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COLLECTIONS OF GREEK INSCRIPTIONS, A COMPENDIUM. FROM THE HUMANISM TO THE END OF THE 18TH CENTURY

■ Abstract

The aim of this paper is to retrace the history of Greek epigraphy through an examination of the research that fostered its birth and development. The division into paragraphs reflects an organization of the study on a chronological basis. Starting with the fifteenth-century interest in ancient epigraphy, the major collections of Greek epigraphs will be presented until the nineteenth century, when the *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum* was published. The main works and the names of the scholars associated with them, cornerstones of the discipline, will be mentioned throughout the discussion.

Keywords: Greek epigraphy, Humanism, corpora, history of Greek epigraphy, antiquarian studies.

Introduction

Although the birth of epigraphic sciences is generally traced back to Humanism, when Rome provided fertile ground for the flourishing of antiquarian studies, collections of inscriptions from much earlier times are known. We are aware of the existence of a manuscript dating from the 6th to 9th century AD, which contains the transcriptions of some inscriptions from Rome, Rimini, Ravenna, and Trier. It has partially come down to us through a copy made by Joseph Justus Scaliger, a French humanist active in the second half of the 16th century¹. However, this is not the only evidence of early medieval date. The largest collection of ancient epigraphs of the time, today part of the Codex Einsiedelnensis 326, dates to the 9th century AD². These compendiums are often structured as travel itineraries, enriched by descriptions of ancient monuments and thus also by the transcription of epigraphs. This feature was

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¹ G.B. DE ROSSI, *Inscriptiones Christianae urbis Romae septimo saeculo antiquiores*, II, Roma 1888, pp. 3-8; M. PETOLETTI, *Appunti sulla fortuna delle epigrafi classiche nel Medioevo*, «Aevum», 76 fasc. 2 (2002), pp. 309-323.

² PETOLETTI, *Appunti cit.*, p. 314, note 1. It is said to be a Carolingian copy of an older collection. The manuscript can be consulted in digital format: <https://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/list/one/sbe/0326>.

lost between the 10th and 14th centuries, in which we observe a marked decrease of interest in this type of ancient texts.

The 14th century was the period that saw the birth of the first sylloges. The oldest surviving one is part of the work known as *De iuris*, the identity of whose author is still debated. Sometimes attributed to Cola di Rienzo, Poggio Bracciolini or Nicolò Signorili, it is unanimously considered the oldest epigraphic collection of Humanism³. The different hypotheses of attribution to one or another author derive from the different dates attributed to the text⁴.

Ancient inscriptions were no longer collected for mere antiquarian taste, but with a clear intention of preserving their memory. For example, the *De varietate fortuna* by Poggio Bracciolini, whose catalogue of inscriptions is included in the sixth volume of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, has a declared documentary purpose in reaction to the destruction carried out by the citizens of Rome. Also, mention should be made of the collection of inscriptions from Rome compiled by Nicolò Signorili⁵ and the activity of the Florentine humanist Niccolò de' Niccoli⁶, who played a pivotal role in the teaching of classical languages, promoting their translation through the study of inscriptions.

The 15th century and the short season of travels in Greece

Ciriaco de' Pizziccoli, better known as Ciriaco d'Ancona (Ancona, 31 July 1391 – Cremona, 1452) was the first author to assemble, within the pages of his *Commentaria*, a collection of inscriptions from different sites in the Mediterranean. Although it was a wide-ranging research, aiming to describe several types of ancient monuments, Cyriac's work included inscriptions from Athens, Delphi, Argos, Sparta, Achaia, Boeotia, Epirus, Macedonia, Chios, Rhodes, Cyprus, Dalmatia, and Egypt. The epigraphs were often reported in the form of actual apographs, being detailed drawings that reproduced the paleographical details. Not surprisingly, Wilhelm Larfeld defined him as "the father of the new Greek epigraphy"⁷. The *Commentaria* were lost in the fire of the library of Pesaro and are only partly known from surviving fragments and the indirect tradition of those who were inspired – mainly by copying his drawings – by his work⁸. Because of the raging Turkish-Venetian wars, which

³ DE ROSSI, *Inscriptiones Christianae* cit., pp. 338-340, note 1.

⁴ Three copies of the text have survived, A. SILVAGNI, *Se la silloge epigrafica signoriliana possa attribuirsi a Cola di Rienzo*, «Archivum Latinitatis Medii Aevi», 1 (1924), pp. 175-183; M. PETOLETTI, *Testimonianze sulla fortuna di epigrafi classiche latine all'inizio dell'Umanesimo*, «Italia medioevale e umanistica», 44 (2003), pp. 1-26.

