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INVECTIVES IN THE RENAISSANCE SCHOLARLY DEBATES: DIALOGUE, POLEMICS, OR SOMETHING ELSE?[2]

Renaissance scholarly debates often look like personal invectives devoid of any real scientific content. The present paper examines this impression, considers several particular cases (Raffaele Reggio's invectives against Johannes Calphurnius, Francesco Robortello's polemics against Marc-Antoine Muret and Carlo Sigonio, Angelo Poliziano's criticism of Domizio Calderini's work) and proposes a more specified view on the problem.

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In 1490 an Italian humanist Raffaele Reggio (c.1440–1520), best known now for his athetesis of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and his comments to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*, published a book that could at the first glance be taken as a collection of scholarly essays although in fact three out of four essays were just the invectives against Johannes Calphurnius (Giovanni Planza de' Ruffinoni, c.1443–1503) that contained, above all, the analysis of some philological problems; the solutions offered by the adversary had been erroneous from the author's point of view: the *Discourse against the errors made by Calphurnius in his treatment of some passages of Persius, Valerius Maximus and Cicero*, a dialogue between Reggio and Calphurnius on some passages of Quintillian, and an epistle to a certain Hungarian Sigismundus concerning the same Calphurnius.

Having poured scorn on the pseudonym of Calphurnius (in his opinion, it demonstrated its bearer's ignorance,) Reggio writes in the *Discourse*[3]:

> Ego quidem cum primum te accepi spreto vero nomine Calphurnium malle nominari, putavi te aliquam paterni artificii rationem habuisse. Cum enim pater tuus et carbonariam fecerit et furnorum ferri fundendi calfaciendorum curam semper habuerit, credebam te ei, qui te genuit, aluit, educavit, ac ut bonis artibus institueris nullis parcens impensis, suumque saepenumero vel necessariis defraudans genium, omni diligentia curavit, aliquid gratiae referre, memoriamque ipsius artificii ista nominis a calefaciundis furnis declinati arrogatione aeternitati comendare voluisse. Sed cum Calphurnium per ph. aspiratum, ut Graecum nomen scribendum asseras, video te ut in reliquis, sic in hoc quoque in patrem maxime impium semper fuisse. Is enim cum ardore tui videndi, quem senectuti baculum columenque sibi praeparatum esse putabat, Bononiam usque ubi tunc quoque degebas paedagogus, ex alpibus Bergomatum pedes ivisset, ac qui sibi magistrum Zaninum (sic enim antea in patria vocabaris) indicaret, invenire neminem posset, tandem casu tibi obviavit, ac cum dextram iungere dextrae, teque et amplexari et osculari paterna cuperet caritate, tanta impietate abs te fuit repulsus, ut eum nolueris agnoscere parentem, neque ullis blandiciis ullisve precibus, aut cuiusquam sacerdotis exhortationibus adduci potueris, ut in occulto saltem cum ipso colloquereris. Omnem igitur spem, quam in te infelix pater collocarat abiiciens, domum tristis admodum rediit. Ubi cum a vicinia tota, quidnam ageret magister Zaninus rogaretur, barbare quidem, sed non tamen inepte, Nescio ego respondit quid agat. Sed iam non Zaninus, sed Scalfornius nominator, et quidem me bene scalforniavit, hoc est magnopere decepit. Montani namque Bergomates scalfornias deceptiones atque fallacias dicunt.
>
> When I first learned that you preferred to call yourself Calphurnius, having rejected your real name, I assumed that somehow you referred to the occupation of your father. For your father had been a charcoal burner and had always cared for the run-up of his furnace, so I thought – perhaps you rendered some small gratitude to him for that he had beget, nursed you, brought you up and made sure you have learned liberal arts, sparing no money and often depriving his own genius of the most necessary things; perhaps, I thought,

[3] *Raphaelis Regii Epistolae Plynii, qua libri Naturalis Historiae Tito Vespasiano dedicantur, enarrationes; Eiusdem de quattuor Persii locis, uno Valerii Maximi, duobus Tullii de officiis, ac tribus oratoriis quaestionibus disputatio; Eiusdem de quibusdam Quintiliani locis cum quodam Calfurnio dialogus; Eiusdem loci cuiusdam Quintiliani ac eius Ciceronis ad Atticum epistolae, cuius initium est: Epistolam hanc convicio efflagitarunt codicilli tui, enarratio* (Venice, 1490), fol. c6r.

