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Die Collectanea: des Gaius Iulius Solinus: Ein Reiseführer für Sitzenbleiber - sachlich ohne Belang? Kai Brodersen, Universität Erfurt, 21.06.2013-23.06.2013.

Reviewed by Kai Brodersen
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Die Collectanea: des Gaius Iulius Solinus: Ein Reiseführer für Sitzenbleiber - sachlich ohne Belang?

Gaius Iulius Solinus ist der Autor eines spätantiken Werks, das unter dem Titel *Collectanea rerum memorabilium* oder *Polyhistor* bekannt ist. Der Erfolg dieses Werkes in Spätantike, Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit war enorm: Solinus erfreute sich einer "almost unrivalled popularity in the Middle Ages" George H. T. Kimble, Geography in the Middle Ages, London 1938, S. 5. und blieb "immensely popular in western Europe" Marjorie Chibnall, Pliny's Natural History and the Middle Ages, in: Thomas A. Dorey (Hrsg.), Empire and Aftermath: Silver Latin II, London 1973, S. 57-78, hier S. 59. - kurz: Solinus war "the chief Latin geographer to a millennium". Mary E. Milham, C. Julius Solinus, in: Ferdinand E. Cranz (Hg.), Catalogus Translationum et commentariorum. Mediaeval and Renaissance Latin Translations and Commentaries, Bd. VI. Washington DC 1986, 73-85, hier S. 74. Dies änderte sich am Ende jenes Jahrtausends grundlegend: "Da wir ... die Vorlagen Solins noch heute besitzen, sind die *Collectanea* sachlich für uns ohne Belang." Ernst Diehl, Iulius [492], in: RE X.1 (1918), Sp. 823-838, hier Sp. 828. Urteile wie dieses, das sich in der großen Real-Encyclopädie findet, sind für die Geringschätzung von Solinus' Werk in der altertumswissenschaftlichen Forschung der letzten hundert Jahre typisch. Man hat Solinus als "schwachköpfigen Kompilator" bezeichnet Carl Weyman, Besprechung von Mommsen, in: Berliner philologische Wochenschrift 16, 1896, 909-911, hier S. 911. , und die "Irrtümer eines lächerlichen Lehrerleins" Theodor Mommsen, C. Iulii Solini Collectanea rerum memorabilium iterum recensuit, Berlin 1895, S. viii. in seinem "wretched" und "trivial" Werk William H. Stahl, Roman Science, Madison 1962, S. 122 und S. 137. , einem "Reiseführer für Sitzenbleiber" Arno Borst, Das Buch der Naturgeschichte: Plinius und seine Leser im Zeitalter des Pergaments, Heidelberg 1995, S. 44. , haben zu einem anhaltenden Desinteresse in der Forschung geführt. Angesichts der großen Bedeutung von Solinus' *Collectanea* für das "Weltwissen" in Spätantike, Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit scheint die Vernachlässigung des Werks in der Altertumswissenschaft nicht angemessen.

Ziel der von der DFG geförderten Tagung war, fast alle Gelehrten, die in den letzten Jahren Untersuchungen zu Solinus begonnen oder bereits publiziert haben, an einen Tisch zu bringen, um laufende Projekte zu diskutieren und abzustimmen, Forschungsdesiderate zu identifizieren und neue Studien anzuregen. Die Tagung fand in der Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, einem Teil der Universitäts- und Forschungsbibliothek Erfurt/Gotha, statt, deren großer Bestand an frühen Editionen der *Collectanea* seit dem 15. Jahrhundert während der Tagung den Teilnehmenden zugänglich gemacht wurde. Die Tagung fand in englischer Sprache statt, weshalb der nachstehende Bericht auch auf Englisch abgefasst ist.

The conference first looked at Solinus' *Collectanea* as a "fluid" text. FELIX RACINE (St Andrews) examined the messy textual transmission of Solinus' *Collectanea* in late antiquity and the early Middle Ages, as well as the impossibility of creating a traditional edition on the model of Mommsen's. He rather agreed that the great number of surviving manuscripts make this text particularly suited to an edition made according to the principles of the 'new philology' movement, which seeks to present various manuscripts within their intellectual context. Using evidence from Carolingian era, this presentation also shows insights that can be gained from identifying circles of readers of Solinus, as well as the relationship between the *Collectanea* and texts copied in the same manuscripts.