⁵ P. LEPORE, *Introduzione allo studio dell'epigrafia giuridica latina*, Milano 2010, p. 35.

⁶ I.G. RAO, *Niccolò Niccoli: il ritratto immaginato e un ritratto reale*, in *Immaginare l'autore: il ritratto del letterato nella cultura umanistica* (Firenze, 26-27 marzo 1998), a cura di G. Lazzi, P. Viti, Firenze 2000, pp. 185-197.

⁷ W. LARFELD, *Handbuch der griechischen Epigraphik*, I, Leipzig 1907, p. 30.

⁸ M. CICCUTO, *L'odeporica di Ciriaco d'Ancona fra testi e immagini*, «Annali d'Italianistica», 14 (1996), p. 181.

inevitably affected travel in the Mediterranean, Cyriac's work is often regarded as the last expression of Greek archaeology in the Renaissance⁹. Although provocative, this statement risks erasing the testimonies of many other travelers and scholars who, by travelling to Greece or buying its artefacts, contributed to the continuation of their studies.

Among the authors of this period is Giovanni Marcanova (Venice 1410/18-1467), author of one of the most extensive and systematically ordered epigraphic collections of the 15th century. The *Quaedam antiquitatum fragmenta studio Iohannis Marchanovae artium et medicinae doctoris Patavini collecta*¹⁰ was compiled using drawings from the works of Poggio Bracciolini and Nicola Signorili and copying some of the inscriptions harvested by Cyriac. Particularly fruitful for the success of his work must have been his closeness to the circle of German scholars, including the author of a small sylloge inspired by the *Commentaria* – Iohannes Hasenbeyn – and to the circle of Bishop Pietro Donato. The latter was the owner of some original Cyriac's drawings and manuscripts and was probably also the author of a manuscript that is now part of the Codex Hamilton 254¹¹. The list of *tituli* in Marcanova's work, better known in the latest edition published by Felice Feliciano, became part of the *CIL* and of the *Inscriptiones Christianae urbis Romae* (*ICUR*)¹².

Felice Feliciano (Verona, 1433 – Rome, 1479) was also the first to combine fragments from Cyriac's writings with some of the many copies then in circulation. His sylloge, in which the inscriptions were presented in geographical order, was published in 1464 and became part of the *ICUR*¹³.

In 1477 another epigraphic summa was published, entitled *Epigrammaton ex vetustissimis per ipsum lapidibus exscriptorum*. Larfeld attributes the authorship of this work to Michele Fabrizio Ferrarini (Reggio Emilia, mid 15th century – Reggio Emilia, 1492), but both Scipione Maffei and – a century later – Girolamo Tiraboschi, attributed it to Felice Feliciano¹⁴. Instead, the manuscript C 398 in the Bibliotheca Reggiana, *Antiquarium sive Divae Antiquitatis Sacrarium*, can be attributed with certainty to Ferrarini¹⁵. Declaring himself a follower of Cyriac, he must have drawn much from Feliciano's work to the point of prompting Scipione Maffei, centuries later, to write: "I have found that Feliciano has also copied other collectors who followed immediately

⁹ The expression used by Luigi Beschi in the third volume of *Memoria dell'antico nell'arte italiana* is significant: "Greek Archaeology in the Renaissance was born and died with Ciriaco d'Ancona" (translated by Author). L. BESCHI, *La scoperta dell'arte greca*, in *Memoria dell'antico nell'arte italiana* 3, edited by S. Settis, Torino 1986, p. 319; L. CALVELLI, *Ciriaco d'Ancona e la tradizione manoscritta dell'epigrafia cipriota*, in *Humanistica Marciana. Saggi offerti a Marino Zorzi*, edited by S. Pelusi, A. Scarsella, Milano 2008, pp. 49-59.

¹⁰ A copy of the work is kept at the Bürgerbibliothek in Bern, codex MS B 42.

¹¹ The manuscript is currently kept in the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin.

¹² *CIL* III 1 XXIX, 272; V 1, 319-320, 426 ss.; VI, 1, XLII; *ICUR* II 1, 392-393. Please refer to a summary description in LARFELD, *Handbuch* cit., p. 35, note 6.

¹³ These are some Greek epigraphs from Corinth; *ICUR* II 1, 391.

¹⁴ S. MAFFEI, *Verona Illustrata. Parte seconda*, Verona 1731, p. 99; G. TIRABOSCHI, *Storia della Letteratura Italiana*, II, Milano 1833, p. 571; LARFELD, *Handbuch* cit., p. 36, note 6. Some of the epigraphs in the manuscript are included in *ICUR* II, 394-395.

