

Guglielmo Cavallo: *Παραδείγματα*. Le liste degli autori greci esemplari dall'antichità a Bisanzio. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter 2024 (Transmissions 8). X, 205 p., 14 ill. € 119.95. ISBN: 978-3-11-102709-8.

In this characteristically erudite and perceptive study, Guglielmo Cavallo examines Byzantine lists of authors considered outstanding or exemplary in selected literary and scientific-philosophical genres, as variously transmitted in manuscripts of the tenth/eleventh to fifteenth centuries. A monographic treatment of these unascrbed and undated opuscula might seem a remarkable enterprise but the outcome amply justifies the project, not least because the last comprehensive investigation was published in 1897 and subsequent disciplinary advances are vast.<sup>1</sup> Cavallo's meticulous analysis not only sheds much light on these particular documents, with regard to their antecedents, origins, sources, compositional settings, prosopography, intertextuality and transmission, but also contributes to broader discussion of complex processes of 'canon' formation and the varying nature, purpose and cultural functions of 'canonical' authors/works. While modern debates (or 'culture wars') about literary-artistic canons, especially in relation to educational curricula, partly hinge on notions of essential long-term fixity and chronological distance, studies of ancient and medieval canons, addressing much larger timeframes, have long recognised the inherent mutability and elasticity of such lists, which in turn curbs assumptions that all constituent elements have a classical – or specifically 'Alexandrian' – pedigree.<sup>2</sup> A conceptual thread running through Cavallo's inquiry is this unstable – in a sense 'non-canonical' – aspect of canons, in both their assemblage and diffusion, or perhaps, more simply, the semantic imprecision of 'canon', ranging from definitive and irreversible authentication of Scripture to shifting criteria for evaluating

1 O. Kröhnert: *Canonesne poetarum scriptorum artificum per antiquitatem fuerunt?* Diss. Königsberg 1897.

2 See recently, in particular, the contributions of Roberto Nicolai: e.g. R. Nicolai: *I paradossi del canone alessandrino*. In: V. Costa/M. Berti (eds.): *Ritorno ad Alessandria. Storiografia antica e cultura bibliotecaria: tracce di una relazione perduta*. Atti del Convegno Internazionale, Università di Roma Tor Vergata, 28–29 novembre 2012. Tivoli 2013 (*Ricerche di Filologia, Letteratura e Storia* 22), pp. 27–40; Id.: *The Canon and Its Boundaries*. In: G. Colesanti/M. Giordano (eds.): *Submerged Literature in Ancient Greek Culture. An Introduction*. Berlin/Boston 2014, pp. 33–45. See also I. Matijašić: *Shaping the Canons of Ancient Greek Historiography. Imitation, Classicism, and Literary Criticism*. Berlin/Boston 2018 (*Beiträge zur Altertumskunde* 359).

some authors/works as superlative and paradigmatic, while marginalising most others, depending on era, place and context, and reflecting literary tendencies, teaching practices, scholarly interests and/or readers' tastes. Selective adaptation, over time, produces composite or stratified lists, in which counteracting cultural forces of fossilisation and evolution can place relics of Hellenistic scholarship beside recently deceased Byzantine writers.

Cavallo's study principally concerns three lists or catalogues of pre-eminent authors in specified fields or genres, including poetry, grammar, rhetoric, history, medicine, philosophy and theology. These lists he ultimately designates C,  $\Delta$  and M. C and  $\Delta$  are differently structured redactions of the same constituent source-texts ( $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ ). M is a later and independent compilation. Some readers might have benefited from a brief introductory clarification of these documents and Cavallo's preferred labels, even if this would entail preempting his detailed argumentation. As it is, the first twenty or so pages of the book must be read very attentively, as Cavallo cumulatively presents this material, initially by way of a summary of older scholarship (chapter 1, "Le liste bizantine di autori esemplari", pp. 1–7), whereby the lists are first introduced using the alternative and even conflicting denominations they have borne since the late nineteenth century up to the present (Cavallo's C was hitherto *Tabula M*/Montfaucon;  $\Delta$  formerly *Tabula C*/Cramer).<sup>3</sup> Cavallo's own definitions gradually emerge over the course of his analyses of manuscript transmission and textual origin and evolution, and his terminology becomes fixed and comprehensively applied only towards the end of chapter 2 ("Tradizione manoscritta delle liste", pp. 8–36).

