

THOMAS HENDRICKSON (ed.), *Ancient Libraries and Renaissance Humanism. The De bibliothecis of Justus Lipsius*, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, 265 = Brill's Texts and Sources in Intellectual History, 20, Leiden - Boston: Brill, 2017, xiv+336 pp., \$ 158.00, ISBN 978-90-04-33816-6.

During the international colloquium, "Iustus Lipsius Europae Lumen et Columen", held in Louvain in September 1997, Thomas D. Walker concluded his paper with the words: "There remains much to study about Lipsius the historian and his library treatise, especially regarding his sources. A new scholarly edition in English could be the core of such a project." Twenty years later this project found its realization with this nicely produced edition of Justus Lipsius's treatise *De bibliothecis syntagma*. In 1602, the famous Flemish scholar dedicated it to Charles of Croÿ, the fourth duke of Aarschot (1560-1612), and received in return a large silver-gilt cup of no less than 60.5 ounce (almost 2 kg), manufactured for £257. Charles of Croÿ was indeed a generous maecenas and notorious bibliophile, famous for his magnificent library, a large part of which he had inherited from his great-grandfather, the humanist Georgius Haloinus (= Georges d' Halluin in French, Joris van Halewijn in Dutch, c. 1472-1536). In a poem composed for his second wedding, in 1605, his rich library and his fondness of the Greek and Latin treasures it contained were eulogized as follows:

Bibliotheca micans, libris instructa peritis,
Solae deliciae, Graeca, Latina, tuae.

The scholar and the duke shared the same interests, not only in books and classical literature, but also in flowers and gardening. They even shared the same history, at least in part: they both had studied with the same Louvain professor of Latin, Cornelius Valerius ab Auwater (although not at the same time) and they both had switched to the Reformation before returning to the Catholic faith. No wonder then that they developed a close relationship, testified by some fifteen letters of their correspondence which are preserved, and by Lipsius's dedication of three of his works to the duke. With the dedication of the *De bibliothecis syntagma* Lipsius no doubt hoped to persuade the duke to leave his library to the University of Louvain. Until then there existed only a few libraries in the colleges and a number of others privately

owned by some professors. Lipsius's pupil and successor Erycius Puteanus stated in his *Auspicia Bibliothecae Publicae Lovaniensis* (Louvain, 1639, pp. 33-34): "Quot per urbem sparsa collegia et paedagogia, tot propemodum bibliothecae sunt; quot monasteria et coenobia, tot bibliothecae; quot professores et doctores, tot bibliothecae ... Inter professores suam quisque possidet bibliothecam et aestimat." In Louvain the University library was founded only in 1636, thanks to the efforts of several personalities, such as the professor of theology Cornelius Jansenius (1585-1638), archbishop Jacobus Boonen, or the lawyer Gerardus Corselius (1568-1636). But before that date more and more initiatives were taken to promote and install public libraries all over Europe, such as the Bibliotheca Ambrosiana in Milan or the Bodleian in Oxford. Lipsius was of course acquainted with such initiatives, especially with those concerning the Bibliotheca Ambrosiana, where his pupil Erycius Puteanus played an important role; they may have inspired him to this brief treatise of thirty-four pages, mainly offering a historical survey of libraries throughout Antiquity, but in the meantime designing an ideal library. In doing so Lipsius produced the first major library history of modern times, which met with immediate success and set the standard for library history for several centuries.

This volume begins with a fifty-eight page introduction that starts with underlining the importance of this treatise and the need for a new edition. After a brief presentation of Lipsius's career and an overview of library historiography in the Ancient World, during the Middle Ages and in the age of Humanism, the author focuses on the treatise itself, dealing with its title, the structure and purpose, with its ancient and contemporary sources. The introduction concludes with discussions of the print history, the editorial principles on which the present critical edition is established, and with a note on the commentary. After this long introduction come the Latin text and English translation on facing pages (59-163) and a substantial commentary of 140 pages (pp. 164-304), followed by a rich bibliography (pp. 305-319) and several indices (pp. 320-336).

As for the introduction, it is rather startling to discover the discrepancy between the text on p. 41, figure 2 on p. 45, and the list of editions on p. 46. On pp. 41 and 46 the 1666 edition is referred to as a⁵, while in the figure one reads a⁶ for this edition; the same goes for the 1702 edition, referred to in the figure as a⁷, but on pp. 41 and 46 as a⁶ leaving one to wonder how a⁵ has disappeared in the figure. Following the bibliographical description in the *Bibliotheca Belgica* and elsewhere, the author systematically describes the 1614, 1620 and 1627 editions as printed in Helmstadt. It should be made clear that these editions were produced in Helmstedt, not in Helmstadt. Helmstadt is the name of a town in Bavaria and another one in Baden-Württemberg. Helmstedt (in earlier times also written Helmstädt) is now known because from the end of WW II until 1990 it was the most important border cross-

ing between the German Democratic Republic and West Germany. From 1576 until 1810 there was also a University: the Academia Julia, founded by and named after Duke Julius of Brunswick. It was in this town that Jacobus Lucius and his heirs printed the 1614, 1620, and 1627 editions of Lipsius's *De Bibliothecis*.