¹⁵ The manuscript can be consulted in digital format: http://digilib.netribe.it/bdr01/visore2/index.php?pidCollection=Ferrarini:1&v=-1&pidObject=Ferrarini:1&page=indice.01_r.

after, and who are still little known for having remained unpublished, such as Gerolamo Bologni, Michel Ferrarini, and others”¹⁶.

The fact that this part of the century saw a sharp decline in the direct survey of Greek epigraphs, counterbalanced by an increase in sylloges assembled using known transcriptions, can be explained, as already mentioned, by contemporary historical events. The raging of the first war between the Venetian Republic and the Ottoman Empire (1463-1479) had forced a pause in travel between the territories of influence of one faction and the other, physically prohibiting travel to Greece. In fact, the main purposes for undertaking a journey to the East were mercantile traffic and pilgrimages to the Holy Land¹⁷. The most significant evidence of the impediment caused by the war can be found in a peace treaty stipulated in 1479 between the Venetian Republic and Sultan Mohammed II, which specifies that: “[...] *the exquisite and illustrious Signoria of Venezia is obligated to return to my Lordship all the castles and places taken away by my Lordship in this war, in the parts of La Morea. That men are free to go where they will like, with everything they own [...]*”¹⁸.

The resumption of trade and the free movement of people and goods in the Mediterranean, soon undermined by alternating conflicts at intervals of about thirty years, may have favored the resumption of travel to Greece and the autopsy study of inscriptions. The copy of a travel itinerary titled *Notitia itineris cuiusdam per Graeciam in lingua italica redacta, cum inscriptionum apographis*¹⁹, whose author was identified with certainty by Luigi Beschi as Urbano Bolzanio, dates to this period and has not yet been compared with other contemporary works²⁰.

The 16th century, age of great collections

The main feature of this period is the birth of the largest collections known up to that time, the result of systematic collections handed down from father to son. This is the case of the epigraphic collection of Alessandro Maggi da Bassano (Padua, 1509? – c. 1593), started by his family in the fifteenth century and comprising more than eighty inscribed artifacts, which remained the largest in the Venetian Republic for centuries²¹. According to Mommsen, Maggi was very active in obtaining epigraphic material from the region of Hispania, indirectly contributing to the CIL collections. More generally, Padua's collecting was marked by a large influx of Greek and Latin epigraphs,

¹⁶ Translated by author. MAFFEI, *Verona Illustrata* cit., p. 190, note 13.

¹⁷ A pilgrimage to the Holy Land was the cause of the passage of the notary Nicolò de' Martoni da Carinola from Athens, some forty years before Cyriac. M. PICCIRILLO, *Io notaio Nicola de Martoni. Il pellegrinaggio ai Luoghi Santi da Carinola a Gerusalemme, 1394-1395*, Jerusalem 2003.

¹⁸ M. SANUDO, *Le vite dei dogi*, critical edition by Angela Caracciolo Aricò, Padova 1989, pp. 140-141.

¹⁹ E. ZIEBARTH, *Ein griechischer Reisenbericht des fünfzehnten Jahrhunderts*, «Mettheilungen des Kaiserlich deutschen Archaeologischen Instituts», 24 (1899), pp. 72-88.

²⁰ L. BESCHI, *L'Anonimo Ambrosiano, un itinerario in Grecia di Urbano Bolzanio*, «Rendiconti Accademia Nazionale Lincei», 39 (1984), pp. 1-20.

²¹ G. BODON, *Veneranda Antiquitas. Studi sull'eredità dell'antico nella Rinascenza veneta*, I, Bern 2005, p. 32.

together with many other finds, such as coins – another field of interest of Alessandro Maggi – which make the Bassano lapidary the first of many such collections.

An important figure in the collection of epigraphic and other volumes was Gian Vincenzo Pinelli, the owner of a library set up in his own home and open to all the major scholars of the time. Unfortunately, only a few volumes of Pinelli's collection have survived, acquired after various vicissitudes by the Bibliotheca Ambrosiana in Milan²². Analysis of the notes on the folio of some of the manuscript sylloges has enabled us to ascertain their provenance from Pinelli's library; in order not to be too lengthy, here are three examples.

Codex P 65 sup. is dated to the 16th century and contains several Greek inscriptions that were later included in both the CIG and the IG²³. A note in the inventory notebook of the Biblioteca Ambrosiana states that some of the inscriptions were taken over by Casimiro Accursio and Agostino Valier, others by later authors. Casimiro Accursio, a name that is little known apart from the citation on Cod. P 65 sup., was the son of the famous epigrapher Mariangelo Accursio (L'Aquila, 1489 – L'Aquila, 4 August 1546), who is best remembered for having published critical editions of Ammiano Marcellino and Cassiodoro. He died prematurely while studying medicine in Padua (1563). Casimiro was a composer of epigrams and an expert in Greek and Latin, probably also dedicated to epigraphic studies²⁴.