Cavallo's discussion of manuscripts covers basic codicological and palaeographical data, the placement of relevant texts, and the known history of each codex. His thorough re-investigation of stemmatic relationships resolves or nuances uncertainties in previous studies and lays foundations for both new editions of the lists and future research. Redaction C is transmitted in a single witness: tenth-/eleventh-century Paris, BnF, Coislin 387 (= C). Redaction  $\Delta$  has a more ramified tradition. The long-recognised two main witnesses are late tenth-/early eleventh-century Vatican, BAV, Vat. gr. 1456 (= V) and early fifteenth-century Oxford, Bodleian, Auct. T. 2.11 (Misc. 211) (= B). Cavallo assigns the siglum  $\Delta$  to their lost common ancestor. In addition, he affirms, beyond doubt, that mid-sixteenth-century Oxford, Bod-

3 See recently e.g. Matijašić (note 2), pp. 24–25, 28–29, 217–221.

leian, Barocci 125 (= N) descends from V, crucially before V suffered physical damage and extensive loss, post-1612/1613, and thus N can fill this lacuna in V (pp. 19–21).<sup>4</sup> It remains unclear how, when, or why V became available to the Venice-based copyists of N around the 1540s.<sup>5</sup> Otherwise, Venice, BNM, gr. II 15 (= V<sub>1</sub>), an eighteenth-century apograph of V, is of no editorial value. Cavallo also takes account of a hitherto unexploited partial witness in the form of two marginal scholia, relating to certain authorial groupings, in Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Voss. gr. Q. 76 (= L<sup>sch</sup>); dating to the tenth/eleventh century, the scholia descend from a collateral tradition independent of Δ, the ancestor of VBN. For the present, Cavallo (p. 22) understandably postpones detailed treatment of List M, a late adaptation transmitted in mid-fifteenth-century Munich, BSB, gr. 256 (= M).

Building on previous studies, Cavallo offers a lucid and plausible reconstruction of the genesis and unusually intricate early textual history of Lists C and Δ (pp. 14–17). Their primary components are two originally independent lists, created in different periods, one apparently classical in origin (α), the other late antique/middle Byzantine (β). Later, between the mid-ninth and later tenth centuries, lists α and β were differently conjoined to form a composite document, but in two structurally divergent redactions: C, broadly characterised as a fuller or *aucta* version (α + β), and Δ, a shorter or *brevior* version (β + α). To reach this point in Cavallo's analysis, the two redactions have passed through various denominations: “Redazione *aucta*” (olim *Tabula M*) > “Redazione C”, and “Redazione *brevior*” (olim *Tabula C*) > “Redazione

4 Here Cavallo significantly modifies the thesis of H. Rabe: Die Listen griechischer Profanschriftsteller. In: RhM 65, 1910, pp. 339–344 at 343–344.

5 Cavallo observes “ma la storia del Vat. gr. 1456 prima del suo ingresso nella collezione del cardinale Sirleto [= 1574] è del tutto ignota, e non si può escludere che a un certo momento, capitato tra le mani dei copisti che lavoravano a Venezia nella cerchia di Nicola Malaxos, fosse adoperato per la compilazione di una nuova miscellanea” (p. 21). However, as Cavallo is aware (p. 10, n. 9), V previously belonged to Cardinal Marcello Cervini, Cardinal-Librarian (1548–1555) and then Pope, as Marcellus II (1555). V was therefore kept in one of his two libraries, in Rome and Montepulciano, which remained intact under his heirs until 1573/1574. See S. Lucà: La silloge manoscritta greca di Guglielmo Sirleto. Un primo saggio di ricostruzione. In: Miscellanea Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae 19. Vatican 2012 (Studi e testi 474), pp. 317–355 at 337, with cited bibliography. In addition, it might seem all the more puzzling that N was copied from V in Venice in the early 1540s, if, as it seems, B was then available in Venice, in the possession of Guillaume Pellicier, French Ambassador 1539–1542, who otherwise employed both of the identified copyists of N, Ioannes Katelos and Nikolaos Malaxos.

VBN” > “Redazione Δ”. I wondered if *aucta* and *brevior* might ultimately have been more useful labels, if only because letter C is now both a redaction of a list and the siglum of a manuscript, while Δ denotes both a redaction of a list and a posited hyparchetype (of VB).

