Adriana Alessandrini. 'Il libro a stampa e la cultura del Rinascimento. Un'indagine sulle biblioteche fiorentine negli anni 1470-1520.' Biblioteche e archivi, 35; RICABIM. Texts and studies, 3. Florence: SISMEL – Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2018

Natale Vacalebre

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more complex from that of 1462-63: here Landino distinguishes between a superior and an inferior reason (which allows for the development of the concept of reason) and appetite, with the divine illumination that allows Enea to reach the highest good (God).

Chapter 7 is dedicated to the commentary of the *Aeneid*, similar in many ways to the course of 1462-63. Here Landino does not use the terms *negotium* and *otium*, but rather goes back to the terminology of his course in the sixties (namely: life of pleasure, active life, and contemplative life). Chapter 8 is dedicated to the comment of the *Divine Comedy*. Here, Landino considers the triad Homer-Virgil-Dante as the transfer of poetic hegemony in epic poetry, thus resuming his ideas on philosophical and linguistic transfer. Here, we also find the description of the powers of the soul, the virtues, the different types of life, and the idea that a person may reach the highest good both through active life and contemplative life. The analogy of Plato's chariot is also present, but here, for the first time, Landino provides the means by which a soul shattered by sensual vice and desire can redeem itself: that is, through divine grace. Divine grace not only illuminates and inspires the human soul but also allows to reach the highest good, namely God and divine things. The concept of divine grace is unknown to the ancient writers but present in Dante, says Landino. For this reason, Dante surpasses his classical predecessors.

In chapter 9, McNair presents a summary of his book, claiming that Landino's works present Platonic elements, but not only: in fact, Landino might be considered, besides as a Platonist, or Neoplatonist, also as a Thomist, or Aristotelian. But the best label, McNair argues, would be that of a follower of Dante, who tries to merge concepts of different philosophical schools. Therefore, it is not possible to simplistically catalogue Landino, who instead shows a particularly versatile thought.

Massimiliano Lorenzon, *University of Pennsylvania*

Adriana Alessandrini.
Il libro a stampa e la cultura del Rinascimento. Un'indagine sulle biblioteche fiorentine negli anni 1470-1520.
Biblioteche e archivi, 35; RICABIM. Texts and studies, 3. Florence: SISMEL – Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2018. XXVI + 340 pp. €160.

This impressive volume constitutes an essential contribution to the history of the circulation of printed books in Italy in the early typographic age. Adriana Alessandrini focuses her work on the Florentine libraries between 1470 and 1520. The author selects this time frame for two reasons: first, because this period defines the investigation on which the documentary repertory RICABIM is based, from which Alessandrini obtains the sources that form the core of her work. Secondly, because in those years the printing industry developed exponentially in Italy, giving readers the opportunity to expand their book collections with new bibliographic products. In the Introduction, Alessandrini explains the objectives and analytical criteria of

her work. The author has selected 34 catalogues, lists of books and inventories of private and religious Florentine libraries listed in the first volume of the aforementioned RICABIM repertory, relating to the libraries of Tuscany. Through the systematic study of these documents she has built a tool capable of offering a detailed overview of the circulation of written culture in Renaissance Florence.

In the essay 'Il libro a stampa nelle biblioteche fiorentine (1470-1520)' (pp. 1-40) the author first provides a very detailed description of the morphology of the book lists taken into consideration. In the second section of her contribution, Alessandrini describes the different classifications of the books within the libraries examined. The last part of the essay consists of a series of statistical analyses devoted to verifying the presence of printed books in Florentine libraries between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when the Medici city was still considered the most important center of manuscript book production in Italy. In this regard, it is very interesting to observe how the ancient libraries of the religious orders were the most reluctant institutions to open up to printed books, while the private libraries of intellectuals and merchants housed many of the new bibliographic products. In this context, the thirteen tables and twelve graphs that the author inserts as an appendix to her extensive essay can be considered as extremely useful tools to navigate the vast amount of information provided in the following section of the book.

