

PREFACE

For the general aims of the *Catalogus Translationum et Commentariorum* the reader is referred to the Preface to Vol. I, by Paul Oskar Kristeller, which is reprinted below.

The articles of the present volume do not reflect any special choice; as in the past we are simply publishing those which happen to be completed. We hope that the material here presented will not only throw additional light on some patterns of tradition already seen in earlier volumes but will also exhibit other *Fortunae* of different format.

Three Latin poets are included: Ausonius, the *Carmina Priapea*, and Martial. Ausonius was well known throughout the Middle Ages, but the transmission was fragmented, and there are no known commentaries before the fourteenth century. In the cases of the *Carmina Priapea* and of Martial, however, there was little medieval tradition, and they were both 'discovered' by Boccaccio. For all three authors the commentaries may be grouped as usual into an early Italian stage and a later one in which scholars from Northern Europe were predominant.

Cato and Varro represent a somewhat different tradition. Their works *De re rustica* circulated within the corpus of the *Scriptores rei rusticae*; both authors were also important as testimonies to Latin usage, and Varro himself dealt directly with linguistic problems in his *De lingua latina*. As writers on agriculture, Cato and Varro were overshadowed during the Middle Ages by the more popular works of Columella and Palladius; both came back into prominence with the renewal of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. They were carefully studied during the early Renaissance, but the commentary tradition begins only in the middle of the sixteenth century with Petrus Victorius. And while Cato and Varro continued to be used by agriculturalists, the commentary tradition of the *De re rustica* is dominated by philological and textual interests; we have no commentaries by farmer-scholars attempting to relate Cato and Varro to their own practical experience. Varro's *De lingua latina* had a separate tradition from the *De re rustica*. It was little known in the Middle Ages, but the number of manuscripts and of early editions evidence an active interest in it during the Italian Renaissance. Pomponius Laetus prepared an edition c. 1471 and later commented on it. The next commentary, by Michael Bentinus, appeared at Basel in 1526, and there were six more commentaries in the later sixteenth century.

The other three articles in the present volume are on Dioscorides, Paul of Aegina, and Pliny the Elder; those on Dioscorides and Pliny are by far the longest, and together they constitute roughly half the volume. None of the three authors falls within the primary area of humanist concern, but their *Fortunae* strikingly illustrate the importance of the humanists for the medical and encyclopedic traditions.

To look at the Greek medical writers first, both Dioscorides and Paul of Aegina had an active tradition in Byzantium and exercised a significant influence among the Arabs. However, though both were translated into Latin during the late ancient period, the medieval Western tradition was very thin, and few manuscripts of the Old Latin translations survive (though a pseudonymous work of Dioscorides, the *Ex herbis femininis*, was more popular). There was only one medieval commentary, that of Petrus Padubanensis on the Latin Alphabetical Redaction of Dioscorides.

The study of Dioscorides and Paul revived in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the context is humanist in the broad sense rather than medical. Hermolaus Barbarus, for ex-

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ample, was the first to translate Dioscorides and to comment upon him; he did so as part of his general plan to make available in good Latin Aristotle and the other lights of Greek learning. Gulielmus Copus, whose translation of Book I of Paul of Aegina was published in 1511, regrets in his preface that medicine is now neglected by students of humane letters because it has been almost obliterated *barbarorum faecibus*; his intention is to make Paul and the other Greek medical writers accessible in good Latin so that they may take the place of the 'most barbarous' writers to whom his contemporaries are addicted. About 1525 Euphrosynus Boninus sent what purported to be a complete translation of Paul to Pope Clement VII as part of a more ambitious plan, suggested to him by Clement himself before his elevation to the papacy, to put into Latin hitherto untranslated Greek works, especially medical ones.

One may thus credit humanism with the restoration of Dioscorides and Paul to the Latin reading public and to doctors in particular, and from the prefaces to the translations and commentaries one can find good evidence for a 'medical humanism'. Toward the middle of the sixteenth century, however, the context begins to shift, and the scholarship on Dioscorides is drawn more and more into the contemporary medical and botanical traditions. The commentaries now emphasize questions of fact rather than of philology; the commentators are more often doctors and scientists interested in the content of Dioscorides rather than the earlier humanist scholars trying to establish and explain a Greek medical and scientific text. At the same time publication of Dioscorides gradually shifts from Latin into the many European vernaculars, and the most famous of all the commentaries, that of Petrus Andreas Matthiolus, appeared first in Italian in 1544 and only in 1554 in a Latin form.

Thus in the *Fortunae* of Paul and of Dioscorides one sees the gradual movement of a modern science away from the context of Latin humanism and toward its own specialized tradition in the vernaculars. In the same period one also sees the increasing tendency of humanist scholarship to concentrate upon what served literary and historical purposes, particularly in relation to the Latin authors. In the case of Dioscorides, for example, there was a great Latin *Opera omnia* edition with commentary in 1598, but it had no successor and was not even reprinted during the following centuries, even though the publications of the *De materia medica* continued actively in vernacular translations. With the revival of scholarly study of Dioscorides in the early nineteenth century, one can almost speak of a 'Renaissance' which looks back to the sixteenth century across the 'Dark Ages' which succeeded it.

The *Fortuna* of Pliny the Elder shares many features with those of Dioscorides and of Paul of Aegina, but it also presents sharp contrasts. In the first place the *Historia naturalis* had a strong medieval tradition, and there was no need to 'rediscover' it. What the Renaissance brought, however, was a new philological interest, and this was particularly important in view of the bad state of the text of Pliny. As in the case of Dioscorides, Hermolaus Barbarus played a decisive role, and his *Exercitationes Pliniana*e served the same general purpose as his translation and commentary of the *De materia medica*. It is well for us to remember his often quoted judgment that without Pliny 'Latin scholarship could hardly exist' (*sine quo vix potest Latina res consistere*). The commentary tradition is for Pliny roughly as extensive as for Dioscorides, and forty-six commentaries have survived on all or part of the *Historia naturalis*. The commentary tradition through the first decades of the sixteenth century is Italian, with very few exceptions. In the 1520's the scene changes and thereafter, again with very few exceptions, the commentators are from Northern Europe. As in the case of Dioscorides, we find a shift after the middle of the sixteenth century to a greater interest in the things themselves discussed by Pliny in contrast to the earlier concentration upon a text to be illuminated by other texts. However, in contrast to Dioscorides, Pliny is in no way abandoned by Latin scholarship after 1600, and there are important editions and commentaries from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Admittedly the nineteenth century inaugurates a new epoch with its modern philo-

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logy and its emphasis on the manuscripts, but there was no need for any such 'Renaissance' as occurred with the study of Dioscorides.

In conclusion it is a pleasure to thank those who have made this volume possible. The first place again belongs to Professor Kristeller who despite heavy other commitments has given unstintingly of his time and vast learning. As in the past, Leicester Bradner as Chairman of the Executive Committee has provided valuable advice and support. The Section Editors have again contributed largely to the excellence of what finally appears in the volume; Professors Marshall Clagett and James Hutton have in this instance borne exceptionally heavy burden in a most generous spirit. Finally, and in sadness, there is the debt of gratitude we all owe to Bernard M. Peebles, to whose memory the present volume is dedicated; up to the time of his tragic death in November, 1976 he played an active and helpful role in all our planning and doing; for a tribute to him, see Germain Marc'hadour, "In Memoriam Bernard Mann Peebles (d. 22 Nov. 1976)", *Moreana* XIV, nos. 55-56 (1977) 79-88.

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Connecticut College
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For the Executive Committee
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