> you wanted to immortalize the memory of his trade by taking a name derived from the running-up of furnaces (*a calefaciundis furnis*). As you insist however that the name of Calphurnius should be written with *ph*, with aspiration, as if it were Greek, I can see that in this respect as in all others you have not shown any reverence. For when your father who desired to see you since he thought you to be the pier and staff of his old age, walked on foot from the mountains of Bergamo to Bologna where you taught, and began to search everywhere for anyone who could tell him where to look for Master Zanino (*magistrum Zaninum*)[4] (for it was the name you had been called with at your native land) he could find nobody who could tell him about it. But in the end he came across you by chance. And when he was about to shake your hand, embrace and kiss you in fatherly way you drove him off and were so rude that refused to recognize him as your father. And he could not get even a secret meeting with you, not by flattery or humble supplications, not by the intercession of a priest. Finally he lost all hope that he had previously set on you and went back home in great sorrow. When neighbours asked him there what Master Zanino was doing he answered with a phrase coarse but witty: "What he does, I do not know, but he is now called Scalfornius, not Zanino, for he has in fact *scalforned* me a good deal (*et quidem me bene scalforniavit*)", that is, "crossed up": for the inhabitants of the montains of Bergamo use the word *scalfornie* to signify lies and fraud.

In plain words, Reggio throws mud at Calphurnius and he does not disdain to use whatever means possible: endless mockery of his pseudonym, hints at his low birth, inreliable rumours on his enemy's immoral behaviour (one wonders where Reggio could have learned this story – are we to believe that he had travelled through villages around Bergamo in search of the father of Calphurnius?). Their quarrel had not been caused by a simple disagreement: in 1486 Calphurnius replaced Reggio at the chair of rhetoric in the University of Padua that the latter had occupied since 1482 with a salary of 200 florins, more than decent for a non-lawyer; to judge by the words of Reggio Calphurnius achieved it by shameless intrigues[5] (later Calphurnius occupied this position till his death in 1503, and Reggio took this post again in 1503-1509, but this time his salary was average – only 100 florins)[6]. Thus behind the outward appearance of scholarly debates one finds invectives fuelled by personal animosity topped up with the illustrations of the opponent's ignorance. This is a picture typical for scholarly quarrels of the Renaissance. Could one see any productive polemics, and are there any real scholarly debates here?

In his interview of 1984, entitled *Polemics, politics and problematizations* Michel Foucault explained his dislike of polemics in the following way[7]:

[4] This name could possibly be interpreted as a nickname of a fool, cf. Italian *zanni* – a fool, a character from the *commedia dell'arte*. In any case this name does not look Latin at all.
[5] See G. Tiraboschi, *Storia della letteratura Italiana, t. VI, p. 3* (Milan, 1824), p. 1574–1575 and P. F. Grendler, *The Universities of the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore; London, 2001), p. 225, and p. 24 on the salaries of Paduan professors in the 15th century. Calphurnius had had a school in Bologna before the period Regio is writing about: see J. H. Gaisser, *Catullus and His Renaissance Readers* (Oxford, 1993), p. 33 and 292, n. 33
[6] P. F. Grendler, op. cit., p. 225 and 370.
[7] M. Foucault, *Dits et écrits* (Paris, 1994), vol. IV, p. 591–592.

Dans le jeu sérieux des questions et des réponses, dans le travail d'élucidation réciproque, les droits de chacun sont en quelque sorte immanents à la discussion. Ils ne relèvent que de la situation de dialogue. Celui qui questionne ne fait qu'user du droit qui lui est donné: n'être pas convaincu, percevoir une contradiction, avoir besoin d'une information supplémentaire, faire valoir des postulats différents, relever une faute de raisonnement. Quant à celui qui répond, il ne dispose non plus d'aucun droit excédentaire par rapport à la discussion elle-même; il est lié, par la logique de son propre discours, à ce qu'il a dit précédemment et, par l'acceptation du dialogue, à l'interrogation de l'autre. Questions et réponses relèvent d'un jeu – d'un jeu à la fois plaisant et difficile – où chacun des deux partenaires s'applique à n'user que des droits qui lui sont donnés par l'autre, et par la forme acceptée du dialogue.

Le polémiste, lui, s'avance bardé de privilèges qu'il détient d'avance et que jamais il n'accepte de remettre en question. Il possède, par principe, les droits qui l'autorisent à la guerre et qui font de cette lutte une entreprise juste; il n'a pas en face de lui un partenaire dans la recherche de la vérité, mais un adversaire, un ennemi qui a tort, qui est nuisible et dont l'existence même constitue une menace. Le jeu pour lui ne consiste donc pas à le reconnaître comme sujet ayant droit à la parole, mais à l'annuler comme interlocuteur de tout dialogue possible, et son objectif final ne sera pas d'approcher autant qu'il se peut d'une difficile vérité, mais de faire triompher la juste cause dont il est depuis le début le porteur manifeste.

Le polémiste prend appui sur une légitimité dont son adversaire, par définition, est exclu.

Il faudra peut-être un jour faire la longue histoire de la polémique comme figure parasitaire de la discussion et obstacle à la recherche de la vérité…

In the serious play of questions and answers, in the work of reciprocal elucidation, the rights of each person are in some sense immanent in the discussion. They depend only on the dialogue situation. The person asking the questions is merely exercising the right that has been given him: to remain unconvinced, to perceive a contradiction, to require more information, to emphasize different postulates, to point out faulty reasoning, and so on. As for the person answering the questions, he too exercises a right that does not go beyond the discussion itself; by the logic of his own discourse, he is tied to what he has said earlier, and by the acceptance of dialogue he is tied to the questioning of other. Questions and answers depend on a game—a game that is at once pleasant and difficult—in which each of the two partners takes pains to use only the rights given him by the other and by the accepted form of dialogue.

