

A CORRECTION AND MORE ON GIROLAMO AVANZI'S LAST
EDITION OF CATULLUS (CA. 1535)

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SUMMARY

Some time around 1535 Girolamo Avanzi published an innovative edition of Catullus that is very rare today. The edition is known as the *editio Trincavelliana*, as it has been ascribed to the printer Giovanni Francesco Trincavelli; but I showed in the previous issue of *Exemplaria Classica* that the volume was printed in Venice by Bartolomeo Zanetti. However, I misidentified its dedicatee, who was Alessandro Farnese the Younger (1520-1589). Avanzi's preface contains two references that enable it to be dated between late May and mid-August 1535. The title page and the preface show that the volume was intended to include not only the poems of Catullus, but also those of Tibullus, Propertius and Gallus. Some time after the title page and the preface were set to print it was decided only to include Catullus, as is shown by a list of errata in the first gathering. The volume was probably completed in the second half of 1535.

KEYWORDS

Catullus, Girolamo Avanzi, early printed editions, codicology.

RESUMEN

Um 1535 veröffentlichte Girolamo Avanzi eine neuartige Ausgabe von Catull, die heute sehr selten ist. Diese Ausgabe wird oft die *editio Trincavelliana* genannt, da sie dem Drucker Giovanni Francesco Trincavelli zugeschrieben worden ist; aber in der letzten Nummer von *Exemplaria Classica* habe ich gezeigt, dass sie in Venedig durch Bartolomeo Zanetti gedruckt worden ist. Damals habe ich den Widmungsträger der Ausgabe falsch identifiziert; es handelt sich um Alessandro Farnese den Jüngeren (1520-1589). Das Vorwort von Avanzi enthält zwei Hinweise, die es ermöglichen, dies zwischen Ende Mai und Mitte August 1535 zu datieren. Die Titelseite und das Vorwort zeigen, dass ursprünglich geplant war, nicht nur die Gedichte von Catull, sondern auch jene von Tibull, Propertius und Gallus in den Band aufzunehmen. Aber irgendwann nachdem die Titelseite und das Vorwort gesetzt worden waren, entschloss man sich, nur die Gedichte Catulls in den Band aufzunehmen, was aus einer in der ersten Lage gedruckten Liste von Errata deutlich wird. Der Band wurde wahrscheinlich in der zweiten Hälfte von 1535 fertiggestellt.

SCHLÜSSELWÖRTER

Catull, Girolamo Avanzi, frühe Druckausgaben, Kodikologie.

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In an appendix to a review article that appeared in the previous issue of *Exemplaria Classica* I discussed the last edition of Catullus by Girolamo Avanzi¹. Just after the journal went to press, I was able to consult this very rare edition again at the Morgan Library in New York, and I saw that due to a case of homonymy I had misidentified its dedicatee. I apologize for this error, and thank the editors of this journal for enabling me to put it right. The identity of the dedicatee has some interest of its own as a reminder of the connections between scholarship and politics in Renaissance Italy; and along with an observation that I made about the physical makeup of this volume, it casts some more light on the origins of this mysterious edition.

The Veronese scholar Girolamo Avanzi, also known as Hieronymus Avancius or Avantius, was one of the most influential Catullan textual critics of all times². He wrote the first independent work of scholarship that was devoted mostly to Catullus and was not an edition or a commentary, namely the excellent *Emendationes* (written in 1493, printed in 1495); five years later he published a revised version, which appeared alongside a text of Catullus that reflected part of his proposals (1500); and he prepared two highly influential editions of Catullus, Tibullus and Propertius, the elegant first (1502) and the thoroughly revised second Aldine (1515)³. About twenty years later he published yet another edition of Catullus, in which he made further improvements to the text. This edition is extremely rare today; only three copies are known to exist. It lacks a colophon, which is where its place and date of publication would have been indicated. Conrad Gesner stated in 1545 that it had been printed in Venice by Giovanni Francesco Trincavelli, whence it has been known as the *editio Trincavelliana*; but I noted that Trincavelli was not a printer, and that the book was printed in Venice by Bartolomeo Zanetti⁴.

