

Cyriac of Ancona: Life and Early Travels. Charles Mitchell, Edward W. Bodnar, and Clive Foss, eds.

The I Tatti Renaissance Library 65. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015. xxii + 376 pp. \$29.95.

Ciriaco d'Ancona (1391–ca. 1452) is without doubt one of the most fascinating personalities of Italian humanism: his writings, travels, drawings, correspondence, and epigraphic collections greatly influenced fifteenth-century knowledge of classical, particularly Greek, culture. Ciriaco's life and works have aroused the interest of scholars in different fields of Renaissance studies, even though direct knowledge of the vast material he produced is limited, due to the very complex tradition of his texts. The initiative of The I Tatti Renaissance Library to devote a series of books to works by and on Ciriaco d'Ancona is therefore more than welcome. The material used was mostly gathered and in large part already published by Edward Bodnar (1920–2011) as a result of more than forty years of research. This is the second volume, devoted to Ciriaco's life and works until 1435 (xii), while the first one, published in 2003, concerned the period 1443–49, and a third one, about the years 1435–44, is planned (xviii).

The first section of the book presents the text and translation of the *Life of Cyriac of Ancona* written by his friend Francesco Scalamonti. It is a biography of Ciriaco from his birth to 1435, and it is the main available source for the life of Ciriaco in this period, since the first section of his diaries, known as *Commentaria*, is completely lost. It was not meant to be published in this form: in fact, its goal was to provide materials for a book to be written by Lauro Quirini. Scalamonti, as he states in his dedicatory letter to Quirini, drew his information in part from Ciriaco's mother and relatives and in part from Ciriaco's notes. The text is preserved in only one manuscript (Treviso, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS 2 A/1) and it was published in 1996 (Francesco Scalamonti, *Vita viri clarissimi e famosissimi Kyriaci Anconitani*, ed. and trans. Charles Mitchell and Edward W. Bodnar). The text and the translation of the *Life* in this book reproduces the 1996 edition with very small variations.

In the second section we find Ciriaco's early epistolary exchanges. It includes a letter to Pietro de' Bonarelli (1423), a letter to Leonardo Bruni on the Roman use of the titles of king and emperor (1432), and Bruni's reply (1433). These texts were also included in the abovementioned edition of 1996. The editor also decided to add two other letters addressed to Leonardo Bruni and dated 1436, concerning the *querelle* on Caesar and Scipio between Guarino Veronese and Poggio Bracciolini. The second one is a sort of short political treatise defending the superiority of the empire over the republic, which

caused the angry reaction of Poggio in a letter of 1438 to Bruni (published at 225–38). The editor in this case chose to discard strict chronological criteria, privileging instead a certain consistency in the content of the texts, which complements the political subject introduced in the letter of 1432. A third section presents *The King's Naval Battle*, a description of the Battle of Ponza between Alfonso d'Aragona and the Genoese fleet, written by Ciriaco in 1436. This text follows the *Vita* by Scalamonti in the manuscript of Treviso, but was excluded from the volume of 1996.

The appendixes present exactly the same texts as the 1996 book: a useful "Chronology of the Events in Scalamonti's Life," Ciriaco's captions for a series of drawings of Hagia Sophia, letters of Filelfo to and about Ciriaco, and a 1457 letter to Feliciano about Ciriaco (included because it is part of the Treviso manuscript). There are two significant exceptions. One is the exclusion of the comparison between some events narrated in the *Life* and a series of passages of the *Itinerarium*, a sort of short autobiography written by Ciriaco in 1441 in the form of a letter to Pope Eugenius IV. This text is planned to be published in the third volume of the series (xii, note 26), but the comparison of the two proper biographical texts of Ciriaco was without doubt a useful feature of the 1996 book. The other difference is the inclusion of a new edition of a text on the six forms of government written by Ciriaco between 1440 and 1447. It does not belong to the period that should be covered by this volume, but it has been included because of the subject, connected with the political letters of the second section. This is the most original contribution of the volume, since this text had only been previously published by Giovan Domenico Mansi in 1746, in an edition with numerous errors.

Stefano G. Casu, *University of California EAP, Florence*