

Riccardo Burgazzi: Francis of Meyronne's *Tractatus de passione domini*. Critical edition and analysis.

The dissertation of Riccardo Burgazzi deals with a hardly known work of a widely known late medieval Franciscan. Francis of Mayrennes, or Franciscus de Mayronis as the contemporaries knew him, and his fellow preachers cited him, was among the most popular authors of model sermons in the fourteenth and fifteenth century, his works were published 19 times between 1473 and 1498 in incunable editions. Even if he was not on par with a Johannes Herolt or a Vincentius Ferrerius, he counted as one of the most learned doctors of the church, and was called „doctor acutus”, the sharp-minded doctor. Any work dealing with such a prominent figure of the late medieval church is more than welcome, and it is especially so, if it purports to illuminate a hitherto neglected or unknown facet of Mayronne's activity. The central aim of this dissertation is exactly this, i.e. to publish a previously unedited text from Mayronne. Thus, Burgazzi's dissertation is a useful addition to the existing scholarly literature on Mayronne himself, and to the history of passion narratives, in general.

In my assessment of his work, I will concentrate on my criticisms, as the virtues of the dissertation speak for themselves. The text consists of two major parts, an introduction and a critical edition. Although the title calls the first part 'analysis', I would rather define it as a long introduction (more than 80 pages), because it offers a general outline of Meyronne's personality, and it touches on several subjects concerning the treatise, but it hardly gives a systematic analysis of the work. After a short chapter on the life and times of Meyronnes (12-20), the treatise is presented in three chapters from three different aspects: 1. the textual type, 2. its sources, 3. structure and contents. The first one positions this treatise among the categories of late medieval passion tracts, whereas it always refers to 'textual type', avoiding the expression 'genre'. Although it can be debated if the passion tracts have such generic conventions, that it would be possible to call them a genre, with its own set of rules, I think it would be useful to explore this area, too. What are the rhetoric tools and devices employed in the passion paraphrases of the contemporaries and in the passion treatise of Meyronnes? Although the

author touches upon these issues, when he deals with the roles of the narrator in this text, he could be more systematic and more comparative in his analysis. The theoretical approach developed by Tobias Kemper could be further refined, and by taking into account a wider comparative material (not only on the textological, but also on the philosophical and ideological level) we would have a deeper understanding of the slow evolution of the narrative paraphrases of Christ's passion in the last two centuries of the Middle Ages. I would suggest starting with a more precise differentiation between the 'meditative type' and the 'narrative representation' of Christ's passion, and perhaps finding a better terminology to describe these tendencies also with an eye on a more detailed account of the rhetoric strategies of the text. (24-25)

One of the virtues of Burgazzi's dissertation is that he concentrates on those aspects of the text, where he can contribute something original to the existing scholarship. This approach in writing a doctoral dissertation has its advantages, as the text remains continuously an interesting read. On the other hand, it has its disadvantages, too, because these original ideas may make a fragmented impression to the reader. Nevertheless, this fragmentation of various parts remains within a systematic structure in the text. Perhaps the most original parts are contained in the chapter about sources. Although the author duly lists the most important sources of Francis' treatise, and shortly describes the strategy how Francis transformed these sources, more could be added on the specific way how the Ordinary Gloss or the *Meditationes vitae Christi* was used by Francis. The study of Lesley Smith could be used as an exemplary pattern in this case. Although she says indeed in her conclusion, that the *Glossa Ordinaria* was used in many different ways by its readers, and Burgazzi justly quotes her conclusion, that it is difficult to count all the different contexts in which it was perused, before that, she actually characterizes the approach of fourteen different authors to the *Glossa*, and one could surely find parallels or striking differences among these to Francis' approach.

As we are discussing a dissertation, the central aim of which is producing a critical text edition, let me go on with a detailed criticism of some minor textual issues. First let us see a few textual questions from the dissertation itself. On page 13, the author introduces Mayronis by citing a panegyric poem on him by an early 16th century humanist. Burgazzi explains the reference to Hyrus in the text as

Hyrieus, explained by a misleading . In fact, Hyrus is only an orthographic variant of Irus, or Arnaeus by another name, was a beggar in Ithaca according to the Odyssey, who tried to compete and fight with the disguised Ulysses, not realizing who he actually was (see Pauly-Wissowa, RE, 9, 2046. Hom. Od. 18, 1-109). Irus and Croesus forms a commonplace couple in Renaissance Latin poetry to represent rich and poor living standards (based on Prop. Eleg. 3., 5, 17: Lydus Dulichio non distat Croesus ab Iro.)

On page 30, the quotation from Henry Totting von Oytha is almost certainly wrong. As Burgazzi quotes this text from a manuscript, it seems reasonable to suppose, that either the ms. had a mistaken reading, or the transcription contains some errors. Speaking of the story, that the wife of Pilate had seen nightmares in her dreams, so that she would warn his husband, Totting raises the question, why it was the wife of Pilate, and not Pilate himself who received these visions. Burgazzi transcribes: *'Responsio Chrysostomi: quia fantasma putasset velut magis ex verbis uxoris emollietur, sicut Adam persuasionem Eve'* and translates 'Answer of Chrysostom: because the Devil [*fantasma*] had thought: he [Pilate] would have been convinced by the words of the wife, as Adam [was] by Eve's persuasion.]' In fact, we only have to separate *velut* into *vel* and *ut*, to make the sentence understandable: „But why not to Pilate? The answer of Chrysostom: because he (=Pilate) would have thought that it was a nightmare [*putasse id fuisse fantasma*], or so that he would become more lenient because of the words of his wife, as it happened to Adam upon the persuasion of Eve.' (Here *persuasionem* should read *persuasione*). So the subject of the sentence is not the devil, but Pilate himself.