As for Agostino Valier (Venice, 7 April 1531 – Rome, 23 May 1606), his profile as an epigrapher is more difficult to reconstruct. Partly because of the contradictory catalogue entry, the codex does not seem to have been as successful as, for example, C 61 inf. This can be deduced, first, from the fact that Mommsen did not mention this manuscript in any of his works, which cannot be justified by the scarce presence of Latin epigraphs in it.

Codex R 97 sup., whose total number of sheets is around three hundred, also comes from the Pinelli library. Of the few epigraphs contained in the manuscript, only one is Greek and is included in CIG and IG, transcribed in italics and with a Latin translation²⁵. The peculiarity of this text is the heterogeneous size of the pages, in which epigraphs are often repeated in different renderings, one of them nine times. It should be noted that neither the IGC nor the IG cite the manuscript as a source. The most redundant transcription is that of an epigraph from Corcyra, which appears in another text of Pinelli's collection, codex R 124 sup. The version that is given is enriched by a detail about its history that does not appear in the previous text. According to the author of cod. R 124 sup., the epigraph comes from Candia and was brought to Italy by Alessandro Reniero, who gave it to Giovanni Battista Ramusio. The profile of Alessandro Reniero, probably a member of the Venetian Renier family with properties in Crete,

²² For the epigraphic codices of the Bibliotheca Pinelliana, that are part of the Ambrosiana collection, see L. MONTEVECCHI, *Spogli da codici epigrafici ambrosiani*, «Aevum», 11 fasc. 4 (1937), pp. 504-602; L. MONTEVECCHI, *Spogli da codici epigrafici ambrosiani (continuazione)*, «Aevum», 12 fasc. 2 (1938), pp. 3-55.

²³ MONTEVECCHI, *continuazione cit.*, pp. 24-30, note 20.

²⁴ P. NAPOLI SIGNORELLI, *Vicende della coltura nelle due Sicilie, o sia storia ragionata della loro legislazione e polizia, delle lettere, del commercio, delle arti, e degli spettacoli (etc.)*, IV, Napoli 1785, p. 281.

²⁵ CIG II 1840; IG IX 1, 693.

cannot be reconstructed here. On the other hand, we are familiar with Giovanni Battista Ramusio (Treviso, 20 July 1485 – Padua, 10 July 1557), author of the first compendium of geography of the modern age and owner of a copious collection of inscriptions²⁶.

The 16th century was also the century that saw a considerable development of studies in Germany, for which the physician Hartmann Schedel (Nuremberg, 13 February 1440 – 28 November 1514) was the spokesman. Educated first in Leipzig and then in Pavia, where he studied both law and medicine, he was one of the greatest scholars of Ciriaco de' Pizziccoli's *Commentaria*. In particular, the inscriptions from the Cycladic Islands attracted his attention, so that they were not entirely lost with the rest of the work. Schedel's research was later taken up by the famous humanist Konrad Peutinger (Augsburg, 14 October 1465 – 28 December 1547), author of the first printed epigraphic collection of a global character, the *Inscriptiones Romanae*²⁷. However, the Dutchman Martin Smet, better known under the Latin name Martinus Smetius, was the most capable of compiling a complete epigraphic collection, including both Latin and Greek epigraphs. His work, entitled *Inscriptionum antiquarum quae passim per Europam, liber*, was published in 1588 by the Belgian scholar Justus Lipsius, under the charge of several curators of the history chair of the newly founded University of Leiden.

Even though some events forced Smetius to delay the publication of his work, which was done in a hurry, this can be considered as the most complete epigraphic collection of the period. The *Inscriptionum antiquarum* consists of two sections, a *pars prima* in which Smetius' handwritten epigraphic records are included, and a *pars secunda* in which second-hand epigraphic records that the author had received from colleagues are included. This unusual arrangement is due to the fact that the almost complete work was almost entirely destroyed in a fire, which forced Smetius to resort to descriptions that were not always accurate. A careful examination of the text reveals a certain lack of homogeneity between the two parts of the book, which a recent study has further emphasized²⁸.

The discussion of the sixteenth century concludes with the research of the Dutch Canon Stephan Winand Pigge, Latinized as Stephanus Vinandus Pighius (Kampen an der IJssel, 1520 – Xanten, 16. Oktober 1604). After moving to Italy between 1437 and 1555, he collected numerous epigraphic testimonies, especially in Greek, and later became librarian to Cardinal Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle. His epigraphic collection, *Inscriptionum Antiquarum Farrago, collecta atque illustrata per Stephanum Pighium: opus inchoatum absolutumque anno 1554 iussu auspiciisque Marcelli Cervini*, is kept in the Königliche Bibliothek in Berlin²⁹; it was to be published by Böckh in the CIG, but according to Larfeld this did not happen³⁰.

