

## PREFACE TO VOLUME I

The present volume is the first of a series that will list and describe the Latin translations of ancient Greek authors and the Latin commentaries on ancient Latin (and Greek) authors up to the year 1600. The work is planned as a contribution to the history of classical scholarship. It is intended to illustrate the impact which the literary heritage of ancient Greece and Rome had upon the literature, learning, and thought of those long centuries of Western history usually known as the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. During that whole period, the acquaintance with, and the gradual appropriation of, this ancient literary heritage played a much more central and more productive role than has been true in more recent times, although the approach to this ancient material may have been imperfect, uncritical, and often wrong by present scholarly standards. Hence it is important to ascertain how much the Middle Ages, how much the Renaissance, how much each century or generation within those larger periods actually knew of the ancient Greek and Latin literatures. The widespread debate about the relative extent and merits of classical learning during those centuries can be settled only by a dispassionate, careful and critical stocktaking of the relevant textual, documentary or bibliographical evidence. We cannot merely examine such a vague and indistinct unit as 'classical literature,' but we must trace in detail the history and transmission of each ancient author, and of each of his writings. We must take ancient literature in the broadest possible sense, and include not merely the 'classical' authors of the earlier periods, but also their successors down to 600 A.D., and not only the poets and writers of literary prose, but also all authors, some of them obscure or anonymous, who wrote on philosophy or theology, on grammar or rhetoric, or on the various arts, sciences, or pseudo-sciences. All these subjects were to occupy an important place in the intellectual history of the later centuries, and they derived much of their subject matter, vocabulary, and method from the available ancient sources. Even within the area of poetry and belles-lettres, we must keep in mind that several authors now prominent were almost forgotten, and others now neglected occupied the center of attention. This fact will not disturb us, for we do not merely wish to find in the past the antecedents for our own interests, but also to know and understand the past in its own interests where they were different from ours. Perhaps the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, in emphasizing certain aspects of ancient literature that have disappeared from the modern view, may even have grasped some authentic traits of antiquity. In other words, this work addresses itself to students of classical antiquity as well as of the Middle Ages and of the Renaissance, to historians of literature as well as to historians of theology, philosophy, the sciences, and learning in general. Quite appropriately, scholars from all these fields have taken an active part in planning and carrying out this work.

A complete study of classical scholarship during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, however, would include much material and many problems that are beyond the scope of our present undertaking, — e.g., the manuscript copies and printed editions in which a given text has been transmitted; the many short glosses and notes that were added to the text by the copyists, editors, or readers of these manuscripts and printed editions; the many quotations from classical texts, direct or indirect, precise or distorted, that are found in the works of Mediaeval or Renaissance writers; finally, the vernacular translations of ancient texts that were produced with increasing frequency down to the sixteenth century, and that as far as the works of Greek

authors were concerned were usually based on Latin translations. Without denying the importance of all these matters for a study of classical scholarship in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, we have singled out for our work two groups of material that are more limited, but that occupy a central place in the transmission of ancient texts in the West: the Latin translations from the Greek, and the Latin commentaries on Greek, and especially on ancient Latin authors. The translations prove through their very existence that a given text was available at a given time, and through the number of manuscripts or editions, how widely it was available. During the period with which we are concerned, Greek was familiar to but a small group of Western scholars, a group that was almost negligible up to about 1400, and, despite its general increase, was still limited between 1400 and 1600. On the other hand, the vernacular languages tended to expand during the later Middle Ages at the expense of Latin. Nevertheless, up to the end of our period, Latin remained the language of the Western Church, of international scholarship, and of school and university instruction. Hence it is the Latin translation that made a Greek text available to the Western reader. The presence or absence, the rarity or frequency, finally, the relative merits of Latin translations determine and measure the degree to which a Greek author or a Greek text, whether great or small by our standards, was able to influence, through its form and content, the readers, writers, and scholars of a given period.

The Latin commentaries have a similar importance, especially for the transmission of ancient Latin authors, for whom the problem of availability through translation did not exist. Here the question of availability is settled through the age, provenience, and frequency of extant manuscripts, through the testimony of old library catalogues, and later through the bibliography of printing. Yet the commentary proves through its very existence that a given author or text was carefully read and studied at a given time and place and, in many instances, that such texts or authors were used as textbooks or readings in some school or university. For the commentary as a literary genre is the product of the class lecture, and in its form, method, and content, it discloses the intellectual interests of the commentator and his approach to this text. Commentaries often indicate the connections in which a given author was read or studied, that is, the branches of learning which he served to illustrate, and the other ancient or mediaeval authors associated with him. The study of the commentaries will thus throw much light upon the curricula of the schools and universities in which they originated.