I wrote that “[t]he title indicates that the book is dedicated to Cardinal Farnese, but Avanzi states in the preface that the dedicatee has just be-

¹ D. Kiss, rev., “D. S. M^cKie, *Essays in the Interpretation of Roman Poetry*, Cambridge 2009”, *ExClass* 15, 2012, 257-71, at 269-71; Hieronymus Avancius (Girolamo Avanzi) ed., *Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, Gallus restituti per Hieronymum Auancium, Cardinali Farnesio dicantur*, Venetiis, n.d.

² On Avanzi see J. H. Gaisser, *Catullus and his Renaissance Readers*, Oxford 1993, Index s.v., and esp. p. 302, n. 104: “He was born in Verona, and became a professor of moral philosophy at Padua, and a doctor of arts and medicine. He edited various Latin poets and died sometime after 1534”.

³ Hieronymus Avancius, *Hieronymi auancii Veronensis artium doctoris in Val. Catullum & in Priapeias Emendationes...*, Venetiis 1495; id., *Emendationum Hieronymi Auancii Veronensis in Lucretium: in Catullum: in Pryapeias: in Statii Syluas. Editio Secunda*, Venetiis 1500; id. ed., *Catullus. Tibullus. Propertius*. Venetiis 1502; id. ed., *Catullus. Tibullus. Propertius*. Venetiis 1515. – Here and in the following the poems of Tibullus are taken to include books 3 and 4 of the *Corpus Tibullianum*, which were still ascribed to the Augustan elegist in the early 16th century.

⁴ Kiss, “D. S. M^cKie, *Essays*”, 269-71.

come Pope and taken up the name of Paul III”⁵. The title of the volume runs *CATVLLVS, TIBVLLVS, PROPERTIVS, GALLVS RESTITVTI PER HIERONYMVM AVANCIVM, CARDINALI FARNESIO DICANTVR*⁶. The preface bears the heading *D. ALEXANDRO FARNESIO CARDINALI FELICISSIMO, HIERONYMVS AVANCIVS VERONENSIS DEI GRATIAM*. The dedicatee is a Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, whom I identified with the Alessandro Farnese who later became Pope Paul III. But a close reading of the beginning of the preface shows that this is not the case⁸:

Durus atque etiam ingratus sim: Nisi cum uniuersis Christiani orbis gentibus geminato gaudio exultem. Primum quod obuijs supremorum Antistitum suffragijs Alexander Farnesius olim Hostiensis Cardinalis, Iam PAVLVS III Maximus Pontifex Apostolicae Sedis Maiestatem suis uirtutibus illustret, Et uenerabiliorem cunctis nationibus reddat. Deinde quod non ita multo post ijdem purpurati Patres te Christiani Cardinis custodem libentissime declararint.

Avanzi expresses his delight at the fact that Alessandro Farnese, formerly Cardinal Bishop of Ostia, has become Pope Paul III, and that his addressee has been elected Cardinal. His dedicatee was evidently not the Pope, but someone else of the same name. There is an obvious candidate: Alessandro Farnese the Younger (1520-1589), the son of Paul III's illegitimate son Pierluigi Farnese, who was appointed cardinal *in pectore* by his grandfather on 18 December 1534, at the age of fourteen, and whose appointment was confirmed at the consistory of 21 May 1535, which is surely the occasion Avanzi refers to here⁹. At the start of the preface the humanist seems to refrain discreetly from stating that his addressee is the grandson of the Pope, but later on he says as much, while making the interesting statement that Alessandro Farnese the Elder had actually written to him and encouraged him to publish an edition of the Roman poets he was emending¹⁰. But while Avanzi had been

⁵ Kiss, “D. S. M^cKie, *Essays*”, 271.

⁶ Avancius, *Catullus, Tibullus*, folio A i r.