²⁶ T. VENERI, *Per convenienti rispetti. Osservazioni sulla presa di parola di G.B. Ramusio*, in *Quaderni veneti. Nuova serie digitale*, 6.2 (2017), p. 131.

²⁷ LARFELD, *Handbuch* cit., p. 37, note 6.

²⁸ G. VAGENHEIM, *Gli errori nel codice epigrafico di Martinus Smetius (1527-1578)*, in *L'errore in Epigrafia*, edited by A. Sartori, F. Gallo, Milano 2018. Retrievable online at: <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-01882228>.

²⁹ Ms. lat. fol 61h, Codex Pighianus.

³⁰ LARFELD, *Handbuch* cit., p. 37, note 6.

The German Philological School, the Court of Louis XIV, and other expeditions to Greece

The seventeenth century saw the continuation of the German tradition of studies, whose primacy in the field of epigraphy belongs to the Universities of Leiden and Heidelberg. We have already mentioned the former in relation to the work of Martin Smetius, but the latter is linked to a name no less important, that of Jan Gruter (Antwerp, 3 December 1560 – Heidelberg, 20 September 1627).

Born in what is now northern Belgium and known to most in the Latinized form of Janus Gruterus, he was the author of a sylloge considered the most significant of the century, the *Inscriptiones antiquae totius orbis Romani*. This two-volume work, published in Heidelberg in 1603, was so successful that it remained a cornerstone of the study of the subject until the publication of Scipione Maffei's collection in the 18th century. It gathers both Greek and Latin epigraphs, ordered by subject and transcribed together with a schematic drawing of the support, as in the epigraphic cards of Martinus Smetius.

The indexes were compiled by Joseph Juste Scaliger (Agen, 5 August 1540 – Leiden, 21 January 1609), also known as Giuseppe Giusto Scaligero, a French philologist of Italian origin who worked in Leiden after Justus Lipsius. The greatest merit to be attributed to Gruterus's epigraphic collection is that it paved the way for subsequent research up to the first half of the 18th century, to pass the baton to leading figures such as Scipione Maffei and Ludovico Antonio Muratori, who were among the main sources of August Böckh's *magnum opus*.

Following in the footsteps of Gruterus was the Florentine Giovanni Battista Doni (Florence, 30 November 1594 – Florence, 1 December 1647). Best known for his career as a musician, he was also interested in epigraphy, compiling a sylloge with more than six thousand entries. His work saw the light about a century after his death, having been published by Antonio Francesco Gori in 1731³¹. Although most of the inscriptions collected by Doni already appeared in Gruter's collection, his work was both an addition and an update.

The seventeenth century was also the century of the first epigraphic sylloge devoted entirely to Sicily. Until then, Sicilian inscriptions had only sporadically entered epigraphic sylloges, although they included many testimonies in Greek. The work of the German Georg Walther, or Georgius Gualtherus (Germany, ? – Syracuse, 1625)³², which went to press in Messina in 1624, included both Greek and Latin epigraphs without distinguishing between local and imported finds, but possessed an almost unique peculiarity for the period in question: it was compiled by viewing the epigraphs and therefore by travelling to Sicily in person. This is an aspect not to be underestimated, which is evident from the introduction; while Gruterus' work contains innumerable acknowledgements to those who provided him with many of the epigraphic cards that later became part of the corpus, *Siciliae obiacentiumq. insular. et Bruttiorum antiquae tabulae cum animadversionibus* is, from this point of view, much more concise. Another

³¹ G. BINAZZI, *Inscriptiones christianae Italiae septimo saeculo antiquiores*, 6, Bari 1989, p. 32.

³² M. SILVESTRI, *Le epigrafi romane di Canosa*, Bari 1990, p. 159.

peculiar aspect is the way in which the epigraphs are presented, preferring a geographical approach to the typological connections, which better suits the kaleidoscopic context of the island³³. Gualtherus' sylloge was therefore the first large collection of Sicilian inscriptions, a work as vast as it was difficult to complete, an element that can be deduced from the final part of the title given to the work "*cum animadversionibus*". Despite this, it is a fundamental piece of work for both Greek and Latin epigraphic studies, to which both Gabriele Lancillotto Castelli Prince of Torremuzza and Ludovico Antonio Muratori, discussed in the next paragraph, will refer.

