

of extensive and not always extremely germane contextual information. This is a minor and perhaps ungrateful complaint, however, since Garrod's text is so impressively researched and conscientiously argued that even scholars working far afield from her detailed defense of the ongoing relevance of dialectic in the "New Science" will find much to appreciate here.

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*"Sine moribus errantes": Les discours sur les temps premiers à la Renaissance italienne.* Susanna Gambino Longo.

Cahiers d'Humanisme et Renaissance 129. Geneva: Droz, 2016. 394 pp. \$70.80.

This 394-page book consists of three parts, an extensive bibliography, and indexes. After a few acknowledgments thanking the small world of Neo-Latin studies, an introduction sets out to define the purpose of this book on primitivism through the ages and especially at the turn of the Renaissance. Reassessing the myth of the Golden Ages and the question of barbarism, Gambino Longo presents her choices of texts and author: Poliziano, Beroaldo, and Pontano, but also Bembo and Pietro di Cosimo, readers of Lucretius. The book focuses on the history of the reception of Lucretius but does not forget the reception of the great texts of the Bible, such as Genesis or Flavius Josephus and Vitruvius for the reception of *ars aedificatoria* in the works of Leon Battista Alberti. For the story of iconography, Gambino Longo studies the reception of Ovid and his *Metamorphoses* in the Italian Renaissance as a first step to the construction of a new humanism. Finally, the reuse of antic myths, from Plato for Ficino, Aristotle for Alessandro Piccolomini, and Cicero and Livy for Machiavelli, acts as the basis of knowledge in moral and political treatises in the Italian Renaissance. Reading the ancients serves to construct new and less mythological origins, according to these scholars, and gives them a historical dignity and reality. The last part of the book focuses on the invention, specifically Italian, of a European "noble savage," after the observation of Northern peoples in the Quattrocento by the Italian humanists. Gambino Longo defines this as the beginnings of anthropology even if some Quattrocento scholars like Pope Pius II or Beatus Rhenanus, for instance, do not hesitate to direct their knowledge toward the glorification of the Italian civilizing process.

A rich collection of illustrations supplements the subject of this book and shows how iconography plays a part in the theoretical definitions of the early modern period. An extensive bibliography is followed by indexes, and includes primary sources and critical works. In sum, the book is very strongly structured across four research directions and stresses the very gradual construction of a genuine humanistic identity, as classical tradition helps scholars to build new discourses but also new sciences and

myths in support of history. A great merit of this book also consists of bringing together so many texts from different authors in both languages, Italian and Latin, thereby reaching a wider audience of enlightened amateurs and of contextualizing Italian humanism within cultural studies of early modern Europe.

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*Exemplary Reading: Printed Renaissance Commentaries on Valerius Maximus (1470–1600)*. Marijke Crab.

Scientia Universalis 1; Studien zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte der Vormoderne 2. Münster: LIT Verlag, 2015. x + 318 pp. €59.90.

The subject of this book, the *Memorable Deeds and Sayings* of Valerius Maximus, does not get many readers today, since there is not much of a market for a volume that mines ancient history for moralizing exempla and wraps the results in a florid, labored style. Yet Valerius Maximus was very popular in the Renaissance—by Crab's count, he was printed 190 times by 1600 and translated into Italian, German, French, and Spanish. *Exemplary Reading* sets out to determine what Renaissance readers valued there by examining the Latin commentary tradition of the *Memorable Deeds and Sayings*.

Crab limits herself to the printed commentaries, since they had the greatest impact on the cultural life of their day. Of the twenty-seven known Renaissance commentaries, Crab concentrates on nine. Her approach is “essentially positivistic in nature” (6), based in the materiality of the printed book and using the paratexts as well as the commentaries themselves. To facilitate comparison, Crab asks a fixed set of research questions for each commentary: When and where was the commentary written, by whom, for whom, and for what purpose? How is it laid out, and how does it work in relation to its base text, to other commentaries by the same author, and to its sources? And how did it evolve into a text that was printed and then generated its own reception history?

The fixed structure of Crab's inquiry allows a clear set of generalizations to emerge. The first group of commentaries, those by Omnibonus Leonicensis (1482), Oliverius Arzignanensis (1487), and Jodocus Badius Ascensius (1510), sought to explain Valerius's text through a line-by-line commentary so that a relatively young audience would appreciate the value of his anecdotes for moral instruction. These didactic commentaries, however, were replaced in the sixteenth century by a second, more technical, specialized group of selective annotations by Stephanus Pighius (1567), Claudius Mitalerius (1576), and Justus Lipsius (1585). This second group focused on emending the text by correcting mistakes in chronology, prosopography, and genealogy.

*Exemplary Reading* represents an unusually well-timed entry into the scholarly discourse of our day. The interests of many classicists have turned to reception, and within reception studies as a field, more attention is being paid to commentaries and to the