Solinus' sources have been studied intensively in the past, but there is still room for further thoughts: THOMAS HILLARD (Sydney) examined parallel passages in Pliny's Natural History and in Solinus' work dealing with items of a prosopographical nature, showing that close resemblances - often verbatim - demonstrate an unmistakable relationship between the mate-

rial. However, a number of cases where Solinus augments - correctly - the relevant nomenclature indicate that Solinus was not dependent upon Pliny's work. Hillard argued that both Pliny and Solinus transmit items that came into their hands from an ultimate common source in a close but occasionally divergent fashion; this in turn indicates that Solinus preserves valuably independent data. ARWEN APPS (Sydney) examined Solinus and source citation in general. She showed that much has been written (but little definitively concluded) regarding the exact literary antecedents of Solinus' book. She did not grapple with these complex textual arguments, but explored Solinus' relationship with his sources in more general terms. How did Solinus think about his source material? And in terms of source material, what did Solinus perceive his job as an author to be? These questions were discussed via an examination of the first dedicatory letter and the explicit citations in the Polyhistor. A third paper, by ROBERT BEDON (Limoges), was read by Kai Brodersen, it argued that the chorography of Titianus the Elder is a very likely source of Solinus.

Special interest was focussed on Solinus as an author. FRANK ROMER (Greenville, NC) studied Solinus and the myth(s) of empire. He showed that Solinus, unlike his models, privileged Rome and problematized history, imperial ideology, and time. Roman calendars regulate religious life and form cultural memory, but many cults and customs antedate the city, leaving certain *ambiguitates* (1.7; cp. the Parilia at 1.19.) Solinus included the history of Caesar's astronomically-based calendar (1.34-52), which surpassed Egyptian and Greek science (1.34) and embodied Roman imperium: Caesar mastered time through control of foreign knowledge, and Roman power extended over heaven and earth. Astronomy underlies the celestial *plagae* whose counterparts Solinus innovatively described on the earth's surface (2.48, etc.). Readers form mental images of Roman history, much as they do of a mental world map (however imperfect). CAROLINE BELANGER (Ottawa) examined Solinus' success in bridging popular and didactic literature. She examined the ways in which Solinus enriches authoritative tradition with appealing elements to create a work that concurrently informs and amuses the reader. Special attention was given to Solinus' authorial comments on his purpose in the opening letter and throughout the text, and to the questions of genre and readership. Finally, she showed that one ancient reader, Augustine, associates the type of work that Solinus wrote with *curiositas*, a notion whose presence in Solinus' preface and in the larger cultural context of his age deserves close attention. Finally, ZWEDER VON MARTELS (Groningen) spoke on the limits and limitations of Solinus' *bratteae eloquentiae*. He showed that according the dedication letter of Solinus's work, the author wanted his readers to believe that he placed contents (*fermentum cognitionis*) above eloquence (*bratteas eloquentiae*). These words do not mean that the rules of rhetoric were neglected by him. At the contrary, the dedication letter provides many examples of the author's acquaintance with the rules of rhetoric and shows that we must look with different eyes at him. The same is true, as von Martels argued, for the contents of the work itself. Solinus followed several strategies in order to attract the attention of readers. One of these is the use of amplification, and vivid language aiming at visualization. This technique can be connected with specific rhetorical training exercises used at schools, shedding new light on Solinus.