In presenting the Latin text, the editor has chosen to keep Lipsius's orthography, punctuation and even diacritical marks, because in his view they don't present a real obstacle for the reader. This may be true for the experienced reader of (Neo-)Latin texts, who has no difficulty with the long s, with the alternating use of i/j or u/v, or with the ligatures for ae/oe, but it surely could sometimes throw someone into confusion. Conversely, in order to improve readability and make cross-referencing more effective, Hendrickson has introduced numbered paragraphs and a sectioning of the text. For this matter, line-numbering would have been still more effective.

Furthermore the editor presents Lipsius's practice as the normal one in Early Modern times (p. 55), which is simply not true: it is not because in Lipsius's text "the comma indicates the shortest pause, the semicolon a slightly longer one, the colon slightly longer than that and the period longest of all", that this is also the case in other Neo-Latin texts, such as for instance in those of Juan Luis Vives. On the other hand it is perfectly true that the presence of a comma or accents can be helpful for a correct interpretation of a word or a sentence. So in pr. 1.3 (p. 66): "qui primus Regum illustrem habuit ... is fuit Osymanduas, Aegypti". The comma suggests that the genitive "Aegypti" is to be interpreted as a genitive of place, not a possessive genitive; the translation thus should be: "The first king to have a famous library ... was Ozymandias, in Egypt", not "... Ozymandias of Egypt". For the rest the Latin text is quite accurately edited, if not for a few typographical errors, the first of which unfortunately occurs at the very beginning (p. 60, pr. 1): "Bibiliothecis" instead of "Bibliothecis" (moreover, the small caps of the 1602 and 1607 edition have not been rendered, and in the translation "Libraries" is not in bold, as is the editor's practice in the rest of the text !). In the English translation and the commentary occur equally very few typos, e.g. on p. 111 (pr. 8.6) one should read "ignorant" instead of "ingorant" and on p. 229 : "Van Even" instead of "Van Evan" (also in the bibliography). In general the translation reads smoothly and proves to be faithful to Lipsius's ideas, but occasionally there might be some room for another or better interpretation. A few examples: in pr. 3 (pp. 60-61), a better translation for "Heuria tua, huic urbi in ore atque oculis" could be "your Heverlee, which is in this city's talk and sight", instead of "your Heverlee, right beneath the eyes of the city". And in pr. 4 (pp. 62-63), the Latin "Heuriam, Academiae nostrae suburbanum" is rendered by "Heverlee, home of our university". This statement is repeated on p. 164: "Heverlee, home to the Old University of Leuven". Unfortunately this does not fit the facts: it took until the twentieth

century before the University of Louvain expanded to neighbouring villages such as Heverlee; a better translation could be: “Heverlee, situated near to our University city”. In the same paragraph a better translation for “in artium ingeniorumque praecipueque usum” could be: “for the benefit of the arts and *scholars* especially”, instead of “for the benefit of the arts and *writers* especially” (my italics; idem dito in pr. 2.1).

Admittedly the most important and innovative part of this volume is the generous commentary, which not only provides the reader with abundant material on the ancient libraries discussed by Lipsius, but also on ancient and modern authors who have contributed to the subject. Here I will limit myself to a most remarkable observation concerning the phrase (pr. 4.4., p. 86): “Hoc enim opinor ἀπλὰ βιβλία dici”. The editor comments on p. 222: “Lipsius has made an error in changing the phrase into the accusative: it should be ἀπλῶ βιβλία”. I see no need for the use of the dual form; the only error here seems to be the use of the accent, which should read ἀπλᾶ, instead of ἀπλὰ.

The volume closes with no less than four indices: manuscripts – inscriptions and papyri – ancient authors and works – and a general index. A superficial control revealed the absence of several names, such as Jeanne of Hallewyn (p. 161), Philippe of Croÿ (p. 161), George of Hallewyn = Georgius Haloinus (p. 166), Johannes Oporinus (not: Operinus!) (p. 186 and n. 91, p. 188), Alexandre Bosquet (p. 229), Jean Scohier (p. 229).

But despite these small imperfections, this volume is a valuable contribution to the field of library history and of Lipsian scholarship.

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