

*Recolleste super Poetria magistri Gualfredi.* Guizzardo da Bologna.

Ed. Domenico Losappio. Gli umanisti; Collana di studi e testi 3. Verona: Fiorini, 2013. ix + 290 pp. n.p.

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Given the low rate of survival of medieval textbooks due to their material quality and usage, Marjorie Curry Wood's discovery of over 200 surviving manuscripts of Geoffrey of Vinsauf's textbook on rhetoric, *Poetria nova* (1200–02) (*Classroom Commentaries: Teaching the Poetria nova across Medieval and Renaissance Europe* [2010]), reveals the enormous influence the work had on European writing from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries. Largely because of its strong tradition of *ars dictaminis* and focused

interest on prose, Italian teachers of rhetoric were relatively late in introducing the transalpine textbook into their classrooms.

With his edition of *Recollecte super Poetria magistri Gualfredi*, Domenico Losappio publishes one of the four earliest Italian commentaries, that by Guizzardo of Bologna. According to Losappio, the exact years of composition of the commentaries of Guizzardo, Pace da Ferrara, Bartolomeo da San Concordio, and Benedetto da Cividale or da Aquiliea remain unknown, but the first three were clearly written between the end of the thirteenth century and the first years of the fourteenth century, while that of Benedetto da Cividale dates from the first quarter of the fourteenth. The four commentaries are significant not only for their interpretation of the *Poetria nova*, but also because they are among the first surviving commentaries on a classical or medieval author of literature and history in Italy. Surely Italian commentaries were written prior to the late thirteenth century, but apart from fragments, the earliest commentary known to me is Brunetto Latini's uncompleted commentary on Cicero's *De inventione*, composed in the early 1260s. As a result, these commentaries on the *Poetria nova* allow us to gauge the hermeneutical approach of Italian scholars at the outset of a learned tradition that would make Italians within decades the leading philologists in Western Europe.

Guizzardo's *Recollecte* survives in only one manuscript (Vat. Ottob. Lat. 3291 fols. 11–27) and consists of lecture notes taken by one of his students. The *accessus* to the *Poetria nova* clearly identifies the work as dedicated to the composition of poetry, but as Losappia points out, Guizzardo, first having distinguished rhetoric from dialectic, subsumes poetry under rhetoric and, as the commentary proceeds, he extends the analysis to letters and speeches. Although the editor defines Guizzardo's methodology of explication as *divisio textus*, I tend to agree with Woods that the approach is "eclectic," dividing the *forma tractatus* into discussion of the five parts of rhetoric and the six parts of rhetorical discourse.

The editor's approach to the text is justifiably conservative given that the text is the fruit of a collection of notes probably transcribed during the lectures. When parts of speech are omitted because they are assumed to be implied, the editor intervenes only when the omission can lead to misunderstanding. He also provides a detailed justification for establishing a consistent spelling throughout the text coincident with the usage of Northern Italy, the origin of the writer. Where lemmata are too highly abbreviated, Losappia extends them. The edition is eminently readable with excellent notes frequently comparing citations of the *Poetria nova* in Faral's 1924 edition of the work and referring to Guizzardo's sources. Among these was Horace's *Carmina*, a work put into circulation by Lovato de' Lovati in the previous generation.

I cannot agree that Benedetto da Cividale or da Aquiliea, one of the other early authors commenting on Geoffrey, can be identified with Magister Benedictus, *iuris peritus, canonicus Utinensis*, who from his title was likely a canon lawyer. While it is true that the lectures of Jacques de Dinant on the *Ad Herrenium* opened a new phase in deliberative oratory, it is important to remember that manuals of *ars arengadi* circulated

from at least the 1220s. These criticisms aside, Domenico Losappia's edition of Guizzardo stands as a model for editing the other three early commentaries on the *Poetria nova*, among the first responses to the new surge of interest in composing Latin literary prose and poetry.

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