⁷ Avancius, *Catullus, Tibullus*, fol. A ii r.

⁸ Avancius, *Catullus, Tibullus*, fol. A ii r.

⁹ S. Andretta in: S. Andretta and C. Robertson in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* 45, 1995, 52-70 s.v. ‘Farnese, Alessandro’, at 52.

¹⁰ Avancius, *Catullus, Tibullus*, fol. A iii r: *Tibi doctum Catullum, Cultum Tibullum, & Vehementem Propertium per me solertius emendatos nuncupatim dicaui. [...] Sic enim Auo tuo [...] satisfaciam. Qui me iampridem eleganti Epistola est adhortatus, ut Latinos poetas mea opera diligentius recognitos ad communem studiosorum hominum utilitatem publicarem.* It is far from inconceivable that a senior cardinal should have written a letter of support to a classical scholar in this period: Alessandro Guarini's commentary on Catullus (*Alexandri Guarini Ferrariensis in C. V. Catullum Veronensem per Baptistam Patrem Emendatum Expositiones*, Venetiis 1521) opens with a letter of support from Pope Leo X.

working on this edition, Alessandro the Elder had been elected Pope, and it no longer seemed appropriate to dedicate the volume to him¹¹.

Alessandro Farnese the Younger's greatest claim to fame today may be his appearance along with his younger brother Ottavio and his grandfather the Pope in a remarkable triple portrait by Titian, a masterpiece of psychological painting that has been called "a hieroglyph of nepotism"¹². Although Titian gave Alessandro the Younger what seems to me a bland and rather unintelligent expression, the Cardinal was not just a pawn in his grandfather's games of power. When Avanzi dedicated the volume to him, he was still receiving a humanistic education, but a flood of favours from the Pope had already set in. He went on to become not only fabulously rich and powerful, an accomplished diplomat and a serious contender for the papacy on his own right, but also one of the greatest patrons of art of his day: he appointed the great humanist Fulvio Orsini as his librarian, commissioned celebrated manuscripts, frescoes and paintings (including Titian's triple portrait), and accumulated a huge collection of works of art in the Palazzo Farnese¹³. He may not have been a bad choice after all as the dedicatee of an edition of Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius and Gallus.

Such an edition is what the title page and Avanzi's preface would have us expect, but in fact the volume only contains the poems of Catullus. Why did it remain incomplete? And when was it printed?

Avanzi states in the preface that Alessandro Farnese the Elder has become Pope Paul III, that his grandson Alessandro Farnese the Younger has been made a Cardinal, and that Girolamo Aleandro is papal legate to Venice. The *terminus post quem* for this text is the public appointment of Alessandro the Younger at the consistory of 21 May 1535. The *terminus ante quem* is the end of Aleandro's tenure as legate to Venice on 14 August 1535¹⁴. So Avanzi wrote his preface between late May and mid-August 1535.

But when was the volume completed? Here its physical makeup comes into play. It consists of seven gatherings, marked A to G in the lower right

¹¹ Avancius, *Catullus, Tibullus*, fol. A iii r-v: *Sed dum editionem differo, & rem tanti uiri iudicio subiiciendam diligentius tracto ac retracto ... Ecce tibi illum uirtus ... ab humanioribus istis studijs ad moderandam Christi Ecclesiam. Et asserendam Euangelicam ueritatem auocauit, Ac iam importunus uideri possim, Si illius curam tantis rebus debitam ad haec reuocare audeam.*

¹² V. Cronin, *The Flowering of the Renaissance*, London 1972², 221. Today the painting is in the Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte in Naples.

¹³ Andretta and Robertson, 'Farnese, Alessandro'.