The polemicist , on the other hand, proceeds encased in privileges that he possesses in advance and will never agree to question. On principle, he possesses rights authorizing him to wage war and making that struggle a just undertaking; the person he confronts is not a partner in search for the truth but an adversary, an enemy who is wrong, who is armful, and whose very existence constitutes a threat. For him, then the game consists not of recognizing this person as a subject having the right to speak but of abolishing him as interlocutor, from any possible dialogue; and his final objective will be not to come as close as possible to a difficult truth but to bring about the triumph of the just cause he has been manifestly upholding from the beginning.

The polemicist relies on a legitimacy that his adversary is by definition denied.

Perhaps, someday, a long history will have to be written of polemics, polemics as a parasitic figure on discussion and an obstacle to the search for the truth (tr. by L. Davis).

J. Crewe criticized this opinion of Foucault in his article in the collection *Polemics* edited by Jane Gallop; Crewe objects[8]:

> Foucault's momentous gesture is one to which I shall return in due course, but before doing that I should additionally like to highlight one fairly staggering implication of Foucault's statement. It is that polemic has no constitutive role in intellectual history, or in bringing about intellectual change. Is legitimate intellectual history then also a history of non-violence? Can we just detach ourselves from the apparent fertility and even pleasure as well as the implicating troublesomeness of polemic?

If we are to compare three cited passages a mixed impression is formed: on the one hand, Renaissance scholarly debates (to judge from this example) appear to illustrate the worst side of 'polemics' in the version by Foucault (there is certainly no dialogue here); on the other hand, there seems in fact to be no 'polemics' here at all (Reggio makes himself right, but he is right by definition, not as a proponent of a certain opinion; there is no "intangible point of dogma, the fundamental and necessary principle that the adversary has neglected, ignored or transgressed")[9]. In the present article I will address the question: does one in fact find this sterile fiction of intellectual activity fuelled by nothing else but personal animosity of the participants in the Renaissance scholarly debates, or has perhaps the situation proved to be more complex?

In order to do so I will analyze a seemingly striking example of the same trend as the one seen in the case of Reggio: namely, invectives from the *Disputation on the art and method of correcting the books of the old writers* (*De arte sive ratione corrigendi antiquorum libros disputatio*), the first manual on textual criticism published in 1558 by Francesco Robortello (1516–1567)[10]:

> Horum librorum auxilio utendum est. Quisquiliae autem quaedam librorum, et nugae reiiciendae. Sunt enim involucris apti scombrorum, Pleni thuris et inficitiarum, ut Catullus ait. Sunt qui colligant huiusmodi quisquilias, seque et amicos decipiunt inscitiane dixerim, an calliditate. Castigavi ego, et quidem iure, ni fallor, quendam, qui nuper Horatium emendare frustra conatus est, nam ubi libro tertio odarum ait ad Faunum scribens Vacat ocioso cum bove pagus, emendat sic, et legit, Vacat ocioso cum bove pardus, quasi in Italia pardi uspiam sint. Nam Plinius lib. 8. cap. 17. in Africa, et Syria tantum nasci scribit, et tamen manuscriptum, et antiquissimum vocat librum ad se Patavio missum a quodam Lusitano. Proferat quaeso

[8] J. Crewe, 'Can Polemic Be Ethical? A Response to Michel Foucault', in J. Gallop (ed.), *Polemic: Critical or Uncritical* (New York; London, 2004), p. 138.
[9] *Le point de dogme intangible, le principe fondamental et nécessaire que l'adversaire a négligé, ignoré ou transgressé*: M. Foucault, op. cit., p. 592 (tr. by L. Davis).
[10] *Francisci Robortelli Utinensis De convenientia supputationis Livianae ann. cum marmoribus Rom. quae in Capitolio sunt; Eiusdem De arte, sive ratione corrigendi veteres Authores, disputatio; Eiusdem Emendationum libri duo: Ad clariss. virum Ioannem Bernardi F. Donatum Patritium Venetum* (Padua, 1557), fol. 2v (second pagination).

> librum ipsum, ut videamus qualis sit: vix risum tenebimus, sat scio. Sunt igitur hae quisquiliae librorum protinus amandandae
>
> One should use these books <i.e. manuscripts>. All sorts of nonsense and follies from books should be rejected. These are only fit to wrap mackerels in them, and are 'bundles of rusticity and clumsiness' as Catullus says <36.19 (tr. by F. W. Cornish), cf. also 95.8>. There are those who collect such nonsense and deceive both themselves and their friends – should one say, out of ignorance, or out of cunning? For I have pointed out an error (and pointed correctly if I am not mistaken) made by a man who had recently undertaken in vain to correct Horace. In particular, where Horace writes in his third book of the *Odes* to Fawn: *Vacat ocioso / cum bove pagus* <3.18.12–13, "a village rests with an ox doing nothing">, he makes a correction and reads as follows: *Vacat ocioso / cum bove pardus* <"a leopard rests with an ox doing nothing">, as if there had been leopards anywhere in Italy. For Pliny writes in the 17th chapter of the 8th book <*NH* 8.63>, that they are born only in Africa and Syria. And all the same, he calls the book <he has used> a manuscript, and a very ancient one at that, and says that a certain Portuguese had send it to him from Padua. Let him show this book please so we could have a look on what it is. I have no doubts that we would hardly refrain from laughing. So this kind of nonsense found in books should be totally ignored.

