

Manetti's enthusiasm is so overwhelming that some of his laudatory statements in praise of humankind eventually had his *De dignitate et excellentia hominis* added to the *Index of Forbidden Books* in the late sixteenth century. For the opposite reason, the same fate befell the well-known *De miseria humanae conditionis* by Lotario de' Segni (future Pope Innocent III), the very text that Manetti criticizes in the fourth and last book of his treatise. Readers can now find a concise yet clear and informative assessment of the Giannozzo-Lotario controversy in Copenhaver's introductory essay and in the many notes to his English translation. The latter is an excellent example of stylistic ability founded on solid scholarship. These two qualities make it possible for Copenhaver to render Manetti's Ciceronian (and often quite involuted) Latin syntax into both refined and precise English prose. Though less exacting, the two texts translated in the appendix to this volume (Antonio da Barga's outline of the treatise on "human worth and excellence" that Bartolomeo Facio would write shortly afterward, just a few months before Manetti addressed this same topic) are further testimony to Copenhaver's outstanding scholarship and the spirit of intellectual generosity pervading this entire book.

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*Greek and Latin Poetry.* Angelo Poliziano.

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Over the past century and a half, Angelo Ambrogini, known as Poliziano in homage to his birthplace at Montepulciano, has figured securely in the canon of fifteenth-century Italian poetry, Florentine humanism, and Neo-Latin verse. Less known as a Neo-Greek poet, he echoed and imitated epigrams from a Hellenic anthology that had been compiled by Maximus Planudes in the thirteenth century and was prepared for publication by his own rival in the fifteenth century, Janus Lascaris. As a Neo-Latin poet, he took inspiration from Catullus, Ovid, Horace, and Martial in notably accomplished elegies, odes, hymns, didactic and epideictic verse, and scores of witty epigrams. He also fashioned a poetic genre of erudite discourse, which he denominated as a *Silva* or dense, forest-like assemblage of ideas. These ideas deal chiefly with poetry and poets such as Homer, Virgil, and Statius, whose texts he taught in the Florentine Studio. Charles Fantazzi edited and translated his four major *Silvae* for the I Tatti Renaissance Library in 2004. Now, for this series, Peter E. Knox has edited and translated the rest of Poliziano's Greek and Latin poetry with stylistic elegance and the highest scholarly standards.

In confronting Poliziano's texts Knox faced a thorny problem because, except for the above mentioned *Silvae*, the poet in his lifetime published very little of his Greek or Latin verse. Most of the poems attributed to him reached print four years after his death, when Aldus Manutius commissioned two of the author's friends to prepare his works for the Venetian press in 1498. A subsequent edition appeared at Basel in 1553. In 1867, Isidoro Del Lungo rearranged the Aldine collection according to genre and added thirty-one texts discovered since the sixteenth century. Since 1950, scholars such as Paul Oskar Kristeller, Alessandro Perosa, Paolo Orvieto, and Francesco Bausi have located and published still other Latin texts.

Incorporating their scholarship and that of others, Knox returns to the Aldine edition as his principal source, correcting it when compelling evidence requires him to, and making a strong argument that its mixed-genre organization likely conformed to Poliziano's intentions. After the opening *elegia sive epicedion* (elegy or funeral lament) upon the death of a fifteen-year-old fiancée just before her marriage to an ally of Lorenzo de' Medici, the volume adopts the generalized title of *liber epigrammatum* (book of epigrams). 133 Latin poems in various genres precede fifty-seven Greek epigrams. Knox rounds them out with a commendatory elegy (for three centuries wrongly attributed to Janus Pannonius) addressed to the multi-talented humanist Bartolomeo Fonzio; an outlandish *Silva* (discovered in 1952) on the disease of scabies; twenty-nine other newly found epigrams; and four epigrams of dubious authorship. Of these non-Aldine poems, the 254-line elegy to Fonzio strikes me as the most interesting. The poem compares the best attributes of its subject to those of more celebrated scholars such as Ficino and Pico, public personages such as Federigo da Montefeltro and Ercole d'Este, and classical authors such as Epicurus and Lucretius. In the process there emerges an intellectual, social, and cultural portrait of figures who meant as much to the poet as they did to Fonzio.

Other poems likewise honor the obscure humanist Gioviano Crasso in both a Latin and a Greek epigram; a Latin ode in Sapphic stanzas to Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga of Mantua; and ten Latin epigrams largely in Catullan hendecasyllabic verses lambasting the clownish poetaster Mabilio da Novate. Lorenzo de' Medici enjoys pride of place as the recipient of twenty-two Latin epigrams (one of them shared with his ill-fated brother Giuliano). Of nearly five dozen Greek epigrams, seven address the accomplished scholar and poet Alessandra Scala, whom Lascaris wooed as Poliziano's amatory rival, but who in 1496 married Poliziano's poetic competitor, Michael Marullus. Knox's first-rate talent as a translator remains in evidence on every page, even and especially when the text of more than a few poems is unapologetically risqué. Kudos to Peter Knox for pulling no punches. And plaudits to him for superb work all around.

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