NOTES ON THE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF RAINERIUS DE PISIS

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The Pantheologia of Rainerius de Pisis, the Dominican who died in 1351, must be one of the longest books ever composed in the Middle Ages. Although the author was an Italian, it is noticeable that of the six editions printed in the fifteenth century the first five appeared in Germany, suggesting that the manuscripts quickly found their way to Nuremberg, where it is quite possible that the celebrated humanist, physician and bibliophile Hartmann Schedel had something to do with seeing the formidable tomes of Rainerius de Pisis into print. The first edition, dated 8 April 1473, was produced by Johann Sensenschmidt, and this is the only book at Nuremberg which also contains the name of Heinrich Kefer, who had been one of Gutenberg’s servants and testified in the law suit with Fust. The incunable editions of Rainerius (of all of which there are copies in the British Library) are as follows:


After these massive productions (the size of which never struck terror into fifteenth-century printers), the work seems to have quickly faded out of popularity. There is, however, one early sixteenth-century edition in two folio volumes, of which Cambridge University has three partial sets and the British Library has nothing. This was completed at Lyons by the printer Guillaume Huyon on 5 November 1519 at the expense of the publisher Constantin Fradin. There is a complete copy of this edition in the Bibliothèque Municipale, Lyons; but it is rare enough not to be recorded in Paris, or the libraries of North America. There are copies in Manchester College and St John’s College at Oxford. This Lyons edition of 1519 is the only one to appear in the century between 1486 and 1580. There are, however, two editions printed in Italy, in 1580 and 1585 respectively, about which more needs to be said. These too are evidently quite rare, but Cambridge University seems to be complete in its holdings of them. The British Library has a substantial fragment of one of them, hitherto unidentified.

The edition published in two quarto volumes at Brescia in 1580 exists in three different issues. The first has the imprint ‘apud Thomam Bozzalam’, of which there are copies in St John’s College, Cambridge, and the University Library at Urbino. The second issue has the imprint ‘apud Petrum Bozolam’, of which there is a slightly mutilated copy at Magdalene College, Cambridge. The third has the imprint ‘apud Petrum Mariam Marchettum’, and of this there is a copy in Cambridge University Library. The Bozzola family were booksellers and publishers only, not printers. Pietro Maria Marchetti was sometimes a printer, but often a publisher for whom other printers worked on commission. It seems reasonable to conclude that the two-volume quarto edition of 1580 was printed by an unnamed printer, some copies being ordered for sale by the two Bozzola (brothers?) and
others for sale by P. M. Marchetti. We have to identify this anonymous printer.7

The 1585 edition, likewise, in two quarto volumes, was published at Venice ‘apud Ioan. Baptistan à Porta’, whom my recent researches have shown to be a publisher only, so that the anonymous printer of this edition also needs to be identified. Of this Venetian edition of 1585 there are copies in Gonville and Caius and Emmanuel Colleges at Cambridge, with a copy of vol. i only at Clare; and both volumes are also in the Bodleian, Oxford, in Christ Church, Queen’s and Wadham; and in Trinity College, Dublin.8 The fact that both the 1580 Brescia edition and the 1585 Venice edition have 1207 numbered pages in part i, while the former has 1233 pages in part ii and the latter has 1232, shows that the 1585 is a very close reprint of the 1580 edition.

The fragment in the British Library consists of 1207 numbered pages, or sig. A-FFF12. This pagination shows that it must belong to either the Brescia 1580 edition or the Venice 1585 edition. It lacks the preliminary leaves, including title-page. The General Catalogue of the British Museum in the nineteenth century gave its imprint as [Venice? 1585?], while the Short-Title Catalogue of Italian Books published in 1958 decided to omit [Venice?] and give only the date as [1585?]. The shelfmark of the fragment is 3835.df.2.(2).

Because Adams gave the information that the 1585 edition was edited by one ‘D. Borgarutius’ (another small error here needs to be corrected),9 and because I knew that Borgaruccio Borgarucci worked as editor on several different texts for the publisher G. B. Porta, I first took photocopies of the British Library fragment to Emmanuel College, Cambridge; but here I immediately saw that the fragment did not belong to the 1585 Venice edition. This meant that it must belong to the 1580 Brescia edition, but of course to which issue of this edition we shall never know. The same headpiece ornament of the fragment is found in at least two other books dated 1584: Andrea Nicolio, Historia dell’origine et antichità di Rovigo, and Girolamo Cataneo, Dell’arte del misurare libri due. Both of these books were printed by the well-known and successful Brescian printer Vincenzo Sabbio, and it is to him that the 1580 edition of Rainerius de Pisis must also be attributed. He was working on commission for the publishers Bozzola and Marchetti.

