

COROLEU, Alejandro: *Printing and Reading Italian Latin Humanism in Renaissance Europe (ca. 1470 – ca. 1540)*, Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014.

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Although Renaissance humanism had been flourishing for a good hundred years between the time of Petrarch and the time of Gutenberg, the printing revolution of the late fifteenth century gave a new impetus and a new agility to the processes of cultural exchange.

The focus of this book is the reception outside Italy of the works of Italian scholarship and creative writing in Latin. This central topic is successfully studied. The author then builds on his findings as a way of mapping the relations between printing, publishing and education (at a variety of levels) throughout Western Europe in the Renaissance. The universality of Latin means that similar phenomena are encountered in the German and Romance areas, and in both tiny local schools and great metropolitan universities.

The four main chapters cover Social Networks, Commentaries, the Use of Italian Humanism in the Classroom, and Italian Latin Humanism and the Spanish Vernacular.

In ch. 1, ‘Social Networks’ (ps. 10-23), Coroleu sketches the connections between printers, who sometimes imported and sometimes printed texts, and scholars. Some printers were linked to a university (ps. 67, 95), some were associated with individual scholars (p. 105). Some printers were themselves scholars (such as Manutius and Bade), and employed learned men as correctors (ps. 13, 49; see now Grafton (2011).

The authors discussed in chapter 2, ‘Commentaries’ (ps. 24-57), are Baptista Mantuanus, the Petrarch of the *Bucolicum carmen* (a work which cultivates obscurity and self-exegesis, p. 39), Filelfo, and the Poliziano of the *Silvae*. Humanist works appeared in individual editions, in the author’s collected works, or in genre-based anthologies (p. 48). The small cheap pocket-sized octavos of individual works, sometimes with extra leading between lines for manuscript notes, were clearly for the student (p. 12).

The documentary evidence for the reception of Italian humanism is to be found in the paratexts of early editions. These take two principal forms: the editor/printer’s prefaces (a selection is edited in Appendix B) and the variety of annotations called variously glosses, *lectio* (p. 43), *enarratio* (ps. 33, 43), *adnotatio*, *commentariolum* (p. 50). These range from mere explanation of vocabulary and word-order to the identification of realia and literary sources. For definitions of these terms Coroleu refers the reader to the work of Ann Moss and Paul White: I personally would have welcomed a typology of annotations, with terminology,

set out explicitly very early on in the study. Individual commentators differ in their approach: Murmullus criticized Bade for writing for children (p. 26); Coroleu contrasts the methods of Bade and Murrho (p. 35).

Poliziano, who figures so prominently in this study, emerges as a man committed to commentary. He edited numerous classical authors, including the highly allusive *Ibis* of Ovid. Echoing Petrarch, he intended his *Silvae*, four erudite poems on the works of Homer and Virgil, on agriculture as expounded by Hesiod and Virgil, and on poetry from the Sybils to Lorenzo de' Medici, to require explanation (p. 54): Sánchez de las Brozas thought «he had included in his poem every example of obscure interpretation which he knew» (p. 110). Indeed, Poliziano lectured on his own works (ps. 49, 53): a form of Renaissance self-fashioning overlooked by Greenblatt. As Coroleu points out, first fêted as an original writer, after the 1550s Poliziano was valued primarily as a scholar (p. 2).

Ch. 3 discusses 'The Use of Italian Humanism in the Classroom' (ps. 58-89). While some of these Neo-Latin works were intended for the classroom, others were aimed at the adult connoisseur. Vida (p. 68), Mantuan (p. 69) and Geraldini (p. 59) belong to the first group, Poliziano to the second. It was standard praise to say a work combined excellent style and excellent morals (ps. 15, 59-61, 72, 75, 79, 85, 86 etc.). In the classroom in particular and the world in general, a source of anxiety was the danger of paganism (ps. 39, 59, 61, 63, 86, 116-17) —sometimes negotiated by means of allegoresis— and (in Catholic countries) Erasmianism (p. 26). A third arena, neither curriculum nor connoisseurship, is what Coroleu terms *private study*, that is, additional courses given in school or university (ps. 22, 88). Within the student body, a distinction was made in one case between younger *pueri* and older *iuvenes* (p. 74). I think it is significant that in his portrait of the *grammaticus* (not cited here), Vives sees the grammarian as expounding a wide range of knowledge to a wide range of pupils:

Porro quid grammaticus profitetur? non solum litterarum et vocum peritiam, quamquam neque hoc omnino parum, sed intelligentiam verborum et sermonis totius, cognitionem antiquitatis, historiarum, fabularum, carminum, denique veterum omnium scriptorum interpretationem: Quid potest hoc maius vel amplius in studiis dici? (*De causis corruptarum artium*, II, ii)

[Tell me, what does the grammarian profess? Not only fluency with letters and words, although this in itself is no small accomplishment, but also the understanding of words and all discourse, the knowledge of Antiquity, histories, fictions, poems, and the interpretation of all the old writers. What greater or deeper can be said of studies?]

Like other humanists, Vives also taught a range of authors from Golden to Silver to Christian and contemporary (n. 241).