Although Cavallo revisits some previously explored territory, he makes significant progress in several areas, beyond improvements to the stemma codicum. Older studies recognised Lists C and Δ as variant combinations of two pre-existing lists (Cavallo’s α and β),<sup>6</sup> but C and Δ have never been treated as true redactions, each with its own characteristics, reflecting not only the ‘open’ nature of such catalogues, prone to change and addition, but also the intentions and collative method of a particular editor in a distinct rhetorical-grammatical milieu (p. 37). Cavallo’s codicological analysis also identifies an interesting new dimension (pp. 16–17): although the source-material (α + β) certainly originated, at different times, in the eastern Roman/Byzantine sphere, the manuscript tradition of the two redactions, judging by the origins of extant codices, appears to reflect different geo-cultural orientations, whereby Redaction *aucta*/C was handed down in the East, while *brevior*/Δ has been transmitted in Hellenophone southern Italy. Accordingly, this case study coheres with earlier observations on the generally more conservative textual production in the Italo-Byzantine zone. Chapter 2 concludes with mostly colour digital reproductions of all relevant folios of all witnesses (pp. 23–36). Even allowing for the relative brevity of the texts, this provision is a rarity, which permits readers’ deeper engagement with the *constitutio textus* and interpretative questions.

Chapter 3 provides new critical texts of Lists C, Δ and M (“Edizione delle liste”, pp. 27–51). While their publishing histories can be variously traced to the early eighteenth century, the most recent editions are by Otto Kröhnert (1897) and Hugo Rabe (1910).<sup>7</sup> Kröhnert edited List C (as Tab. M) from codex C, List Δ (as Tab. C) from codex B alone, and List M on the basis of an apograph of codex M provided by the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek. Rabe collated a superior text of List Δ based on codices VB with N, even if he did not correctly construe the descent of N from V. Although only L<sup>sch</sup> has

6 See already G. Steffen: *De canone qui dicitur Aristophanis et Aristarchi*. Leipzig 1876, pp. 8–11; and especially O. Regenbogen: Πύραξ (3). In: RE 20,2, 1950, coll. 1409–1482 at 1458–1459.

7 Kröhnert (note 1), pp. 5–8, 10–11, 15–16; Rabe (note 4), pp. 339–344 at 340–342.

played no part in prior scholarship, Cavallo's text benefits from improved editorial principles and more accurate knowledge of the tradition. As Redactions C and Δ differently draw on the same primary lists, Cavallo can occasionally emend one using the other as “textus altero modo traditus” (pp. 41, 46), but he strictly intends “una duplice edizione”, sequentially arranged, rather than “una vera e propria edizione comparativa” (p. 39), recognising their independent production and transmission, and appreciating that the diverging structure of C ( $\alpha + \beta$ ) and Δ ( $\beta + \alpha$ ) precludes juxtaposing the two redactions. A commentary devoted to editorial issues appraises preceding emendations and conjectures. A couple of misprints were noted.<sup>8</sup>

Deconstructing Redactions C and Δ, chapters 4 (“Prosopografia, composizione, origine, cronologia della lista  $\alpha$ ”, pp. 52–63) and 5 (“Prosopografia, composizione, origine, cronologia della lista  $\beta$ ”, pp. 64–118) present detailed analyses of their two primary components, lists  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ , in terms of compositional principles, prosopography and chronology, with a view to establishing the literary-cultural and educational contexts of their original formation. Cavallo draws parallels with other genre-specific lists of exemplary authors and/or works compiled in antiquity, ranging from ‘canons’ of demonstrable or likely Alexandrian origin to more targeted selections of models for rhetorical instruction in the first and second centuries: Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Quintilian, Dio Chrysostom and Hermogenes. List  $\alpha$  comprises sequential listings of authors grouped according to the genre in which they excelled, mostly in verse: epic, iambic, tragedy, comedy (Old, Middle, New), elegy and lyric, followed by oratory and historiography. The earliest is Homer, the latest Polybius. Some identical or largely coinciding sequences are attested elsewhere (e.g. an epic pentad, iambic triad and lyric ennead) and seemingly originate in ‘canons’ formulated in Hellenistic Alexandria or even earlier (e.g. the core tragic triad of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides). The lineage of other series, especially prose writers, is much less certain: the ten Attic orators have the most diffuse tradition, traceable at least from the early Principate, while the historians, beyond a fixed nucleus, have a more fluctuating membership. Cavallo adduces features that, in his view, point to a date of composition before Late Antiquity (p. 61): classifying poets according to versification; terminology used to define genres (as more authoritatively transmitted in Redaction C); and omission of certain fields apparently not deemed *artes liberales*

8 C 6 (p. 41) and Δ 25 (p. 47): Ἐπίχαρμος should read Ἐπιχαρμος. Δ 32 (p. 47): the line begins with an intrusive Arabic numeral: 3Ἐλεγείων.

