indeed, neither mortal eye saw, nor ear heard anything like that misdeed.</p> <p>§ 19 The prophet Jonah, though he had been commanded [by the Lord] to preach to the inhabitants of Nineveh, disobeyed, going to another place [Tarsis], where he had not been sent [by the Lord].</p> <p>§ 20 David, king and prophet, a man absolutely close to the heart of God, more lenient in justice than Venus, appropriated another man’s wife and arranged for her husband to be killed.</p> <p>§ 21 Simon Peter, to whom the Lord had promised the keys of the kingdom of heaven, even denied his Lord with oath. Nor, however, that very lenient God ordered that the chasms of the earth be opened, so that those who violated his law were devoured alive; this, to teach everyone, by his example, to mitigate the severity of judgment with piety and mercy.</p> <p>§ 22 Therefore, calm your threatening indignation and your terrible anger against me; quench your fury. O Man, of the utmost integrity, in a merciful manner, blame me that I have fallen into error and decide with predilection for</p>
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⁹⁶ And here Michelangelo points out the two hesitations of Moses: (i) when God told him to bring the Israelites out of Egypt, Moses said to God (Exodus 3:11): “*Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?*”; (ii) when the “*Jews, disheartened by the scarcity of water in the desert, entered into a heavy contrast (“contradictio”) with Moses and irritated him at a place that was later called ‘the waters of the contradiction’; then Moses was afflicted for such disputes with his people and, precisely for this affliction, although inspired by God to strike the stone, hesitated somewhat with some diffidence to do it, but then he beat it and the water came out in great copy; nevertheless God, angry with Moses for his hesitation, punished him with making him die in the journey before reaching the promised land*”. See Alphonse de Liguori, Traduzione de’ salmi e de’ cantici, 1805, p.287, http://books.google.it/books?id=Y5s7sH3Hk5wC&printsec=frontcover&hl=it&source=gsb_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

<p>§ 23 Cujus auxilio, consilio, et favore nitar, si tu, qui omnium sacra anchora es, (et numinis loco te habent omnes), me prorsus tuo destituas auxilio?</p> <p>§ 24 Quo fugiam extra regnum istud, ut vitare possim, quia aut carne mea et sanguine meo satientur hostium evangelij dentes et ora, aut veritatem illius ipse negare cogar?</p> <p>§ 25 Non veluti primi parentis Adami est hoc peccatum meum, ut non vetustate, prudentia et pietate sanctorum Dei deleri possit.</p> <p>§ 26 Cave, obsecro, ne Satanas, per imaginem quasi justæ severitatis, crudelem hanc tibi adversus me suadeat sævitiam.</p> <p>§ 27 Clamabis fortassis, me indignum esse hoc tuo favore et auxilio.</p> <p>§ 28 Fateor [<i>n.d.r.</i>, <i>peccavisse</i>], sed recorderis, rogo, Deum indignos justificare et servare.</p> <p>§ 29 Pietas igitur commoveat te, ut velis mihi famulo tuo pereunti opitulari, cujus salus tibi in manu est.</p> <p>§ 30 Vale, et bene fortunet Christus opt. Max. quod in manibus est,</p> <p>10 Kal. Februarij⁹⁰.</p>	<p>my salvation, and take care.</p> <p>§ 23 On whose help, advice and favor, can I rely if you, who are the sacred anchor of all (and all people hold you in high esteem, because of your protection, almost as a tutelary deity), completely deprive me of your help?</p> <p>§ 24 Where shall I go into exile out of this kingdom, in order to be able to avoid either that the teeth and mouths of the enemies of the Gospel become full of my flesh and blood, or that I myself must deny the truth of that [i.e. the truth of the Gospel]?⁹⁷</p> <p>§ 25 This sin of mine is not like that of the first parent Adam, who cannot be erased on the basis of the ancient friendship, wisdom and mercy of God's holy wills.</p> <p>§ 26 Be cautious, I adjure you, because Satan, through the image of only one apparent rigor, does not persuade you to adopt such ruthless severity [exile!] against me.</p> <p>§ 27 You may feel that I am unworthy of your favor and help.</p> <p>§ 28 I acknowledge [that I have sinned], but I beg you to remember that God forgives and saves the unworthy people.</p> <p>§ 29 Therefore, mercy inspires you, so that you may want to help me, your servant who has fallen into disgrace, whose salvation is in your hands.</p> <p>§ 30 Take care of you and [I hope] that Christ, the excellent Maximus, blesses in a favorable way [the decision] that is in [your] hands.</p> <p>January 23 [1552].</p>
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⁹⁰ “The letter is dated ‘x Kal. Februarii’ with no year. A contemporary endorsement is ‘January, 1551’, i.e. 1552 according to the modern reckoning” (Frances A. Yates, *John Florio, The Life of an Italian in Shakespeare’s England*, Cambridge University Press, 1934, footnote 2 at p. 6). You can read this footnote in the preview of such volume, in