The final chapter, 'Italian Latin Humanism and the Spanish Vernacular' (ps. 90-122), will doubtless be of greatest interest for readers of this journal. It takes

in both Castile and Aragon, but the reader must be aware that its findings are informed by the conclusions of chapters 1-3: one of the strengths of this book is that the Peninsula is defined by reference to Trans-Pyrenean Europe. Appendix C lists editions and translations of Italian humanist works printed in Spain between 1473 and 1554.

Coroleu begins by surveying Catalan editions of the new works on grammar: Perotti's grammar, Fieschi's *Synonyma*, and Dati and Francesco Negro on epistolary composition: the latter was an essential practical skill for a civil servant. Although the connection with particular educational establishments appears not to be explicit, Coroleu draws a parallel with Paris, where «printing houses and academic institutions were clearly working in conjunction with one another» (p. 92). Long poems on Biblical themes were a favourite (p. 94): in Catalonia as abroad Mantuan enjoyed great success (p. 95). A focal point of this chapter is Pere Miquel Carbonell, notary to Alfons el Magnànim, and the owner of a library (including twenty incunables, some bought from the book fairs of Venice and Lyon) which is known to us. His interest in works on letter-writing was professional; he wrote annotations in his copies of poems by Mantuan and Sulpizio and imitated them in his own compositions.

In Castile, local presses issued Fieschi and Valla tailored to the requirements of local institutions in Salamanca and Alcalá (which had universities): and Burgos (which did not) (p. 101); see Sánchez (1992: 449-456). The pan-European taste for Christian Latin poetry was matched in Castile and Catalonia. The presence of Poliziano's *Silvae* is documented by a copy of the work (Alcalá, 1515) with manuscript annotations comparable with those studied above (ps. 103-04). In Alcalá there was a clear nexus of university, professor (Nebrija) and printer (Brocar) from 1513 onwards (p. 105), and Coroleu makes a strong case for connecting these manuscript notes with the great humanist. Poliziano was expounded at Salamanca by Hernán Núñez, «to a large crowd» (p. 107); he composed commentaries, now lost, on three of the *Silvae*. Professor at Salamanca, Sánchez de las Brozas published his edition of the *Silvae* in 1554, explicitly to accompany his rhetoric course. Like Núñez, he had catholic tastes: in addition to Latin humanist works, both edited near-contemporary and patently extra-curricular vernacular authors, respectively Mena and Garcilaso. Mention of the vernacular leads to Coroleu's final section, on imitation. He traces the influence of the *Silvae* on Joan Angel Gonsales and Antonio Serón in Latin, and on Fray Luis de León and Góngora in Spanish (ps. 112-13). Christian epic flourished: Mantuan left his mark on the Latin *Thalichristia* of Alvar Gómez de Ciudad Real and on St John of the Cross. Last but not least, *Lazarillo de Tormes* can be seen as a follower of Alberti's *Momus*.

In sum: although written with exemplary precision and clarity, this is not a book for the neophyte. The general reader might prepare him or herself with works such as Martin and Febvre's *L'Apparition du livre* and *Introducción al humanismo renacentista*, edited by Jill Kraye. The present work handles a rich

quantity of material from a variety of sources. It is an original and wide-ranging contribution which opens up new perspectives. Even those who think they understand the Renaissance will realize how much they have to learn.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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El gruixut volum del professor Jaume Medina aplega un conjunt de treballs entorn d'una temàtica en la qual és un expert indiscutible: la presència del món clàssic a Catalunya tot al llarg de la seva història. És en aquest sentit que els seus deu capítols es poden dividir en tres àmbits, per bé que tots tres van intrínsecament relacionats: en primer lloc, les traduccions dels clàssics —especialment a la Fundació Bernat Metge—; un segon àmbit consisteix a estudiar la presència en les lletres i en les terres catalanes d'alguns autors emblemàtics com ara Virgili, Horaci, Ciceró o sant Agustí; el tercer punt és, també un tema seu favorit, el de l'adaptació dels metres clàssics en la nostra poesia.

Com a traductor dels clàssics, Jaume Medina és plenament conscient del valor cultural que aquests aporten. No és casualitat, doncs, que el seu estudi sobre la intrahistòria de la gran col·lecció de clàssics grecollatins, la Fundació Bernat Metge, encapçali el primer capítol del llibre i que precisament, tanqui el seu llibre un altre capítol que duu per títol «Passat, present i futur de la traducció al català», convençut del treball ingent que tenim davant nostre per a incorporar autors de cultures forasteres, no només dels clàssics o de la Bíblia.

Altres set capítols del seu llibre s'ocupen d'Horaci, Virgili, Ciceró i sant Agustí en la cultura catalana. En realitat són articles publicats ja abans en altres revistes científiques, *Faventia*, *Els Marges*, *Ausa*, *Convenit Internacional...* En alguns casos es tracta de llargs estudis, plens de notes a peu de pàgina, riquíssims en dades i dates, que el nostre autor ha refet (sobretot els referents a Horaci i