

*Abstract*

The contribution looks at Venetian printing and publishing in the mid-sixteenth century from the point of view of the so-called ‘poligrafi’, that group of writers who collaborated with the leading Venetian printers and publishers in the production of works aimed at a wide readership – in particular editions of the classics in translation and anthologies of letters and poems – and prepared according to the linguistic standards laid down by Bembo. The starting point is a case study involving Dionigi Atanagi, a writer from Cagliari who began his career in Rome as a secretary and then moved to Venice. The contribution aims to look afresh at his career with a reconstruction of his relationships and collaborations and a focus on his ambitions and projects. In pursuit of this aim it surveys the various literary projects undertaken by Atanagi between 1554 and 1572, which consisted of two complementary categories – the editing of contemporary works and the production of anthologies of letters and of lyric poems. In the production of the latter Atanagi drew above all on materials from Rome and from the Curia – an indication of how he became an interpreter and spokesman for this cultural and political ambience and how he transformed the recovery of this important heritage, which had until then been little known in Venice, through what amounted to a sustained programme of publication. In pursuing this aim Atanagi strengthened and confirmed the appeal of Venetian publishing in the sixteenth century beyond regional confines; Venetian books were able to respond to the many local needs of the multiple different centers across Italy and to give expression to all their voices, however specific the contexts in which they emerged.