APPENDIX III

“The names of the Bookes and Auctors , that have bin read of purpose for the accomplishing of this Dictionarie, and out of which it is collected” (reference is made to John Florio’s dictionary “A Worlde of Wordes”-1598⁹⁸[The numbers, before any bibliographical reference of the list, have been added, for editorial purposes]).

1. Apologia d’Annibal Caro, contra Lodovico Castelvetri.
2. Arcadia del Sannazzaro.
3. Capitoli della venerabile compagnia della lesina.
4. Cento nouelle antiche, e di bel parlar gentile.
5. Decamerone o Cento nouelle del Boccaccio.
6. Del’Arte della Cucina di Christofano Messisbugo.
7. Descrizione del Regno e Stato di Napoli.
8. Dialogo delle lingue di Benedetto varchi, detto Hercolano.
9. Dialoghi della corte del’Aretino.
10. Dialoghi delle carte del’Aretino.
11. Dialoghi, o sei giornate del’Aretino.
12. Dialoghi piaceuoli di Stefano Guazzo.
13. Dialoghi di Nicola Franco.
14. Dialoghi di Speron Speroni.
15. Dittionario volgare & Latino del Venuti.
16. Dittionario Italiano e Francese.
17. Dittionario Inghilese & Italiano.
18. Duo volumi di Epistole di diuersi gran Signori e Prencipi scritte al’Aretino.
19. Epistole o lettere facete del Rao.
20. Fabrica del Mondo di Francesco Alunno.
21. Galateo di Monsignore della Casa.
22. Gierusalemme liberata di Torquato Tasso.
23. Georgio Federichi del Falcone & Uccellare.

<https://books.google.it/books?id=Qi8wAbnw4aIC&printsec=frontcover&hl=it#v=onepage&q&f=false> The date of 23 January 1552 is also confirmed by Luigi Firpo, in his preface *Giorgio Agricola e Michelangelo Florio*, in *L’Arte de’ metalli tradotto in lingua toscana da Michelangelo Florio Fiorentino*, edited by Bottega d’Erasmus, Torino, 1969, p. XIII.

⁹⁷ Michelangelo does nothing but change, in a different situation, the same concepts expressed by Ochino in his letter of 22 August 1542 to Vittoria Colonna (a letter well known among the Italian Evangelicals, just like Michelangelo); Ochino had decided not to go to Rome, for fear of being incarcerated and “*because [in Rome] I could not but deny Christ or be crucified*”. The entire text of this letter is reported by Ugo Rozzo, *I dialoghi sette e altri scritti del tempo della fuga, di Bernardino Ochino*, Turin, Claudiana, 1985, p. 123.

The equation between exile and death (here expressed by Michelangelo) also characterizes a famous piece in *Romeo and Juliet*, where Romeo strongly proclaims, addressing Friar Lauerence: “*Hence banished is banished from the world, And world’s exile is death. Then ‘banished’ is death* [Act III, scene I, v. 20-21] ...*Thou canst not speak of that thou dost not feel* [v. 65]”. It seems as if the Dramatist (just like Michelangelo) personally felt, on his skin, the terror of exile, perceived as death!

⁹⁸ The list is readable in the original edition of the dictionary in <http://www.pbm.com/~lindahl/florio1598/023small.html> Highlighted in yellow the texts concerning Pietro Aretino.

