

Antiquity Matters!

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Marsilio Ficino and his *Scriptorium*: Three Cases of Renaissance Close Readings

The aim of this paper is to focus on three anthologies, which are extant in three manuscripts (MSS. Ambr. F 19 sup., Ricc. 92, Borg. gr. 22), compiled by one of the most important representatives of the Italian Renaissance: Marsilio Ficino. Such manuscripts refer to a massive cultural phenomenon, that of humanist miscellanies.

Humanist miscellanies are evidence of a practice which was very frequent among Renaissance scholars: whilst reading ancient and medieval texts, humanists selected and transcribed in notebooks passages of special interest. Such reading practices resulted in the creation of repertoires of texts that compilers could recall and reuse, at a later stage, in their activity.

The analysis will concern both the physical structure and content of the manuscripts and will seek to show, first, how a Renaissance scholar actually read, selected and transcribed classical and medieval authors; secondly, how complex Ficino's personality and approach to ancient texts were; lastly, the difficulty of categorising or defining humanist miscellanies (anthologies, compilations, collections, commonplace books?), due to their mixed content.