

Bratislav Lučin  
*Marulianum*, Split  
***In epigrammata priscorum commentarius:***  
**sources of Marulić's commentaries**

Marulić's epigraphic treatise *In epigrammata priscorum commentarius* (written ca. 1503-1510) collects 141 ancient inscriptions from Rome, Naples, Florence, Milan and other cities on the Apennine peninsula and on the eastern side of the Adriatic; a special section is devoted to the inscriptions from Salona, of which there are 29. The author accompanied all the inscriptions with various antiquarian interpretations, interweaving the occasional moral reflection and making frequent reference to ancient historians, poets, grammarians and lexicographers. Those parts of the treatise in which he describes Diocletian's Palace and in which he melancholically apostrophises the glorious past of his native ground are particularly affecting: walking with his friend among the ruins of Salona, the Virgilian sigh comes to his lips: *Fuimus Troes...* Only the parts containing the description of the emperor's palace and the Salonitan inscriptions have been published so far.

IEPC contains, in fact, three kinds of texts: the inscriptions themselves, commentaries to them, and three paratexts (preface/dedication, preface to the Salonitan group of epigraphs – with the already mentioned description of the Diocletian's Palace – and the peroration).

In this paper neither the paratexts (which have always received most of the scholarly attention) nor the sources from which Marulić might have collected the epigraphic texts are discussed: my aim here is to establish as far as possible the sources on which Marulić relied in writing the explanations of the inscriptions he had collected.

Each of the 141 inscriptions is accompanied by commentaries of various length (from one or two lines to several pages of the MS): in them Marulić explains the epigraphic abbreviations, comments on the grammatical and orthographic peculiarities of the text, gives identification and additional information on persons and events mentioned in them, explains the facts of Roman religion, army, magistrates, jurisprudence, mythological and geographical data etc. In so doing he refers to some thirty Greek and Roman authors, which would lead to the conclusion that their works are the main source of his antiquarian culture. My investigation has shown that only for the smaller part of his references this is indeed so (imperial genealogies derived from Suetonius' *Lives of the Caesars*, chronological and historical data taken from Eusebius' *Chronicle*, as well as the works his continuators, St. Jerome and Matteo Palmieri). Indeed, the main source of Marulić's antiquarian and linguistic information are the works of humanist philology, viz. the voluminous dictionaries and encyclopedias of Giovanni Tortelli (*De orthographia dictionum e Graecis tractarum*<sup>1</sup>), Niccolò Perotti (*Cornu copiae*) and Giuniano Maio (*De priscorum proprietate verborum*), as well as the compendia written by Pomponius Laetus and ps. Fenestella (*De Romanorum magistratibus*). It is worthwhile to note that Marulić never once makes mention of these authors or titles in his text. We know for certain that he possessed them in his personal library, but so far the Marulić philology has not investigated his use of these sources in his own writings.

---

<sup>1</sup> Marulić's own copy, with his marginal notes, has been preserved.