The second part of the volume consists of the Repertory of records describing in detail the sources analyzed, which are structured according to an analytical criterion aimed at bringing out each element related to the library list examined. The first part of each record contains information about the document's dating and the essential data about the owner of the book collection taken into consideration. The second section contains all the information that characterizes the structure of the document as a whole: language, layout of the text in the document, a narrative description of the source, original titles of the works, distinction between manuscripts and printed books, notes of provenance and many other elements useful to highlight the peculiarities of the individual document.

The last part of the volume contains the Catalogue of the authors and editions. In this part of the work, the author identifies the individual editions listed in the documents discussed in the second section of the book. For each work, Alessandrini indicates the *editio princeps* adding some information about the fortune of the text. The record then provides a transcription of the entry relating to the specific work. Among the many interesting data, it is useful to notice that Dante's *Commedia* is the vernacular literary work with the highest number of records (14), followed by Boccaccio's *Decameron* (4), and Petrarch's *Canzoniere* (3) and *Trionfi* (3); a clear sign of how, even at the end of the fifteenth century, in Florence, Dante was still considered the Tuscan poet par excellence. Although the last part of the catalogue is dedicated to unidentifiable editions, one can hypothesize about the identification of some of the titles transcribed by Alessandrini. The "Landulfus" belonged to the Dominican friar Giorgio Antonio Vespucci is very likely one of the many printed editions of Ludolph von Saxon's *Vita Christi*, while the "Mombrino bombitio" held in the library of Lorenzo di Domenico Franceschi should be the 1477 Milanese edition of Boninus Mombritius's *Vitae Sanctorum*.

This truly remarkable volume concludes with a series of very useful tools: a documentary appendix with the transcription of some unpublished book

~ 182 ~

inventories, a rich bibliography, and a series of indexes related to: 144 identified copies, anonymous authors and texts, publishers and printers, places of printing, owners, and documentary sources.

Natale Vacalebre, *University of Pennsylvania*

Lina Bolzoni.
Una meravigliosa solitudine. L'arte di leggere nell'Europa moderna.
Turin: Einaudi, 2019. XXIX + 254 pp. $33.

Bolzoni's book presents the reader with the Italian version of a book soon to be published in English by Harvard University Press. The volume originates from a series of "Berenson Lectures" delivered by Bolzoni in Fall 2012 at the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies (Villa I Tatti, Florence). Made out of seven chapters, *Una meravigliosa solitudine* explores the manifold ways in which early-modern European readers conceived of books as a privileged way to gain access to and converse with the past. In Bolzoni's book, reading is a very special thing: by giving readers the opportunity to encounter and interact with bygone authors, it allows them to negotiate and shape their own identity. The close tie between reading and self-fashioning in Bolzoni's book is investigated further by examining the very interesting case of private libraries. By taking inspiration from Berenson's famous assertion that his own library "could furnish the surest and completest biography" of himself (p. XXIX), Bolzoni considers the book collections of some prominent early-modern intellectuals (Federico da Montefeltro, Michel de Montaigne) as the place that best reflects, and also contributes to shape, their identities.

The first author Bolzoni takes into account is Francesco Petrarca (1304–1374). Petrarca's prominent position in the book seems in fact totally justifiable: he was the first European author who consciously and coherently fashioned himself not just as a writer or scholar, but specifically as a reader. In his many works, Petrarca devoted a great deal of attention in picturing his own image as book hunter, voracious reader, and direct interlocutor (via books) with the ancients. In the second chapter, Bolzoni shifts towards Italian humanism as a movement committed to the re-appropriation of the cultural heritage of antiquity. In particular, Bolzoni expands on two specific aspects of this phenomenon: the rise of the philological method, according to which books start to be looked at as real entities or bodies (Bolzoni examines the case of Fiammetta's manuscript in Boccaccio's *elegia di madonna Fiammetta*); and texts as a channel permitting the resurrection of, and the dialogue with, the ancients (in addition to Boccaccio, Bolzoni also considers leading humanists from the following two centuries, namely Angelo Poliziano and Pietro Bembo). Chapter 3 moves from texts to figurative art and architecture. It first examines the interesting case of Renaissance portraits of classical authors as a way to gain access to, visualize, and interact with the ancients. It then considers early-modern private

~ 183 ~