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And Lorenzo Changed His Mind: Compositive Layers in the 1st Book of Lorenzo Valla's *Elegantie Lingue Latine*



Lorenzo Valla (Roma, c. 1406-1457) was the author of a large amount of texts, which deal with a wide range of topics, from religion to history and philosophy. But above all, he was a philologist whose main concern was to bring back correct and elegant Latin, according to the use of the Classical *auctores*: that is the purpose of his main work, the *Elegantie Lingue Latine*, one of the most important linguistic treaties of the Humanism.

Valla worked in the *Elegantie* for many years: he started around 1433 at Pavia and he only thought them ready for publication around 1449. In the meanwhile, his epistles tell us about draft versions being presented to friends, about unwanted circulation of unfinished work, about ancient texts that he had not read and wanted to use for his book. We also have a valuable manuscript with corrections by Valla's own hand that tells us about Valla's method of redaction. The large manuscript tradition of the work bear marks of all of these stages of Valla's work, making the edition of the *Elegantie* particularly complex, but also extremely interesting both from an ecdotic and a cultural point of view.

The aim of the present talk is to show how book I of Valla's *Elegantie lingue latine* shows evidence of the author reviewing and rethinking his work, and how the different compositive stages overlap and disappear to arrive finally to the definitive version of the treaty.

Date and Venue:
Wednesday, 28th March 2018, 6pm
Zentrum für Alte Kulturen („Atrium“), SR 5
Langer Weg 11, 6020 Innsbruck