There is only one notorious Portuguese in the humanist circles of the 16th century (Achilles Statius (1524–1581)), and the reference is obviously to him[11]. However he could hardly have been the unnamed scholar at stake, for although Achilles Statius did indeed write a commentary on Horace it had never been published (only a commentary on the *Ars Poetica* was printed)[12]. Robortello almost certainly referred to another text – a commentary on Horace made by Marc-Antoine Muret (1526–1585), published by the Venetian press of Paul Manutius in 1555. Here is Muret's commentary on the passage in question[13]:

> Cum bove pagus,] Nihil video esse causae cur quicquam hoc loco mutetur: in Achillis tamen Statii ita legitur,
> Festus in pratis vacat ociosa
> Cum bove pardus.
> idque non alienam sententiam habet ab eo quod statim sequitur, inter audaces lupus errat agnos.
>
> *Cum bove pagus* <"A village together with an ox">. I do not see any reasons why anything should be changed in this place. But the text in the manuscript of Achilles Statius is as follows: *Festus in pratis vacat ociosa / cum bove pardus* <3.18.12–13, "A leopard at ease rests with a cow doing nothing">. And the meaning is linked to what is following: *Inter audaces lupus errat agnos* <3.18.13, "A wolf is wandering among the lambs that grew bolder">.

[11] E. J. Kenney, *The Classical Text: Aspects of Editing in the Age of the Printed Book* (Berkeley, 1974), p. 32.
[12] J. H. Gaisser, 'Catullus', in V. Brown (ed.), *Catalogus Translationum Et Commentariorum: Mediaeval and Renaissance Latin Translations and Commentaries, vol. VII* (Washington, 1992), p. 265.
[13] *Q. Horatius Flaccus cum Aldi Manutii, et M. Antonii Mureti adnotationibus; Eiusdem Manutii De metris Horatianis* (Lyon, 1586), p. 17 (second pagination).

If Muret is indeed mentioned here it follows that Robortello garbles a quotation considerably. However, as it was Muret together with Carlo Sigonio (c.1524–1584) who were the main objects of criticism in the remaining part of the *Disputation* (and Robortello avoided mentioning their names though by the end of the text he forgot about caution), it seems reasonable to infer that he is being referred to here as well. In any case, Sigonio understood the hint by Robortello in this sense and immediately wrote a reply entitled *Against the book on the art of correcting* (*In librum de arte corrigendi*). Defending his own self against Robortello's attack Sigonio also mentions his invectives against other scholars; having analyzed a passage by Robortello dedicated to the sensational *Anacreontica* published by Henri Estienne, Sigonio turned to the example in question[14]:

> et illud in M. Antonium Muretum virum doctissimum aliquanto modestius: … Ex his verbis modestiam eius perspiciunt omnes cum in Muretum, tum in Achillem Statium Lusitanum, virum ingenii, atque doctrinae gloria florentem. quem ipse quondam honoris sui caussa auditorem suum appellare solebat, cum magistrum iustius, ac studiorum suorum adiutorem nominare deberet. nunc quam vere hoc de Mureto scribat, videamus. sic loquitur Muretus: … An igitur Henricus etiam, an Muretus te iniuria provocarunt ea, ut eos ita tractares?
>
> Here is a more restrained attack on the most learned man Marc Antoine Muret: <the above-cited passage from Robortello follows>. Everyone perceives in these words how 'restrained' he is towards both Muret and the Portuguese Achilles Statius, a man flourishing in the glory of his talent and learning. He <Robortello> has earlier called him his student to add himself glory, for in justice he should have called him his tutor and assistant in his scholarly work. And now let us see, how truthful is what he writes about Muret. Muret says: <the above-cited passage from Muret follows>. Have both of them, Henri <Estienne>, and Muret offended you so greatly that made you treat them in such way?

Sigonio certainly overdoes it: although Achilles Statius listened to Robortello and communicated with him, and Robortello has possibly mentioned him in his *Emendations* printed together with the *Disputation on the art of correcting* as *Lusitanus quidam amicus meus* "one my Portuguese friend" when quoting an epigraphic text from Spain out his book[15], to call Achilles Statius a 'tutor' of Robortello who was eight years his seniour was to juggle with facts with the intention to humiliate the opponent.

What can we see in the analyzed passages? To what extent the texts by Robortello and Sigonio could be compared with Reggio's invectives against Calphurnius?

