**Who was PMA??**

in English: Peter Martyr of Anghiera

in [Italian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian_language): Pietro Martire d'Anghiera

in [Spanish](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_language): Pedro Mártir de Anglería

in Latin: Petrus Martyr Anglerius or ab Angleria

Born 1457 (possibly 1455) probably in Arona on Lake Maggiore not too far from Milan in north Italy. Anghiera is across the lake from Arona; PMA traced his origin (true or not?) to the counts of Anghiera and their "mythical domination of northern Italy" -- adds prestige.

His name references a Dominican monk of Verona who was murdered/martyred in 1252 and was canonized as a saint, i.e., St. Peter Martyr; this cult of St. PM was widespread in Lombardy (region around Milan) in the 15th century - St. PM's bones were in a chapel in Milan. So, our PMA named after this guy in honor of this saint.

PMA mentions relatives infrequently, but he did help out careers of two younger brothers: 1) Giorgio - PMA helped him become Governor of Manza and

2) Giambattista - PMA helped him enter service of Venetian Republic in official capacity; when Giam died, PMA helped secure future of his kids and wife; PMA helped a nephew too, Gian Antonio

in PMAs late teens, troubled times in Lombardy in politics, so PMA leaves for Rome at 20 yrs old - he was connected to Archbishop of Milan and bro of duke of Milan, so this assured him welcome in Rome

He studied in his early 20s with Pomponius Laetus, popular philhellene in Rome. This is the "age of the academies" and of the revival of classical learning (Greek & Latin, esp Plato & Aristotle, etc.) In Florence, the Medicis sponsor a Platonic Academy; Pomponius Laetus and buds start a similar Roman Academy in Rome

PL, PMA's professorr, was interesting guy -- known for dwelling "aloof in poverty"; that is he could have lived luxuriously, but didn't; held class in gardens and groves outside - Socratic style (asking questions of students until they delved deep in their own minds for answers); PL was also a bastard son of the house of Sanseverini - they didn't recognize him in his youth, but when he became famous, they wanted to claim him -- PL said too late, no thanks.

PL's Rome Academy, focused on Greek and Roman literature, art, and civilization, aggravated the some of those in the Papal hierarchy (Catholic Church) - church officials persecuted them, put them in prison; eventually released them when they realized PL was NOT trying to cause a schism in the church and was NOT part of a conspiracy; but the episode had a chilling effect under the rest of Pope Paul II's rule. Under the new Pope Sixtus IV, classical learning encouraged again.

PMA is one of the "intellectual nomads" that comes out of this kind of education. This group sometimes made fun of the papacy/church in a harmless way, but PMA himself was devoted to both classical learning and to the church.

Both the Latin and Italian languages are very popular in Italy among educated people at this time (1470s [& both earlier & later - "High Renaissance"])

PMA spends summer in Rieti near Rome with Milanese noble Bartolomeo Scandiano and Bishop of Viterbo; very impressed by the people he met, what they talked about, etc., -- PMA reports in his letters that this summer was like an intellectual awakening for him. (23 yrs old)

From 23 - 29 yrs old, PMA is in Rome and devoted to pursuit of knowledge, esp., deciphering inscriptions and the geography of ancient world; also serves as Secretary to Governor of Rome - spending time in the Italian city Perugia also; PMA gets reputation for smart, fun personality - people like being around him evidently.

In 1486, an embassy from Isabella and Ferdinand, the Spanish monarchs, arrives in Rome to the Pope. Inigo Lopez de Mendoza, the Count of Tendilla, is representing the Spanish monarchs. He invites PMA to go to Spain - place in royal court for him promised.

PMA considers; friends in Italy try to urge him to stay in Italy, but PMA is 30 and wants adventure, has ardent desire to see the world, wants to join the holy war in south Spain against the Moors, Spain is offering compensation, and Italy's political turmoil seems to be growing worse.... so he goes in 1487!

Good bud in Italy, Ascanio Sforza, makes PMA promise to report on info from the Spanish Court --- and PMA does so for years and years through his whole life.