24. Gloria di Guerrieri ed Amanti del Dottor Cataldo-Antonio Mannarino.
25. Herbario Inghilese di Giovanni Gerardo.
26. Herbario Spagnuolo del Dottor Laguna.
27. Historia delle cose Settentrionali di Ollao Magno.
28. Hospedale degli Ignoranti di Thomaso Garzoni.
29. **Humanità di Christo del' Aretino.**
30. Il Cortegiano del Conte Baldessar Castiglione.
31. **Il genesi del' Aretino.**
32. I Marmi del Doni.
33. I Mondi del Doni.
34. **I sette salmi del' Aretino.**
35. La pelegrina, comedia di Girolamo Bargagli.
36. La nobilissima compagnia della bastina.
37. La diuina settimana di Bartas, tradotta da Ferrante Guisone.
38. La ruffiana, comedia.
39. La minera del mondo di Giouan-Maria Bonardo.
40. **La vita della vergine Maria del' Aretino.**
41. **La vita di San Thomaso del' Aretino.**
42. **La vita di Santa Catarina del' Aretino.**
43. **La P. Errante del' Aretino.**
44. La vita del Gran Capitano del Gioio.
45. La Tipocosmia d' Alessandro Cittolini.
46. La Zucca del Doni.
47. Le lodi del Porco.
48. Lettere Famigliari d' Annibale Caro.
49. Lettere Famigliari di Claudio Tholomei.
50. Lettere facete et piacevoli di diversi grand'huomini, raccolte da Francesco Turchi.
51. Le opere del Petrarca.
52. **Le quattro comedie del' Aretino.**
53. Le opere burlesche del Berni, e d'altri, Duo volumi.
54. Mathiolo sopra Dioscoride.
55. Opere di Senofonte, tradotte da Marcantonio Gandini.
56. Ordini di cavalcare del S. Federico Grisone.
57. Osservationi sopra il Petrarca di Francesco Alunno.
58. Piazza Universale di Thomaso Garzoni.
59. Pistolotti amorosi degl' Academici Peregrini.
60. **Primo volume del' Epistole o lettere del' Aretino.**
61. Ragioni di stato del Botero.
62. Relationi uniuersali del Botero.
63. Ricchezze della lingua Toscana di Francesco Alunno.
64. Rime piaceuoli di Cesare Caporali, del Mauro et d'altri.
65. **Secondo volume delle lettere del' Aretino.**
66. Sinagoga de' pazzi di Thomaso Garzoni.
67. Specchio di vera penitentia di Maestro Iacopo Passauanti.
68. Theatro di varij cervelli di Thomaso Garzoni.
69. **Terzo volume delle lettere del' Aretino.**

70. Tito Livio, tradotto dal Narni.

71. Tre volumi di Conrado Gesnero degli animali, pesci, et uccelli.

72. Vocabolario de las dos lenguas, Italiano e Spagnuolo.

APPENDIX IV

“The names of the Authors and Books that have been read of purpose for the collecting of this Dictionarie” (reference is made to John Florio’s dictionary “Queen Anna’s New World of Wordes”- 1611⁹⁹[The numbers, before any bibliographical reference of the list, have been added, for editorial purposes]).

1. Alfabeto Christiano.
2. Aminta di Torquato Tasso.
3. Amor Costante, Comedia.
4. Antithesi della dottrina nuova et vecchia.
5. Antonio Bruccioli nell’Ecclesiaste, et sopra i fatti degli apostoli.
6. Apologia d’Annibale Caro contra Lodovico Castelvetri.
7. Apologia di tre saggi illustri di Napoli.
8. Arcadia del Sannazzaro.
9. Arte Aulica di Lorenzo Ducci.
10. Asolani di Pietro Bembo.
11. Avvertimenti ed essamini ad un perfetto bombardiere di Girolamo Cataneo.
12. Balia. Comedia.
13. Bernardino Rocca dell’Imprese militari.
14. Bibbia Sacra tradotta da Giovanni Diodati.
15. Boccaccio de’ casi degl’huomini Illustri.
16. Botero delle Isole.
17. Bravure del Capitano Spaventa.
18. Calisto. Comedia.
19. Canzon di ballo di Lorenzo Medici.
20. Capitoli della venerabile compagnia della lesina.
21. Capo finto. Comedia.
22. Catalogo di Messer Anonymo.
23. Celestina. Comedia.
24. Cena delle ceneri del Nolano.
25. Cento novelle antiche et di bel parlar gentile.
26. Clitia. Comedia.
27. Commentario delle più nobili e mostruose cose d’Italia.
28. Contenti. Comedia.
29. Considerationi di valdesso.
30. Contra-lesina.
31. Corbaccio del Boccaccio.
32. Cornelio Tacito, tradotto da Bernardo Davanzati.
33. Corona et palma militare di Artegliería, di Aless. Capobianco.
34. Corrado Gesnero degl’animali, pesci, ed uccelli, tre volumi.
35. Dante, Comentato da Alessandro Velutelli.
36. Dante, comentato da Bernardo Daniello.

