

Kommentar zu "Priscianus vapulans" (Der geschlagene Priscian) und "Iulius redivivus" (Julius Caesars Rückkehr ins Erdenleben). Nicodemus Frischlin.
Ed. Christoph Jungck and Lothar Mundt. Nicodemus Frischlin: Sämtliche Werke 3:3.
Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 2014. 254 pp. €198.

The long-overdue attention paid to Neo-Latin philology in recent decades has begun to make up for years of neglect. Finally, a small but growing body of critical editions of major Neo-Latin works is becoming available to scholars of the Renaissance, shedding

much-needed light on literary and textual details that have often gone centuries without serious consideration. To this body, Christoph Jungck and Lothar Mundt have made a most welcome addition by publishing the long-awaited commentary to their exemplary dual-language edition of Nicodemus Frischlin's *Priscianus Vapulans (PV)* and *Iulius Redivus (IR)*, two of the most influential and creative humanist comedies to come out of the end of the sixteenth century.

Though the authors divide the plays between them, with Jungck writing the commentary on *PV* and Mundt taking the *IR* and the paratextual materials for both plays, their commentaries do share a broadly similar format. They both recognize and amply meet the need for serious philological scholarship on the original, and so gear their commentaries to the Latin text, and both begin each new act or scene with a helpful summary of what is to come. Perhaps most noteworthy, while each commentator does give a brief background on his play's performance history, each also approaches his play not as a performance, but rather as what Jungck calls the "kahler Text" — a phrase borrowed from the earlier scholarship of Erich Neumeyer and appropriated in a positive sense by Jungck. While this limited approach may not satisfy eager students of performance in the Renaissance, the commentators' incisive knowledge of their texts proves its validity for the philologist.

Jungck's line-by-line commentary is full of valuable information on the (often allusive and parodic) language used and the sources of the many texts, authors, and ideas alluded to by the playwright. From well-spotted and explained allusions to the *Epistulae Obscurorum Virorum* in the play's opening scene, to the minutely detailed analysis of medieval legalistic speech in the third act, Jungck's commentary elucidates the humor and depth of Frischlin's writing for modern readers in a way that has not previously been done.

Mundt begins his commentary by attacking head on a burning question for Frischlin scholars, who have long recognized that the fifth act was not added to the play until after its initial 1582 performance, but who could not agree on the actual date it was added, nor why. To settle this matter, Mundt provides the first-ever printed editions of letters from Frischlin to the Stuttgart authorities, in which Frischlin clarifies the reasons and timeline for his addition of a fifth act to incarnations of the play printed after 1585. These previously unpublished letters are woven into a simple retelling of the play's textual and performance history, which, taken together, is not only ingenious, but also massively important for bringing serious Frischlin scholarship to a wider audience. The line-by-line commentary that follows evinces the same depth of learning and attention to detail as that of the *PV*. Mundt also deserves special recognition for his effusively detailed commentaries on the paratextual materials for both plays, which are not limited to the dedications from a single edition, but encompass a number of important documents related to the plays and to Frischlin's life and career at the time they were written.

The commentaries are not without their minor shortcomings. Though some borrowings from Aristophanes — an exceptional and ubiquitous influence on Frischlin — are highlighted by the authors, the commentaries' German readers could

be better served by references to the Aristophanic parallels of scenes such as *IR* 4.1, which have been noted in the English scholarship of David Price. At the same time, broad allusions to the Aristophanic nature of various aspects of the plays, such as the scatology in the *PV*, are never fully substantiated. Since Hans Sachs, Rabelais, and many others may have influenced the excremental purgation scene in act 5, it may be a disservice to dismiss it as Aristophanic merely because feces is involved; some discussion of these potential influences would be most welcome, especially for students and scholars coming from a background in classics, and not familiar enough with the literature or ideas of the period.

These very minor criticisms cannot detract from the overall value of this work, however. Jungck and Mundt have provided a superb example of how close philological criticism can make unjustly neglected Latin texts accessible to a new generation of scholars. These commentaries are invaluable tools for anyone who wishes to study Frischlin's dramas, and they set a high bar for the future work to be done in Neo-Latin philology.

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