Upon arrival, warm reception with Isabella. Spain with marriage of I & F is united and relatively peaceful in Aragon and Castille. Before union of I & F, things in Spain had been rough -- feudal nobles struggling for power, warring with each other, intrigue; pacificiation of these nobles was brutal. For I & F, Duke of Villahermosa burned their castles, etc, etc. - suppression of any who might resist royal authority was completed before PMA arrived

Isabella asks PMA to educate the courts' young - future leaders of Spain; he does, but asks to fight in the south -- in south Spain, Moors are losing control of region they had secured for more than 700 years --Granada, Baza, Almeria, Guadiz, etc under Moorish control

1489 King F leads assault on Baza - F is victorious - Moors fought bravely, defending their lives, liberty, property

Isabella was a t Jaen (near seat of war, just north of Granada) - sent daily encouragements to F - Moors surrendered in most places after fall of Baza - Moors also weakened by internal power struggle - Granada held out little longer under Boabdilla - Jan 1492 Granada finally surrenders - PMA discusses Granada action in his letters

Keep in mind Moorish civilization was among the most thriving at the time - advances in science and medicine - ahead of most of Europe in these areas - extraordinary architecture in Granada, etc.

PMA fought there, but realized his future lay in diplomacy, not as a warrior

Spain's victory in Granada made patronage of Columbus possible

PMA must've met Columbus in late 1480s

PMA stayed in Granada with Count of Tendilla who was appted governor (remember, C of T, is the one who convinced him to leave Italy for Spain) and with pal Talavera (1st archbishop of Granada)

PMA becomes canon (priest) and protonotary (a documents official) of the cathedral of Granada, but he starts to feel isolated -- peaceful country life not in his nature, wanted to be in the thick of things, back at the F & I's court --he writes to many people to get back there, but new confessor, Cardinal Ximenes (chief Confidante of King & Queen) is tougher to deal with and doesn't warm to PMA right away.

BUT, because Isabella is still concerned about the youth of the court (the sons "Procerum" = gen pl of the leading men) having an excellent education, PMA is called back; he gives a successful lecture at University of Salamanca (tough crowd - does well - offer him job - but he declines); he takes a post, like a Dean, at Valladolid, city where F & I's court is, and educates the surly, teenage nobles --in fact, gains their trust and does well. (PMA's sparkly personality evident, as it is through so many of his interactions and posts.) Regarding his post at this time, he wrote: Domum habeo tota die ebullientibus Procerum juvenibus repletam. ([In] every day, I have a house full with the beaming youth of the leading men (of the court).) He teaches the classics - Greek & Roman writers & philosophers (Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Horace, etc., etc.) Uses Latin regularly.

Back in Italy, Lorenzo the Magnificent (prime Medici in Florence!) has died. In Rome, the Borgia family unscrupulously ascends to power with a Borgia becoming pope (Alexander VI)

PMA writes to Borromeo (a pal in Italy) about Columbus' journey - PMA is the first person back in Europe to really broadcast the discovery of the "new world."

1497 PMA given diplomatic mission to Bohemia (where Czech Republic is today). Problem to solve: Ladislas II, King of Bohemia, is about to divorce wife Beatrice, daughter of King Ferdinand of Naples and princess of Aragon!! Beatrice is outraged by threat of divorce. PMA jazzed to go solve problem. But Pope Alexander VI (the corrupt Borgia) sides with Ladislas, so F & I cancel the mission. PMA doesn't go and is disappointed.

BUT 4 yrs later (1501), PMA is sent on embassy to Egypt by F & I. WHY? When Moors lost in Granada, many forcibly expelled; some stayed in Spain but claimed they were treated very badly, not on the terms of the peace treaty, were forced to convert to Christianity of suffer badly, etc. Sooo, in retribution, Christians in Egypt, the Levant, in the "Holy Land," were at the mercy of the Sultan and other rulers and were threatened with like treatment. PMA sent to negotiate their protection.