[14] *Caroli Sigonii Emendationum libri duo: Quorum argumentum proximae pagellae indicabunt* (Venice, 1557), fol. 9r–v.
[15] F. Missere-Fontana, 'Appunti antiquari di Achille Stazio (1525–1581) in una copia del *De notis Romanorum* di Marco Valerio Probo (1525) in Biblioteca Estense Universitaria di Modena', in *Numismatica e Antichità Classiche* 32 (2003): 324 thinks that this reference is to Achilles Statius.

Similarities in the arguments of Sigonio and Reggio are obvious: what Sigonio wants to demonstrate is that Robortello behaves immorally unjustly attacking people he is greatly indebted to; what Reggio desires to show is that Calphurnius is equally immoral when he refuses to show respect to his father who he is also indebted to. Sigonio and Robortello had personal reasons to quarrel, just as Reggio and Calphurnius had: they had long been in conflict with each other over the 'spheres of influence' in the academic circles of Veneto in the field of the Roman history; in the early 1560s this conflict turned into a campaign for the position of professor at the same *studium* of Padua[16]. Sigonio and Muret had one more thing in common: in 1557 both were leading scholars who worked with the Venetian publishing house of Paul Manutius, a grandson of Aldus (Robortello had never collaborated with the Aldine Press). Critical comments from the *Art of correcting* by Robortello are almost exclusively aimed at those two and against Paul Manutius himself – first of all, against the edition of Titus Livius prepared by Sigonio in 1555, and the edition of Asconius Pedianus published by Paul Manutius in 1547. Both books were, of course, printed by the Aldine Press – as was Muret's Horace. It is easy to notice that the main function of the *Art of correcting* is to divide the academic community into 'allies' and 'enemies'. 'Enemies' are a constant subject of discussion there; 'allies', scholars recognized by Robortello, are mentioned in one or two places only, but unambiguously[17]:

> In primis vero in emendatore librorum requiritur fides, ut ne fucum faciat ullum, ut ne lectori imponat, si dixerit se in manuscriptis libris invenisse, quod ipse excogitarit, possit fortasse decipere imperitos: at peritis necesse est, ut se deridendum praebeat. Quanta fides, Dii immortales, in Politiano? cuivis intueri licet adhuc Florentiae in Medicea, et Marciana bibliotheca manuscriptos libros, ubi publice asservantur, quibus usus est. Eadem fides in sanctissimo illo et doctissimo sene, qui Vergilium ex Romano codice emendavit, Io. Pierio Valeriano, viro dignissimo, qui ab omnibus ametur, et colatur. Nec secus egit Petrus Victorius meus, qui ex hac emendandi professione non tam doctrinae magnae, quam magnae bonitatis, et fidei laudem quaesivit, quibus sit usus libris, ubi sint: Langobardicisne scripti, an Romanis literis, semper patefacit… Eandem fidem agnoscas in Hieronymo Ferrario, qui Philippicas orationes Cic. expurgavit. Nec dissimili ratione usus est Beatus Rhenanus vir doctissimus, qui in eluendis maculis ex Livio, ex Tacito, ex Velleio, et ex aliis tam multis praeclaram omnibus bonis navavit operam. Itidem et Glareanus, et Camerarius, omnesque alii, qui librorum authoritate manuscriptorum nituntur.

> First of all, there should be fidelity in a corrector so that he does not throw dust in a reader's eyes, does not lie to a reader saying that he had found something in manuscripts what he in fact invented; he could have tricked inexperienced scholars in this way but he would inevitably make himself look as a fool in the eyes of the experienced. How faithful Poliziano had been! Even now anybody could look at the manuscript books he had used, in Florence, in the libraries of Medici and St Marco where they are kept for free access.

[16] P. F. Grendler, op. cit., p. 400.
[17] Francisci Robortelli Utinensis op. cit., fol. 7v (second pagination).

> The holiest and the most learned elder who corrected Vergil following the Roman codex, Giovanni Pierio Valeriano, is equally faithful, and he is more than worthy of universal love and veneration. My dear Piero Vettori did nothing other; the glory he has earned in the field of correcting is not as much the glory of high learning as that of high honesty and conscience: what books he used, where are they, whether they had been written by Lombard or Roman characters – he always clearly states all of this... You would find the same fidelity with Girolamo Ferrari who cleansed the "Philippics' by Cicero. The most learned man Beatus Rhenanus acted in the same way when he removed stains from Titus Livius, Tacitus, Velleius and a great number of other authors; he had done a glorious work for the use of all good people. The same could be said of Glareanus and Camerarius, and of all others who base themselves on the authority of manuscript books.

