

JOHANNES BAPTISTA BRUSIN: *Inscriptiones Aquileiae* I – III. Deputazione di storia patria per il Friuli 20, Udine 1991–93. Pp. 1407.

Before one starts to use this edition, of great interest because of the importance of Aquileia and the large number of (in many cases not well known) epigraphical texts from the city and its surroundings, one should have a close look at the "premesse" of Maurizio Buora on p.p. xiii-xv (which seems to have been written quite a long time ago when the volumes were still intended to be included in the series "Inscriptiones Italiae") and possibly even a more close one at the "avvertenze per il lettore" by Claudio Zaccaria on p.p. 1257-59 (added, as it seems, at a late stage in the production of the book) which help the reader to understand many of the strange features of these volumes.

The author had already died in 1976, leaving a manuscript lacking e.g. a preface, and so the final editing (and the compilation of an index) was entrusted to M. Buora. Choosing the only reasonable policy, Buora decided to produce a "diplomatic" edition of the manuscript, eliminating only obvious errors and systemizing bibliographical references, but not altering in any way, or adding anything to, the original text. Although he does refer to this only in a somewhat vague manner, quoting (on p. xv) Le Roy Ladurie's description of a book as "having at least the merit of existing", Buora does not seem have been altogether satisfied with Brusin's work, and the reader's suspicions are fully confirmed after the perusal of Zaccaria's note, in which it is not only made clear that in general this edition represents something which would have been acceptable in the thirties, but that there are also mistakes in the readings and interpretations, not to speak of other weaknesses typical of an "opus imperfectum" (p. 1257).

All this, of course, soon becomes clear to the reader. But there is still more: although the unattractive title "Inscriptiones Aquileiae" (I would have preferred "Aquileienses") could of course be taken to mean that the collection includes many, but not necessarily all, inscriptions from Aquileia, I think I am right in suspecting that all potential users of this book will without any hesitation think of it as a corpus, especially as the number of texts included is as high as 3570 (and moreover the outward appearance of the volumes makes one think of a *monumentum aere perennius*). However, the truth is that many Aquileian texts are in fact missing (cf. the "comparatio numerorum" on p. 1263ff.). Now it is true that some of the texts collocated under the heading "Aquileia" in CIL V were actually found somewhere else (e.g., CIL V 735 in Verona, 852 in Trieste), and were only assigned to Aquileia, in most cases probably correctly, by Mommsen on the basis of various criteria (and one would of course wish to have had Brusin's opinion on this), but for instance CIL V 852, missing here, was found in Aquileia and was seen there by Mommsen. Besides texts already in CIL V, also many inscriptions published later in various journals have apparently been omitted; for instance, I do not seem able to locate the funerary inscriptions of a C. Vibius and a T. Curius, known to me from the not very accessible journal *Mittheilungen der k. u. k. Central-Commission* 17 (1891) 45 and 23 (1897) 79. (And of course one should not expect to find recently discovered Aquileian texts in this collection.)

The structure of this edition also presents some peculiarities. The inscriptions are given in five sections: Republican, Imperial, Christian, inscriptions from Grado, "Additamenta". Now the uses of the separation of the Christian inscriptions from the earlier ones are of course obvious, but the separation of the Republican inscriptions from the later ones is rather problematic, many texts not being exactly datable. The separation in these sections becomes even more problematic when one considers that in the section "Additamenta" the corresponding heading has acquired the somewhat modified formulation "tituli aetati liberae rei publicae vel Augusti tribuendi". This could possibly be understandable if this section only included a few texts found after the completion of the earlier sections, but in actuality the "Additamenta" contain material for the most part already appearing in CIL V, a fact which, by the way, seems to point to serious trouble at some stage of the compilation of this collection. Most of the readers not exactly familiar with local circumstances would probably also wish to find some explanation for the fact that the texts from Grado have been given a separate section, for they seem to fit well into the series of texts from Aquileia proper, and were in any case enumerated with the rest by Mommsen; moreover, other texts coming from the *ager* of Aquileia do not seem to have received a similar treatment.

It thus seems that everything is not all right with this edition. And although I would perhaps not go as far as Zaccaria who says (on p. 1258) that the readers are advised to check in each single case the reading of Brusin by having a close look at the original or at least at the photograph – a statement certainly not common in introductions to epigraphical publications – I must say that without the photographs this edition would be only of limited use, for the readings present so many mistakes and misunderstandings (although it is true that we are usually dealing only with small details); cf. e.g. nos. 49, 182, 380, 484, 1339, 1567 (*T. lib.* in line 5), 2797, 3253, 3771 (read *Eucarpia*; and where does all the text come from which does not appear on the photograph?); and Zaccaria, p. 1258. The commentaries are also usually less impressive; what is said on onomastic matters is in any case usually practically worthless (e.g. on no. 339, "gens *Campania* Latinae originis, cf. ..." [a reference to Schulze follows]) or simply false (e.g. on no. 40).

On the other hand, since the book does have photographs, brings together a large material previously scattered in publications of partly limited availability, and is furnished with indexes (on p. 1314, correct the cognomen of a certain Cn. Vibius in no. 1583 to *Quinctilis* – a previously unknown name), it goes without saying that this is, in spite of its shortcomings, a useful edition which should figure in any respectable epigraphical library. However, this does not mean that I do not feel that the job could stand to be done again.

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