On p. 36 and 108 we read the sentence 'Notandum quod Christus quattuor conatus est Iudam reducere'. If we interpreted this sentence as 'Note that Christ has tried four things to revoke Judas', interpreting *quattuor* as 'quatuor res', or 'quatuor actiones', then the following accusative and infinitive would have the meaning of an 'in order to revoke Judas', which would require rather an *ut* even in medieval Latin. In fact, the sentence becomes completely grammatical, if we exchange the *quattuor* to *quater*, i.e. 'Jesus has tried four times to revoke Judas'.

If a word form is inexistent in medieval vocabularies, then it is very possible that it is either a scribal error or a mistake in the transcription. E.g. on p. 51 and 94, the author transcribes „Nardus autem est fructus aromatica preciosissimi odoris sine herba parva, hunc adherens spinosa rovicans in floribus crassa radice”. Obviously, the sentence structure is agrammatical. Even if we accept that *aromatica* stands in the text for *aromaticus* because of the feminine gender of *nardus*, -i (although it should agree with *fructus*), „sine herba parva” (without small weed?), and „hunc adherens” do not make any sense here, not to speak of the word „rovificans”, which is unattested in medieval Latin. In fact – without having direct access to the manuscript, I would suggest the following corrections based on typical transcription/scribal mistakes: *rovificans* stands for *rorificans* („producing dew”), „sine herba parva” is actually „sive herba parva” („or a small weed”), and *hunc* stands there for *huic*.

In the beginning of the sixth consideration (p. 167), we can find a possibly unnecessary emendation: when Francis says that ‘O dulcissime Iesu, de te ludebant, ut pueri cum pila, que ab uno ad alium proicitur, fuisti’, I think it is unnecessary to correct ‘proicitur’ into ‘proiectus’, or if it is corrected, also the previous ‘que’ should be changed into a ‘qui’, as ‘una’ and ‘proiectus’ cannot occur as nominatives in the same sentence.

Another critical point is the transcription of Greek word forms occurring in medieval Latin texts. We can safely assume that Franciscus de Mayronis did not know more Greek than the Greek etymological wordlists or the Biblical commentaries of Jerome or the *Glossa ordinaria* would allow. Should we restore the text in these cases to the ‘correct’ Greek form, i.e. to the form how classical Latin would transcribe a Greek word? Or should it be left as it stands in the manuscript? I would lean towards the first option: on p. 53 and 167, in the etymology of the word ‘Golgotha’, ‘litostratus’ is still an acceptable form, although naturally it should stand as ‘lithostratus’. Nevertheless, in the following line, we already find ‘licostratus’, which is problematic from two aspects: first, c and t are often paleographically indistinguishable, thus the word might have well been ‘lithostratus’ originally. Second, I think in all these cases, the text should be made consequent by using the same spelling in the same words. There is some minor problem with the following ‘aliquot’, too: if the manuscript has ‘alicos’, and the editor corrects it, the correction should be ‘aliquid’, not the insensible ‘aliquot’.

In a critical edition, each and every word should be accounted for, even if it is in the vernacular. Thus, the word 'musach' left me wondering to which vernacular it belongs, and it is surely in need of explanation. (p. 52).

In all these cases, it is difficult to say the final word without having a firsthand acquaintance with the manuscript. Nevertheless, as the aim of a critical edition is not only to present a single manuscript, but to present a text, the sense of which is interpreted by the editor in the most adequate manner, it would be reasonable to include more conjectures and emendations in the text. As the only surviving witness is surely not an autograph, the editor the hand of the author

Finally, I would have some minor remarks on the text of the dissertation:

The author recurrently refers to the bibliographic database of the SISMEL, as *mirabileweb*. While it certainly provides one way of reaching these data, all these collections of biographies, manuscript bibliographies, etc. have an author. Thus, e.g. when he refers on p. 16 to *mirabileweb*, the reference actually goes to a part of the website, which is called CALMA, i.e. *Compendium Auctorium Latinitatis Medii Aevi*. This important collection of biographical data and source references consists of separate articles, all of which have their authors, whose names should be cited, preferably with the appropriate page numbers from the printed edition, which preceded the digitized one.

On p. 21., when the author speaks of an Augustinian monastery, it would be useful to make always clear, if it is a monastery of Austin canons, or hermits, as the two would define a completely different setting, and consequently, a different readership. Later (p. 80) it is specified, that it belonged to Augustinian hermits.

Similarly, I would strongly discourage the use of epub references in the dissertation without further reference to the actual page numbers, because it makes the use of the printed versions of the same books impossible.

Having said this all, I would not want to raise the suspicion that the work of Burgazzi would not qualify for the doctoral title, and I want to stress that the dissertation of Burgazzi is a solid piece of

scholarship. The minor details that I have enumerated at length could be justly described with the Latin proverb “ex culice elephantum facere”, which I surely would not want to do. Even if the text needs some polishing and brushing up of the language at some points, it certainly meets the general standards required from doctoral dissertations. I strongly recommend it for public defense, and I wholeheartedly support, that it can pass at the doctoral examination. I am sure that its publication in the future in a corrected version would be a welcome addition to medieval Latin scholarship.

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