For all that I would argue that there is a difference between the texts by Robortello and Sigonio, and that the list by Robortello represents more than just the names of those he had not managed to quarrel with: it is here that one could find what looks like a slight gap that enables one to make corrections to the pessimistic image of the Renaissance scholarly disputes that I have drawn earlier. Attempts to correlate the boundary drawn by Robortello with the boundaries of his circle, or of the scholars linked to the Aldine Press always require some qualifications (for example, the *Corrections to the* Philippics *of Cicero* by Girolamo Ferrari were published by Paul Manutius; Robortello has never quarreled with Henri Estienne and Achilles Statius, although he still criticizes them – it was exactly this that shocked Sigonio). What is more important, Robortello does not stress random personal or even professional qualities of the scholars under discussion, unlike Sigonio (though Robortello retains some traces of this approach – cf. the epithet 'holiest' awarded to Pierio Valeriano): he talks about one particular shortcoming of the rejected scholars – about their careless use of manuscripts. A scholar should say what manuscript he has taken a reading from, so one could check what was in fact written there, how old the manuscript was etc. It is this he calls *fides*, 'fidelity'– the word itself reminds one of the discussions of the moral qualities of the scholars but here its meaning is specific. The contraposition of the two 'variants' of textology clearly is not an artificial device by Robortello: even if his accusations addressed to Muret are somewhat strained one could only look through any edition prepared by Muret to realize that clarity and accuracy of the references to manuscripts there are far from ideal even for his period.

A doubt arises here (typical for the studies of the Renaissance reasoning of the accuracy of the work with texts). If the accuracy of references is the sign of a good textologist, and Robortello is 'good', according to this parameter, and Sigonio is 'bad', how did it happen that Robortello has muddled the phrase by Muret shamelessly while Sigonio cited both his sources accurately? Could it be that it was all for show and Robortello slandered his personal enemy while his own approach to texts was no better? It often seems that debates on the Renaissance

method undermine themselves. Let us look at a parallel case from the text by the paragon of fidelity for the whole of the 16th century (including Robortello, as we have seen)[18], Angelo Poliziano. In his famous chapter IX of the *Miscellanea* (1489) Poliziano himself criticizes a leader of the previous generation of the commentators of classical texts, Domizio Calderini[19], and analyses his interpretation of the word *attegias* in line 196 of the 14th Satire of Juvenal (*dirue Maurorum attegias…*)[20]:

> Ad attegias autem quod attinet, ipsius haec Domiti verba sunt: Alii, inquit, accipiunt lingua Maurorum attegias, mapalia significare. Ego potius intelligo, hoc significare Mauritaniam ad extremam partem Libyae. Dionysius:
>
> Ad summam Libyen habitant Attegias undas
> Alcidae qua sunt statuae Maurusia plebes.
>
> Haec ille, videns utique meliora, deteriora sequens, volebamque sane illi credere, sed rumor vera negat esse. Dionysium vero citat auctorem Domitius, qui si unquam vocabuli istius mentionem fecisse ullam reperietur, cedam, tollamque manum iam tum, meque omnium haberi vanissimum non recusabo.
>
> Sed ut omni remota vessica, rem putemus ipsam, non sunt Dionysi versus hi, non sunt. Verum Prisciani potius, quo libello Dionysium poetam de Graeco interpretatur. Corrumpit eos autem Domitius, atque depravat. Nam quod apud Priscianum fuit, ad Tethyos undas, priore inducta, interpolataque scriptura, pro eo supposuit attegias undas, neutiquam (ut arbitror) facturus, si rationem carminis, aut si spatia, morasque syllabarum consuluisset, cum vocabulum, quod est attegias, antepenultima porrecta syllaba, contra ipsius quem interpretatur testimonium, tum postrema brevi, contra omnium posuerit auctoritatem. Bene quod extat Dionysius, cuius esse Graecos illius argumenti, hos puto versus:
>
> Ἀλλ᾽ ἤτοι πυμάτην μὲν ἐπὶ γλωχῖνα νέμονται
> Ἀγχοῦ στυλάων Μαυρουσίδος ἔθνεα γαίης.
>
> Licet autem evolvas iam totum, videbis ne minimam quidem suspitionem subesse attegiarum apud Dionysium, videbis alium citari pro alio, expungi veram scripturam, supponi falsam, rationem syllabarum vel carminis haberi nullam. Et dubitabit aliquis ab ipso iam liberrime dissentire, et refutare has nugas, vel si praeiudicata pridem de hominis ingenio, doctrinaque opinio, causam faciat invidiosiorem?

> As for the word *attegias* this is what Domitius himself said: "Some think that the word *attegias* means 'shelters' in the Moorish language. I would rather suggest that this word means Mauritania in the distant part of Libya. Domitius writes:
>
> Ad summam Libyen habitant Attegias undas
> Alcidae qua sunt statuae Maurusia plebes.
>
> <«At the edge of Libya where the columns of Alcides are <i.e., the pillars of Hercules >, the waves of Attegia (?) are populated by a Moorish people»>".