Stops in Venice along way. Brief visit but saw much, talked with important Venetians, delivered F & I's greetings/messages to Venetian senate, made good connections, treated well. Sails on Venetian trip, tempestuous voyage, to Egypt. Ventures along Nile, met by Tangriberdy (a former Christian, Spanish sailor from Valencia who was shipwrecked, taken captive, but eventually became an official (Grand Dragoman) to the Sultan).

Sentiment in Cairo among the people is very hostile to Christians and to PMAs purpose --they don't trust him --they believe Moors are being persecuted in Spain (indeed, some were, some weren't); the Sultan decides the hostile pressure of the people is too great and sends word for PMA to leave before they even talk! PMA refuses. They end up having a private meeting. PMA and Sultan scapegoat Jews as way to deflect attention from Moors and Christians --horribly prejudiced language in some of what PMA wrote reflecting on this aspect of the Egypt Mission (recorded in PMA work called *Legatio Babylonica*). What becomes a public diplomatic success is a personal moral failure.

PMA gets treaty from Sultan: assent of military chiefs to favorable attitude toward Spain (and they devise ways to calm down their populace), Christians permitted to rebuild and repair their sanctuaries in the Holy Land, taxes levied on pilgrims reduced and guarantees for personal safety of these folks is promised. Mostly religious concessions gained. Sultan is given guarantees about Moors in Spain and their safety. While text of treaty was prepared, PMA explores flora & fauna, sites and grandeur of Egypt. (Describes Sphinx, Pyramids, etc. etc in *Legatio Babylonica*) Public opinion shifts somewhat by time PMA leaves Egypt (given a farewell audience, gifts, etc.)

Lands in Venice on way home to Spain -- sought audience with the new Doge. PMA perceived that the French had more influence than Spain, wrote to F & I, before he received official authority to negotiate in Venice with respect to this issue, he tried to do so anyway. He was made to appear offensive and ridiculous (because he didn't have proper authority to negotiate in Venice) - French there denounced him as intriguer and spy from Spain. He escaped Venice secretly with help of friends and reached his native Lombardy (region around Milan) - kinsmen there, Borromeo, Trivulzio protect him.

Granted safe conduct across south France even though the Cardinal who granted it was verbally hostile. F & I not upset about Venice; thanked PMA for work in Egypt and granted him another title (and salary)

November 1504 - Isabella dies - plunges court and populace into mourning and crisis in government. Her body laid in cathedral in Granada. PMA accompanies. Returns to court of Ferdinand after. Political situation complex:

Dona Juana - reputation for being mentally/emotionally unstable (Juana the Mad) inherits crown of Castile (part of Spain that Isabella represented). Ferdinand, in accordance with Isabella's last wishes, Juana and Philip (her jerkish husband) to be the sovereigns (rulers) of Castile, with himself as regent. But F not especially popular with people of Castile.

Rumors that Philip is allying with King Louis XII of France! Ferdinand marries Germaine de Foix, a French princess, to prevent too much aggression from France. (Marriage alliances are powerful). F still has regency. To calm Philip, he also proposes to share power of regency. PMA tries to negotiate this, but it's rejected. Cardinal Ximenes also tries and also rejected. F decides to yield and left Spain for Naples. PMA remains with Juana (who likes him) so he can report to F what's happening. Philip suddenly dies!!

Juana broken even moreso ...won't let the corpse be buried at first. PMA urges F's return. He does so - when F lands back at Valencia, he resumed control of Spain unopposed. Juana chills a little; doesn't talk to many, but will talk to PMA.

THEN, F dies in 1516 -- the regency devolves to control by Cardinal Ximenes until young King Charles of the Netherlands can arrive and claim his rights to the throne. Charles eventually arrives; snubs X to show the Castilians he is in their corner (X is seen as supporting Aragon more perhaps). Young King Charles is ruled by his counselors for a while. PMA in background, observing. Eventually Charles shows favor to PMA by asking him to be ambassador to Constantinople to make sure the Ottomans don't intend to invade Europe. But PMA not so sure, sees the writing on the wall that this is a real threat, so declines the honor (claims his advanced age doesn't make it doable) and does not go.