⁹⁹ The list is readable in the original edition of the dictionary in <http://www.pbm.com/~lindahl/florio/012small.html>
Highlighted in yellow the texts concerning Pietro Aretino.

37. Dante, comentato da Giovanni Boccaccio.
38. Dante, comentato dal Landini.
39. Decamerone, overo Cento novelle dell Boccaccio.
40. Decamerone spirituale di Francesco Dionigi.
41. Della causa principio ed uno del Nolano.
42. Della perfettione della vita politica di Mr. Paulo Paruta.
43. Dell'Arte della Cucina di Christofaro Messibugo.
44. Dell'infinito, universo et mondi del Nolano.
45. Descrizione delle feste fatte a Firenze, del 1608.
46. Descrizione del Regno o stato di Napoli.
47. Dialoghi della corte, dell'Aretino.
48. Dialoghi delle carte, dell'Aretino.
49. Dialoghi, o sei giornate dell'Aretino.
50. Dialoghi di Nicolò Franco.
51. Dialoghi di Speron Speroni.
52. Dialoghi piacevoli di Stefano Guazzo.
53. Dialogo delle lingue di Benedetto Varchi, detto Hercolano.
54. Dialogo di Giacomo Riccamati.
55. Dilologo di Giovanni Stamlerno.
56. Discorsi Academici de mondi di Thomaso Buoni.
57. Discorsi peripathetici e Platonici di D. Stefano Conventi.
58. Discorsi politici di Paolo Paruta.
59. Discorso di Domenico Scevolini sopra l'Astrologia giudiciaria.
60. Dittionario Italiano ed Inglese.
61. Dittionario Italiano e Francese.
62. Dittionario volgare et Latino del venuti.
63. Don Silvano.
64. Dottrina nuova et vecchia.
65. Duello di messer Dario Attendolo.
66. Emilia. Comedia.
67. Epistole di Cicerone in volgare.
68. Epistole di Phalaride.
69. Epistole di diversi Signori et Prencipi all'Aretino, duo volumi.
70. Epistole ovvero lettere del Rao.
71. Essamerone del Reverendissimo Mr. Francesco Cattani da Diaceto.
72. Eunia. Pastorale ragionamento.
73. Fabrica del mondo di Francesco Alunno.
74. Facetie del Gonella.
75. Fatti d'arme famosi di Carolo Saraceni, duo gran volumi.
76. Favole morali di Mr. Giovanmaria Verdizotti.
77. Feste di Milano del 1605.
78. Fuggi l'otio di Thomaso Costo.
79. Galateo di Monsignore della Casa.
80. Gelosia. Comedia.
81. Genealogia degli Dei, del Boccaccio.
82. Georgio Federichi del falcone ed uccellare.

