

Stefano Martinelli Tempesta, ed. *Platonis: Euthyphron Francisco Filelfo interprete. Lysis Petro Candido Decembrio interprete.*

Il Ritorno dei Classici nell'Umanesimo. Ministero per i beni e le Attività Culturali 3. Edizione nazionale delle Traduzioni dei testi greci in età umanistica e rinascimentale 6. Florence: SISMEL Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2009. x + 219 pp. + 4 b/w pls. index. append. illus. bibl. €48. ISBN: 978-88-8450-357-2.

The book presents critical editions of the Latin translations of Plato's *Euthyphron* and *Lysis* by the Italian humanists Francesco Filelfo (1398–1481) and Pier Candido Decembrio (1399–1477), respectively. Next to thematic introductions and textual and historical explanations in Italian, Tempesta offers useful indices and an up-to-date bibliography covering relevant articles and books in Italian, German, English, French, and Spanish. The conscientious editions are accompanied by three critical apparatuses: one for variant readings in the Latin translations, one for those in the translated Greek texts (complemented by subsidiary appendices), and one for commentary on specific words and phrases, mostly referring back to the introductions.

Neither of the translations edited by Tempesta exerted a considerable influence on the tradition of Latin Plato-translations that followed it. Never printed in full, their circulation was limited: Filelfo's translation of the *Euthyphron* (dating from ca. 1430) is transmitted in only one manuscript, Decembrio's rendering of the *Lysis* (dating from the 1440s) in one more, none of them autograph. Filelfo moreover left his translation unfinished, while Decembrio's bears witness to his shaky knowledge of Greek. This begs the question of why the edition of these translations is desirable in the first place. Even though the reason for offering precisely these two renderings in a modern edition remains implicit, Tempesta justifies his work convincingly by pointing out that close studies of these Latin translations may

contribute to our understanding of both the dissemination of Plato's works in the early Renaissance, and the theory and practice of translation in early humanism.

In the introductions, Tempesta shows how Greek texts of the *Euthyphron* and *Lysis* circulated in the intellectual milieu of both translators, placing the relevant codices in the textual tradition of both dialogues. Tempesta's research into the Greek reference texts translated by Filelfo and Decembrio elucidates important facets of the translating practices of both humanists. While Decembrio probably used one *Lysis* manuscript for his translation, Filelfo rendered none of the two *Euthyphron* copies at his disposal directly. Despite the lack of detailed studies into the textual transmission of Plato's dialogue, Tempesta shows that, very probably, Filelfo created his own working version of the *Euthyphron* by collating the manuscripts at hand and adding emendations of his own (the readings translated are marked with asterisks in the Greek apparatus). This conclusion reveals an interesting difference with today's translating practices. While modern translators can rely on authoritative critical editions for their translations, for early humanists establishing the text could be an integral part of the translating process. After having identified the Greek reference texts, Tempesta examines the stylistic and linguistic characteristics of the Latin translations, confronting the translators' theoretical propositions to their translating practice. In these introductions Tempesta touches upon important issues in scholarship on translation, such as the translator's active intervention in the original text, and the ideas of authorship and authority implied by translating theories and practices.

Despite his accuracy and impressive erudition, Tempesta overlooked the only edition of Decembrio's *Lysis* translation published before his own, by Elena Gallego Moya in 2001. He corrects this unfortunate lacuna in a subsequent article (*Acme* 63.2 [2010]; <http://www.ledonline.it/acme/allegati/Acme-10-II-13-Martinelli-Tempesta.pdf>) in which he observes an important difference of interpretation of the text history between the editions. Gallego Moya considers the two manuscripts of Decembrio's translation as apographs ultimately dependent upon one single archetype. Yet Tempesta argues that they are derived from an idiograph that was adapted by Decembrio in the interval between the first copies that were made of it. He explains how these different interpretations affected editorial choices made by himself and Gallego Moya. As the *Acme* article also offers a list of *errata*, it constitutes an unmissable supplement to Tempesta's edition.

The book is meant for specialists in the field of both Greek and Latin philology and translation studies. Greek and Latin quotations remain untranslated. In my view, an introductory and/or concluding essay would have been welcome in order to confront, more systematically, the different approaches of both translators to their ancient model, and to address with more depth some of the important issues raised. Yet as it stands, Tempesta's book is a very carefully researched — and beautifully produced — contribution to both our knowledge of Plato's survival in the Renaissance, and early humanist translation practices from Greek into Latin.

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