[18] See A. Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: A Story in the History of Classical Scholarship, vol. 1* (Oxford, 1983); M. D. Reeve, 'Classical Scholarship', in J. Kraye (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 20–46.
[19] On the importance of the criticism of Calderini for Poliziano see V. Branca, *Poliziano e l'umanesimo della parola* (Turin, 1983), p. 157–181 *et passim*; on the authority of Calderini in 1470s see J. Ramminger, 'Calderini (Domizio) (1446–1478)', in C. Nativel (ed.), *Centuriae latinae II: Cent une figures humanistes de la Renaissance aux Lumières* (Geneva, 2006), p. 167–74.
[20] *Omnia opera Angeli Politiani, et alia quaedam lectu digna, quorum nomina in sequenti indice videre licet* (Venice, 1498), fol. C i v – C ii r.

> Thus Domitius: "although he had seen the best he chose the worst" <Ov. *Met*. 7.20–21>. And I would have loved to believe him, but rumors tell me that it is all lies. Here Domitius refers to a writer Dionysius <Periegetes>. If the word could be found anywhere in the latter's works, I would admit I had been wrong and even would rise my hand and would not object to be called the biggest windbag of all people.
>
> But I will put aside all equivoques and will reveal the essence of the matter: these are not lines of Dionysius, they are not by him; these are the lines by Priscian, from the book where he translates the text of Dionysius from Greek <Priscian, *Periegesis* 174–175>. And Domitius has distorted and mutilated them: the text by Priscian read *ad Tethyos undas* <"at the waves of Tethys">, and Domitius has deleted and reworked the old variant and wrote *Attegias undas* instead. I believe that he would not have done it had he taken metrics into consideration or counted lengths and moras of the syllables. For he put the word *attegias* so that, firstly, the third syllable from the end should be long, and this contradicts the testimony of the very same author he comments on, and secondly, the last syllable should be short, and this contradicts all authorities. Fortunately, the original text by Dionysius has survived; here are, I think the corresponding Greek lines <Dionysius Periegetes, *Orbis descriptio* 184–185>:
>
> Ἀλλ' ἤτοι πυμάτην μὲν ἐπὶ γλωχῖνα νέμονται
> Ἀγχοῦ στυλάων Μαυρουσίδος ἔθνεα γαίης.
>
> <"And by the further edge, next to the pillars, the peoples of the land of Mauritania live">.
>
> And even if you read the whole text there – you will see that there is no hint of *attegias* in Dionysius, you will see that one writer is being cited under the name of the other, that the correct text has been taken out and a false one replaced it, that no attention is paid to metre and lengths of the syllables. Is there anybody still hesitating to disagree with this man at the first opportunity and to blow up this nonsense? And the fact that there had been a preconceived opinion of his learning and wit should make him even more hateful.

Here one does not deal with textual criticism but rather with an interpretation of the text but the parallel is revealing. Poliziano implies that Calderini has intentionally corrupted the text by Priscian so that it would support his interpretation of the text by Juvenal, and also has used an unclear reference, to create an impression that he does not quote Priscian but rather a Greek Dionysius Periegetes. A point open to criticism here is the idea of Calderini's malicious intent: why could not he find his version in a manuscript? But one could have ignored this detail having written it off as a rhetorical strategy of Poliziano (it is quite possible that the readers of the *Miscellanea* were prepared to do it): what does it matter, even if it was a variant from a corrupted manuscript. Why would Calderini quote a text so obviously corrupted, at least as far as metrics is concerned? The word is interpreted as *āttĕgĭās* in the text of Juvenal, while in the text of Priscian as cited by Poliziano it should be interpreted as *āttēgĭăs* – the length of the second syllable has changed, and the ending of the genitive case has become short contrary to all classical Latin evidence.

However the picture would change if one is to compare the quotation with the original edition by Calderini. Here we would find a single but crucial difference: Calderini writes the

word in question as *atteias*[21]. It nullifies all metrical arguments by Poliziano: both in the text of Juvenal, and in the text of Priscian the same form *āttēiās* is perfectly acceptable as far as metre is concerned.

Of course Calderini is still in the wrong and his technique falls short of the occasion (he could have checked the Priscian's translation against the Greek original, as it has been done by Poliziano), but what interests us more here is that Poliziano himself happens to be careless when citing the abused opponent. Why has he allowed it if the fidelity of citation is so important for him?

It is possible that the answer is the same both in case of Poliziano and in that of Robortello: when one criticizes one's opponents the careless citation "does not count". Robortello says that one should quote manuscripts faithfully but he himself does not quote manuscripts but rather the work by a Muret who he wants to present in the worst possible light. Poliziano says that one should quote ancient authors faithfully but Calderini is not one of them so he does not have to be treated with similar respect. In fact one deals with the rules of polemical rhetoric.

This detail clarifies an important point. It could have been noticed in my arguments that of the two problems touched upon at the beginning one remained in the shadows. Yes, it seems possible to talk about normal academic polemics in relation to the quarrels of the Renaissance scholars (at least, in some cases). Robortello and Poliziano were first of all unsatisfied by the contents of the scholarly work of their opponents, and it is not likely that they simply bear a grudge against opponents personally and so had to invent what to find fault with in their work. At the same time both could hardly answer anything to Foucault's accusations against polemics as such. What they stood for was indeed a "fundamental and necessary principle that the adversary has neglected". The problematic nature of legitimacy of such polemics is obvious. Strictly speaking both Robortello and Poliziano are 'cheating'. We have to act on our own to understand what Calderini or Muret had in fact wanted to say, to 'establish a dialogue' with them.