The identity of the British Library fragment was confirmed on a visit to Cambridge University Library, by comparison with the perfect copy there. Bound before the fragment of 1207 pages are the title-page and index of another work, the Summa seu Destructorium vitiorum of Alexander Anglus, in an edition printed at Venice by Damianus Zenarus in 1582. Attention is drawn to the discrepancy and imperfections of the contents of this volume in several notes, written by a German hand in Latin, on the title-page and inside the book. It is clear that the volume was in Germany for a number of years. It is in a German pigskin binding of about 1600, and on the title-page is the inscription ‘Ex libris Ranshoven’: presumably the word ‘Bibliothecae’ is to be understood, and the book came from the monastery of the Augustinian Canons of Ranshoven in Upper Austria. It was acquired by the British Museum on 19 June 1882.

The British Library fragment should be catalogued as follows:

[Brescia: Vincenzo Sabbio printer for either of the two publishers Thomas Bozzola or Pietro Maria Marchetti, 1580.] 4°.

We now come to the Venice edition of 1585 which, although there is no copy in the British Library, deserves more careful consideration. I have studied in detail the perfect copy of it in Emmanuel College library, Cambridge. As already noted, the editor is Borgaruccio Borgarucci and the publisher is Giovanni Battista a Porta. Two other books in the British Library
by the same combination of editor and publisher are Leandro Alberti, *Descrittione di tutta Italia, 1581*, and Francesco Alunno, *Della fabbrica del mondo, 1584*. In both cases I have been able to prove, from a study of the typographical ornaments and initial letters copiously used in them, that the anonymous printer must have been Francesco Ziletti, who was most active at Venice between 1569 and 1586. The British Library has nearly seventy of his signed editions, quite apart from his anonymous work, which must have been on a considerable scale, commissioned by several publishers. This conclusion is confirmed by another work in two volumes which is in St John's College, Cambridge, but not in the British Library: Miguel de Palacios, *Enarrationes in Ioannem*, 1587. Here, the colophon of tom. i is ‘apud Io. Baptistam a Porta’, while the colophon of tom. ii is ‘apud Franciscum Zilettum’, demonstrating clearly the collaboration between the two firms, Ziletti being the printer and Porta the bookseller or publisher. The Rainerius de Pisis must likewise be attributed to Francesco Ziletti as its anonymous printer in 1585. The same large capital ‘D’ which is found on sig. x 2r of the Rainerius is also found on A 1r of Teodoro Angelucci, *Quod metaphysica sint eadem quae physica noua sententia, 1584*, and in a number of other books printed by Ziletti.

There is an unexpected continuation to the list of editions of the *Pantheologia*. Two late seventeenth-century editions were published at Lyons, each in three folio volumes; the first, ‘sumptibus Petri Rigaud’ in 1655, the second ‘sumptibus Johannis Girin et Bartholomaei Riviere’ in 1670. These are in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, but not in the British Library. The last of these editions, 1670, is in the Acton collection in Cambridge University Library.

This, as far as I know, is the end of the list of editions of Rainerius de Pisis.


The Nuremberg edition of 1473, and its very close reprint of 1474, each have 856 printed leaves, or 1712 pages, in double columns with 57 lines to a column. Taking into account all the many abbreviations, I calculate at a conservative estimate that this means that the *Pantheologia* contains something in the region of 1,350,000 words.

2 Several obvious errors in the bibliography of editions of Rainerius given by Quetif-Echard in 1719 are easily accounted for. They begin by referring to an edition *sine nota typographica* which they think was printed ‘not long after 1459’: they can only mean the Basle edition which is no. 5 on my list. There is no Kobberger edition of 1486, and the other edition of 1486, which they declare to have been printed at Cologne by Hermann Liechtenstein, was of course printed by him (a native of Cologne) at Venice. There is no Brescia edition of 1520.


4 Adams R 36. Moranti 2871.

5 Adams R 37.

6 Adams R 38. The Brescia 1580 edition is also in the Bodleian and in Jesus College, Oxford, but I have not checked which issues.

7 For an account of the printers and publishers of Brescia from 1500 to 1600, see Ugo Baroncelli, ‘Editori e stampatori a Brescia nel Cinquecento’, in *Studi di biblioteconomia e storia del libro in onore di Francesco Barberi* (Rome, 1976), pp. 97–107. Ennio Sandal has compiled a checklist of books printed at Brescia between 1472 and 1550: 455 editions in all. See *I Primordi della

8 Adams R 39.
9 Adams does not seem to have understood that in ‘D. Borgarutius’, the ‘D’ merely stands for ‘Dominus’.
10 Adams P 55.
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