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Conconi, Bruna. Quel che resta di un naufragio. Le edizioni cinque-seicentesche delle opere di Pietro Aretino nelle biblioteche di Francia. Con un repertorio. Preface by Jean Balsamo

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[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

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Conconi, Bruna.

Quel che resta di un naufragio. Le edizioni cinque-seicentesche delle opere di Pietro Aretino nelle biblioteche di Francia. Con un repertorio. Preface by Jean Balsamo.

Cahiers d'Humanisme et Renaissance 178. Geneva: Droz, 2021. Pp. 656. ISBN 978-2-600-06273-2 (paperback) CHF 69.

One can only admire the amount of material gathered in Bruna Conconi's *Quel che resta di un naufragio*. Besides being a catalogue of Pietro Aretino's printed works in France and assessing their fortune, Conconi inserts herself in the recent tendency of looking at Aretino as more than a licentious author; a tendency also reflected in the recent book *A Companion to Pietro Aretino*, edited by Marco Faini and Paola Ugolini and published by Brill in the same year. However, it is useful to start this review with an overview of the contents of the census and then turn to its general merits in conclusion. The repertory is divided into two parts: the first part counts 138 Italian editions, the second part counts 19 translations into French. Their descriptions are preceded by a serial number assigned by Conconi, and a title that briefly defines the edition. They contain a facsimile transcription of the title page and colophon (including the description of the printer's mark when applicable); a physical description (format, pagination or cartulation, signature); the fingerprint; an overview of the contents (including eventual indices or authors' portraits); references to the catalogue *Edit16* and/or the *Edizione nazionale delle opere di Pietro Aretino*; and notes on the history of the edition (such as variants within the same edition). The "dossier" is concluded by a survey of the edition's copies held in French libraries (dimensions, conservation status, notes by possessors or other notes, binding, other works featured within a convolute when applicable); and a concise list of known libraries outside of France that possess copies of a particular edition to give the reader an idea of the circulation of Aretino's works. Conconi also usefully points out corrections to existing catalogues and descriptions.

The repertory is followed by eight interconnected appendixes and a bibliography. The first appendix lists all known editions of Aretino's works (subdivided into "various poems," "chivalric poems," the "Ragionamenti (Ragionamento della nanna e della Antonia. Dialogo)," "letters," "drama," "political and satirical works," and "religious works"), while the second appendix, "Tavola delle edizioni reperite," enumerates all 138 editions and the 19 French

translations. The combination of the two enables the reader to understand how many of the known Aretinian editions survive in the French libraries. The third and fourth appendixes list the editions respectively by library and by genre. The fifth appendix gives an alphabetical overview of the libraries, while the sixth is based on the numbers of copies they own. The last two appendixes concern the possessors: the seventh subdivides them by period (the sixteenth to the twentieth century); the eighth and final appendix offers biographical notes not only on private owners and institutions but also on booksellers and bookbinders. These explain which books they possessed, where these are kept, and refer to elements such as the owners' notes, other known possessors, or the binding.

As this overview makes clear, for Conconi, book history is the methodological gaze through which the history of the circulation and fortune of Aretino's works can be gauged. In her introduction, Conconi advances that signs of use are better indicators than the sole number of surviving copies to understand the dissemination of an author's work. Interestingly, she not only considers comments in marginalia, textual corrections, or indications of censorship but also the physical aspects of the binding that can tell us more about their readers' intentions. Was the book elaborately decorated and did the possessor wish to convey a certain image of himself? Or does its cover, on the contrary, suggest that it had been purchased for educational purposes and should not be in its reader's possession for very long? Besides single possessors, Conconi does not lose track of institutions that owned Aretino's writings, or of the texts that appeared in convolutes together with Aretino's works. For example, the combination of Aretino's *Lettere* and Castiglione's *Cortegiano* in a copy held by the Collegio gesuita di Tolosa suggests that it was used for the formation of the *honnête homme* since these texts became increasingly important in this regard (67–77). Though it seems odd that religious orders owned Aretino's works, since he is considered a licentious author, an important conclusion of Conconi in this regard is that it was especially the Aretinian religious production that circulated. Moreover, Conconi finds that, though the sixteenth century was the age of the Inquisition and censorship, surprisingly more Cinquecento than Seicento editions have survived; and that a very restricted number of editions have been translated into French.

Besides its being a repertory, *Quel che resta di un naufragio* is a stimulating book because it posits two broader contributions to the field of Aretinian Studies based on material evidence. First of all, Conconi's book-historical focus

puts the reception of the early modern prints circulating in France in the centre. Second, by discovering why people in certain times read or bought Aretino's works, Conconi also reassesses the image of Aretino as a pornographer, *flagella dei principi*, and atheist that still sticks to him today.

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