

*B r a t i s l a v   L u č i n*

TEXTOLOGICAL AND LEXICOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTIONS  
TO MARULIĆ'S *JUDITH*

If we say that to establish a text means — in the first place — to establish its meaning, it would seem that we have just uttered a truism. Yet, it is only apparently so, for already at the level of literal meaning we are sometimes faced with alternative or, even, multiple choices in reading and understanding a text. Consequently, our first aim should be to identify these variants and to separate true from apparent meanings, in other words to make a reasoned choice. The criterion of such a choice is that of fidelity to the author's original conception, to the extant or hypothetical autograph, or even to »the image of the text« (C. Segre), which exists solely as an abstraction preceding the act of writing, and in which the author's intention is contained in an ideal, even if virtual, form.

*Judith's* autograph is lost. Of the three editions issued in the author's lifetime only the first one can be considered relevant in terms of textual criticism. That is why, here, the textological approach can not be based on a comparison of sources, but, primarily, on the analysis of the text itself, in other words, on the understanding of the laws of cohesion which rule it and which, *per analogiam*, can be used to resolve its obscure or controversial places. Namely, the laws of interior cohesion operate at all textual levels, from the spelling and punctuation levels to those of language (morphology and semantics) and those of style and versification.

The comparative approach could be of some use here, but only in its special variant: not in the form of classic textual criticism, but in the application of the principle of »interpreting Marulić by Marulić himself« (deriving, naturally, from the hermeneutic principle of Homeric philology). This approach works, first and foremost, at the semantic level. At this level the relevancy is revealed not only of the insight into Marulić's other Croatian texts, but also into his Latin texts, and even into his reading, or the »cultural text« inscribed into the author's text. The »cultural text« is given in advance and has precedence over the author's text, which makes it particularly suitable for a criterion of meaning reconstruction, and therefore, of the author's text itself.

After the capital step in *Judith's* textology completed by Milan Moguš and his edition of the epic in Marulić's *Collected Works*, it is nevertheless possible, based on the presented methodological assumptions, to propose further changes and improvements at the textual and lexical-semantic levels.

Almost all of the quoted changes have already been introduced into *Judith's* text and commentary in the book *Marko Marulić: Duhom do zvijezda (Through Spirit to Stars)*, edited by B. L., Mozaik knjiga, Zagreb 2001. We must, however, point out that similar changes have been made in other Croatian texts of the edition (especially *Susanna*), which will be the subject of another paper.