

◆ *The Latin of Science*. Edited by Marcelo Epstein and Ruth Spivak. Mundelein, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci, 2019. 395 pp. \$29. This book is a stimulating contribution to the recent swell in anthologies dealing with Latin literature from a timespan wider than the more commonly surveyed classical and medieval periods. Viewed even within this relatively progressive group of publications, the present volume takes an innovative approach. If Minkova's *Florilegium Recentioris Latinitatis*, Riley's *Neo-Latin Reader*, and Korenjak's *Neulatein* have made selections from the blossoming field of Neo-Latin available to interested readers,⁴ Epstein and Spivak's collection is the first—to this reviewer's knowledge—to consider Latinity in its entirety for the selection of texts. Moreover, in focusing on the natural sciences and addressing an audience of language learners outside of the humanities, *The Latin of Science* genuinely earns itself a characterization as

4 M. Minkova *Florilegium Recentioris Latinitatis* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2018); M. Riley, *The Neo-Latin Reader: Selections from Petrarch to Rimbaud* (Sophron Editor, 2016); M. Korenjak, *Neulatein. Eine Textsammlung. Lateinisch/Deutsch* (Ditzingen: Reclam, 2019).

something new and very exciting.

The book has its background in a course run at the University of Calgary. The two-term Latin of Science course introduces students majoring in fields other than Classics to the Latin language and its 2000-year-long tradition of writing on natural philosophy. Accordingly, the present volume presents readers with an overview of Latin grammar (249–325) as well as a translation glossary, alongside twenty-three extracts of scientific writing from twenty-one authors on everything from natural history through engineering, mathematics, astronomy, and optics to economics and chemistry. On the book's companion website (<https://www.bolchazy.com/Latin-of-Science-P3958.aspx>), interested readers can also access electronic facsimiles of the volume's texts, as well as exercises in aspects of Latin grammar and their answers. A companion volume that will offer translations of the Latin passages presented in this book is also planned (cf. xvii).

In their aim to stimulate readers with a wide range of periods and scientific subject matter in their selection of texts, Epstein and Spivak have certainly been successful. William Harvey's vivid explanation of blood circulation in his *Exercitatio anatomica* will be a surefire hit, while the anonymous translation of the reflections of Maimonides (Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon) on the dramatic ups-and-downs in the mental and physical condition of his king, Al-Afdal ibn Salah ad-Din, makes for absorbing reading. The comparison of Adelard of Bath's twelfth-century Latin translation of an Arabic rendering of Euclid's *Elements* with the thirteenth-century version from Campanus of Novara is another noteworthy example of the editors' stimulating selection of texts: The case offers fascinating perspectives on both the role of Latin as a linguistic medium in Europe's history and on the transmission of mathematical thought through the ages. Moreover, in their inclusion of clear geometrical diagrams (e.g. 108, 113) and strong notes on the mathematical issues at play in Euclid's text (109–10, 117), Epstein and Spivak show themselves very capable pilots for non-expert readers through the occasionally choppy waters of mathematical propositions and their early forms of explanation.

The editor's well-written introductions to each author and text are both lively and interesting. They offer valuable perspectives on the place of the various works in the history of science more gener-

ally—this holds especially true for the present journal’s Neo-Latin readership in the introductions to Kepler’s *Epitome astronomiae* (145), for example, Copernicus’s *De revolutionibus* (127–28), and Libavius’s *Alchemia* (33)—but there are also engaging details from the life and times of their authors (cf. Galvani’s attitude towards Napoleonic control in late eighteenth-century Italy (95) or Leibniz’s and Newton’s dispute (119)). Lists of further reading for each chapter, or fuller notes on the figures and ideas dealt with in these introductions, would perhaps have made it easier for interested students to take their curiosity further, should they wish.

The notes on the texts are, on the whole, instructive and are surely successful in making the Latin more accessible, especially to less experienced readers. This reviewer shares the editor’s enthusiasm for one of their preferred explicatory techniques, that of reordering a Latin passage into a form easier to grasp, which is put to good use throughout the volume. Occasional moments of ostensibly terse commentary involving either straightforward English translation or the repeated “subjunctive; why?” (cf., e.g., 93) may be less helpful for the wider readership, but they do not hinder the overall impression of a well-thought-through guide to the text for learners.