The list of commentaries should include the Latin commentaries on original Greek texts, as well as the commentaries on Latin translations of Greek texts. The former, which are rather scarce and largely limited to the sixteenth century, will be treated as a kind of appendix to our main material. The latter, on the other hand, would include such large bodies of material as the commentaries on Scripture, on Aristotle, and on certain medical and mathematical authors, a kind of mass production which reflects the place of these texts in the curricula of the universities and other schools. Important as this is as a cultural fact integral to the purpose of our work, the inclusion of so extensive a body of specialized material would seriously distort the perspective and balance at which we aim. It has therefore been decided to omit these groups of commentaries (as well as those on the *Corpus Iuris*), at least for the time being, although it is hoped that they may be listed and studied at some future date (the listing of the commentaries on Scripture has been carried almost to completion by F. Stegmüller in his *Repertorium Biblicum Medii Aevi* [5 vols. Madrid 1950-55]). The articles on these authors or subjects will therefore list their translations, but not their commentaries. Thus for two opposite reasons, commentaries on Greek authors will play a decidedly secondary role, and the lists of commentaries will primarily concern the articles on Latin authors.

It may be objected that the mere listing and description of the Latin translations and commentaries is a very modest, pedestrian and, in a sense, bibliographical undertaking, and that the real bearing of this material on the history of learning can become apparent only if the

texts are actually studied, analyzed, or even edited. We have no doubt that such further study is highly desirable, and we hope that many such studies may be stimulated by our work, and may be written by our contributors or by other scholars. Yet we feel that the collecting of the descriptive material is the necessary first step. This material in itself is sufficiently complex and voluminous to suggest that we concentrate our efforts for the time being on this more limited task.

If the listing of Latin translations and commentaries seems to be an important desideratum of scholarship, one may wonder why it has not been filled long ago. As a matter of fact, there is a good deal of scattered information in older and more recent reference works or editions. Latin translations of Greek texts that were made from the Arabic are listed by M. Steinschneider ('Die europäischen Uebersetzungen aus dem Arabischen,' *Sitzungsberichte der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse* 149 [Vienna, 1904] and 151 [1905; reprinted Graz 1956]). Father J. T. Muckle published a preliminary list, entitled 'Greek Works translated directly into Latin before 1350' (*Mediaeval Studies* IV [1942] 33-42; V [1943] 102-114). Information on Latin translations of Greek patristic writings has been collected by G. Bardy (*La question des langues dans l'Église ancienne* I [Paris 1948]), and by A. Siegmund (*Die Ueberlieferung der griechischen christlichen Literatur in der lateinischen Kirche bis zum zwölften Jahrhundert* [München-Pasing 1949]). The need for more work in this area was emphasized by B. Altaner, who even refers to prewar plans for a *Corpus* of early Latin translations of Greek patristic writings (*Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati* I [1946] 519-520). These plans are now being carried out under the auspices of the Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften in Berlin (cf. J. Irmscher, *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 77 [1952] 52; 78 [1953] 126). The *Corpus Platonicum Medii Aevi* and the *Aristoteles Latinus* are both in process of publication, and will thoroughly cover the ground for Plato, Aristotle and their commentators, at least for the period to 1350 or 1400.

In our articles on these authors, we do not plan to duplicate these much more elaborate works, but shall refer to them directly for the material they cover, and supplement them in certain ways. The coordination between our work and these last two undertakings has been assured through the good offices of the Union Académique Internationale, and through arrangements made directly with Professor R. Klibansky for the *Corpus Platonicum*, and with Professors E. Franceschini and L. Minio-Paluello for the *Aristoteles Latinus*. Thus there is no lack of partial contributions to our work, but there seems to be a need for a *Corpus* or *Catalogus* in which all known evidence will be assembled and critically sifted, and new evidence will be added as far as possible.

Our procedure is to give full information concerning Latin translations and commentaries down to 1600 A.D., but with only a summary account of such material as is easily available in recently printed works. We shall include the Latin translations and commentaries produced in antiquity and still extant, since they are few in number and will illustrate the relation between ancient and mediaeval learning. The list of translations will describe all Latin translations of Greek authors who wrote before 600 A.D., including patristic writers, apocryphal works attributed to Greek authors, and Latin translations derived indirectly from the Greek, especially through the Arabic (the latter to be described in abbreviated form). It will exclude translations of Byzantine writers. It will exclude for the present at least translations of scattered poems and prose sections that have been preserved in the original works of later authors, but had no independent tradition before 1600. The list of translations will record all Latin translations made through 1600 A.D., and may go occasionally beyond that date.

The list of commentaries will describe Latin commentaries on writers of Latin and Greek antiquity who wrote before 600 A.D. It will, however, exclude, for the present at least, commentaries on Aristotle; on medical, legal, and canonistic works; on the Bible; and on mediaeval Latin authors. It will also exclude scattered, anonymous glosses, as well as miscel-

## PREFACE TO VOLUME I

laneous observations on various ancient authors. It will record in greater detail the commentaries made through 1475 A.D., and give more abbreviated descriptions for those made from 1475 through 1600 A.D.

