

Angelo Poliziano. *Panepistemon*. Edition by Daniela Marrone (Edizione nazionale delle opere di Angelo Poliziano, IX.3.2). Florence: Leo S. Olschki editore, 2024. ISBN: 9788822268969. viii+166 p. Paperback: 29€

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An accomplished poet in Latin and Italian, philosopher, scholar of high prestige and the author of an extensive correspondence with other Italian and European humanists, Angelo Poliziano (1454-1494) came to exert considerable influence on European intellectual life in the first half of the sixteenth century. In the final four years of his life, Poliziano's lecturing programme in Florence shifted from poetry to philosophy. The professor turned his attention to Aristotle's writings and, before devoting two courses to Aristotelian logic, in the academic year 1490-1491 he delivered the *Panepistemon*, a *praelectio* to a series of lectures on Aristotle's *Ethica Nicomachea*. In his work Poliziano attempts to systematize knowledge. He does so by listing the mechanical arts alongside the classical and medieval liberal and humane arts (1, *non disciplinae modo et artes vel liberales quae dicuntur vel machinales, sed etiam sordidae illae ac sellulariae...intra huius ambitum distributionis colligantur*).

Based on the Florentine *editio princeps* of 1492 but with an eye to later editions and the only surviving manuscript copy of the tract, in Daniela Marrone's edition, the text of Poliziano's *Panepistemon* takes, of course, centre stage, and the *praelectio* is impeccably edited (pp. 113-32). The full content of Poliziano's work cannot, however, be fully grasped without Marrone's incisive preliminary study. In the first two sections of her introductory remarks (pp. 1-22) Marrone highlights Poliziano's innovative methodology, "[consistente] nella scomposizione minuziosa dei vari costituenti del sapere, cui segue un loro riordinamento estremamente sintetico" (p. 19). This sorting is based on the division of knowledge into three *genera doctrinarum*: theology (the *genus inspiratum*), philosophy (the *genus inventum*) and divination, i.e. prophecy (the *genus mixtum*, partaking in a divine and artificial origin). Yet it is philosophy which attracts most attention from Poliziano in his *Panepistemon*. The author distinguishes three types of philosophy: theoretical, practical, and rational. Rational philosophy "explains or narrates or demonstrates or persuades or entertains. From it, grammar, history, rhetoric and poetics are derived" (*aut indicat aut narrat aut demonstrat aut suadet aut oblectat, unde grammatica, historia, dialectica, rhetorica et poetica emerunt*). As well as discussing Poliziano's lexicographical choices (pp. 22-32) –for the Italian humanist is, after all, drawing on the Greek philosophical tradition– and documenting his classical sources (pp. 32-39), Marrone's introduction attends to the making of the *Panepistemon*. In the sections "Da prelezione a scritto autonomo" and "*Excerpta e marginalia*: alcuni precedenti della sistemazione del sapere", pp. 39-43 and 43-47, respectively, she shows how

the treatise forms a unit with documents long known to scholars: two sets of notes (disclosed by Lucia Cesarini Martinelli in 1980) on Macrobius, Sextus Empiricus and the *Suda* penned by Poliziano (preserved in Munich, Staatsbibliothek, Mon. lat. 398 and Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Magl. VIII. 1420), and an oration written between 1480 and 1489 (Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ms. 2723, unearthed by Ida Maier in 1960), where Poliziano also attempts to systematize knowledge. Marrone identifies a further precedent to the *Panepistemon* in a series of marginal annotations by Poliziano included in several *incunabula* held in Florentine libraries (for example, in a copy of the 1482 edition of the *Scriptores historiae Augustae*). But if I were to single out one section within the introduction, this would be Marrone's elucidating and comprehensive summary of the text ("Il disegno", pp. 50-86), which acts as a full commentary on the *Panepistemon*. These pages are in turn supplemented by an appendix (pp. 133-41) with seven diagrams illustrating the complex divisions and subdivisions of knowledge as discussed by Poliziano in his treatise.

For some time now we have known that, from the 1490s onwards, Poliziano's vast Latin literary output was read, copied, imitated and translated throughout Europe. We have also learnt that during the following century promotion of Poliziano's Latin works was further enhanced by the printing press. Indeed, the sheer number of editions of his Latin poetry and prose constitutes a potent testimony to Poliziano's popularity which had started during his lifetime and then grown steadily in the decades after his death in 1494. As also shown by Marrone in the sections "Fortuna e giudizi" and "Nota al testo" (pp. 47-49 and pp. 98-109, respectively), Poliziano's *Panepistemon* is no exception to this general rule and –with no fewer than eighteen editions published between the *editio princeps* of 1492 and a Basel reprint from 1553, all of them thoroughly recorded by Marrone– "[l'opera] viene ampiamente citata o perfino riprodotta integralmente da altri umanisti con 'appropriazione' di paternità" (p. 47). As an example, Josse Bade's pseudo-Lullian *Isagoge in rhetoricen* (Paris, 1515) turns out to be a plagiarism of Poliziano's original text. In her edition, Marrone also explains that another humanist who paid close attention to the *Panepistemon* was Nicolas Bérauld, born in Orléans in 1470 (pp. 103-4). At the beginning of 1516, Bérauld took charge of the late Jean Barbier's publishing house, whose widow he married shortly afterwards. The first volume to come out of Bérauld's new press was an edition of Alexander of Aphrodisias's *Naturalia problemata* in the Latin translation of Angelo Poliziano, a volume which also included four original works of Poliziano (a collection of Latin epigrams, the poem *Manto* as well as *Lamia*, a prolusion on Aristotle's *Prior Analytics*, and, unsurprisingly, *Panepistemon*). An indication of the popularity of Poliziano's treatise in the Paris of the time, the text had already been included in his 1512 edition of Poliziano's complete works by the same Josse Bade who three years later would not hesitate to appropriate Poliziano's tract. This is the kind of meticulous information on the *Panepistemon* and its European circulation in the early modern period which can also be found in Marrone's fine edition of a key Renaissance philosophical text.