

published an edition with only the first two letters, and that edition was reprinted many times, making readers forget about the second letter by Pico. Of course, this happened because after 1525 Bembo had become the so-called dictator of the Italian language, publishing his treatise *Prose della volgar lingua*, and his fame as a humanist and a Latin and Italian writer was recognized throughout Europe.

In the meantime, Bembo's letter *De Imitatione* was used by Benedetto Varchi in his preface to the posthumous edition of *Prose della volgar lingua* (1549), when he says that Bembo's treatise "cleaned the previous century roast in the Florentine language" (see *De Imitatione*, 128), putting an end to the "questione della lingua" (the issue regarding which Italian language was to be used) with the declaration of the final victory of Bembo's point of view: Italian writers had to imitate fourteenth-century Florentine authors—specifically, Petrarch in poetry and Boccaccio in prose—just as humanists imitated Virgil's Latin poetry and Cicero's Latin prose. This is also why Bembo's letter is so important and worthy of being not only translated into Spanish but also scientifically edited for Spanish-speaking scholars around the world.

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Dialogus de Adoratione. Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola.

Ed. Alessia Contarino. Centro Internazionale di Cultura, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Studi Pichiani 18. Florence: Olschki, 2017. xii + 168 pp. €25.

The *Dialogus de Adoratione*, completed by Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola (1469–1533), Giovanni Pico's nephew, at the beginning of 1524 and never published before, is the first and only book in which Gianfrancesco Pico clearly expounds his personal opinions about the Reformation, mirroring the beliefs and reactions of many Italian literati of his own time. The *Dialogus de Adoratione* edited by Alessia Contarino provides a scholarly transcription of the Latin unprinted original text and its Italian translation, introduced through a detailed analysis of its historical and philosophical context.

As part 1, "Introduzione al *Dialogus de Adoratione*," points out, the *Dialogus de Adoratione* is not a systemic theological tractate but a polemical pamphlet against the Reformation itself. German Reformation notwithstanding, the attention paid by the editor to the framework of the genesis of the *Dialogus* highlights the relation between Gianfrancesco and the German humanistic milieu. Significant in this context are the character Nicolaus, the alter ego of Gianfrancesco himself, inspired by the supporter of the very same dialogue, the bishop of Capua Nicolaus Schönberg, and the influence of the Strasbourg Josse Clichtove's *Elucidatorium Ecclesiasticum* (1516) on the *Dialogus*.

In addition to the close tie with German humanists, Alessia Contarino stresses the inner nature of Gianfrancesco's religious view, comparing the *Dialogus de Adoratione*

with another work, *De Reformandis Moribus Oratio* (1520). If in the *Oratio* Gianfrancesco advocates the restoration of an apostolic early church, in his *Dialogus*, still wishing for a church reform, he markedly distances himself from both the Reformation intents and Savonarola's moral reform to avoid being accused of heterodoxy. The issue of Savonarolanism allows Contarino to discuss both Giovanni's and Gianfrancesco's encounters with the Ferrarese friar in relation to Gianfrancesco's lost *Defensio* of Giovanni's *Apologia* (1487) against Pietro Gracias's attack on Giovanni (in the *Determinationes Magistrales* [1489]), concerning the matter of the *adoratio crucis*. In this context, it is noteworthy that Contarino studies from all angles the issue of the *adoratio* (the practice of prostration before sacred images in the Roman Church cult), a key theme in Reformation polemics and the core of the *Dialogus de Adoratione*, as the title itself suggests.

A particularly valuable insight deriving from Contarino's research is that in order to defend the legitimacy of the exterior representations of God and of the cult of the images, the author of the *Dialogus* unfolds, within an orthodox Dominican-Thomistic perspective, a gnoseological theory based on the idea that thinking about the divinity through images is structural to the human mind. In a wider perspective, Contarino specifies that the author of the *Dialogus* grounds his belief in the usefulness of religious images on his imagination theory (explained in *De Imaginatione* [1501]), in which Gianfrancesco recovers the Savonarolian idea of a prophetic imagination. Indeed, from a symbolic theology, based on the *adoratio*, every man should reach an affective theology, in which representations of God become internalized and are enhanced by prayer. Contarino ascribes this conceptualization to the mystic tradition and to Savonarola's spiritualism, probing at the same time Gianfrancesco's need to strongly separate his legitimation of the *adoratio* from the pagan cult of mythological gods, breaking with his uncle Giovanni Pico's *pax philosophica*. In part 2, Contarino provides a transcription of the only manuscript of the work, the MS Vat. Lat. 3735 in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, in Rome. The original Latin is followed by an Italian translation of the *Dialogus*, enriched by a good number of literary, philosophical, and historical notes, which help to deepen readers' understandings of Gianfrancesco's intellectual network.

Combining philosophical and historical research, Alessia Contarino has not only edited the very first publication of Gianfrancesco Pico's *Dialogus de adoratione*, but she has also produced an introduction distinguished by clarity, making Pico's study accessible to graduate students as well, and by critical approach, displaying a fine eye for Gianfrancesco's close dialogue with Italian and German humanists and his multifaceted intellectual positions. One may object that this interpretation of Gianfrancesco's religiosity is not totally innovative, but what is significant is Contarino's ability to re-stitute Gianfrancesco's complex relation with Savonarolanism.