83. Geronimo d'Urea dell'honor militare.
84. Gesualdo sopra il Petrarca.
85. Gierusalemme liberata di Torquato Tasso.
86. Gio: Marinelli dell'infermità delle donne.
87. Gio: Fero della Passione di Giesù Christo.
88. Giovanni Antonio Menavino, de' costumi et vita de' Turchi.
89. Girolamo Frachetta, del governo di Stato.
90. Girolamo Frachetta, del governo di guerra.
91. Gloria di Guerrieri ed amanti di Cataldo Antonio Mannarino.
92. Hecatommiti di Mr Gio. battista Giraldi Cinthio.
93. Hecatompila di Mr Leon-Battista.
94. Herbario Inghilese di Giovanni Gerardi.
95. Herbario Spagnuolo del Dottor Laguna.
96. Heroici furori del Nolano.
97. Historia della China.
98. Historia delle cose Settentrionali di Ollao Magno.
99. Historia del villani.
100. Historia di Gio. Battista Adriani.
101. Historia di Francesco Guicciardini.
102. Historia di Natali Conti duo volumi.
103. Historia di Paolo Giovio, duo volumi.
104. Historia di Persia, del Minadoi.
105. Historia d'Hungheria, di Pietro Bizarri.
106. Historia milanese.
107. Historia naturale di C. Plinio secondo.
108. Historia Venetiana di Pietro Bembo.
109. Historia universale del Tarcagnotta, cinque volumi.
110. Hospedale degli Ignoranti di Thomaso Garzoni.
- 111. Humanità di Christo dell'Aretino.**
112. Iacomo Ricamati, della dottrina Christiana.
113. Il Castigliano, overo dell'arme di Nobiltà.
114. Il Consolato.
115. Idea del Secretario.
116. Il Cortegiano del Conte Baldazar Castiglioni.
117. Il Furto. Comedia.
- 118. Il Genesi dell'Aretino.**
119. Il gentilhuomo di Mr. Pompeo Rocchi.
120. Il Marinaio. Comedia.
121. Il Peregrino di Mr. Girolamo Parabosco.
122. Il Terentio, comentato in lingua Toscana de da Gio. Fabrini.
123. Il Secretario, di Battista Guarini.
124. Il viluppo. Comedia.
125. I Marmi del Doni.
126. I Mondi del Doni.
127. Imprese del Ruscelli.
128. Inganni. Comedia.

129. Istruzioni di Artiglieria, di Eugenio Gentilini.
130. I Prencipi di Gio. Botero, Benese.
131. Isole famose di Thomaso Porcacchi.
132. I sette salmi penitentiali dell'Aretino.
133. La Civile Conversatione, di Stefano Guazzo.
134. La Croce racquistata di Francesco Bracciolini.
135. La divina settimana di Bartas, tradotta da Ferrante Guisone.
136. La Famosissima compagnia della lesina.
137. La Fiammetta del Boccaccio.
138. Lacrime di San Pietro del Tansillo.
139. La minera del mondo, di Gio. Maria Bonardo.
140. L'amoroso sdegno. Comedia.
141. La nobilissima compagnia della Bastina.
142. La Pelegrina. Comedia di Girolamo Bargagli.
143. La Dalida, Tragedia.
144. La Adriana, Tragedia.
145. La P. errante dell'Aretino.
146. La Regia. Pastorale.
147. La Ruffiana. Comedia.
148. La Tipocosmia d'Alessandro Cittolini.
149. Le aggiunte alla Ragion di Stato.
150. Le due Cortegiane. Comedia.
151. Le hore di recreatione di Lod. Guicciardini.
152. Le lodi del porco.
153. Le opere del Petrarca.
154. Le origini della volgare toscana favella.
155. Lettere di Angelo Grillo.
156. Lettere del Cavagliere Guarini.
157. Lettere del Cieco d'Adria.
158. Lettere di Prencipi a Prencipi, tre volumi.
159. Lettere di Stefano Guazzo.
160. Lettere d'Ovidio, fatte in volgare.
161. Lettere famigliari di Annibale Caro.
162. Lettere famigliari di Claudio Tolomei.
163. Lettere facete di diversi grand'huomini.
164. Lettioni varie di Benedetto varchi.
165. Lettioni del Panigarola.
166. Libro nuovo d'ordinar banchetti, et conciar vivande.
167. Luca Pinelli Giesuita, nelle sue meditationi.
168. Madrigali d'Allessandro Gatti.
169. Marsilio Ficino.
170. Mathiolo sopra Dioscoride.
171. Metamorphosi d'Ovidio, tradotte dall'Anguillara.
172. Morgante Maggiore di Luigi Pulci.
173. Notte. Comedia.
174. Novelle del Bandello, volumi tre.

