

A First Look into the Corpus of Humanist *Laudationes Urbis* on the Eastern Adriatic Coast

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Laudationes urbium Dalmaticarum

Presenting the corpus

Authors

Genres

Findings and observations

A digital collection

- ▶ 55 documents
- ▶ written between 1268 and 1608
- ▶ infrastructure: TEI XML and PhiloLogic
- ▶ <http://www.ffzg.hr/klafil/croala>

The best-known laudationes: the Quattrocento

- ▶ 1440, prose: Filippo Diversi (Lucca, c. 1390 -- post 1455), *Situs aedificiorum, politiae et laudabilium consuetudinum inclitae civitatis Ragusii*
- ▶ 1487, prose: Juraj Šižgorić (Šibenik, c. 1445--1509?), *De situ Illyriae et civitate Sibenici*
- ▶ 1495, verse: Ilija Crijević (Dubrovnik, 1434--1520), the "Ocelle mi, Ragusa" lyric poem

The best-known laudationes: the Cinquecento

- ▶ c. 1505, verse: Ilija Crijević, epic poem *De Epidauro*
- ▶ 1522 (published in Venice, 1525), prose: Vinko Pribojević (Hvar, d. after 1532), *Oratio de origine successibusque Slauorum*
- ▶ c. 1538--1551, verse: Ivan Bolica (Kotor, c. 1520--1572), epic poem *Descriptio Ascriviensis urbis*
- ▶ 1582, verse (published in Kraków and Venice): Didacus Pyrrhus (Ebora, 1517 -- Dubrovnik, 1599), *De illustribus familiis quae hodie Rhacusae exstant ad amplissimum Senatum elegia*

Cities in seven best-known laudationes



A working definition of laudatio

Laudatio is any description (written in Latin) that can be interpreted as a compliment --- or a criticism --- of an Eastern Adriatic city.

What is included

The definition includes topographies, such as:

- ▶ Flavio Biondo, Istria (*Italia illustrata*, 1448)
- ▶ Giacomo Filippo Forèsti da Bergamo, Dubrovnik (*Supplementum chronicharum*, 1483)

What is excluded

The definition excludes Croatian and Italian laudationes, such as:

- ▶ Hanibal LuciĆ from Hvar (1485--1553), "U pohvalu grada Dubrovnika" (c. 1520)
- ▶ Antonio Proculiano from Bar *Oratione al clarissimo m. Giovan Battista Calbo degnissimo rettor, et alla magnifica comunita di Spalato* (Venice, 1567)

The definition also excludes non-verbal material: communal seals, coats of arms, paintings and drawings; music, social rituals.

Chronology, trends

- ▶ 1409--1420 Eastern Adriatic (except for Dubrovnik) becomes part of the Venetian *Stato da Mar*
- ▶ 1423--1430 the first Ottoman-Venetian War
- ▶ 1435--1608 the majority of laudationes written
 - ▶ 1460--1525 a large number of laudationes written
 - ▶ 1525--1537 a gap (1527 Dubrovnik achieves its definitive independence from the Kingdom of Hungary-Croatia)
 - ▶ 1582--1600 another gap: peace in the Mediterranean

The following cities and regions are praised: Trieste, Istria, Dalmatia, Zadar, Šibenik, Trogir, Split, Brač, Hvar, Korčula, Ston, Dubrovnik, Kotor, Shkodër.

Dubrovnik: 31 texts. Split: 9. Dalmatia: 6, Istria: 3.

Cities and regions praised in the corpus.