(e.g. medical writing, included in list  $\beta$ ). Insofar as the unitary structure of list  $\alpha$  appears to reflect a specific time and place, Cavallo plausibly hypothesises its compilation in the second or early third century AD, probably in connection with rhetorical-grammatical schooling, when nascent Greek literary culture rediscovered or revived interest in authors/genres of the archaic and classical eras. Cavallo further argues that a preliminary list of nations who discovered specified arts or sciences, drawing on a separate tradition of “first inventors” (*πρῶτοι εὐρεταί*), is a later accretion, which sought to adapt list  $\alpha$  into a broader-purpose scholarly or didactic tool (pp. 61–63).

Similarly grouping authors by genre, list  $\beta$  was clearly compiled later and in distinct circumstances. Listed authors range from Homer, across Late Antiquity, to George Choïroboskos in the early ninth century. In addition to a few duplicated but differently configured categories found in list  $\alpha$  (hexametric and iambic poets, historians), new prose categories include diverse grammarians, authors of rhetorical commentaries, medical writers, and philosophers and their exegetes. Compared to  $\alpha$ , the tradition of  $\beta$  shows greater divergence between Redactions C and  $\Delta$  in terms of selection, arrangement and/or content of authorial groupings. These variations, some evidently deliberate editorial interventions, complicate the task of tracing the origin and development of list  $\beta$ , which evinces a more stratified heterogeneous formation. Certain groups include figures now deemed secondary or ‘minor’, indicative of the differing priorities of Byzantine erudition, and some names cannot be securely identified. Cavallo’s prosopographical study is up-to-date and often exhaustive, and raises questions about criteria for generic categorisation.<sup>9</sup> He elucidates even ostensibly hopeless cases: e.g. an Ἀλέξανδρος listed among ὅσοι γραμματικοί (C 21)/ὅσοι περὶ γραμμάτων ( $\Delta$  7), from the long list of potential homonyms, is plausibly whittled down to Alexander of Co-tiaeum (pp. 77–79). Regarding compositional contexts, Cavallo discerns in the two diverging redactions of list  $\beta$  “una compilazione ambigua a uso di scuola di livello medio” (p. 110), consistent with what is known of scholastic curricula, but a more ‘open’ text liable to adaptation according to personal taste, didactic setting or regional culture. Suspecting the inclusion of Choïro-

9 A rare instance of incaution relates to the career of Aetius of Amida: “Passato a Costa[n]tinopoli” and “divenne medico alla corte di Giustiniano e Teodora” (p. 95). Although confidently stated as fact in older literature, these statements are pure conjecture; it is not even certain that Aetius lived into Justinian’s reign [see: J. R. Martindale: Aetius (of Amida) 5. In: *PLRE* 2, 1980, p. 20].

boskos to be a later supplement, Cavallo doubts its chronological significance. Principally from the historical orientation of listed writers/works on grammar, medicine and Neoplatonic philosophy, he cautiously proposes later sixth-/seventh-century Alexandria as the original intellectual environment of list β, which was later diffused across the eastern/central Mediterranean and variously modified during the middle Byzantine era (pp. 113–115).

Chapter 6 turns to List M, preserved in Monac. gr. 256, which has played no part in the preceding discussion (“Prosopografia, composizione, origine, cronologia della lista M”, pp. 119–146). In form, content and selective principles, List M differs entirely from Lists C and Δ. Whereas C and Δ remain rooted in their ancient and/or late antique ancestry, the focus and contrived configuration of M reveal an authentically ‘Byzantine’ product. Divided into four sections, each comprising twelve individually numbered authors of a stated genre, M includes Church Fathers and theologians alongside poets, orators and ‘philosophers’. In my view, Cavallo’s intensive analysis of List M is one of the most satisfying aspects of this volume, partly since M has hitherto attracted less editorial or scholarly interest, but primarily because its later date allows Cavallo to adduce manuscript production, circulation, and readership in the middle and especially late Byzantine periods as comparative evidence of attitudes to listed authors. Aside from specific insights into List M, this endeavour furnishes readers with a wealth of contextual detail on Byzantine literary scholarship and book culture. Cavallo charts the extent, modes and chronology of direct and indirect reception of each author, both individually and as a representative of a genre, in literary, intellectual and/or educational contexts, as evidenced by diverse criteria: extant manuscripts, editorial interest, citations, excerption, adaptation and mimesis, drawing close correlations between these external indices of popularity and the selection of authors in List M, most persuasively for orators and philosophers. In addition, Cavallo accounts for the re-categorisation of certain authors, notably why Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon and Polybius, unremarkably *ἱστορικοί* in C/Δ, become *ῥήτορες* in M, owing to shifting perceptions of their instructional value, and why strictly ‘scientific’ (mathematical/astronomical) authors are classified as *φιλόσοφοι* (pp. 125–127).<sup>10</sup> In general, Cavallo identi-

