

GUGLIELMO CAVALLO, *Παραδείγματα*. Le liste degli autori greci esemplari dall'antichità a Bisanzio (Transmissions: Studies on Conditions, Processes and Dynamics of Textual Transmission 8). Berlin – Boston: De Gruyter 2024. 205 pp. – ISBN 978-3-11-102709-8

• SOPHIA XENOPHONTOS, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
(sxenophontos@lit.auth.gr)

CAVALLO's book is a learned contribution to the history of canon formation and scholarship in antiquity and the Byzantine period. It focuses on the study of lists of exemplary Greek authors, dubbed *παραδείγματα* in rhetorical works, though it does not limit its exploration to rhetoric alone but takes into account the occurrence of such lists in a variety of literary, scientific, and philosophical genres. The book starts from the premise that earlier scholarship has not paid due attention to the nature, chronology, formation and use of the canons of exemplary authors. It fills this gap by providing a new critical edition of the lists, a useful introduction to the state of the art, as well as interpretative material appended to the edition, which delves into the lists' historical context, including details of their production, various functions – both synchronic and diachronic – and prosopographical information on the individual authors included in them.

The first part offers a concise and handy engagement with previous editorial attempts at furnishing a critical text for the lists. More specifically, it emphasises the merits and limitations of the key player in this long history, namely OTTO KRÖHNERT.¹ HUGO RABE's edition of 1910 is also discussed, though a full reference does not appear in the Bibliography. On the previous editions of the lists, there is another relevant section in the book on pp. 37–39. As CAVALLO acknowledges, KRÖHNERT dealt with the question of whether the Byzantine lists coincided with the ancient canons of poets, grammarians, orators, historians, doctors, and philosophers. He also provided a more competent critical edition of the lists compared to those hitherto available and made a detailed examination of the various groups of authors. Yet, in the light of the recent revival of interest in the Byzantine lists of excellent authors, KRÖHNERT's work is bound to be deemed lacking: it does not consider the manuscript tradition thoroughly, it includes

1. OTTO KRÖHNERT, *Canonesne poetarum scriptorum artificum per antiquitatem fuerunt?* Königsberg 1897.

unreliable collations, its critical apparatuses are unnecessarily dense, its prosopography is outdated or imprecise, no plausible hypothesis on the formation and chronology of the lists is discussed or proposed, and there is no in-depth analysis of the relationship between the lists and Byzantine literature. In this context, the importance of CAVALLO's study, which seeks to provide a comprehensive account of Byzantine lists of exemplary authors from ancient times up to the fourteenth century, is evident.

The second part focuses on the manuscript tradition of the lists and includes meticulous descriptions of the main codices preserving them,² with accurate details on their measurements, chronology, script, watermarks, contents, and owners. A distinctive characteristic in the transmission that, unlike KRÖHNERT, CAVALLO has been able to identify is that one of the lists, hitherto assumed to be unitary, was composed of two originally independent lists which were later joined together: an older one dating back to Alexandrian philology and a more recent one, possibly from late antiquity, which continued to be formed up to the ninth century. This is one of the key findings of CAVALLO's book, alongside the important proposition that another list of authors dated to the 13th–14th centuries differs significantly from the previous ones in that it encompasses examples of Church Fathers and theologians, serving the Byzantines' religious needs. This list was shaped partly under the influence of cultural factors in the 11th–12th centuries and partly by the Second Sophistic movement. The upshot is that in practice only two lists were originally distinct and diachronic – not three, as KRÖHNERT indicates in his edition. Accordingly, two redactions are considered for the constitution of the text, namely Redaction C and VBN (pp. 18–22), which results in the stemma shown on p. 22. The critical edition by CAVALLO is sound and provides an authoritative text, though on p. 41, l. 6 and p. 47, l. 25 the text should read Ἐπίχαρμος (not Ἐπίκαρμος). The *apparatus criticus* is useful and easy to read. The text is followed by commentary of an editorial nature, mostly with justification of preferred readings and conjectures.

The final part of the book examines the intellectual background to the composition of the lists, followed – given the lists' flexible nature – by careful consideration of their chronology. One of the most interesting sections in the volume is the analysis of the various functions the lists served, notably

2. Viz., Bibliothèque nationale de France, Coislin 387; Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1456; Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, gr. II 15; Bodleian Library, Auct. T. 2. 11 (Misc. 211); Bodleian Library, Barocci 125; Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Voss. gr. Q. 76; and Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, gr. 256.

the didactic one, which offers precious insights into their reception in later environments and the way they were appreciated as social and cultural variables. Equally thought-provoking is the discussion in Part 7 on the ways in which the lists of exemplary authors impacted the mindsets and agendas of Byzantine writers between the eleventh and the fifteenth century. The focus is on John Tzetzes, who used the lists quite often in his writings, thus rendering them an integral element of his erudition; on the relationship between the canon of the ten Attic orators and Byzantine scholarship; on Michael Psellos and the new rhetorical canon; on the anonymous treatise *On the Composition of the Four Parts of Perfect Speech*; and finally on the παραδείγματα in the rhetorical treatises of the Anonymous and Joseph Rhakendytes. The study concludes with some important remarks on the role of the Byzantine lists of exemplary authors as documents of cultural history. Despite dealing with highly technical material, the book is made easy to read by the well thought out structure that underpins it, the inclusion of recapitulating paragraphs, normally at the end of individual sections, digital reproduction of manuscript folios containing the lists on pp. 23–36, and useful indices at the end. The production is also meticulous.³

All in all, this is a work of profound erudition that will be of interest to scholars working on ancient canons (literary and scientific-philosophical alike), the history of scholarship, and the reception of the classics and the Church Fathers in Byzantium.

Keywords

Greek rhetoric; Classical scholarship; canon of Classical literature

3. Only one typo caught my eye: ‘Edimburgh’ (*sic*) on p. 203.