Three groups of authors

- ▶ native citizens (including those who celebrate other cities)
- ▶ foreign professionals serving the cities
- ▶ foreign authors not professionally engaged in the cities they praise

Locals and strangers at the same time

- ▶ c. 1464 Raffaele Zovenzoni (Trieste) in an epigram to Jacopo Antonio Marcello compliments Split: *sacellum / Quod tenet Aspalatum delitiisque fovet*
- ▶ 1469 Juraj Šižgorić (Šibenik) honors Trieste
- ▶ 1475 Koriolan Cipiko (Trogir) admires Dubrovnik: *Patricii soli rem publicam administrant, plebs tantum suis rebus studet: de publicis minime curiosa est.*
- ▶ 1499 Juraj Dragišić (Srebrenica and Firenze) praises Dubrovnik: *hunc Senatū peritū hosque patritios uiros qui Platonis documento ita rem publicam administrant ita curis exterioribus uacant ut tamen philosophari nullatenus desinant*

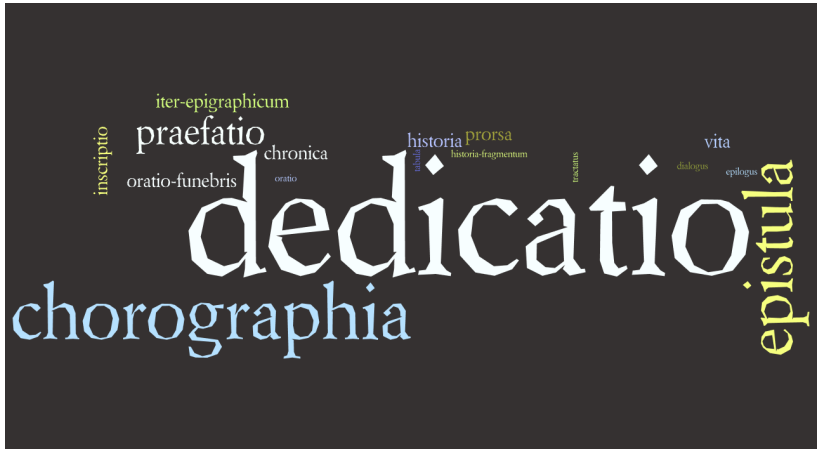
Locals and strangers 2, Cinquecento

- ▶ 1508 Marin Barleti (Shkodër and Venice) praises Dubrovnik (and uses Cipiko): *Ragusium altera Roma*
- ▶ 1538 Nikola Petrović (Korčula) praises Dubrovnik: *Ex quibus facilis conjectura resultat, hanc Vrbem uestram sanctissimis iustissimisque legibus fulciri: ob idque foelicem iuxta illud Biantis esse, qui optimam illam rempublicam asseruit, in qua omnes leges ipsas, ut Tyrannum pertimescunt.*

Poetry genres in the laudationes, by number of texts



Prose genres in the laudationes, by number of texts



Dedicatory letter

- ▶ Aldo Manuzio (1498, dedicating Aristophanes, early Christian poets, and Demosthenes to Daniele Clario from Parma): *inclyta ista urbs alumna virorum nobilium Epidaurus, cui nunc Rhacusae est nomen*
- ▶ Nascimbene Nascimbeni from Ferrara (1564, dedicating a commentary on Cicero's *De inventione* to the Senate of Dubrovnik): *splendor nobilitatis uestrae fulgentissimus, antiquitas gentis, celebritas reipublicae, res a uobis praeclarissime terra marique gestae, demum plurimae nobilium familiae*

Funerary oration: Ilija Crijević (1502)

- ▶ *nam patria est caput Illuriae in sinu Adriatico secunda (Venetis enim semper primas partes tribuo)*
- ▶ *Hoc tamen ex nostris annalibus et vetustatis memoria eruimus Epidauro a Vandalis eversa huc illos cives migrasse; mox etiam Romanos ad Illuriam recuperandam Bellum regem secutos.*

Laudatio and reality

- ▶ contrast with official reports compiled by Venetian *reggitori*
- ▶ praise of ancient past guarantees legitimacy and place in history
- ▶ lack of specifics is convenient

Cities gaining an identity

- ▶ Anton Rozanović celebrates Korčula in 1571, in a narrative of its successful resistance to the Ottoman fleet
- ▶ Vinko Pribojević praises Hvar in 1522: the city is at the same time an important Venetian harbour on the Levantine route and a scene of prolonged peasant and civic rebellion several years earlier (1510--1514)