In 1520, PMA is appointed historiographer (great salary) - he chronicles events, writes histories.

In 1524, King presented PMA's name to Pope Clement VII to be the abbot of Santiago on Jamaica (in effect, Europe's religious representative for Jamaica).

1526, aware that he was dying, he put his affairs in order and secured a decent ceremony for his funeral in Granada -- the people he entrusted followed through even moreso than he had requested. In his will, he bequeathed his property to his nieces and nephews.

PMA was the first historian of the lands that became the Americas, of Columbus, and of other explorers and historic figures in the Age of Exploration.

First person we know about to recognize the importance of Columbus' discoveries (and that they were not the 'West Indies' of the Pacific); present when F & I received Columbus at court. Wrote all about it to friends in the Opus E. Also dealt with questions of magnetic poles, certain calculations of longitude and latitude, the Gulf Stream, the mare sargassum, flora and fauna of Americas, anthropology of native Americans (customs, religion, governments, institutions, traditions); arrival of his letters eagerly awaited in Italy by some of the most prominent peeps of the Renaissance - they were read aloud during gatherings and dinners, etc.

WORKS - the full names are longer - these are abbreviated ways of referencing them:

**Legatio Babylonica,** Oceani Decas, Poemata, Epigrammata

(Babylonian Embassy - about his Egyptian diplomatic mission)

(Report of the Ocean, Poems, Epigrams)

**De Orbe Novo - Decades** (decas, decadis - report)

("Reports," 8 of them, published at various times, some together, some not "Concerning the New World" --these are the works that contain the information from PMA's correspondence with Columbus and other explorers:

* The first was devoted to the exploits of [Alonso de Ojeda](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alonso_de_Ojeda), [Diego de Nicuesa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diego_de_Nicuesa), and [Vasco Núñez de Balboa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vasco_N%C3%BA%C3%B1ez_de_Balboa)
* The second gave an account of [Balboa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balboa)'s discovery of the [Pacific Ocean](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacific_Ocean), Columbus' fourth voyage, and the expeditions of [Pedrarias Dávila](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pedrarias_D%C3%A1vila).
* Three appeared together at [Alcalá de Henares](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alcal%C3%A1_de_Henares) in 1516 under the title: *De orbe novo decades cum Legatione Babylonica*.
* The *Enchiridion de nuper sub D. Carolo repertis insulis* (Basle, 1521) was printed as the fourth *Decade*, describing the voyages of [Francisco Hernández de Córdoba](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco_Hern%C3%A1ndez_de_C%C3%B3rdoba_%28discoverer_of_Yucat%C3%A1n%29), [Juan de Grijalva](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juan_de_Grijalva), and [Hernán Cortés](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hern%C3%A1n_Cort%C3%A9s).
* The fifth *Decade* (1523) dealt with the conquest of Mexico and the [circumnavigation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Circumnavigation) of the world by [Ferdinand Magellan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ferdinand_Magellan).
* The sixth *Decade* (1524) gave an account of Dávila's discoveries on the west coast of [America](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Americas).
* The seventh *Decade* (1525) had collected descriptions of the customs of the natives in present-day [South Carolina](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Carolina), including the "Testimony of [Francisco de Chicora](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco_de_Chicora)", a Native American taken captive there; as well as those of natives in [Florida](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida), [Haiti](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haiti), [Cuba](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuba), and [Darién](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dari%C3%A9n,_Panama).
* The eighth *Decade* (1525) told the story of the march of Cortés against [Cristobal de Olid](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cristobal_de_Olid), (1488–1524).

**Opus Epistolarum**

("Work of Letters" - 813 letters of PMA that he sent to various Renaissance figures in Italy, Spain and elsewhere - he always kept a copy - published as an entire collection for the first time 4 years after his death, i.e., in 1530. Fewer than 80 of these letters have been published in English. They are letters dealing with contemporary events, and especially with the history of Spain between 1487 and 1525. The Opus first appeared first at Alcals (in Spain) in 1530; a new edition was issued by Elzevir at Amsterdam in 1670. (We have used this 1670 text.)