

JACOBUS PONTANUS. *Jacobi Pontani de Societate Iesu, Poeticarum institutionum Libri III. Editio secunda emendatior*

In Latin, imprint on paper

Ingolstadii, Excudebat Adam Sartorius, 1597

Small in-8o, [8] + 239 pp., complete [signatures:] (^s, A-P^s), text preceded by a Preface to the reader and Index, title-page with printer's mark with Jesuit insignia, head- and tailpieces, decorated typographic initials. Bound in a limp vellum wallet-style binding made up from a 15th-century parchment leaf taken from a liturgical manuscript, text in two columns, rubrics in red, a few initials in blue (Very fresh internal condition, a few dampstains on binding with some smudging on lower cover, else in good condition). Dimensions 157 x 100 mm.

Important imprint of conceptual thought on language and poetics, composed by a learned Jesuit, here in the second edition. The work was very influential with a number of successive editions. This copy was elegantly bound by an early owner in a limp vellum binding made up of a fifteenth-century parchment leaf taken from a German liturgical manuscript for the Divine Office, either a Collectarium or simply a Breviary.

PROVENANCE

1. Printed in Germany, Bavaria (Ingolstadt): this is also likely where the imprint was covered with its present limp vellum binding made up from a fifteenth-century parchment leaf of German origin.
2. European Private Collection.

TEXT

This is the second edition of this work on Poetics by the Jesuit Jacobus Spanmüller Pontanus. The first edition of the *Institutiones poeticae* was published in Ingolstadt in 1594 by David Sartorius (copy München, SB A. lat. a. 1325/1), and there were five separate editions published between 1594 and 1620. The work is important in the history of Poetics and its application to teaching and theater. Pontanus studies the epic poem, comedy and tragedy, followed by elegy, lyric poetry, hymns, iambic poetry, satire, epigrams, echoes and epitaphs. His work still largely reflects later humanist preoccupations, and is not yet turned towards the new baroque aesthetic.

Jacobus Spanmüller Pontanus was born in Brück (Bohemia) in 1542 and died at Augsburg in 1626. He studied in Prague. He was admitted amongst the Jesuits and studied philosophy in Ingolstadt from 1566. He taught humanities, especially rhetoric and the ancient languages, in the Jesuit university of Dilligen, where he succeeded to Johannes Holonius as professor of Rhetoric. He was a fine Latinist and playwright, great admirer of Italian Humanism, and was inspired by such Italian authors as Robortelli and Viperano. His treatise on Poetics also harks back to the seminal work by Scaliger (*Poetics libri septem*, first printed in 1561 in Lyon, then mostly reprinted in Leiden and Heidelberg). Against the general mistrust of his Order, he defended in-depth philological study and linguistic correction. His translations and commentaries were used well into the seventeenth century. For a most recent survey of J. Pontanus as a Jesuit playwright (Should students fight at war?), see P. R. Blum and T. McCreight, *Soldier or Scholar: Stratocles or War*, 2009.

The present work is to be placed in the general context of what has been coined the "European Republic of Letters" (*respublica litterarum*), the common society of pen and scholarship that flourished in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which supported the reading, editing, and interpretation of ancient letters, establishing a bond between those alive and those who have passed away. This cultural and literary commonwealth championed the rules of rhetoric and poetics, as found in the present work by Pontanus and who believed poetry to be a central key to all fields of knowledge. Pontanus and his thought on Poetics hark back to Humanist ideals and commonplace themes (*topoi*), through the reactivation (*renovatio*), study (*studium*) and imitation (*imitatio*) of the Greco-Roman heritage. The work should also be studied in relation to Jesuit education, and the weight of poetry and theater in the Order's pedagogical ideals. Finally, this treatise on Poetics confirms the importance of Neo-Latin poetry and the predominance of the North, especially the Netherlands and Germany at the turn of the seventeenth century.

Duhr, 1907, pp. 671-673; Sommervogel, vol. VI, 1007-1019 and vol. IX, 779; *Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienenen Drucke des XVI. Jahrhunderts* [VD], Stuttgart, 1992, vol. 19, p. 440, S 8138.

BINDING

The present imprint is preserved in a limp vellum wallet-style binding made up from a fifteenth-century parchment leaf taken from a liturgical manuscript for the Divine Office. The leaf was once part of the Sanctorale of a Collectarium [Book of Collects, named after the Latin "collecta" for "prayer"], a Diurnal or perhaps simply a Breviary, likely of German origin, given the spelling of the word "Ewangelio" in the righthand column. For the Office recited for the feast of Saint Achardo (15 Sept.) the present leaf presents at Vespers the following liturgical elements: antiphon, capitulum, antiphon for the Magnificat (*in ewangelio antiphona*) and collect (see the word "collecta" in red found on the spine). We cannot say for sure whether the manuscript was once a Collectarium or a Breviary, because we do not know whether the manuscript contained reading for Matins or not. Typically, a Collectarium would include the prayers (or collects, as well as capitula and antiphons) for all the canonical hours of the Divine Office, excluding Matins.

LITERATURE

Backer, A. de and C. Sommervogel, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jesus*, Brussels/Paris, 1895, vol. 9, col. 779; Suppl. col. 712.

Bauer, B. "Jacob Pontanus S.J., ein oberdeutscher Lipsius. Ein Augsburger Schulmann zwischen italienischer Renaissancegelehrsamkeit und jesuitischer Dichtungstradition," *Zeitschrift für bayerische Landesgeschichte* 47 (1984), pp. 77-120.

Bielmann, J. *Die Dramentheorie und Dramendichtung des Jakobus Pontanus (1542-1626)*, Freiburg in Brisgau, 1928.

Duhr, B. *Geschichte der Jesuiten in den Ländern deutscher Zunge*, Freiburg, 1907-1928.

Lukács, L. *Catalogi personarum et officiorum Provinciae Austriae, vol. I, 1551-1600*, Rome, 1978.

Sommervogel, C. *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, Paris, 1890-1909.

Stahl, A. "P. Jakob Spann Müller-Pontanus S. I., ein hervorragender Humanist und Schulmann um die Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts," *Kalksbürger Korrespondenz* (1953), pp. 43-55; (1954), pp. 5-20.

Valentin, J.-M. *Les jésuites et le théâtre (1554-1680)*, Paris, 2001.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Jakob Pontanus, Database *Scholasticon*

http://www.scholasticon.fr/Database/Scholastiques_fr.php?ID=1306

Jacobus Pontanus

http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacobus_Pontanus

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