Moving on to the second part of this overview of the seventeenth century, we will address the entry of French research into the field of Greek epigraphy. One of the few European travellers who had the opportunity to visit Greece in the seventeenth century was Charles-Marie-François Olier (Paris, 1635 – ?, 1685), Marquis of Nointel, who was part of the court of Louis XIV as ambassador to Sultan Muhammad IV. During his stay in Athens, Olier was able to explore previously inaccessible places, which led him to discover the epigraph with the list of the fallen of the Erechtheid tribe, still known today as the Nointel Marble³⁴.

At the same time, the first institution for the research and promotion of epigraphy was founded in France, the *Académie Royale des Inscriptions et Médailles*, founded by Louis XIV at the suggestion of the finance minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert. Founded in 1663 with the aim of finding works of art to add to the king's private collection, on his death (1715) it changed its name to *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, keeping alive the interest in antiquarianism: the season of collecting was far from over.

Except for those who were able to undertake trips to Greece, such as Olier of Nointel, the last European explorer on Greek soil was Ciriaco de' Pizziccolli. Research was resumed by the French physician Jacques Spon (Lyon, 1647 – Vevey, 25 December 1685) and the English clergyman George Wheler (20 January 1651 – 15 January 1724), whose voyage led to the creation of a work in three volumes – the third of which was entirely devoted to inscriptions – entitled *Voyage d'Italie, de Dalmatie, de Grèce, et du Levant: fait aux années 1675 et 1676*. The importance given to epigraphy, now understood as one of the categories of archaeology, can be seen in another of Spon's works, the *Miscellanea eruditae antiquitatis*. It contained more than 130 transcriptions translated into Latin and with commentary by the author, a work of great scientific value that helped to spread a new understanding of Greek epigraphy³⁵. Although the political situation in Greece was not the best, and despite the state of profound neglect in which the ancient remains lay, Wheler's six-volume work *Journey Into Greece* was published in the same years. Dedicated to Charles II of England, to

³³ S. DE VIDO, *Corpora epigrafici siciliani da Guatherus a Kaibel*, in *Sicilia Epigraphica. Atti del convegno internazionale (Erice, 15-18 ottobre 1998)*, *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, Serie IV, Quaderni 1, edited by M.I. Gulletta, Pisa 1999, p. 230.

³⁴ Now in the Musée du Louvre, it's dated 459 BC and refers to military campaigns in Cyprus, Egypt, Phoenicia, Halieis, Aegina and Megara. R. OSBORNE, P.J. RHODES, *Greek Historical Inscriptions. 478-404 BC*, Oxford 2017, pp. 54-62.

³⁵ The tenth chapter of the volume contains Greek epigraphs on marble, J. SPON, *Miscellanea eruditae antiquitatis sive supplementi gruteriani. Liber primus*, Frankfurt-Venezia 1679, p. 315.

whom the author denounces the difficult reality he encountered, in it epigraphy takes on a new meaning, becoming a tool of fundamental importance for the recognition of important ancient cities such as, for example, Amphissa³⁶.

In addition to expeditions to Greece, the turn of the century also saw the birth of research in the Levant. The establishment in 1661 of a new constitution of the *Levant Company of Turkey Merchants* (founded in 1582), which allowed shipping from England to the Ottoman Empire, propitiated the start of research in the East. The most important site to benefit from this was Palmyra, whose antiquities were published in 1696 in Adebnego Seller's *The Antiquities of Palmyra with an Appendix of Critical Observations and Commentary on the Inscriptions* (1696). The corpus of Palmyrene inscriptions, whose potential was then understood, was published two years later by Edward Bernard and Thomas Smith in *Inscriptiones Graecae Palmyrenorum* (1698).

The 18th century, the Society of Dilettanti and the role of Scipione Maffei

As part of the research initiated by the 'new' *Levant Company of Turkey Merchants*, the practice of sending scholars to make reproductions of Asian epigraphs was consolidated, and among them Edmund Chisull (1671-1733) stood out³⁷. He kept a diary of the inscriptions he encountered during his travels, publishing on his return to England the *Antiquitates Asiaticae christianam aeram antecedentes* (1728), fundamental in that they were accompanied by commentary.

At the same time the French also began to send scholars to the East, in this case under the patronage of the *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*. The main purpose of these expeditions was to recover the numerous Constantinopolitan manuscripts after receiving the approval of the Ottoman authorities, but on their arrival the French found that few libraries were still intact.

The antiquarian attention then shifted to Greece, and in particular to Attica, the Peloponnese and the Cyclades islands, mainly with the aim of detecting ancient architecture and inscriptions.

The inscriptions collected by the abbot Michel Fourmont (28 September 1690 – 5 February 1746), mainly from the area of Sparta, were transcribed and published some time later by the Berliner Immanuel Bekker (1785-1871)³⁸. Contemporary and later critics were not always in favor of Fourmont's work, especially in view of the dubious authenticity of some transcriptions. The most authoritative criticism was that of August Böckh, who, in compiling his corpus, identified 16 of the more than 1000 epigraphs he copied as 'inventions'³⁹.

