Wiesław Pawlak, Francesco Sacchini, *De ratione libros cum profectu legendi libellus. O owocnym sposobie czytania książek*. Edidit, in linguam Polonam traduxit, praefatione annotationibusque instruxit Wiesław Pawlak. Wydał, przełożył oraz wstępem i przypisami opatrzył Wiesław Pawlak, Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, 2021. Pp. 236. Pb, 39,53 zł.

Francesco Sacchini (1570–1625) attained fame and notoriety in the *respublica litteraria* as the historian of the Jesuit order (*Historia Societatis Iesu*). Aside from his secretarial duties and historical investigations, he was also deeply interested in pedagogy. In two manuals (*Paraenesis*, *Protrepticon*) addressed to “the Jesuit teachers,” Sacchini outlined approaches toward more effective learning and emphasized “the dignity” of teaching, attesting to his authentic commitment to studies. Moreover, he composed the hagiographies of two Jesuits saints, Stanisław Kostka and Pieter Kanis (Peter Canisius). His narrative on the life of the young Polish nobleman Kostka (*Vita beati Stanislai Kostkae Poloni e Societate Iesu*, 1609) was dedicated to the fourteen-year-old prince Władysław Waza, the future king of Poland and grand duke of Lithuania (1632–48). Shortly after its publication, it became the main source for the stories and iconography associated with Kostka.

The book elaborated meticulously by Wiesław Pawlak offers a bilingual (Latin-Polish) edition of one of the most important manuals on the benefits of reading in early modern Europe, *De ratione libros cum profectu legendi libellus* (1613). Sacchini intended to write a textbook for students of rhetoric that could be helpful not only in learning precepts of eloquence, but also in exploring other disciplines, for example poetry, history, or philosophy. His work appeared to be a great success. Because of an unflagging interest in the text, it was regularly in print across many academic cities until the end of the Enlightenment. Today, this book is still useful for better understanding the foundations of Jesuit education, the history of reading, and an early modern culture shaped by the well-known postulate to return to the ancient authors and their more or less creative imitation (emulation), on the one hand, and by a broader period struggle to handle the accumulation of knowledge and the memorization of ever-increasing quantities of information, on the other.

The erudite, yet at the same time accessible, introduction can be regarded as the practical realization of the rules generated from the art of reading books. This introduction consists of three parts. The first part gives an outline of the history of reading in medieval and early modern times. Many of the referenced authors presented books as indispensable support for literary or scientific study and activities. Both medieval scholars and Renaissance humanists created a community of book lovers (*familia librorum*). Sacchini’s manual was

primarily intended to shape a reader's *humanitas*. Although it aimed at being a helpful handbook for the "Christian" students of rhetoric, its utility was not restricted to eloquence. The text's studies of ancient authors were meant to provide examples of good behavior. In other words, reading the text should lead toward the development of rhetorical competencies, as well as encouraging piety and the pursuit of an honest life.

The second part of the introduction presents the author. Sacchini's literary works were closely related to his duties, first as a teacher at the *Collegium Romanum*, then as a historian of the Jesuit order. Pawlak rightly placed emphasis on the close relationship between Sacchini's life, devoted almost completely to books and teaching, and his manual, which originated, as it turns out, not so much from his reading constantly and interpreting of the ancients, but rather from his own experiences and reflections. The book's ideal reader unexpectedly reveals a close resemblance to the author himself.

Finally, the last section presents some questions raised by Sacchini with regard to reading books, the goals of humanist education, the value of studies, and the belief in the priority of moral or spiritual formation over intellectual exercises. Humanists often employed gastric or culinary metaphors to express the process of assimilating information. Obviously, this figural way of speaking has ancient and biblical origins that deserve further exploration, where bibliophagy refers to the metaphor of eating or even devouring books. Sacchini repeatedly discussed the problem of attentive reading, a process that required concentration, perseverance, a quiet mind, and self-discipline. Furthermore, he stressed the brevity of human life and the necessity of making choices. An awareness of this limitation was intended to intensify each moment of life, regardless of the ways one chose to spend their time.

Substantial commentary is added both to the original Latin text and its Polish translation, sometimes cited as excerpts or paraphrased works, which facilitates reading and understanding this manual. These notes indicate its sources and reveal Sacchini's ability to combine ideas drawn from various authors, for example Plato, Aristotle, Plutarch, Diogenes Laertios, Cicero, Horace, Ovid, Quintilian, Seneca the Younger, St. Augustine, St. Jerome. All phrases, sentences, and citations were creatively integrated by the Italian Jesuit into the original text. The book under review has been enriched with the transcription and translation of the dedicatory letter from the Polish edition of this textbook (Kalisz, 1619), addressed to the students of rhetoric at the Collegium Carncuvianum, founded in 1583 by archbishop of Gniezno, Stanisław Karnkowski.

What is striking about Sacchini's manual is its integration of a variety of sources. Across fourteen chapters, the Italian Jesuit evoked both ancient

authors and the church fathers. Unsurprisingly, his book is not the only work to draw upon many other texts. For instance, he quoted a famous passage from Plato's *Phaedrus* on the Egyptian myth of Theuth (274d-275b), in his critique of note-taking without a special care for memory development. Sacchini did not depreciate the invention of writing. He shared entirely Plato's criticism of false wisdom restricted only to notes. For the humanist, having many, sometimes too many, books in the library (*copia librorum*) prohibited the acquisition of a "true" knowledge which depends on "noting" reliable information in the mind. In the early modern period, Plato's argument on the values and vices of writing and the related strengthening or weakening of memory with notes gained a new significance

It cannot be denied that Sacchini's manual is an example of an excellent literary work. His textbook on "beneficial" reading appears to be the result of expansive reading and ingenious interpretation according to early modern pedagogical practices, and, thus, it might be the best proof for the utility of the proclaimed doctrine. It teaches how to pay attention and concentrate while reading, how to take methodically notes (*ars excerpendi*) and put them in order, and how to memorize effectively large amounts of information or develop one's natural ability to learn. Moreover, it can be regarded as a collection of valuable ancient phrases or sentences worth remembering. For this reason, I believe, it will be a useful source for historians and literary scholars as well as for all book lovers. I am deeply convinced that for all readers, regardless of their interest, it will be a reading *cum profectu*.

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David G. Schultenover, S.J., *Jesuit Superior General Luis Martín García and His Memorias: "Showing Up"*. Jesuit Studies, 30. Leiden: Brill, 2021. Pp. xiv + 946. Hb, € 237.00 / \$284.00.

David Schultenover, S.J.'s monumental study of the Jesuit superior general Luis Martín (1846–1906) leaves all students of modern Jesuit, Catholic, and Spanish history in his debt. (For me this debt is personal. Some years ago, Schultenover generously provided me with a transcription of some of Martín's memoirs for use in one of my own projects.) It is an unusual text derived from an unusual