

Luigi-Alberto Sanchi. *Les Commentaires de la langue grecque de Guillaume Budé: L'œuvre, ses sources, sa préparation.*

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Guillaume Budé's (1468–1540) *Commentarii linguae Graecae*, published in 1529 with Josse Bade in Paris, are undoubtedly one of Budé's major works and accordingly a central work of French Renaissance humanism. To Budé the Greek language was superior to Latin; his *Commentarii* are the result of vast reading and reflections on the correspondences between the two languages and were to become the point of departure for future Greek lexicography. From its publication the work was greeted with admiration, but also with some sort of incomprehension due to the baffling way the material is presented. Budé's *Commentarii* are written in the tradition of Lorenzo Valla's *Elegantiae linguae latinae*, Niccolò Perotti's *Cornu copiae*, Angelo Poliziano's *Miscellanea*, and Ermolao Barbaro's *Castigationes Plinianaes*. The work does not present its material using alphabetical entries, as in a modern dictionary; occasionally the material is presented in groups of thematically arranged entries, and the author regularly seems to use association as an organizing principle. In spite of these seeming disadvantages the *Commentarii* were reprinted three times as early as 1530. Budé himself worked for years on the second edition that appeared in 1548, annotating, as Sanchi shows, his personal copy of the *editio princeps*.

In the first part of the present study, Sanchi places Guillaume Budé within the intellectual framework of Greek studies in sixteenth-century France, discussing Budé's relations with scholars such as Gregorius Hermonymus, Janus Lascaris, Jacques Toussain, and Jean Chéradame. As Sanchi demonstrates, Budé finished the *Commentarii* somewhat precipitately, and his preface to François I^{er} shows that he dedicated the work to the king to persuade him to adhere to his cultural obligations. It must be understood in the light of the political and cultural situation that in 1530 led to the creation of the royal chairs of Greek and Hebrew — that again

may be seen as the first step of the founding of the Collège de France. Budé's preface was composed in Greek, but he also supplied the king with a French translation, edited by Sanchi. From chapter 3 and onwards, Sanchi offers a close reading of the work itself. He presents the evidence for Budé's revision in 1526/27–29 of the material he had compiled up until then, and for his work on the second edition that started almost immediately after the publication of the *editio princeps*. The *Commentarii* are divided into three parts: one containing entries on terms related to Greek law, the second dealing with verbs, and the third with other word classes such as the article and containing a comparison of Greek and Latin. The reader was able to find a specific entry with the help of the index, but then Budé's innumerable digressions on style, rhetoric, Cicero, or Christian theology (to name a few) would often lead him from there to multiple other matters. Sanchi is able to show that the *Commentarii* are essentially Budé's slips, containing excerpts from Greek texts, put into order.

The bibliography and the ten appendices, which take up about half of the book, offers the reader detailed information on Budé's library, the structure and content of the *Commentarii*, and the Greek authors quoted by Budé. Other appendices contain indices and editions of Budé's Greek preface to François I^{er} and of the Greek *postscriptum* with French translation. Some of the information presented in these appendices may seem slightly redundant. For instance, in the "Répertoire des auteurs Grecs cités dans les *Commentaires*" Sanchi indicates the first quotation from each author in the *Commentarii* and the complete number of quotations, while an index — of seventeen pages — lists all quotations of Greek authors in the work. This is just one example where an editor might have helped to present the material in a more economic and accessible way.

This minor point apart, Sanchi's book provides a wealth of information to anybody interested in the study of Greek in the sixteenth century and in the history of Greek lexicography.

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