

Denis Thouard, Friedrich Vollhardt, and Fosca Mariani Zini, eds. *Philologie als Wissensmodell*.

Pluralisierung und Autorität 20. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010. x + 406 pp. index. illus. bibl. €99.95. ISBN: 978-3-11-022759-8.

Combining internalist and contextual approaches, historians are reevaluating the role of classical philology in the development of learning in the age of the Scientific Revolution. A new and important volume on the concept of philology as a “model of knowledge,” or perhaps as a “model of learning,” ranks as the latest significant contribution to the discussion of the status of early modern philology.

The collection is striking for the engagement with Anglo-Saxon and Italian literature in a volume that has no English or Italian contributions. Classics in the genre such as Edward Kenney and his antipode Anthony Grafton figure prominently in the background, as does the great tradition of Italian scholars such as Silvia Rizzo and Vittore Branca. I was, however, astonished to find only one reference (in Thouard’s introduction) to Benedetto Bravo’s key article on “Criticè” (in *History of Scholarship*, ed. C. R. Ligota and J.-L. Quantin [2006], 135–95). Few Renaissance scholars or scientists reflected consciously on textual criticism, and if we really want to

know what they were actually doing, we must, as Helene Parenty points out in her elucidating article on Casaubon's methods, be as good as the scholars themselves: we have to revisit all the sources they themselves had access to and do over their hard work.

The authors approach the question of the importance of philology as a framework of knowledge from quite different angles, although the aim of the volume was to investigate the relation between philology and natural science (2). One erudite (but much too long) article on *emendatio* traces the notion throughout early modern sources, and takes into account the question whether to consider *emendatio* as an art or a science. The discussion, very fruitful at times, sometimes moves too far away from the sources. Another very long article takes philology in its widest sense as hermeneutics and claims that no one has previously understood the epistemic complexities involved in Galileo's self-defense (the author refers to sixty-eight pieces of secondary literature in his footnote). The hermeneutics involved are indeed so complicated that they left me gasping for breath at what exactly the author was trying to convey. I preferred the more hands-on approach of Parenty on Casaubon or Klara Vanek's treatment of Johannes Woverius's treatise on polymathy. Other contributions are brief and rather sweeping (on philological method and natural science, by the eminent Eckard Kessler) or stray a little too far from the theme of philology (on Holstenius and the New Astronomy). Emmanuel Bury's excellent article on how Gassendi used the genre of a commentary on an ancient text (Epicurus) to expound atomist theories, and how Gassendi's scientific convictions influenced his textual criticism demonstrates that even down-to-earth textual scholarship could be guided by philosophical prejudices. In an interesting article on the approaches of the Catholic Richard Simon and the Remonstrant Calvinist Jean Le Clerc to the biblical text, Nicolas Piqué shows the surprising similarities in their aims to salvage the authority of the text by historicizing it, although Simon did so to stress the importance of Tradition and Le Clerc thought that historical context gave access to the meaning of the text. Annette Syndikus treats Gabriel Naudé's bibliography of political treatises with a view to his reception in German "Historia litteraria." For Naudé, the older the text, the greater its authority, and it was philology that had to establish the oldest source texts. Naudé's opinions on the usefulness of history strike me as representative of his age, or as rather commonplace. In this context, philology is basically understood as bibliography and the prescription of certain literature. In the fascinating contribution by Martin Mulso, philology is, as in Parenty's article, described as the taking of notes, but also as the circulation of bookish knowledge, by the addition of layer after layer of quotations from various sources in Johann Christoph Wolf's notebooks.

Taken together, the articles testify to the many meanings of philology, but the volume would have benefitted from an epilogue that would make these meanings explicit, preferably in chronological or disciplinary perspective. As it stands, the volume loses much of its potential strength because the articles ripple away from the theme, each in its own direction, leaving the reader behind with a measure of

confusion instead of a sense of synthesis. Nonetheless, many articles themselves would have survived or deserved to survive tough peer-review rounds in academic journals.

DIRK VAN MIERT

Huygens Institute for the History of the Netherlands, The Hague