

(work of five days); similarly, Sibutus labeled his poem “carmen in tribus horis editum” (poem produced in three hours). Sibutus thus applied the concept of *Schnellmalerei* (quick painting) to poetry. The short period in which the poem was apparently written might account for some ineptitudes in content and language, as the authors rightly claim.

The second poem, “Carmen de puella” (The poem about the girl), is very different in tone and content. It is an erotic poem of one hundred hexameters, in which a young girl talks in an obscene manner to the newly wed persona of the poet about the carnal pleasures that students should enjoy. Meckelnborg and Schneider convincingly argue that Neo-Latin erotic poetry flourished at the university in these years, under the influence of the Italian Richard Sbrulius, who came to Wittenberg in 1507. There are a number of similar poems by other members of the university collected in a manuscript by Dietrich Bloch that is now preserved in the library of Wolfenbüttel (Codex Guelferbytanus 58.6 Aug. 2°). The authors edited and translated some of these poems and included them in appendix 2. “Carmen de puella” seems incomplete because the full title suggested that the girl claimed real joy is only found in marriage. However, this part is missing, and a note at the end promises that it will be submitted later, which never happened.

In the editions, the Latin texts have been normalized to some degree, and sometimes emendations of obvious mistakes have been noted in an apparatus. The facing German prose translations are readable and reliable. The lemmatized commentaries that follow the text and the translation of each poem deal with language, grammar, content, and editorial questions. In sum, the authors have done an excellent job in editing, translating, and commenting on these interesting poems. The book is a much-welcomed contribution to the fields of Neo-Latin and Renaissance studies.

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La Correspondance de Girolamo Zorzi: Ambassadeur vénitien en France (1485–1488). Joël Blanchard, Giovanni Ciappelli, and Matthieu Scherman, eds. Travaux d’Humanisme et Renaissance 604. Geneva: Droz, 2020. lxxvi + 296 pp. €51.70.

Girolamo Zorzi’s manuscript is kept in the British Library. It is a paper register measuring 319 x 215 mm, consisting of 72 folios, almost all numbered on the front at the time of writing and written in one hand, in cursive Italian script, from beginning to end. It contains 80 letters, most of them sent by Zorzi to the Venetian government, between 13 September 1485 and 26 September 1487. The last part of letter 80, written after 26 September 1487, is missing. As Zorzi remained in France at least until January 1488,

it is likely that other letters copied by the ambassador were also included in the missing final part of the manuscript. These letters are a unique document, as no other letter between Venice and France was known to exist before 1500. The manuscript also predates the series of the Ambassadors' Private Archives in the State Archives of Venice, which only begins in 1489. The introduction to the volume, in Italian and French, is the fruit of the collaboration of the three editors and reflects their varying expertise.

Girolamo Zorzi came from an important Venetian aristocratic family, owner of one of the greatest Venetian Renaissance palaces, designed by Mauro Codussi and now the Venetian seat of UNESCO. A member of the Senate, he had already been ambassador to the sultan in 1475 and had held other important posts in his homeland. He was the Serenissima's ambassador in Milan when, in 1485, he was ordered to go quickly to France to ask for the restitution of the four Venetian galleys bound for Flanders that had been captured, on 20 August 1485, off the coast of Cabo de São Vicente, in the Algarve, by the son of "Columbo" (Guillaume Casenove) and Zorzi Greco, two privateers in the service of the French Crown. The first reason for Zorzi's trip to France was an attempt to resolve a diplomatic-commercial crisis. The use of privateers by states against the commercial ships of other countries was legitimate in the event of war, but Venice and France had peaceful relations of collaboration at the time, so this was a particularly embarrassing affair, not least because the galleys were extremely richly laden (210,000–220,000 ducats).

But Zorzi was faced with a complicated political situation in France: the king was a minor and under the *de facto*—but not *de jure*—guardianship of his sister, Anne de Beaujeu, which provoked the revolt of part of the French nobility, intolerant of Anne's rule (the "Guerre folle"). Despite the positive reception and the king's appointment as a knight, Zorzi's task was more difficult than expected, also because of the financial problems of the French monarchy. Another issue of international politics, the affair of Djem, the sultan's brother, held in France, and involving the pope and the king of Hungary, Matthias Corvinus, required Zorzi's diplomatic work. But apart from the more strictly political and diplomatic aspects, the letters are interesting as an autobiographical account, on the one hand, and as a source of psychological observations, on the other. Accustomed to diplomatic language, Zorzi also knows the half-truths, codes, and lies—on the whole, his portrait of the French monarchy is anything but flattering.

Last but not least, Zorzi's letters are a direct testimony to the economic system set up by the great Italian families. Through his remarks, information, and testimonies, the ambassador evokes the organization of international trade and its main actors, the merchant-bankers of the most important Italian cities, such as Venice, Florence, and Genoa. The document vividly illustrates the functioning of one of the fundamental axes of European trade, the link between the Mediterranean and Northwestern Europe. In fact, the urgent choice of Girolamo Zorzi as ambassador was no coincidence:

he and members of his family were frequently found operating in the West of Europe during the fifteenth century.

The publication of Girolamo Zorzi's letters offers scholars exceptional historical documentation that touches the whole of Europe; there is no doubt that these texts will form the basis of important new research.

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Albrecht Dürer and the Embodiment of Genius: Decorating Museums in the Nineteenth Century. Jeffrey Chipps Smith.

University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2020. xiv + 242 pp. \$99.95.

The author investigates the fame of Albrecht Dürer and the impact of his art in the context of the rise of nation-states in Europe. The analysis focuses on the special value assigned to the Genius of Nuremberg as the ideal point of reference for artists and museum audiences. Smith's long-standing study of Northern Renaissance art, particularly Dürer's work, and his attendance at various European museums enabled him to observe how the decorative programs of princely collections, towns, and regional institutions have accorded special importance to the exposition of Dürer's paintings. He also considers Dürer's symbolic presence in buildings, immortalized on walls and ceilings, in facades, and upon balustrades and staircases.

Why Dürer? In his extensive research on the topic, Smith shows by almost thirty consistent examples that Dürer "appeared more often than any other Northern European artist as he came to embody the artistic heritage of the German nations" (2). This book attempts "to answer this question by delving into the complex artistic, cultural, and political histories of this era" and "to understand the period's mindset in microcosm" (189). Smith also explores why Dürer met so often with Raphael, who was regarded as "the divine" artist par excellence of the Italian Renaissance, and why Hans Holbein often replaced Dürer in the ascent of German nationalism. Dürer epitomized artistic greatness, and a stimulus for contemporary artists to restore an extraordinary art after centuries of decline, at a time when new museums were being constructed across German-speaking lands. The present study sheds new light on the erection of many museums in the nineteenth century, and on the upturn of art history as a discipline. The text is richly illustrated, with over 140 images, including photographs and drawings depicting museum decorations destroyed during World War II.

This book is aimed at experts in modern art history, the history of museum collections, and the history of art; nevertheless, it offers the art lover a basic key to comprehend why Dürer played an essential role in the nineteenth-century imagination. Without sacrificing depth or accuracy, the analysis proves agile and engaging; it is