That a good share of the space in the notes goes to ironing out variations in orthography, spelling, and basic textual issues points to one of the very few problematic choices in the book, namely that of relying on early modern editions and the occasional manuscript as sources for the texts. Many of the resulting snags are straightforward and should not hold up students for too long (e.g., *quattuor* / *quatuor* (32), *Appollo* / *Apollo* (69), or *ijs* / *iis* / *eis* (185)). And the early modern misprints **Rx* (for *rex*, 79) or **a postesartes* (for Greek ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρετῆς, 23) are easily explained away, even if they are perhaps unnecessarily troublesome for beginners. But deeper textual issues resulting from this choice are treated frequently in the notes (cf. *iere* for *ire* or *ierunt*, 18, or *inventor* for *invento*, 240, for example). These moments are anything but helpful for language learners approaching Latin texts for the first time. The game of ‘spotting errors’ can be entertaining for bright students, of course, but ‘gloves-off’ textual criticism is surely a step too far for second-semester students.

While a reasonable case can be made for the value of presenting early modern works in their original form when few, or no editions whatsoever, are available, this is not the case for ancient and medieval works. For these texts the editors' explanation of their decision to use early modern sources "in the same spirit as playing period music on the corresponding period instruments" (xiii) does not hold water: We have no surviving autograph manuscripts of Seneca the Younger's *Quaestiones naturales*, Pliny's *Naturalis historia*, or Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae*, for example, and the philological work done since the earliest Renaissance editions of their works has done much to improve the quality of the texts and our understanding of their authors' ideas. A quick comparison of the present volume's passages with the latest modern editions of these three authors reveals a remarkably high number of textual disparities, some of them important (cf., e.g., Isid. *Etym.* IV.4.2). It could be argued that Latin readers early in their experience will neither notice, nor likely care too much about, these philological differences. But when one of the stated aims of the book (and of the course at its origin) is to build "an active awareness of one of the most important components of human culture, namely the vast literary output of scientific works written in Latin over a period of twenty centuries" (113), it seems only fair—to this reader—to offer students only the best available texts from the outset. These are, after all, the very product of our twenty centuries of reading the works.

The volume's three appendices offering introductions to the pronunciation of Latin (I), a functional overview of Latin grammar (II), and notes on the formal 'quirks' of the early modern prints (III) are well presented and carefully thought through for early learners. The Latin-English glossary at the back of the book completes the volume as a stand-alone handbook for its readers. Questions may well be posed over the inclusion of the seventy-six-page grammatical overview, especially in light of the easy accessibility of introductions to Latin grammar in academic bookstores. But it must be said that the book's editors undoubtedly reach their goal of offering the "fundamental tools necessary to analyze and translate a text" (xii) in a self-contained volume. Their willingness to forego some of the minutiae of Latin grammar in favor of direct access to the texts they present is, then, to be applauded.

In sum, Epstein and Spivak's *Latin and Science* is the result of an attractive and ambitious concept to introduce students from outside of the humanities to Latin literature on science from a period of over two thousand years. The editors achieve this in an extraordinarily stimulating self-contained volume that sees students through the basics of Latin grammar and into an exceptionally exciting selection of primary texts. Epstein and Spivak's well-controlled notes and comments, paired with their appealing introductions to the texts, are sure to arouse interest among students and language learners, but also among the broader community of Latin readers who have not read widely on scientific subject matter in the language. If this reviewer has had reason to pause over the decision not to use the latest modern editions in the presentation of the volume's ancient and medieval material, this is only to add a voice to the editors' hope that the present anthology "spurs the publication of other works of this kind" (xiii). Epstein and Spivak's *Latin of Science* remains a pioneering contribution in its approach, subject matter, audience and,—most stimulating for this journal's readership—perspective on the history of Latin literature. (William M. Barton, Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Neo-Latin Studies, Innsbruck)

◆ *Virtue Politics: Soulcraft and Statecraft in Renaissance Italy*. By James Hankins. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2019. XXVI + 736 pp. \$45. This is a book that has been awaited eagerly for some time now. In part this is because its author, James Hankins, is one of the most important scholars at work today in Renaissance intellectual history, so a new monograph from him demands attention. Hankins is as indefatigable in his travels as he is in his research, and he has been presenting and refining his ideas on this topic in lectures and at conferences for a decade. And a book whose premise is that the political thought of the Renaissance humanists *in toto* has been fundamentally misunderstood is bound to make an impact in a way that a single-author study, as valuable as that might be, cannot.

The book is written with admirable clarity around a deceptively simple thesis, that the principal message of the humanist reformers