10 To the bibliography on the Byzantine reception of Thucydides (p. 126, n. 50) should be added the more nuanced assessments in S. Kennedy: *A Classic Dethroned: The Decline and Fall of Thucydides in Middle Byzantium*. In: GRBS 58, 2018, pp. 607–

fies List M as a synopsis of Palaeologan literary culture, but his closer examination of Monac. gr. 256 points to a specific transmissional context: as adjacent folios are dated by watermarks to c. 1445, and the codex contains a substantial collection of anti-Latin polemical writings, interspersed with supporting extracts of patristic texts, the contemporary anti-Unionist religious-cultural struggle at Constantinople becomes the most likely environment for the transcription – and even elaboration – of a list of literary-doctrinal authorities (pp. 145–146).

Having explored the formation and transmission of Lists C, Δ and M, in the final chapter Cavallo asks whether, between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries, they played any role in the writings of those Byzantine scholars or anonymous rhetoricians who cite exemplary writers as compositional models or *παραδείγματα* in selected genres. He has more success in tracing the wider phenomenon of cataloguing authors of excellence and general notions of a literary ‘canon’, than in demonstrating specific familiarity with C, Δ and M or the pre-existing constituent texts of C/Δ (α and β). He observes affinities between sequences of poets in list α and in Tzetzes’ oeuvre, though this trait should perhaps be viewed as a facet of Tzetzes’ self-presentational strategy, in which compiling his own lists of authors in specified fields, sometimes reflecting his actual, if superficial, knowledge of their writings, was one of several outlets of conspicuous learning.<sup>11</sup> Cavallo also discusses Michael Psellos’ radical revision of the classical canon of orators to show that Christian practitioners of the art of rhetoric, notably the Cappadocian Fathers and John Chrysostom, can equal – or sometimes surpass – ancient forerunners. Cavallo extends this line of inquiry to prescriptive lists of authors and/or works in late Byzantine rhetorical manuals, specifically the little-known anonymous *On the Four Parts of a Perfect Speech*,<sup>12</sup> with coinciding (and probably derivative) passages in Joseph Rhakendytes’ *Synopsis of Rhetoric*.

635; S. Kennedy/A. Kaldellis: Thucydides in Byzantium. In: P. A. Low (ed.): *The Cambridge Companion to Thucydides*. Cambridge/New York 2023 (Cambridge Companions to Literature), pp. 249–264.

11 E.g. P. Rance: Tzetzes and the *Mechanographoi*: the Reception of Late Antique Scientific Texts in Byzantium. In: E. E. Prodi (ed.): *Τζετζιζαὶ ἔρευνα*. Bologna 2022 (*Studi di Eikasmós Online* 4), pp. 427–481.

12 W. Hörandner: Pseudo-Gregorios Korinthios, Über die vier Teile der perfekten Rede. In: *MEG* 12, 2012, pp. 87–131.

Throughout this volume, Cavallo displays impressive analytical acumen and wide-ranging erudition. His in-depth investigation of Lists C, Δ and M – or more correctly of C/Δ α, C/Δ β and M – is a magisterial demonstration of how much literary-cultural information can be extracted from even short, terse and ostensibly unsophisticated texts. Beyond the particularities of these lists, however, Cavallo provides broader lessons about the typology of canons, insofar as each specimen exemplifies a specific era and compositional milieu and reflects differing editorial objectives and priorities. Correspondingly, the variable development of such lists, embracing persistence, adaptation, addition and abandonment, and sometimes accommodating even recent authors, affirms the necessarily flexible nature and cultural function of canonicity.<sup>13</sup>

- 13 A handful of minor typographical errors were noted: p. 83: ἀπόδοσιν > ἀπόδοσιν; p. 95: “Costatinopoli” > Costantinopoli; p. 164: “clarer” > clearer; p. 176: “anonymus” > anonymous; p. 203: “Edimburgh” > Edinburgh.

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Philip Rance, Freie Universität Berlin  
Friedrich-Meinecke-Institut  
Gastwissenschaftler  
rance@zedat.fu-berlin.de/philip.r.rance@gmail.com

**www.plekos.de**

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