¹⁴ On the dates regarding Alessandro Farnese the Younger see S. Andretta in Andretta and Robertson, 'Farnese, Alessandro', at 52; on Aleandro see G. Alberigo in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* 2, 1960, 128-35 s.v. 'Aleandro, Girolamo', at 132. The *terminus ante quem* is confirmed by the fact that after the death of Ippolito de' Medici on 10 August 1535 Paul III made Alessandro the Younger vice-chancellor (Andretta, 'Farnese, Alessandro', 52), which Avanzi would surely have mentioned, if it had already taken place.

corner of the recto of each of the folios in the first half of each gathering. Gatherings A and G are duernions, while gatherings B to F are quaternions. Gathering A contains the title page (folio A i r), the preface (A ii r – A iii v) and a list of errata (A iv r). Catullus' poems run from the first page of gathering B (B i r) to the top of the second page of gathering G (G i v), where the word *FINIS* is followed immediately by Pietro Crinito's biography of Catullus, which takes up three more pages (until the end of G iii r). Finally, two pages (G iii v – G iv r) are taken up by three epigrams celebrating Avanzi's edition of Catullus by *Io. Franc. Burana Veronensis*, *Hieronymus Bononius Taruisinus* and *Benedictus Pampineus*.

As we have seen, the title page promises an edition of the poems of Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius and Gallus¹⁵. Only the three Roman poets are mentioned in the preface, which is followed by the phrase *Post singulos Poetas, ipsorum Vitas inspicio*¹⁶. Accordingly, gatherings B to G contain the poems of Catullus, Crinito's biography of the poet, and the three epigrams celebrating Avanzi's edition of Catullus. There is no colophon at the end of gathering G: evidently the book was not supposed to end there. However, the list of errata at the end of gathering A, headed *Errores licet obuij Impressorum*, only contains corrections to Catullus; so by the time this list was drawn up and set to type, it had been decided that the volume would contain Catullus' poems alone. Gatherings B to G must already have been printed at this point, or else no list of errata would have been needed. The title page and the preface, which still refer to an edition of three or four poets, must already have been written and set to type, but not yet printed.

As we have seen, Avanzi wrote his preface between late May and mid-August 1535. It is the question how much time will have passed before all the gatherings of the book were printed. It seems unlikely to me that the printing process should have taken more than a couple of months. So I believe that the volume was probably completed in the second half of 1535. But why were the poems of Tibullus, Propertius and Gallus not included after all? We can only speculate about the cause. My first idea was that perhaps Avanzi had not prepared an edition of these poets after all – but a text of Tibullus and Propertius was readily at hand in his Aldine editions of 1502 and 1515, and Avanzi states explicitly in the preface that he has finished editing the

¹⁵ The poems supposedly by Gallus that were to be included were surely the elegies of Maximian and the poem *Lydia*, which were published in Venice on 12 January 1501 *more Veneto* (i.e. on 12 January 1502) under the title *Cornelii Galli Fragmenta* by the young humanist Pomponio Gaurico, whether or not in an act of deliberate forgery (see F. Skutsch in *RE* 4.1, 1900, 1342-50 s.v. 'C. Cornelius Cn. f. Gallus', at 1349-50, with references). What led Gaurico to identify Maximian's poems with Gallus' lost elegies is surely that at 2.1 the poet calls his beloved Lycoris. Lines 4.25-6, where the poet calls himself Maximian, were omitted by the humanist without comment.

¹⁶ Avancius, *Catullus, Tibullus*, fol. A iii v.

two poets, laborious though it has been¹⁷. It appears more likely that Zanetti, who had just set up his printer's workshop in Venice, was faced with difficulties that forced him to cut the project short¹⁸.

¹⁷ Emendation completed: Avancius, *Catullus, Tibullus*, fol. A iii r *doctum Catullum, Cultum Tibullum, & Vehementem Propertium per me solertius emendatos* and fol. A iii v *Tres itaque lectos poetas (nisi inuentionibus meis nimis faueo) saniores iam & expolitiores tibi dedico, ac commendo*. Avanzi's slow progress: see notes 10 and 11 above.

¹⁸ When Zanetti published a series of Greek authors between 1535 and 1537, he was supported in this *aere ... et diligentia Ioannis Francisci Trincaueli*: see Kiss, "D. S. McKie, *Essays*", 270.