The work will be arranged according to ancient authors. The successive volumes will include the articles completed at the time, and hence an alphabetical order cannot be adopted. To facilitate consultation, alphabetical indices of ancient authors will be added when necessary. Each article devoted to an ancient author will give for each of his works a chronological list of translations or of commentaries, numbered consecutively. For each translation or commentary, the entry will give the following information: name of translator or commentator (if known); date, place and circumstances of the composition of the translation or commentary; a list of all manuscript copies that can be located or used, with descriptive data and catalogue references; a list of all its printed editions, with bibliographical data; a list of all relevant scholarly literature; an *incipit* and *explicit* (15 to 20 words) of the dedication, preface, introduction, and main text of the translation or commentary. For each manuscript or edition, the contributor will indicate whether he has seen the book itself or a microfilm of it, or received information from somebody who saw it, or merely relied on printed secondary information. At the end of each description, there will be a short biographical note on the translator or commentator, with bibliographical references.

As might be expected, the project had to overcome a number of difficulties. Some of them bring to light, or emphasize, certain inadequacies and omissions of recent scholarship. The primary material on which the entire work rests, that is, manuscripts and early printed editions, is still difficult to control or to locate, as any worker in the field is bound to discover. For many manuscript collections there are no printed catalogues, but merely handwritten inventories that have to be inspected on the spot. Of the available printed catalogues, many are extremely rare, and many are quite inadequate. Even the best catalogues do not always give the full information needed for our purpose. The situation is much better for incunabula, since most of them have been described and located. Yet even the best bibliographies of incunabula often fail to analyze the content of a composite edition, and thus leave many questions to be answered. As to the editions of the sixteenth century, the field is a bibliographical chaos except for England, and the task of assembling the necessary data becomes almost hopeless once the safe waters of the catalogues of the British Museum and Bibliothèque Nationale have been crossed. In gathering bio-bibliographical data on the translators and commentators, many of whom were relatively obscure, the standard works of reference turned out to be often useless or unreliable, and it was necessary to draw on the resources of local or regional scholarship, or on the products of eighteenth century erudition. Unexpected difficulties arose in the establishment of a list of ancient Greek and Latin authors that were available before 1600. Such a list was needed as a kind of ledger for our whole enterprise. The initial hope that we could rely for this purpose on the standard reference works of classical scholarship turned out to be mistaken. Works now considered apocryphal or unimportant, but regarded before 1600 as authentic or significant, have often completely disappeared from modern editions or reference works, and their very existence must be recovered in earlier sources. It was for us a vital question to find out whether the works of an ancient author were preserved through direct transmission, and hence available to a translator or commentator before 1600, or whether they have been merely reconstructed in modern times out of fragments and citations. Yet this difference often does not seem to concern the authors of modern histories of ancient literature. At least in one instance the existence of a certain Greek text had to be ascertained with the help of a German school program of 1851, after Christ-Schmid and Pauly-Wissowa had failed to answer the question. In all these ways, the project served to expose serious gaps and shortcomings in our present scholarly and bibliographical information

## PREFACE TO VOLUME I

— shortcomings that are often overlooked with an unjustified complacency, but that ought to be faced and as far as possible overcome.

Aside from the difficulties inherent in the nature of the material, there were a number of purely human ones. The project has received the generous help, not only of its contributors and editors, but also of many other scholars and librarians throughout the world, and it has obtained the approval of several great scholarly organizations and institutions. Yet it always had very limited financial resources, and very little clerical or bibliographical assistance. Most of the work had to be done by the editors in their spare time, or by volunteer helpers. Yet the editors have tried to encourage and help as best they could those contributors who were actively engaged in their work for the project.

Some, but by no means all of these difficulties, were anticipated when the project was first started. The plan was initially proposed in 1945 in the Committee on Renaissance Studies of the American Council of Learned Societies, and Professor James Hutton and the writer were delegated by that Committee to seek the opinion of a wider circle of scholars. As a result, a meeting to consider the project was held in New York on March 2-3, 1946, under the auspices of the American Council of Learned Societies. The scholars present at the meeting decided to adopt the project, and to form, along with a few others, its Editorial Board. They laid down the general lines for the organization of the project as a cooperative enterprise and elected an Executive Committee which has held regular meetings ever since, and has been in correspondence with the other editors. It also designated some of its members as section editors responsible for certain areas of the work. Of the original members of the Editorial Board, Professors R. V. Merrill and E. M. Sanford died, and their places were taken by Professors L. Bradner and R. P. Oliver. Of the original members of the Executive Committee, Professor P. Kibre resigned, but retained her place on the Editorial Board. The following members of the Editorial Board have served as section editors: Hutton (literary translations to 1400); Kibre (scientific and pseudo-scientific translations to 1400); Kristeller (philosophical translations to 1400); McGuire (patristic translations to 1400); Lockwood (translations after 1400); Savage (commentaries to 1100); Marti (commentaries, 1100-1300); Sanford (succeeded by Oliver, commentaries, 1300-1600).