One could find one more interesting feature in Poliziano's *Miscellanea* which points out to his lack of interest towards establishing a dialogue. There are several recurring series of images in the complex rhetorical network of the *Miscellanea*. One of them suggests that the scholarly comments of the *Miscellanea* are an army led by Poliziano against the ignorants and obscurants (this is the reason why, for instance, *Miscellanea* is divided into *centuriae*). Another series correlates the introduction to the *Miscellanea* to the programmatic passages (mostly introductory

[21] *Domitii Calderini Veronensis secretarii apostolici Commentarii in Satyras Iuvenalis ad clarissimum virum Iulianum Medicem Petri Cosmi filium Florentinum* (Venice, 1487), fol. i v v.

as well) of the classical satirical texts (by Lucilius, Horace, Persius, and Juvenal) where the attitude towards the 'enemies' is also described (it is possible that Poliziano implies here that *Miscellanea* is a satire in a sense since the name of *Miscellanea* as a substantive – found in the only classical passage, Iuv. *Sat*. 11.20 – means a mixed pottage eaten by gladiators while one of the classical etymologies traced the word *satira* to a name of sausage made of mixed ingredients, and in his introduction Poliziano paid a good deal of attention to the texts where titles had something in common with the *Miscellanea* although he missed satire there for some unclear reason). One of the direct quotations is as follows[22]:

> Atqui non tamen ob istos pigebit, aut exigere stilo, quicquid hoc nostrarum lucubrationum est, aut experiri, quid concedatur in illos, qui fraudes in literarum negocio concipiunt capitales.
>
> But these people would not make me hesitate, neither in writing down the fruits of my vigils, whatever they are, nor in 'seeing how far I would be allowed to go in my accusations' against those who commit felonies in the field of science.

The quoted text is by Juvenal, Satire 1.170. The wider context is as follows (170–171):

> experiar quid concedatur in illos
> quorum Flaminia tegitur cinis atque Latina.
>
> Then I will try what I may say of those worthies whose ashes lie under the Flaminian and Latin road (tr. by G. G. Ramsay).

The programmatic first satire by Juvenal ends with these lines. In an interesting if provocative article S. Braund and W. Raschke have pointed out the associations with the images of a necromancer or a Frankenstein that are evoked by this phrase by Juvenal: it is they who 'experience what is allowed to do with the dead' (this is the literal meaning of Juvenal's phrase)[23]. Poliziano hardly referred to this imagery but it is an interesting coincidence that the main object of his polemic was the dead Domitio Calderini. Wars (πόλεμοι) waged by Juvenal and Poliziano are most successful when waged against the dead – and this detail shows to what extent both of them were not interested in a *dialogue* with the objects of their criticism[24]. A dead person certainly could not raise any objections. Although their armours shine of the most exquisite rhetoric, grave digging leaves a strong smell of 'illegitimacy' that Foucault referred to.

[22] Angeli Politiani op. cit., fol. A iiii r.
[23] S. M. Braund, W. Raschke, 'Satiric Grotesques in Public and Private: Juvenal, Dr Frankestein, Raymond Chandler, and *Absolutely Fabulous*', in *Greece and Rome* 49 (2002), p. 62–84.
[24] On the non-dialogism of Juvenal's laughter see P. A. Miller, 'The Bodily Grotesque in Roman Satire: Images of Sterility', in *Arethusa* 31 (1998), p. 257–283.

One certainly should not draw general conclusions about what was absent from the academic life of the Renaissance just on the basis on the above-mentioned examples. I would suggest however that this series of cases has revealed some trends. One should not view the quarrels of the Renaissance scholars only as personal conflicts not related to any opposing points of view: the best scholars at least addressed the real problems of scholarly work during those quarrels. At the same time these quarrels often could not be seen as fruitful dialogues. It is this polemics unprepared to accept any objections that Foucault rejected.

Has J. Crewe been right with his justification of polemics? Did the above-mentioned quarrels have any 'visible productivity'? It seems they did – invectives in the style of Robortello and Poliziano certainly played an important role in the rise of strict philological methods in the course of the 16th century. At the same time one detail could be specified concerning the conclusions by Crewe: what was productive was the act of criticism itself but not the discussion of particular questions. By distorting the information about a particular phrase of Muret Robortello made an impact on the fear of scholars to be accused of inaccurate and unfaithful work with manuscript that was growing with the progress of the century, but it could hardly help scholars to understand the text of Horace under discussion. The details are being pushed into the background, and polemical effect dominates the text. All advantages and disadvantages of this situations were often typical for the Renaissance scholarly debates, and it is up to us to decide whether we would concentrate on the former, or on the latter.

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