

time što vezu između te priče i zbilje mogu razabrati samo oni koji su dobro upućeni (*naučni knjige latinske aliti dijačke*), a i njima se može dogoditi da u tome tumačenju zalutaju. Ali, Marulić taj rizik svjesno prihvaća, i spreman je da mu se suprotstavi.

To se vidi u Posveti. A iz nje jasno slijedi sav paradoks Marulićeve situacije: naš pjesnik nikako ne bi htio da se pomisli kako je njegovo djelo samo književnost, niti kako je samo iz književnih razloga napisano. Upravo zato, on stvara u Posveti mali poetički spis, u kojem izlaže načela epskoga pjevanja. Načelno i praktično i inače se u njega svagda mijesaju, a Posveta je slika i prilika toga stanja.

Upravo zato ne može se nipošto smatrati da su sva njezina značenja iscrpljena. Ovaj osvrt na taj legendarni tekst i nije imao druge svrhe do da upozori na njegovu važnost i na potrebu uvijek novog njegova tumačenja.

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JUDITH'S DEDICATION: AN ATTEMPT AT INTERPRETATION

The present interpretation of *Judith's* dedication rests on three moments: Firstly, it is largely an explanation of the motives of his literary embellishment of the biblical story. The epic's ornate style is of smaller interest – the poet asserts - but even as such the biblical story still has its deep religious meaning. Secondly, it points out the supreme importance of stylistic embellishments, because the poet obviously aims at an audience »acquainted with books in Italian or Latin«. The audience which he has in mind knows the plot well but is interested in its new literary rendition. Thirdly, the poet demands of the reader that he not take this poem solely as literature, while neglecting its didactic, biblical aspect because, although the heroine is a beautiful woman, the scope of the epic is not to entertain but to convey an allegorical message. Yet, this demand is deeply controversial: To take the epic as an allegory on the level of plot but not on the level of character. In other words, Judith's action should be taken symbolically, but the story about Judith should not. If this interpretation is correct, Judith is an allegory of Marulić's own literary activity, while the reader, sooner or later, ends up in the role of Holophernes.