The Executive Committee invited a large number of American and European scholars to collaborate on the project, and obtained from a good number of them promises to prepare articles dealing with specific Greek or Latin authors. After the preliminary Committee had obtained the official approval of the American Philological Association (1945), the Executive Committee also obtained that of the following organizations: Mediaeval Academy of America (1946), Modern Language Association of America (1947), British Academy (1947), Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei (1947), Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres (1948), American Council of Learned Societies (1950), Union Académique Internationale (1950), Renaissance Society of America (1954), Francis Bacon Foundation (1957). When the UAI adopted the project as its enterprise No. XIV, an International Advisory Committee was added to the Editorial Board. Of the original members of the International Committee, Prof. R. A. B. Mynors subsequently resigned, and his place was taken by Prof. A. H. McDonald. Information on the project has been printed in the following publications: *Progress of Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies in the United States and Canada*; *Renaissance News*; *Comptes Rendus de l'Union Académique Internationale*. The following documents were prepared for the project and distributed in mimeographed form: Outline; Instructions; Bibliography; Sample Entry for Translations (Aesop, translation of Rinucius, by Prof. D. P. Lockwood); Sample Entry for Commentaries (Juvenal, commentary of Domitius Calderinus, by Prof. E. M. Sanford); List of Extant Greek Authors, and List of Extant Latin Authors (by Prof. J. Hutton, with the collaboration of Dr. H. King and of other editors). The bibliography, and the lists of Greek and

## PREFACE TO VOLUME I

Latin authors, have been included in the present volume. Dr. H. Nachod gave valuable help in the indexing of important bibliographical works for the project, and Mr. Thomas G. Schwartz did much preliminary work on the Latin grammarians. A number of publications grew out of the work for the project, and others, though planned independently, were spurred by its needs, especially Dean M. E. Cosenza's *Biographical and Bibliographical Dictionary of the Italian Humanists and of the World of Classical Scholarship in Italy 1300-1800* (distributed in microfilm by the Renaissance Society of America), and Kristellers's 'Latin Manuscript Books before 1600' (*Traditio* VI [1948] 229-317; IX [1953] 393-418), which consists of a bibliography of printed catalogues of Latin manuscripts, and of a list of handwritten inventories of uncatalogued collections of manuscripts. The Executive Committee has also participated in the work of the Liaison Committee on Microfilming Manuscript Catalogues which has been engaged, under the chairmanship of Professor B. L. Ullman, in obtaining for the Library of Congress microfilm copies of the handwritten inventories of European manuscript collections. Finally, the members of the Executive Committee and the section editors have been in regular correspondence with many contributors, and have examined and edited all articles submitted.

The difficulties I indicated may explain why it has taken us so long to be ready to bring out our first volume, and why this volume contains only a small and in a way random selection from the material which we ultimately hope to present. We are very happy indeed to see it in print. We thus hope to do justice to those active contributors who have done their work so well, to give an example of what our entire work may contribute, and also to encourage other contributors to complete their articles for subsequent volumes. We hope, too, that other scholars will decide to participate in our work and help us bring it to completion.

I should like to thank first of all our active contributors and the other members of our editorial committees who did most of the painstaking work that made this volume possible, although they urged me to assume the chief responsibility for it, thus giving me more than my deserved share of the credit for this enterprise. We all are indebted to many librarians and scholars in this country and in Europe for much information generously supplied. I also wish to thank M. F. Masai for his permission to have the article on Arator reprinted in this volume after it had been published in *Scriptorium* (6 [1952] 151-156). We are grateful to the American Council of Learned Societies which through a series of small grants has covered the running expenses of our Committee; to the Catholic University of America, Columbia University, Princeton University and Sweet Briar College for occasional small grants; to the Columbia University Seminar on the Renaissance for secretarial help. The publication of this volume has been made possible by a grant of \$500 from the Francis Bacon Foundation in Pasadena, California, and by the generosity of the Catholic University of America Press which has agreed to assume the remainder of the costs.

The proofs of the articles on Juvenal and Salvian have been read by Prof. Berthe Marti (Bryn Mawr College), and those of the article on Arator, by Prof. Herbert B. Hoffleit (University of California, Los Angeles).

New York, Columbia University,

April 21, 1958

For the Executive Committee  
Paul Oskar KRISTELLER.