The reception of Solinus is a field which deserves further study, as the conference amply demonstrated. FELIX RACINE (St Andrews) studied Solinus and late Roman schools. He examined the use of Solinus' *Collectanea* as a source of information by school authors for the later Roman Empire, from Servius and Martianus Capella in the early 5th century to Priscian in the 6th century. He studied the relationship between Solinus' project, the contents of the *Collectanea* and its mode of presentation and customary geographical instruction in Roman schools. Also, he studied school authors' attitudes toward Solinus, including Martianus Capella who saw him as an expert on the geography and ethnography of the East, and Priscian who saw him as a model of good Latin usage. DAVID PANIAGUA (Salamanca) studied Solinus and late antique Christian Literature. He showed that Johannes Camers in the *Vita Solini* opening his *In C. Iulii Solini Polyhistora enarrationes* (1520) remarked that Jerome of Strido, Ambrose of Milan and Augustine of Hippo, had often reproduced information from Solinus' *Collectanea*. Camers' statement became *communis opinio* and was repeated over and again, until Mommsen's second edition was published and Camers' statement rejected, since no one had been so far to demonstrate that any passage by Jerome or Ambrose has been taken from Solinus. Paniagua first explored whether there are reasons to back Camers or not, and then paid attention to the third element of his "Christian triad": Augustine's use of Solinus' work was revisited to give an answer to the questions when, how and for what purpose did Augustine read Solinus. Finally, PAUL DOVER (Kennesaw) asked how Heinrich Bullinger and Joachim Vadian read their Solinus. Dover examined the reading of classical geography among two humanists who spearheaded the Swiss Reformation in and around Zurich in the first half

of the 16th century. He did so through an examination of the annotations these humanist readers left in their copies of Solinus. Within this reasonably small world of the Swiss reformed community, the connections between these leading reformers created sodalities committed to a reformed brand of humanism of distinctly Erasmian flavour; their interests included classical geography and cosmography. Both Heinrich Bullinger, the successor to Huldrych Zwingli as pastor at the Grossmünster in Zürich and a major figure in pan-European Reform Christianity, and Joachim von Watt (more commonly known as Vadian), the humanist polymath who led the reform in nearby St Gallen, owned and glossed editions of Solinus' work. The marginal notes left by these readers include examples of humanistic philology, extensive cross-referencing with a vast array of texts that formed part of their humanistic formation, and a number of personal asides reflecting their own circumstances at the time of their reading. These annotations reveal that they read Solinus as a resource, if not a guide, for their broader geographical interests. But they also occasionally betray a critical attitude to what they read. This shared interest in classical geography among this interconnected association of humanists demonstrates that the interests of early humanists indeed extended into the realm of the natural and geographic knowledge of antiquity, and testifies to the enduring popularity of Solinus' work in the surprising humanist ferment of the Swiss lands in the 16th century, even amid the increasingly critical attitude toward classical, narrative geography, evidenced in the marginal comment added by Rudolf Gwalther, the successor to Bullinger in the Zurich Grossmünster, to his own copy of Solinus in 1539: *Geographia sine picture muta est.*

Among the active respondents were Barbara Pavlock (Bethlehem, Pennsylvania), Veit Rosenberger (Erfurt), Karin Schlapbach (Ottawa), and Lutz Spitzner (Mannheim). The lively conference (for which see http://www.collectanea.de), which showed that Solinus rewards the study of his text, his sources, his position as an author, and his "Nachleben", will be the foundation for a book to be published in 2014.

Die Tagung hat gezeigt, dass die Befassung mit dem Werk des Gaius Iulius Solinus mit neuen Fragestellungen dazu beitragen kann, den für ein Jahrtausend wichtigsten lateinischen Geographen neu zu bewerten: Nicht die Frage nach den Vorlagen führt noch weiter, sondern die Frage nach den Gründen für seinen Erfolg in Spätantike, Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit.

Konferenzübersicht

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Felix Racine (St Andrews): Solinus' *Collectanea* as a "fluid" text

Solinus' sources

Thomas Hillard (Sydney): Shared prosopographical items in Solinus and Pliny

Arwen Apps (Sydney): Solinus and Source Citation

Robert Bedon (Limoges): A Very Likely Source of Solin: The Chorography of Titianus the Elder

Solinus as an author

Frank Romer (Greenville, NC): Solinus and the Myth(s) of Empire

Caroline Belanger (Ottawa): Solinus' Success: Bridging Popular and Didactic Literature

Zweder von Martels (Groningen): The Limits and Limitations of Solinus' *bratteae eloquentiae*

The reception of Solinus

Felix Racine (St Andrews): Solinus and Late Roman Schools

David Paniagua (Salamanca): Solinus and Late Antique Christian Literature

Paul Dover (Kennesaw): How Heinrich Bullinger and Joachim Vadian read their Solinus

Kai Brodersen (Erfurt): Studying Solinus - whither next?

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