³⁶ The dedication states: «All, Sir, I presume to present You with, are some observations which I made in my travels into Greece; a Country once mistress of the Civil World, and a most famous nursery both of armies and sciences; but now a lamentable example of the instability of humane things [...]».

³⁷ Due to their drawing skills and inclination to study classical languages, churchmen were often employed, as in the case of Chisull.

³⁸ J.E. SANDYS, *A History of Classical Scholarship*, 3, Cambridge 1908, pp. 85-86.

³⁹ On the issue, see CIG I, 66-67.

In England, the eighteenth century saw the consolidation of two trends that actively contributed to the increase of knowledge in the field of epigraphy: the consolidation of public authorities for the preservation of objects of antiquarian interest and the initiation of privately undertaken journeys with a clear intention of social self-assertion. The concept of 'public responsibility' for antiquities began with the Arundel Collection at Oxford University, donated in 1627 by Thomas Howard XXI Earl of Arundel and published by Richard Chandler almost a century later⁴⁰. The combination of antiquarianism and public institutions was consolidated with the foundation in 1753 of the British Museum in London.

On the private side, the *Society of Dilettanti*, founded in 1734 to collect the experiences of noblemen who had undertaken the *Grand Tour*, was considerably important. In 1768, thirty-six men of letters founded the *Royal Academy of Arts* at the suggestion of William Chambers to King George III. They were soon able to raise enough money to launch the first research campaigns led by Richard Chandler, William Pars, Nicholas Revett and James Stuart.

The most famous work is certainly the account of Stuart and Revett's trip to Greece, the *Antiquities of Athens* (1762). The accuracy and precision of the design and the systematic nature of the collection of epigraphs in their context make this work one of the cornerstones of Greek epigraphy, despite its broader scope than epigraphic collections proper. Interest in antiquities soon spread beyond Attica to the coasts of Asiatic Ionia, the focus of a study by William Pars with Chambers and Revett, the *Ionian Antiquities* (1769). The years immediately following the foundation of the *Royal Academy* saw a development of research in that area too. The first expedition to Asia Minor was in fact organized by Chandler with funds from the *Society of Dilettanti*, after which the richest corpus of Asian inscriptions was produced, entitled *Inscriptiones antiquae plerumque nondum editae: In Asia Minori et Graecia, praesertim Athenis collectae* (1775).

Moving on to the research in Italy, the first name to be linked to the 18th century is undoubtedly that of Marquis Scipione Maffei (Verona, 1 June 1675 – Verona, 11 February 1755), who was affiliated with both the *Society of Dilettanti* and the *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*. Maffei's interest in ancient inscriptions – which he himself defined as 'falling in love' – was so strong that he was driven to collect as many epigraphs as possible, by any means possible, to exhibit them in the museum he created, the *Museo lapidario Maffei*⁴¹. The researched that he carried out for all his life, published ten years after his death, was the *Ars critica lapidaria* (1765). Maffei's intention was quite ambitious: he wanted to create a universal epigraphic collection that could update the now obsolete corpus of Gruterus and was motivated by the desire to contribute to the creation of a 'public' epigraphy. Given the advanced age at which Maffei dedicated himself to the study of epigraphy and the vastness of the

⁴⁰ R. CHANDLER, *Marmora Oxoniensia*, Oxford 1763, p. ii.

⁴¹ A. BUONOPANE, «Tutto son pronto a sacrificare per iscrizioni». La formazione del Museo Maffei tra amore per l'epigrafia e ossessione collezionistica nell'epistolario di Scipione Maffei, in *Le carte vive Epistolari e carteggi nel Settecento*, edited by C. Viola, Roma 2011, p. 284.

collection, he was unable to complete it despite the invaluable help of his collaborator Jean François Seguier, who had already compiled a list of over 2000 known Greek epigraphs⁴².

It is in another work, therefore, that we can best appreciate Maffei's interest for epigraphy. The *Verona Illustrata* is a work in four sections whose aim is to prove that inscriptions were a formidable tool in the field of historiographic research, attempting to settle the newly born rivalry between epigraphy and numismatics⁴³. By putting together data from stone inscriptions and those on 'medals', he also worked on drawing up a sort of history of Italian epigraphic research, providing interesting data especially on fifteenth-century studies.

Ludovico Antonio Muratori (Vignola, 21 October 1672 – Modena, 23 January 1750), a man of the cloth and universally considered the father of Italian historiography, worked in Modena in the middle of the century. His collection of epigraphs shared Scipione Maffei's primary intention of producing a work that was somewhat complementary to that of Gruterus, the *Novus thesaurus veterum inscriptionum in praecipuis earundem collectionibus hactenus praetermissarum* (1739-1742)⁴⁴.

