



Angelo Poliziano. Appunti per un corso sull'Odissea. Editio princeps dal Par. Gr. 3069

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Angelo Poliziano. *Appunti per un corso sull'Odissea. Editio princeps dal Par. Gr. 3069.*

Ed. Luigi Silvano. Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2010. 384 pp. index. €50. ISBN: 978-88-6274-195-5.

Angelo Ambrogini, generally known as Poliziano (1454–94), taught at the Florentine *Studium* from 1480 until the year of his death. The notes Poliziano used as outlines for his lectures represent an important source to reconstruct his approach to ancient texts and teaching method; more generally, they shed light on the pedagogy of the classical languages and literatures in Quattrocento Florence. Most of Poliziano's notes on Latin authors are accessible through modern editions; conversely, his Greek lectures have hitherto attracted much less attention. Luigi Silvano's book contributes to our knowledge of Poliziano as a Hellenist and teacher of Greek by offering the first edition of the notes upon which Poliziano based his academic course on the first two books of the *Odyssey*, presumably taught between 1488 and 1490. MS. gr. 3069 of the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris, written by the hand of Poliziano himself, has transmitted these notes along with other material related to Poliziano's Greek studies; they consist of a sequence of *lemmata* taken from the Homeric poem, explained in Latin and with the help of quotations from Greek and Latin texts.

In the introduction, Silvano offers a very detailed treatment of the transmission, date, sources, and language of Poliziano's notes on the *Odyssey*. The description of the manuscript's content shows the extent of Poliziano's interests,

while the analysis of the sources conveys important information about the circulation of ancient Greek and Byzantine texts in Florence at the end of the fifteenth century. These notes also allow Silvano to gather some information about Poliziano's teaching at the *Studium*, although, as he remarks (lxxviii), they were only a framework and, as such, do not document Poliziano's actual lectures in their entirety.

The edition of Poliziano's notes on the *Odyssey* occupies most of the volume and includes the *praelectio* to the academic course, previously published by Silvano himself. In the preface (vii–viii), Silvano describes the difficulties he encountered in carrying out his task: deciphering Poliziano's small and heavily abbreviated writing, reconstructing the sources of Poliziano's commentary, and, most importantly, editing a text not conceived for publication and bearing traces of the author's continuous corrections, additions, and afterthoughts. Silvano, being well aware of the risks involved in this operation (cxv, n128), explains his method in detail at the end of the introduction (cxiv–cxii): he has preserved the author's orthography and punctuation and limited editorial interventions on discrepancies and misspellings. The critical apparatus has been devoted to the variants, corrections, additions, etc. introduced by Poliziano himself (misspellings and other orthographic peculiarities omitted in the apparatus, though, could have been listed as appendixes instead of constituting long footnotes). The outcome is a comprehensive, informative, and highly readable text that will hopefully set an example for similar editions in the future.

Four indexes (*lemmata* by line, *lemmata* in alphabetical order, proper names, and authors and works cited) facilitate the consultation of Poliziano's text, while a fifth index lists the manuscripts possibly used by Poliziano and/or mentioned in the text's apparatuses and in the introduction. An abundant and updated bibliography and eight plates reproducing pages from the original manuscript complete this book, which is also remarkable for the accurate layout and correct printing of the Greek-Latin text.

Poliziano collected an extraordinary amount of data and information about the language and content of the *Odyssey*, and often expounded them without a plan and logical order. Frequent repetitions, omissions, and obscure passages make it hard to read this "farrago of glosses taken from heterogeneous sources" (cxiv). Also, reading Poliziano's notes requires a good mastery of Latin and Greek and a deep knowledge of ancient Greek, late antique, and Byzantine literatures, as well as the classical and medieval Latin authors. Silvano's book guides modern readers through this process, thanks to its remarkably complete information and careful documentation. Classical philologists, Byzantinists, and scholars interested in the circulation of Greek texts and the pedagogy of Greek in Renaissance Italy will certainly find many hints to further research in the impressive amount of material that this book contains. It is to be hoped that, in the future, more works of this kind will contribute to widening our knowledge of the revival of Greek studies in the Renaissance.

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