175. Nuovo theatro di machine ed edificij di vittorio Zonca.
176. Opere burlesche del Berni ed'altri, duo volumi.
177. Opere burlesche di varij et diversi Academici.
178. Opere di Senofonte, tradotte da Marcantonio Gandini.
179. Oratione di Lodovico Federici, a Leonardo Donato, Doge di venetia.
180. Oratione di Pietro Miario all'istesso.
181. Orationi di Luigi Grotto, detto il Cieco d'Hadria.
182. Ordini di Cavalcare di Federico Grisone.
183. Orlando Furioso dell'Ariosto.
184. Orlando Innamorato dell'Boiardi.
185. Osservationi sopra il Petrarca di Francesco Alunno.
186. Parentadi. Comedia.
187. Pastor fido, del Cav. Guarini.
188. Petrarca, del Doni.
189. Panigarola contra Calvino.
190. Philocopo del Boccaccio.
191. Piazza universale di Thomaso Garzoni.
192. Pinzocchera, Comedia.
193. Piovano Arlotto.
194. Pistolotti amorosi degli Academici Peregrini.
195. Pratica manuale dell'arteglieria, di Luigi Calliadi.
196. Precetti della militia moderna tanto per mare quanto per terra.
197. Prediche del Panigarola¹⁰⁰.
198. Prediche di Bartolomeo Lantana.¹⁰¹
199. Prigion d'Amore, Comedia.
200. Prose di Mr. Agnolo Firenzuola.
201. Prediche di Randolfo Ardente.
- 202. Quattro Comedie dell'Aretino.**
203. Ragon di stato del Botero.
204. Relationi universali del Botero.
205. Retrattatione del vergerio.
206. Relatione di quanto successe in vagliadolid del 1605.
207. Ricchezze della lingua toscana di Francesco Alunno.
208. Rime di luigi Grotto, Cieco d'Hadria.
209. Rime del Sr. Fil. Alberti Perugini.
210. Rime piacevoli del Caporali, Mauro ed altri.
211. Ringhieri de' giuochi.
212. Risposta a Girolamo Mutio del Betti.
213. Rosmunda, Tragedia.
214. Sacrificio, Comedia.
215. Seconda parte de' Prencipi Christiani del Botero.
216. Scelti documenti a' scolari bombardieri di Giacomo Marzari.

¹⁰⁰ https://books.google.it/books?id=M32bNen-D64C&dq=panigarola+eretico&hl=it&source=gbs_navlinks_s
<http://www.eticopedia.org/francesco-panigarola>

¹⁰¹ <https://books.google.it/books?id=WZedzRuJBvEC&printsec=frontcover&hl=it#v=onepage&q&f=false>

217. Sei volumi di lettere dell'Aretino.
218. Sibilla, Comedia.
219. Simon Biraldi, delle Imprese scelte.
220. Sinagoga de' Pazzi, di Thomaso Garzoni.
221. Somma della dottrina christiana.
222. Sonetti mattaccini.
223. Spatio della bestia triumphante del Nolano.
224. Specchio di Scienza universale di Leonardo Fioravanti.
225. Specchio di vera penitenza di Jacopo Passavanti.
226. Spiritata. Comedia.
227. Sporta. Comedia.
228. Strega. Comedia.
229. Tesoro politico, tre volumi.
230. Tesoro. Comedia.
231. Teatro di varij cervelli, di Thomaso Garzoni.
232. Tito Livio tradotto dal Narni.
233. Torrismondo, tragedia di Torquato Tasso.
234. Trattato del beneficio di Giesù Christo crocifisso.
235. Tutte le opere di Nicolò Macchiavelli.
236. Vanità del mondo, del stella.
237. Vendemmiatore del Tansillo.
238. Ugoni Bresciano degli stati dell'humana vita: dell'impositione de' nomi: della vigila & sonno; e dell'eccellenza di venetia.
239. Viaggio delle Indie orientali di Gasparo Balbi.
240. Vincenzo cartari degli Dei degli antichi.
241. Vita del Picaro Gusmano d'Alsarace.
242. Unione di Portogallo & Castiglia del Conestaggio.
243. Vocabolario delas dos lenguas, Italiano & Spagnuolo.
244. Vita del Gran Capitano. Scritta dal Giovio.
245. Vita del Petrarca, scritta dal Gesualdo.
246. Vita della vergine Maria, scritta dall'Aretino.
247. Vita di Bartolomeo Coglioni.
248. Vita di Pio Quinto.
249. Vita di Santa Catarina. Scritta dall'Aretino.
250. Vita di San Tomaso, scritta dall'Aretino.
251. Vite di Plutarco.
252. Zucca del Doni.