Other attempts to replace Gruterus' corpus include that of Jeremiah Milles (1714-1784) and Richard Pococke (Southampton, 19 November 1704 – Charleville Castle, 25 September 1765), a work consisting of a mixture of epigraphs from different collections and inscriptions seen during their travels in Egypt and Greece, entitled *Inscriptiones Antiquae Graecae and Latinae* (1752).

Epigraphic science, now firmly established, is now following another trend, in some cases moving away from corpora and focusing on individual aspects of the subject. This is the case of works such as that of the abbot Jean-Jacques Barthélemy (Cassis, 20 January 1716 – Paris, 30 April 1795), who analyzed a financial epigraph starting from a faithful apograph on the first page of his *Dissertation sur une inscription grecque relative aux finances des Athéniens*⁴⁵, or such as *Le antiche iscrizioni di Palermo raccolte e spiegate sotto gli auspizi dell'eccellentissimo senato Palermitano* (1762) by Gabriele Lancillotto Castelli, Prince of Torremuzza (Palermo, 1727 – Palermo, 1794)⁴⁶.

The stay in Athens by Louis-François-Sebastien Fauvel (Clermont-en-Beauvaisis, 14 September 1753 – Smyrna, 14 March 1838), in a sense marked the resumption of research on the Acropolis, which had been inaccessible since the 1760s. Fauvel's first stay in Athens was on behalf of the French ambassador to the Ottoman Empi-

⁴² LARFELD, *Handbuch* cit., p. 52.

⁴³ C. MIZZOTTI, *Le epigrafi come fonti storiografiche nella Verona Illustrata di Scipione Maffei*, in *Scipione Maffei nell'Europa del Settecento. Atti del Convegno (Verona 23-25 settembre 1996)*, edited by G.P. Romagnani, Verona 1998, p. 680.

⁴⁴ L.A. MURATORI, *Novus Thesaurus Veterum Inscriptionum in praecipuis earundem collectionibus*, III, Milano 1740.

⁴⁵ IG P 375.

⁴⁶ G.L. CASTELLI, P. BENTIVENGA, D. BOXICA, A. BOVA, M. DELLA BELLA, G. GAROFALO, G. PASSERI, G. BATTISTA, D. SCHIAVO, *Le antiche iscrizioni di Palermo: raccolte, e spiegate sotto gli auspizj dell'eccellentissimo Senato palermitano, grande di Spagna di prima classe. In Palermo: Nella stamperia de' Santi Appostoli in Piazza vigliena, per Pietro Bentivenga*, Palermo 1762.

re, Marie-Gabriel-Auguste-Florent de Choiseul-Gouffier (Paris, 27 September 1752 – Aachen, 20 June 1817), an occasion that enabled him to come into contact with the latter's work, the collection of information on the most hidden monuments of Ottoman Athens entitled *Voyage pittoresque de la Grèce*. In addition to his interest in cartography, which enabled him to draw up a plan of Athens at the time, Fauvel was also active in the collection of epigraphic material⁴⁷, thanks mainly to the concessions he obtained from the Ottoman Empire.

The last decades of the 18th century were the scene of great changes, which nevertheless did not interrupt research. The fall of the *Ancien Régime*, under whose aegis the *Académie Royale des Inscriptions et Médailles* was born, and the climate of severe crisis that led France to change form of state three times in less than twenty years, certainly put a brake on antiquarian studies in this country. On the other hand, the activities of the English were flourishing, especially in the early 19th century, with the birth of topographical studies and the continuation of trips to Greece. Systematic collections of data, now divided more precisely into geographical areas, were those of William Martin Leake⁴⁸ (London, 14 January 1777 – Brighton, 6 January 1860) and Edward Dodwell⁴⁹ (Dublin, 1767 – Rome, 14 May 1832); but we should not forget the importance assumed in those years by studies on the Rosetta Stone, on display at the British Museum since 1802.

⁴⁷ See J. KROLL, *Dikasts' pinakia from the Fauvel Collection*, «BCH», 91-2 (1967), pp. 379-396; E. VANDERPOOL, *Some Attic Inscriptions*, «Hesperia», 31 (1962), pp. 399-403.

⁴⁸ W.M. LEAKE, *Researches in Greece*, London 1814; W.M. LEAKE, *Travels in the Morea*, London 1830; W.M. LEAKE, *Travels in Northern Greece*, London 1835-41.

⁴⁹ E. DODWELL, *Classical and topographical tour through Greece during the years 1801, 1805, and 1806*, London 1819.