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Review of Nicandro di Colofone nei secoli XVI-XVIII; edizioni, traduzioni, commenti, by Livia Radici

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Livia Radici, *Nicandro di Colofone nei secoli XVI-XVIII; edizioni, traduzioni, commenti. Biblioteca di Technai, 2. Pisa; Roma: Fabrizio Serra editore, 2012. Pp. 174. ISBN 9788862273671. €38.00 (pb).*

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Nicander of Colophon, long a relatively neglected author, has enjoyed greater attention of late.¹ Scant attention, however, has been given to early modern editions, commentaries, and translations of his poems. Indeed, Gow and Scholfield, the edition best known to Anglophone scholars, dismisses the commentaries of Johann Lonitzer (1499-1569) and Jean de Gorris (1505-1577) as of no value and explicitly ignores the works of Jacques Grévin (1538-1570) and Anton Maria Salvini (1653-1729).² Radici seeks to remedy this situation by examining the work of Lonitzer, Gorris, Pedro Jaime Esteve (d. 1556), Grévin, and Angelo Maria Bandini (1726-1803) on Nicander.³ She is interested in their contributions to establishing the text of Nicander, their exegetical work, and their use of Nicander for the study of medicine.

After an introductory nod to previous work, Radici gives an overview of the use of Greco-Roman medical and pharmacological treatises in the Renaissance. She notes both the practical value seen in these by humanist scholars and the importance of printing in the diffusion of the texts, rehearsing the *editiones principes* of various medical texts. She also notes the conjunction of philology and medicine, that many doctors edited texts. Radici proceeds in the second chapter to the editors, commentators and translators whom she intends to discuss in detail, giving a biography and summary of the works of each. These summaries include a number of interesting observations, such as attributing Lonitzer's decision to translate Nicander into Latin prose to its being more suitable for a medical work than verse.

Radici then examines their works from various perspectives. Her third chapter looks at commentaries on the *Theriaca*, specifically those of Lonitzer, Gorris, and Esteve. She focuses on their textual and exegetical comments, and provides a convenient table of the passages discussed by each (p. 51) before examining specific passages with their commentaries, comparing their varying approaches. For each, Radici provides the Greek text (from Jacques' edition) and the commentaries, with an Italian translation. Her analysis in each case seeks to illuminate how early modern scholars approached the text of Nicander. In many passages she notes textual readings and

interpretations similar to those found in modern editions. The fourth chapter continues in a similar vein, examining the commentaries on the *Alexipharmaca* by Lonitzer and Gorris.

Radici next turns to the *De venenis libri duo* of Jacques Grévin. She demonstrates that he used the works of Nicander as a structural model; tables on pp. 128-129 illustrate both this and the considerable differences in structure between Grévin's second book and Ps.-Dioscorides, another of Grévin's sources. Radici notes that Grévin's work, essentially an encyclopedia of toxicology, drew on many sources such as Aëtius of Amida, Paul of Aegina, Galen, Oribasius, Pliny the Elder, and Avicenna. Unfortunately, she does not examine any passages in detail to establish the extent of Grévin's use of Nicander for content.

Finally, Radici discusses Angelo Maria Bandini's 1764 republication of the translation and commentaries of Gorris, along with the Italian translation of Anton Maria Salvini. Much of this involves listing omissions, changes of lemmata, and other alterations of Gorris' notes to the text. More on what the work of Bandini and Salvini contributed to Nicandrian studies would have been desirable.

A conclusion pulls together and summarizes Radici's findings chapter by chapter. She also includes a substantial bibliography with full bibliographical details for the early editions discussed and an extensive listing of secondary works; this by itself is of considerable value. While her work can best be described as preliminary explorations into various aspects of these early texts, it will be foundational for all subsequent studies of them. Radici has made a significant contribution both to the history of scholarship and to the study of Nicander.

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1. Johann Lonitzer

2. Jean de Gorris

3. Pedro Jaime Esteve

4. Jacques Grévin

5. Angelo Maria Bandini

Capitolo terzo. *I commenti ai Theriaca di Nicandro: Lonitzer, Gorris, Esteve*

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Notes:

1. See, for example, J.-M. Jacques' Budé editions of the *Theriaca* (Paris 2002) and *Alexipharmaca* (Paris 2007) and, for the historical fragments, F.W. Jenkins, "Nikandros, son of Anaxagoras, and Nikandros, son of Damaios, of Kolophon (271-272)" in *Brill's New Jacoby* at [BrilOnline Reference Works](#). Recent studies are listed by Martine Cuypers at [A Hellenistic Bibliography - Nicander](#).

2. A.S.F. Gow and A.F. Scholfield, *Nicander: The Poems and Poetical Fragments* (Cambridge 1953), 16-17.

3. None of these will be household names among classicists. R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship, 1300-1850* (Oxford 1976) mentions none of them. The more comprehensive J.E. Sandys, *History of Classical Scholarship*, v. 2 (Cambridge 1908), 379-380, makes note only of Bandini, along with the translation of Salvini. Nor do they fare much better in histories of medicine.

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